

Expert view

*A conversation with: Eric Malterre,
chief client officer, international, Sedgwick*

As a Frenchman who's lived in Europe, Asia and Africa and now makes his home in the U.K., Eric Malterre is uniquely positioned to put global context into a local framework. We spoke with him about his international perspective, what he's hearing from our clients and partners, and his vision for the industry throughout 2024 and beyond.

edge:

We're very lucky that your globetrotting has landed you here with us. Can you tell us a bit about your background and how you arrived at Sedgwick?

Eric:

I started my insurance career as a broker in France before moving to Asia, where I spent almost a decade. I left the broking world to become the Chief Underwriting Officer for a Lloyd's syndicate based

in the U.K. and underwriting specialty lines across Africa. I think it has all helped me develop an ability to put global context into a local framework — which, consequently, is just what Sedgwick aims to do: provide global solutions and local expertise.

When I joined Sedgwick five years ago, I saw it as a fantastic opportunity to bring the best of everything I'd learned previously in my

career and put it into practice from a claims standpoint. Now, as Chief Client Officer for our international business, I'm in charge of our client relationships and business development across all markets outside of the Americas. The objective is to bring the best of Sedgwick to our clients — and to be their voice back to us, as well. To be the echo.

edge:

When you say it's your objective to "be the echo," what does that mean?

Eric:

My job is not only to promote Sedgwick and bring our solutions to our clients; it's also to be the voice of what our clients need back to Sedgwick. That's how our organization has always designed — and will continue to design — the right types of solutions.

Our toolbox is huge, but it's not just about pushing out options. We also need to understand what our clients need from us. When we understand what matters most to them, we can bring the best of Sedgwick in responding to those needs. Our approach is very consultative, which helps us engage the best resources and build the right solutions.

edge:

What are some of the topics you're hearing from our clients are top of mind in 2024?

Eric:

The first is artificial intelligence, generative AI in particular. How is it going to be embedded into their respective organizations? How is it going to change the way they work and interact with others? That's one important concern they have — and a lot of that remains relatively unknown.

Another topic which is quite interesting across international markets, though the focus varies from one region to another, is environmental, social and governance (ESG) concerns. It's a real and growing topic for our clients, and it's an important parameter as they're determining who they want to partner with. I'd say it's more critical now than ever before.

And then there's data. Clients want to know how they can make sense of the data they're sitting on, and how we, as their partner, can provide them with insights that will help them improve both their customer experience and business performance.

It changes the way we work, in a sense, that we have to be quite knowledgeable about AI. We have to keep ESG front and center in our discussions with clients. And we have to be organized and at the top of our game when it comes to data insights.

edge:

When it comes to AI, are you sensing more apprehension or eagerness from the market?

"The world has never been so small. We can no longer ignore what's happening on the other side of the planet."

Eric:

A mix of both. It raises a lot of concerns in the workforce — and in the organizations that now must learn to think and operate differently — but sometimes disruption can be a good thing. AI certainly brings a degree of uncertainty, as many people are wondering whether they'll have a job moving forward. What I think it will do, though, is allow us to automate lower-value tasks and use our people better.

Here at Sedgwick, we've been quite clear that our objective is to rationalize the process flow, and to make sure we're bringing in our experts and their value at the right level. It's not less people — it's more people, in the right place at the right time.

edge:

What are some of the major challenges facing global insurers today? Are they most worried about technology, talent or something else entirely?

Eric:

It's a broad question, so I'll focus on a few things that I observe across the industry and across all geographies. Talent is the big one. Even larger markets with deep talent pools — the U.K., for example, or Australia or France — are concerned about talent shortages. The international market is a patchwork of local markets, and all are focused on how best to access, train and retain people. The right people. Our industry also faces a particular collective challenge, in that adjusting is unknown to many young people; it isn't being considered as a career option. As we look for the next generation of experts, those obstacles make it that much harder to attract talent.

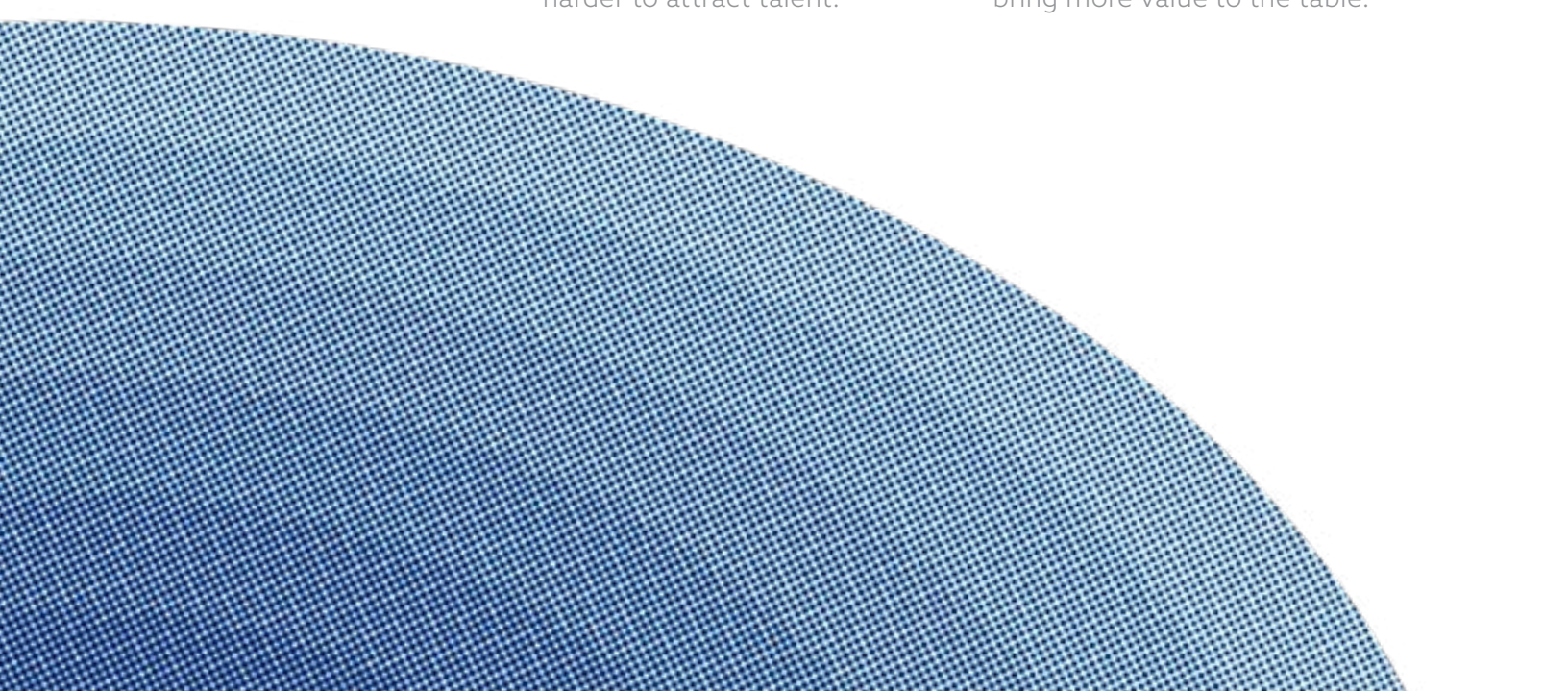
Another challenge is around data, where I think many insurance companies are struggling, like I said earlier, to get insights from data that they can use to improve the underwriting experience, the customer experience, the claims handling process. I think many of our clients are also wondering what meaningful changes generative AI will bring.

edge:

You spoke about Sedgwick's consultative approach to servicing clients. Can you talk to us a bit about the importance of [connection](#) in our client relationships?

Eric:

I look at it like this: the world has never been so small. We can no longer ignore what's happening on the other side of the planet. And it's not so much that we need to be more connected — we need to be better connected. We need to bring more value to the table.



For Sedgwick, it's about putting our clients in a better position to leverage that degree of connectivity for what really matters most to them. I think Circles is one way we're doing this very well: creating an engagement platform to allow clients to mingle with their industry peers, share experiences and best practices, and listen to and learn from one another in a safe environment.

edge:

When you look ahead at the international landscape, what do you envision for 2024 and beyond?

Eric:

It's a challenging question, but it goes back to what our clients need as we monitor the international landscape for them and are fully aware of the local nuances. Sedgwick has so much to offer already. We have a business that is quite diversified internationally, mainly built upon our loss adjusting expertise in property and liability, as well as specialism such as aviation, marine and construction/engineering. On top of that, you add ancillary services like EFL Global, building consultancy, temporary housing, forensic accounting services and our third party administration (TPA)

offering across multiline. Our way forward will require going beyond these foundational services — expanding solutions like brand protection and workforce absence management to a broader client base, on a global scale, wherever possible. That's the ambition.



Sign up for circles to stay on top of trends and forge new connections

Sedgwick clients are invited to join as many circles as they wish. Circles are organized by industry (such as aviation, financial services, healthcare, retail and transportation, etc.) and by area of interest (benefits, managed care, property, risk management, technology, etc.).

Clients interested in signing up for circles or our quarterly In the Know webinars should contact their designated Sedgwick client services director for details.