



**WHAT THE TOP INSURANCE PLAYERS DID TO
STAY AHEAD OF THE TECHNOLOGY CURVE
AND SERVE CUSTOMERS BETTER.**

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BEST LIFE INSURERS

IN A MARKET crowded with life insurance products, it's not easy to stand out solely on the basis of product range, sales force or technology. With rising customer awareness and competition, life insurers have to fire on all cylinders to grow market share and improve persistency ratio. "Innovation is the cornerstone of our growth strategy. By leveraging deep customer insights, we create products that address the real-life uncertainties our customers face," says Kamlesh Rao, MD & CEO, Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance (ABSLI). "From breaking traditional myths about long-term commitments with solutions like Nishchit Aayush (a non-linked, non-participating individual savings life insurance plan) to launching ULIPs with mutual fund-like costs, we aim to offer disruptive, customer-centric solutions," says Rao.

In FY24, ABSLI's 13th month persistency ratio was 87.66%, more than 86.76% in FY23, implying that the percentage of policyholders renewing their policies is increasing. The insurer leverages advanced digital tools like a multilingual prospecting app and AI-powered bots for persistency collections. "These innovations not only streamline operations but also enhance customer experience,"



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says Rao. More than ₹700 crore worth of individual renewals this year were initiated and processed via its bot, called ZARA. The company's claim settlement ratio improved from 98.12% in FY23 to 98.40% in FY24 and repudiation ratio (percentage of claims rejected) dipped from 1.88% in FY23 to 1.51% in FY24.

HDFC Life's persistency ratio is 88%. "Over the years, we have doubled the 'value of new business' every four years. Our growing persistency ratio shows that an increasing number of customers who purchase our policies continue to pay premiums," says Vibha Padalkar, MD & CEO of HDFC Life. The company gets nearly two-third business from Tier-II and Tier-III cities. "Almost 80% of the 150 new branches we have opened over the past 18 months are in Tier-II and Tier-III cities. We have also introduced products that are more customer-friendly," she adds. Despite intense competition, HDFC Life's market share is growing; it touched 11% in the first half of FY25, says Padalkar.

Insurer	Death claim settlement rate	Claim settlement rate within 30 days
1 Aditya Birla Life Insurance Co. Ltd.	98.49%	99%
2 Tata AIA Life Insurance Co. Ltd	99.16%	100%
3 HDFC Standard Life Insurance Co. Ltd.	99.54%	93%

ILLUSTRATION BY ANIRBAN GHOSH

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“We have dedicated our teams, processes and innovations to ensure this essential life insurance cover is accessible to all.”

Tarun Chugh, MD and CEO, Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance

Insurer	Product	Sum Assured		Premium per ₹1Crore		Premium per ₹5 Crore	
		Up to Age	Age 30	Age 50	Age 30	Age 50	
Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company	Bajaj Allianz Life E-Touch II, Life Shield	65 Years	₹12,568	₹41,536	₹47,481	₹1,75,366	

Note: Premium includes GST

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BEST TERM INSURER

TERM LIFE INSURANCE safeguards a person's earning capacity. Unlike endowment plans, money-back policies, whole life insurance and ULIPs, a pure-term plan offers no survival benefits. This means policyholders or their families receive a payout only in the event of the policyholder's death during the term.

Because of this, the premium to sum assured ratio is the highest among all life insurance policies. According to a study by *Fortune India* and Secure-Now, Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance ranks the top, offering the lowest cost term plan across categories.

“We have dedicated our teams,

processes and innovations to ensure this essential life insurance cover is accessible to all. All our distribution partners, insurance consultants and sales teams have helped us reach customer segments across India,” says Tarun Chugh, MD and CEO of Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance. Term insurance contributes about 18% to the company's portfolio in number of policies. “We are committed to growing this further,” he says.

The insurer has identified customer segments and introduced customised products and processes for each of them. “This has helped us expand focus beyond the salaried segment to include self-employed individuals, NRIs, women (working and homemakers), defence personnel and individuals with health issues such as diabetes,” says Chugh.

The company uses technology and innovation to drive growth. “We ensure

a smooth and customer-friendly experience through initiatives such as intuitive documentation, medical waivers enabled by advanced analytics, integration with bureaus and account aggregators, and video and home medical facilities,” he says.

Chugh says the term product also includes comprehensive health management services as a complimentary offering. The services include free doctor consultations, appointment bookings, mental wellness counselling and therapy sessions. “This holistic approach towards making the term plan valuable has helped us sustain a strong persistency rate,” says Chugh.

The insurer's claim settlement ratio is among the best in the industry (99.23% in FY24). “It underscores our commitment to being a dependable partner for customers. We will continue to make our products more value-packed,” he adds.

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BEST HEALTH INSURERS

THE TOP HEALTH INSURER of 2024—Bajaj Allianz General Insurance—extended health insurance protection to over two crore customers and settled claims worth over ₹4,000 crore in FY24. “We have significantly improved policy accuracy and streamlined the claims process by utilising advanced technologies such as AI and automation, resulting in faster settlements,” says MD and CEO Tapan Singhel. This year, the insurer also expanded its reach in Tier-III and Tier-IV towns and cities via its GEO initiative.

Singhel says the company is enhancing user-friendly platforms for seamless policy purchases, renewals and claims, and leveraging AI and data analytics to personalise underwriting, improve risk assessment, automate customer service and strengthen fraud detection mechanisms.

“Additionally, we are focused on touchless claims servicing and expanding our network to ensure 100% cashless settlement,” he says.

HDFC Ergo General insurance has grabbed the second spot while SBI General Insurance and ACKO General Insurance are at the third position. Animesh Das, CEO, ACKO General Insurance, says they are replicating the D2C model in the retail health



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Tapan Singhel, MD and CEO, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance

business, launched last year. “With a strong D2C model that allows for a seamless insurance journey, we’re replicating the success of the auto business in our retail health business,” he says.

One of the key features of its D2C

model is zero waiting period to allow coverage immediately with instant claims. “Customers are willing to undergo medical underwriting to have lower friction at the time of claims to avail this feature,” says the insurer.

“Health insurance is a highly under-penetrated sector, and we will continue to see innovation in product development, distribution, claim management, under-writing as well as customer engagement,” says Anuj Tyagi, MD and CEO, HDFC ERGO.

Naveen Chandra Jha, MD and CEO, SBI General Insurance, attributes the performance to distribution strength and a robust product suite catering to all segments; the insurer has access to the SBI branch network catering to about 51 crore customers along with a strong agency network.

	Insurer	Claim settlement rate	Claim settlement rate within 30 days
1	Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company Ltd.	96.23%	99.44%
2	HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company Ltd.	97.22%	95.31%
3	SBI General Insurance Company Ltd.	98.03%	84.08%
3	ACKO General Insurance Ltd.	96.01%	99.63%



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BEST MOTOR INSURERS

SBI GENERAL INSURANCE topped the motor insurance category this year. The insurer, which has partnered with 21 OEMs for motor insurance, reported a muted rise in the segment in FY24; it managed 2,70,716 motor own damage claims and settled over 7,148 claims for four-wheeler private cars using its

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Naveen Chandra Jha, MD & CEO, SBI General Insurance.



Insurer	Claim settlement rate	Claim settlement rate within 30 days
1 SBI General Insurance Company Ltd.	99%	89%
2 The New India Assurance Company Ltd.	99%	39%
2 ICICI Lombard General Insurance Ltd.	96%	94%

fast lane method, which offers a spot settlement option for minor damages. “Both health insurance and motor insurance are under-penetrated and offer opportunities for growth,” says Naveen Chandra Jha, MD & CEO, SBI General Insurance. The New India Assurance and ICICI Lombard General Insurance have been jointly placed at the number two spot this year. Girija Subramanian, MD and chairman, The New India Assurance, attributes long-time presence across the country in Tier I-IV towns to its strong performance. “Our large network of agents and lately other intermediaries like brokers, motor insurance service providers, web aggregators and insurance marketing firms has played a crucial role in bringing in large volumes of business,” she says, adding the insurer works with 2,500 garages for cashless claims. Subramanian says FY25 has seen muted growth in the automobile industry, with private cars and commercial vehicle segments reporting a dip in sales. “This had an effect on our business figures, which have now started picking up during the festival season. As of now, we are on a par with the industry growth and hope we close with double-digit growth in this line of business,” she says.

Mordor Intelligence estimates the motor insurance market in terms of gross written premium value will grow at a CAGR of 10.25% to touch \$19.48 billion by 2029, up from \$11.96 billion in 2024. The market intelligence and advisory firm believes India’s huge population and its growing aspirations present an opportunity for motor insurance companies. “The shift towards electric vehicles and other advanced technologies will define growth in the sector. With the government focusing on sustainable models, we are sure to see the market trajectory in these segments going up. We see a huge potential in the two-wheeler segment, especially electric models, and in three-wheeler goods and passenger segments,” says Subramanian. **I**

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