

CASE STUDY

# GORE-BENEVA MERGER

From Low Member Participation  
to Two Historic Approvals







The 185-year-old mutual insurer with historically low member participation held two special meetings for the merger. Here is how both votes were won.

When Gore announced its merger with Beneva in January 2025, Kingsdale Advisors had already been working alongside the organization for over a year. What began as a member survey mandate quickly evolved into an e-delivery consent campaign, a member database overhaul, and eventually the role of independent registrar.

By the time the merger was announced, the groundwork was already in place. The real challenge Kingsdale helped overcome was Gore's consistently low member participation rate. It told a deeper story about how the 185-year-old mutual insurer's membership model had never been pressure-tested.

### THE FOUR-POINT BLUEPRINT BEFORE THE MERGER WAS ANNOUNCED

Between 2023 and 2025, Gore and Kingsdale aligned on four priorities to strengthen member engagement, modernize governance readiness, and prepare for any major strategic change.

-  **E-Delivery and Data Readiness:** Designed a multi-year electronic communications opt-in program to capture, validate, and refresh contact data for members and policyholders. The result? 484% increase in e-delivery opt-ins by February 2025, a faster and more scalable communication framework, and meaningfully lower mailing costs.
-  **Independent Registrar:** Governed, reconciled and issued audit-ready member data each month, using processes supported by SOC 2 and PII compliance standards, penetration testing protocols, and secure cloud infrastructure. This provided the audit trail and regulatory assurance needed for the transaction.
-  **2024 AGM:** Drove proxy solicitation, acted as tabulation agent and scrutineer to certify vote integrity. Coordinated pre-meeting engagement to increase turnout by 110%.
-  **Member Engagement:** Served as Gore's frontline member engagement partner, building trust through a steady cadence of plain-language communications, member discount outreach, and responsive Q&A.



## THE MERGER MARATHON

Kingsdale deployed its “Prepare, Persuade, Get the Vote” framework across an Annual and Special Meeting (ASM) in April 2025 and a Special Meeting (SM) in October 2025.

What made this particularly complex was a constantly shifting membership landscape. Some members who voted at the ASM were no longer eligible for the SM, while new members who had not participated in April needed to understand why a second vote was required at all. Managing that transition required rigorous data validation, a targeted communications plan, and personalized pre-conditioning letters mailed ahead of both meetings to alert members about upcoming materials and reduce confusion before it started.

When a postal strike threatened timely distribution ahead of the SM, many of Gore’s members had already been transitioned to e-delivery and the pre-conditioning letters had gone out before the disruption. Gore was able to secure court-approved exemptive relief and shift rapidly to digital-first distribution. For a campaign already built on digital infrastructure, it was a disruption that barely registered. A dedicated microsite, televoting for members less comfortable with digital tools, and real-time sentiment tracking ensured strong participation and quorum.

## TWO VOTES. TWO RECORDS.

### April 2025 ASM:

**Turnout increased 273%,  
with 94% approval for the merger**

### October 2025 SM:

**Additional 32% increase in turnout  
(305% above historical levels),  
and over 97% approval**

Behind these results were a clean and validated database, a high-adoption digital channel, and analytics that informed every stage of the campaign. Voting timelines by channel, geographic and time-based patterns, and segmentation by voting intent enabled precise targeting.

A membership base with historically low turnout, participated at unprecedented levels, on two separate occasions, for the most significant votes in the company’s history.

## A BROADER LESSON FOR MUTUAL INSURERS

Gore’s experience is not unique. Many mutual insurers rely on member infrastructure that has never been fully tested. Strong outcomes are built well in advance. That means keeping the member register clean and audit-ready year-round, ensuring by-laws and eligibility rules are clear and

tested, making e-delivery a strategic asset rather than an afterthought, supporting members with omnichannel communications and plain-language assistance, and managing turnout and trust through real-time analytics and sentiment feedback.

To assess the state of your member infrastructure, email [strategy@kingsdaleadvisors.com](mailto:strategy@kingsdaleadvisors.com)