

“Assistance From the Heart”: There When it Matters Most



INTERVIEW WITH
Sandrine Desseille,
Managing Director

European Business: Ms. Desseille, when people think of assistance services, they often imagine a call center. How would you describe the role of IMA Benelux?

Sandrine Desseille: We are much more than a call center. As a white-label assistance partner, we provide the infrastructure, expertise and partner networks that enable insurers to offer round-the-clock assistance services under their own brand. Assistance requires specialized resources, multilingual teams and the ability to respond to highly fluctuating demand. By bringing these capabilities together, we help insurers deliver a seamless customer experience while focusing on their core business.

When people face a car breakdown, a flooded home or a medical emergency abroad, they expect more than a quick solution – they need reassurance, guidance and reliable support. This is where IMA Benelux, based in Liège, Belgium, comes in. By providing the infrastructure, expertise and partner networks behind modern assistance services, the company enables insurers across the Benelux region to deliver round-the-clock support. Managing Director Sandrine Desseille explains how operational excellence, empathy and scalability come together to be there when it matters most and turn critical moments into reassuring customer experiences.

European Business: Beyond operational capabilities, what makes IMA Benelux stand out in this market?

Sandrine Desseille: What differentiates us is our ability to combine industrial scalability with a truly human approach, a balance that is extremely difficult to achieve at scale. People contact us when something has gone wrong. They may be stranded on the roadside, dealing with a damaged home or facing a medical situation far from home. In these moments, empathy, reassurance and clear communication are just as important as technical efficiency. We often speak about “assistance from the heart”. It reflects our belief that every customer deserves to feel supported and understood throughout the entire process. Beyond finding solutions, we aim to make people feel genuinely cared for when they need help most.

European Business: So customer experience plays a central role in your strategy?



Technology, operational excellence and genuine care: IMA Benelux helps insurers deliver reliable assistance when it matters most

Sandrine Desseille: It is at the center of everything we do. We aim to set the standard for customer experience in the Benelux assistance market. That is why we continuously measure customer satisfaction and Net Promoter Scores through independent research. For insurance customers, assistance is often the moment of truth. The way they are supported in an emergency has a lasting impact on how they perceive their insurer. We therefore focus on delivering a seamless, efficient and reassuring experience.

European Business: What role do AI and digital tools play in enhancing customer service?

Sandrine Desseille: AI and digital tools help us automate routine tasks and simplify processes for both employees and customers. We see AI as a way to elevate human interaction, not replace it. By reducing administrative work, we create more capacity for personal contact, proactive communication, and individual support. In other words, digitalization allows our teams to spend more time helping people when they need us most.



Every assistance case begins with a conversation: listening, understanding and reassuring people in difficult moments is at the heart of IMA Benelux's approach



From its headquarters in Liège, IMA Benelux coordinates scalable, customer-focused assistance operations across the Benelux region

European Business: Demand in the assistance industry can change dramatically within hours. How do you ensure you can scale operations quickly while maintaining the level of service clients and customers expect?

Sandrine Desseille: Flexibility is essential because assistance is a business of predictable and unpredictable peaks. Extreme weather events can multiply workloads within hours, making rapid scalability a key challenge for us and for our providers who must intervene at customer's place. We have built an organization that can respond quickly, with support teams and even members of the management team, myself included, stepping in during major incidents. This ability to mobilize additional resources at short notice is one of our key strengths. Recruiting the right people is central to this approach. Although finding multilingual talent is not always easy, we have grown from fewer than 100 employees to around 150 in just over four years and complement our teams with

university students during peak periods.

European Business: Looking ahead, where do you see the greatest opportunities for IMA Benelux?

Sandrine Desseille: We see several important trends shaping the future of assistance. Customers are increasingly looking for security, simplicity and peace of mind when they travel or purchase insurance products. The ageing vehicle fleet is generating additional assistance needs, while electric vehicles require different types

of support and more specialized recovery procedures. We also see growing demand related to soft mobility and new mobility behaviors. At the same time, more frequent extreme weather events are making assistance more critical than ever, with floods affecting both homes and vehicles, and heatwaves or freezing temperatures leading to a growing number of tyre and battery related incidents. Rising international travel and evolving mobility patterns are also driving new and more complex assistance needs. All of these developments reinforce the growth potential of the assistance

market, and growth remains a clear strategic priority for IMA Benelux. Over the past four years, we have achieved cumulative growth of more than 40%, and we intend to build on this momentum by winning new clients and supporting the development of existing partnerships. At the same time, we will continue to invest in our people, customer experience and technology, because our ambition is not only to grow, but also to help set new standards for assistance services in the Benelux.



A modern working environment for a growing company: IMA Benelux's new headquarters in Liège serves as the operational hub for its customer-focused assistance services



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