

# Leadership Insights: Rebecca Gambrell on SME and Schemes

**Jenny Ellice:**

Hello and welcome to Aviva Leader Insights, I'm Jenny Ellice, and joining me in the studio today, we have Rebecca Gambrell, who is the SME Portfolio Director for Aviva, so Rebecca, welcome.

So, maybe you could start by just introducing yourself and telling me a little bit about your role.

**Rebecca Gambrell:**

Yeah, absolutely. So my name's Rebecca Gambrell, and I'm the SME Portfolio Director at Aviva where I joined in December, and so my role is all about the digital world, so I look after everything that's Fast-Traded and e-Traded, the UK Underwriting Centre, and also our schemes and delegated authority business. I've been in insurance for 15 years, across roles including actuarial, underwriting, and P&L-led roles too.

**Jenny Ellice:**

Well, since you joined Aviva, what would you say have been the key improvements in your space that you've been seeing, and tell me a little bit about how they came about, and how they're kind of impacting the broker client experience with Aviva?

**Rebecca Gambrell:**

Absolutely, I think in the digital world, we've made a number of changes, over 300 in the last year, which is phenomenal, and a lot of those have been focused on how we can improve the customer journey for our brokers, but also how we can expand our digital appetite. So we've made expansions in five of our core products over the last year, most recently in our Trades People [Self Employed] product, expanding the limits, and making sure that our brokers can place more with us digitally. We've also launched a number of new products, most recently, Plant and Equipment, and our Cyber Response product, which is really focused on the small end businesses. And finally, we've used AI [Artificial Intelligence] recently as well, to introduce to the brokers, personalized recommendations, based on the profile of the client that they've put in, in terms of actually these covers might also be appropriate for this customer. So again, making it really easy for the broker to understand what covers their client might need, based on the profile of that customer.

**Jenny Ellice:**

And what sort of trends are you seeing that impact SMEs in the digital space, and what sort of considerations does this mean for insurers, brokers, and clients, and if they need to, what can they do to mitigate them?

**Rebecca Gambrell:**

Yep, so our clients are mostly SMEs, right? So they're small businesses, so the cost of living, rising energy costs, they're impacts of Brexit and the recent Ukraine war, in terms of supply chains, they're all really challenging for our customers. So for me, it's about making sure that our

customers have adequate protection, and that they're not at a point of claim and find that they're inadequately protected. So we've launched initiatives such as our CIT [Commercial Intelligence Tool] insurance tool, which is really focused across digital property products and our schemes brokers. It means that they can go and check that the customer's not underinsured, and suggest an appropriate sum insured for that customer. So again, it makes it really seamless and easy for them to make sure that that protection is adequate. We've also developed our Solus, and built on our Solus claims network, which is a network of motor repair shops, which means that we can help reduce the cost of claims and reduce that claims life cycle as well, which means that we can get our customers back on the road much faster.

**Jenny Ellice:**

And what sort of challenges are brokers facing when it comes to SMEs? And Aviva's appetite, how is this turning that into opportunities?

**Rebecca Gambrell:**

Yep, absolutely. So I think there's a couple of things that are facing brokers at the moment and insurers to be fair. So I think Consumer Duty is a big one, and regulation as a whole. There's a whole raft of requirements. So I think for us, it's really about embedding that culture into our underwriters, and our risk functions and making sure that we're truly there and caring for the customer, and that we're evidencing that adequately and supporting our brokers in doing that as well. I think also a number of the broker conversations that I've had recently have been around actually their digitization strategy and how they can place more digitally. And I think for Aviva, that's about how we can help our brokers understand our risk appetite so that they know that what they can trade with us in that space, but also helping them give them the confidence with that. I think as more and more risks are traded digitally, it's harder. It's about building up that confidence, I think, for the broker. So we do a number of things in terms of broker webinars and sitting down in their offices to help build that confidence that they can place those types of risks with us, but also widening our appetite, as I mentioned earlier, and also really building out our teams and empowering our underwriters to make those decisions at the point of quotes so that it's a faster and efficient journey for our brokers.

**Jenny Ellice:**

And when it comes to key deliverables, what can brokers and clients expect to see from Aviva when it comes to SMEs?

**Rebecca Gambrell:**

I think a real focus on service. It continues to be really key for us in making sure that we can help support our brokers trade the business in the way that they want to. I think continued improvement and appetite in our products and removing inefficiencies in that digital journey. And we've got a real focus as well on in terms of things that fall out of that digital journey that might not quite fit. How do we make that process simpler and slicker for the broker so that they're not sort of having to go to several different people to place a risk? They can just have a more sort of seamless appetite and approach to that.

**Jenny Ellice:**

And your future predictions for SMEs in the digital space?

**Rebecca Gambrell:**

I think really, and I said before, it's really, it's about more and more will be digital. That's not just about, you know, sort of a computer says, yes, our computer says no appetite. It's more around actually, how do we open up that digital world so that it can be more efficient for those risks smaller and can go straight for through, but also for the larger risks where actually, you know, there's an underwriter there to support that digital journey and to answer the questions and make sure that the risk is placed appropriately. So I expect much more of that. But Aviva's a distribution-led business. And absolutely, it's always about how the broker can trade with us in the way that they want to and making that really simple, efficient and easy for them to do.

**Jenny Ellice:**

And finally, a call to action, what would be your one main ask of brokers watching this interview today?

**Rebecca Gambrell:**

Absolutely, I think just talk to us. We really value feedback in whatever form that comes in because we want to listen, we want to improve and we're really focused on building out teams and products that are fit for the future. The UK insurance market and our SMEs are constantly evolving and we want to be able to evolve with them. So talk to us, give us your feedback, make sure that you let us know what's working and what's not working for you because really we want to be there for the brokers and the customers as they evolve.

**Jenny Ellice:**

Rebecca, thank you.

**Rebecca Gambrell:**

Thank you.