



MICROSOFT LEADERS FORUM - Insurers: Taking on the Cutting Edge and Adding Value

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What separated the successes from the failures last year in integrating data and improving straight-through processing?

Controlling project scope and defining “bite-sized pieces” to ensure quick project success was a key differentiator. Another was properly addressing different interpretations of industry standards, and allowing some, such as the definition of “In-Good-Order,” to adapt and grow. This also leads to finding a proper methodology to deliver a solution that is easy to use and intuitive so that there is adoption in the field. The most important differentiator, however, is successful integration between legacy systems and the carrier policy administration systems.

What are some of the critical next steps for 2008?

Tying multiple points of information from multiple companies and systems to a single policy. This will require the implementation of Microsoft BizTalk middleware technology in order to overcome any data delivery and mapping obstacles. Another critical step is trying to address the new electronic data-driven process. This certainly will be different from the paper-based policy process. There has to be some consensus as to what those new processes will be. We will also have to achieve industry consensus on the issue of digital signatures.

What are some of the more exciting advancements you see becoming available?

One of the most important advances is using multiple data points from disparate systems and companies as underwriting inputs, reaching the carriers right to the underwriter’s desktop. This will lead to quicker processing and turn-around of insurance policy applications. The use of intelligent forms through the Microsoft InfoPath solution will also provide a huge advantage to both points of contact (from submission to issue). Still another exciting advancement is automated life insurance policy forms where the policy customizes to the individual.

What is the one message you would leave with insurance companies?

The electronic exchange of insurance data between distribution and carriers is a necessity and needs to be embraced. Innovative carriers who do this first will reap the benefits.



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