

2017

# INTELLIGENT INSURER

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## INFLUENTIAL WOMEN IN RE/INSURANCE

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*Intelligent Insurer profiles the leading women currently making their mark on the re/insurance industry*

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INTELLIGENT INSURER IS PUBLISHED BY NEWTON MEDIA LIMITED.

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PRODUCTION AND DESIGN

Fisherman Creative

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Intelligent Insurer—ISSN 2041-9929

Cover image: iStock Photo / Andrey Danilovich

# MAKING THE MOST OF TALENT

For the fourth year running, this publication profiles some of the most successful female executives working in risk transfer globally. As the industry continues to change and adapt to forces beyond its control, it appears many companies are embracing the factors they can control, which includes ensuring they have the best talent—regardless of gender.

This is important for the industry if it is to thrive and survive after a new tech revolution, an influx of new capital and one of the longest periods of soft rates the industry can recall. But it is also interesting to see how the women selected and interviewed for this project view their role in the industry.

The executives profiled were also asked a number of questions about their career so far, aspirations for the future and how they see the industry developing.

It is interesting to note how the various executives respond to the question about the biggest challenge they have faced. A number still cite juggling family life with a successful career as their biggest challenge while others note how proud they are to be carving a career path that can be followed by future women.

But many women also cite challenges and achievements that have nothing to do with their gender, perhaps indicating a wider trend in the industry of gender becoming less of an issue, albeit slowly. These include changing market dynamics, the soft market, increased competition and the influence of technology on their role.

Perhaps the gender issue is becoming less important as all executives face these challenges.

What follows are the profiles and comments from our new Class of 2017. This year, we have identified and profiled 85 new women, but this should be combined with the hundreds of executives we have profiled previously. While we have previously restricted the list to female executives in re/insurers or brokers, we have loosened our criteria this year and included a selection of service providers working directly with the risk transfer industry.

In addition to this, we selected an additional 17 women featured in previous years to update their answers and offer us some additional responses on how they see the industry changing and their careers progressing.

For the full profile of every executive from 2017, 2016, 2015 and 2014 please visit [www.intelligentinsurer.com](http://www.intelligentinsurer.com)

Wyn Jenkins, managing editor

*If you have a candidate you'd like to propose for consideration in our 2018 update, please contact Angharad Davies, head of research at: [adavies@newtonmedia.co.uk](mailto:adavies@newtonmedia.co.uk)*

CLASS  
OF 2017



## Monalisa Samal

**Company:** Xceedance

**Job title:** Vice president

**Career timeline:**

**2013:** Vice president, cat modelling, Xceedance

**2009:** Manager, RMS

**2008:** Team lead, Guy Carpenter (IGI)

**2006:** Senior risk analyst, RMS

**2005:** Analyst, XL Insurance

**2004:** Fraud risk consultant, sgency to ICICI Bank

**2003:** Research analyst, Reserve Bank of India

With 11 years of industry experience, Monalisa Samal leads the exposure management and cat modelling teams at Xceedance. In previous positions, she has worked at XL India (now XL Catlin) in the cat modelling division and oversaw technology modernisation and exposure management projects for Infotech Global (a reinsurance broker, now Guy Carpenter).

Before joining Xceedance, Samal spent six years at RMS in the analytics services division, serving as a project manager, trainer, consultant and team leader across a diverse range of projects. In this position, she managed a global client base for cat modelling services that included pricing, portfolio management and reporting, project deliveries and model sensitivity analysis.

**Why did you choose to work in this industry?**

I began my career as a fraud risk management consultant, but it was unfulfilling. So, I explored other avenues in the insurance industry, leading to a cat modelling opportunity. I was captivated by the environment that I found in cat modelling. The interplay of science, engineering, programming, statistics, analytics and process optimisation as a set of inputs and solutions for managing catastrophe risks was exciting. The specialty of cat modelling and analytics continues to fascinate me, as every day it poses interesting challenges and new adventures.

**What has been the highlight of your career so far?**

Witnessing the development of my teams stands out as a highlight. The early experience of building a multi-disciplinary team was a tremendous opportunity to learn about leadership

and teamwork. Spiderman expressed a relevant principle: “With great power comes great responsibility.” To me this means effective leaders empower people to respect and appreciate the intrinsic value of their work.

Motivating people to excel, and instilling a team-based sense of confidence and pride is a sure path to achieving strong results. A highlight of my career is when colleagues says: “Mona, I would like to work in your team.”

**What has been the biggest challenge you have encountered?**

Continuously adding value in the rapidly transforming insurance industry. We are witnessing a very exciting time in the insurance industry. Digital enablement and new technologies such as robotics, machine learning, IoT, blockchain and open source platforms are unlocking doors to new opportunities. More than ever, we need to meet the challenges of rapid transformation by educating and empowering our teams and colleagues with vision, strategy and a strong sense of purpose to translate the fast pace of innovation in insurance into growth opportunities for our companies, as well as for our clients and their policyholders.

**If you had chosen a different profession/career path, what would it have been?**

While pursuing my Master’s degree in finance and quantitative techniques, I was very interested in investment banking. I remain a keen follower of news about company operations, mergers and acquisitions, valuation indicators, stock performances and derivatives.

*“The specialty of cat modelling and analytics continues to fascinate me.”*