ACORD LOMA Insurance Systems Forum

Daily News

Tuesday, May 15th, 2012

Welcome to Orlando!

Inspiration and Innovation

Leaders of ACORD, LOMA Detail an Agenda That's Squarely Focused on Future Success

By ***Robert A. Kerzner, CLU, ChFC, President & CEO, LOMA, and Gregory A. Maciag, President & CEO, ACORD***

On behalf of ACORD and LOMA, we welcome you to Orlando and the 2012 ACORD LOMA Insurance Systems Forum.

The late Steve Jobs of Apple once said, "Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower." This year's forum focuses on ways we can all be inspired, become more innovative, and increase our efficiency and effectiveness. From our keynote speaker and sessions to our exhibit hall and networking opportunities such as the Birds of a Feather lunch, you'll find the inspiration that will help you succeed.

> The ACORD LOMA Forum has always been about finding ways that technology can help advance your business and this year is no different.

The ACORD LOMA Forum has always been about finding ways that technology can help advance your business and this year is no different. Vivek Kundra, the first CIO of the United States, will show you how to overcome technology challenges. Analytics and metrics are on the minds of many in the industry and we have Ian Ayres, author of the *New York Times* bestseller *Super Crunchers*, to help you learn more about them. Closing out this year's forum is Pat Williams, senior vice president of the NBA's Orlando Magic and a man known for instilling inspiration in people.

At ACORD, we're looking toward the future. We're working on ways to become more agile and responsive, both in our development and distribution methodologies.

ACORD's 2020 Advisory Committee continues to work with members and find ways to enhance Standards implementations. Our work through ACORD and AUGIE continues to increase the penetration of Real Time and Download for both personal and commercial lines across the industry. We're also tackling emerging areas where Standards will and should play a role such as plug-and-play, mobile technology, telematics, and password management. The ACORD Framework continues to grow into a vital asset to help the industry meet the future..

At LOMA, technology has always been a core focus, serving as a driving force for innovative operations at our member companies. We're helping companies gain a competitive operational edge in technology in three major ways. First, our 10 member-driven, technology-based committees provide members a way to exchange information with their colleagues from other companies. Our technology operations articles from our Information Center and *Resource* magazine are produced on a monthly basis and highlight the latest technology. And finally, our globally recognized, cutting edge insurance education courses allow IT staff to learn to speak the language of insurance. Our newest course, just released on May 1, "Customer Service for Insurance Professionals," has already been taken by over 250 people in the industry in the first week!

We're glad you're here and we encourage you to seek out all the possibilities the Forum provides for you to network, learn, interact, and enjoy. Most of all, we want you to be that industry leader who embraces innovation and looks toward the future.

Robert A. Kerzner, CLU, ChFC, President & CEO, LOMA

Gregory A. Maciag, President & CEO, ACORD

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Innovation In Action

Creating, Leveraging Great Ideas the Focus of ACORD LOMA 2012 Insurance Systems Forum

By ***Michael Voelker***

In today's competitive marketplace, insurers are relying on innovation to gain an edge. Many companies have undertaken innovation initiatives, and some have created special working groups dedicated to finding new ways to use technology to get a leg up on the competition.

Fittingly, the 2012 ACORD LOMA Insurance Systems Forum reflects that trend. "The theme of innovation starts with our opening keynote on Wednesday and flows through our general session speakers and throughout our workshops and exhibits," says Beth Grossman, chief learning officer for ACORD. She points to a Thursday session on "Creating a Culture of Innovation" within Allstate Insurance Company.

"Allstate is a solid example of an insurance company driving innovation across the enterprise by using a variety of different technologies, tools, and approaches."

- Beth Grossman,
Chief Learning Officer, ACORD

"Allstate is a solid example of an insurance company driving innovation across the enterprise by using a variety of different technologies, tools, and approaches," Grossman says. "That kind of activity is also what has been driving developments at ACORD over the past year and, in turn, shaping the direction of the 2012 Insurance Systems Forum."

ACORD members had an integral role in shaping the content and agenda for the 2012 forum. "Leaders at insurers, research firms, services firms, and others, make up our advisory council," notes Grossman. "What comes out of that council are the hottest topics impacting the insurance industry today, which are represented in the makeup of our program."

Program topics include buzz-worthy items such as social media tools, cloud computing, e-delivery of policies, and mobile technology. They also include perennial concerns such as enterprise architecture, operational efficiency, regulatory issues and compliance, systems development, business intelligence, and analytics.

"Analytics and business intelligence are two issues that are at the top of the list within the advisory council," says Grossman. "Everybody is struggling with what to do with 'big data.'"

"One of the most important features of the sessions this year is that they are very forward-looking," adds Jim Huffman, second vice president, management solutions, LOMA. "We are focused on how you can use technology in the future, not just looking back at what has been done over the past year."

"Program topics include buzz-worthy items such as social media tools, cloud computing, e-delivery of policies, and mobile technology. They also include perennial concerns such as enterprise architecture, operational efficiency, regulatory issues and compliance, systems development, business intelligence, and analytics."

Get It To Go

This year's forum will provide attendees up-to-the-minute conference information via the 2012 ACORD LOMA Insurance Systems Forum Mobile App. Available for all major mobile devices, including both Apple and Android platforms, the app will be available both before and during the conference at **www.eventmobi.com/2012isf.** "Our mobile app is one of the most exciting things we've

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

ACORD Framework Sessions
Dedicated sessions starting at 9 a.m. provide the latest on developments with the ACORD Information Model 2.2, the ACORD Business Glossary 2.0, the ACORD Component Model and more. See the conference program for details.

Workshops
From transitioning to customer centricity to harnessing the power of social media to going paperless, check out Tuesday's series of platinum-sponsored workshops for a deep dive into some of today's hottest industry issues. See the program for rooms and times.

Pre-Show Opening Networking Event
Head to the Gatlin Foyer in advance of the exhibit hall opening to renew old acquaintances and get oriented for the next few days. Sponsored by EMC². Gatilin Foyer, 3-4 pm.

Cloud Seeding with Kundra

Get a Glimpse of the IT Future from Uncle Sam's First CIO

By ***Dave Lenckus***

Vivek Kundra has his head in the clouds — and his mind on the future of information technology as an engine of budget-preserving innovation for organizations.

The former U.S. chief information officer under President Obama — the nation's first —and ardent advocate of cloud technology is scheduled to deliver the keynote address at the ACORD LOMA Insurance Systems Forum Wednesday beginning at 8 a.m.

> "In difficult economic times, business and technology are working hard to balance cost containment with innovation. Kundra's experience will be inspirational for attendees who are facing the same obstacles he did."
>
> ***— Beth Grossman, ACORD Chief Learning Officer***

Kundra, an early believer in cloud technology's ability to cost-effectively improve IT system efficiency and promote innovation, plans to share his vision of how organizations must not only embrace reform in a change-averse world, but also commit to new IT ideas and methodologies to succeed.

Among other topics, Kundra is expected to discuss:

- how to objectively measure project performance with data-driven analytics and allocate IT investments appropriately;
- the growing importance of cyber security in protecting the nation's infrastructure; and,
- how technology companies can disrupt the public sector market.

In an ACORD LOMA Forum website video that introduces all the speakers at this year's conference, Kundra explains why he feels it is "so important" for organizations to shift to the cloud. He observes that Facebook, Twitter and YouTube "haven't created a single thing," instead relying on others to upload content to the sites. Kundra said that "amazing" fact leads to the question: "How do you leverage that content to amplify your content, your insight?"

"Kundra's visionary thinking makes him an ideal speaker for the Insurance Systems Forum," says Beth Grossman, ACORD's chief learning officer. "In difficult economic times, business and technology are working hard to balance cost containment with innovation. His experience will be inspirational for attendees who are facing the same obstacles he did."

"The ability for business and technology to work together and solve problems is crucial today," adds Jeff Hasty, a LOMA senior vice president. "As the first CIO of the United States, Kundra has faced such challenges and worked to bring about change. These experiences can help ACORD LOMA attendees achieve results within their own organizations."

Kundra, 37, was appointed as the nation's first CIO in March 2009, after holding similar positions over the previous decade with Arlington County, Va., the Virginia commonwealth and the District of Columbia.

He left the federal government in August 2011 to accept an academic fellowship at Harvard University. Since then, he also has accepted the position of executive vice president of emerging markets at San Francisco-based Salesforce.com, which specializes in providing cloud-based software as a service.

In an interview with political broadcaster Politico last year before leaving his post as U.S. CIO, Kundra observed that as his public-sector career advanced across various levels of government, "the only thing that's changed is the number of zeroes. The problems are fairly universal when it comes to public sector technology."

Kundra said that when he arrived at the White House, he felt he had walked back a decade in time. The systems that were in place did not work, security was an issue, and there was a huge gap between the technology in use at White House and "the explosion of technology" he was seeing in the consumer space.

"That is why I focus very heavily on reforming how we implement technology across the public sector," regardless whether it is at the federal, state or local level, he said.

Among his accomplishments as U.S. CIO, Kundra:

- Introduced in May 2009 the data.gov website, which provides raw data from the federal government's executive branch in an effort to stimulate both increased public participation in government and private sector innovation.
- A month later launched the IT Dashboard on USASpending.gov, which allows the public, government agency CIOs and agency leaders to track all federal government IT spending. For fiscal year 2012, that amounts to more than $6.3 billion, according to figures available on the site. The dashboard also is designed to provide information on the performance of the government's IT investments and give website visitors the opportunity to exchange feedback with those responsible for the investments.
- In September 2009 launched an initiative to move federal agencies to cloud computing.
- Published an IT management reform plan for the federal government. The plan involves re-evaluating dozens of IT projects, with the purpose of canceling or reshaping troubled projects to reduce the time and expense of completing them.

Kundra has received various accolades over the past few years. Among those are the World Economic Forum's Young Global Leader designation and *Information Week's* 2009 Chief of the Year award.

Kundra was born in New Dehli, India. But from age one, he spent his early childhood in Tanzania, where his father was an educator. There, the younger Kundra learned Swahili as his first language and first became interested in technology by learning how radios work, he told Politico.

> "As the first CIO of the United States, Kundra has faced challenges and worked to bring about change. These experiences can help ACORD LOMA attendees achieve results within their own organizations."
>
> ***— Jeff Hasty, LOMA Senior Vice President***

In 1985 at age 11, Kundra, along with his family, immigrated to the United States knowing hardly any English. He told Politico that he learned English by watching reruns of the TV sitcom *Three's Company*.

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Get Smart(er)!

A Look at the Rich Educational Opportunities This Year's Forum Affords Attendees

By ***Dave Lenckus***

Insight from the nation's first chief information officer on how to cost-efficiently innovate by turning to cloud computing. An update on a new agency/insurer system-connectivity process that will eliminate the need for insurer-specific passwords. Ideas on how to utilize various social media sites effectively as part of your marketing strategy. A demonstration of how predictive analytics can help reduce claims fraud. And updates on the ACORD information models, data standards and business glossary.

> "This year's focus is on innovation and how companies are changing to meet the new challenges they face."
>
> ***— Beth Grossman, ACORD Chief Learning Officer***

That's just a sampling of the issues and ideas that experts of various stripes will discuss during more than five dozen educational sessions and keynote addresses at the ACORD LOMA Insurance Systems Forum this week.

"As we do each year, the ACORD LOMA Forum brings attendees a range of sessions on some of today's most significant and impactful topics from thought leaders," says Beth Grossman, the chief learning officer at ACORD. "This year's focus is on innovation and how companies are changing to meet the new challenges they face. Starting with our keynote speaker, (former U.S. CIO) Vivek Kundra, to all of the concurrent sessions over two days, we've kept a single focus on helping attendees prepare themselves for what the future may hold."

Following pre-conference training and educational opportunities Tuesday morning, the conference officially kicks off at 4 p.m. Tuesday, May 15, with a reception in the exhibit hall, followed by two full days of educational sessions and keynote addresses.

The forum culminates on Thursday, May 17, with a keynote address by renowned motivational speaker and leadership guru Pat Williams, a senior vice president with the Orlando Magic of the National Basketball Association and author of more than 60 books. Williams plans to examine the seven traits that, according to his research, define the most effective leaders here in the 21st Century.

Beside the scheduled keynote addresses by Kundra and Williams, the forum's sessions are segmented into four categories: general; property/casualty; life, annuity/health; and reinsurance and large commercial.

With sessions running concurrently, forum attendees have the opportunity to take advantage of around 15 of them, plus the keynote addresses.

Monday was a busy pre-conference day at the event site. From noon to 5 p.m., the Agents' Council for Technology met for an invitational lunch and session where ACT participants discussed trends and challenges for the independent agency system. A reception and dinner with for the ACT group and participants in the ACORD User Group Information Exchange follows the meeting.

> "As in the past, this year's attendees can provide input for sessions at the 2013 ACORD LOMA Insurance System Forum when the two organizations conduct their annual call for speakers".

As in the past, attendees at this year's forum can provide input for sessions at the 2013 ACORD LOMA Insurance System Forum when the two organizations conduct their annual call for speakers. Anyone can submit ideas for sessions in response to the call, which the organizations will make later this year.

Registration hours for the 2012 forum run from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday and from 7 am. to 5 p.m. Thursday.

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Innovation In Action

Creating, Leveraging Great Ideas the Focus of ACORD LOMA 2012 Insurance Systems Forum

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"We are focused on how you can use technology in the future, not just looking back at what has been done over the past year."

— Jim Huffman, Second Vice President, Management Solutions, LOMA.

introduced at the conference this year. It demonstrates how the Insurance Systems Forum is not only a technology conference, but also an event that leverages the latest technology to help attendees make the most of their experience here," Grossman says.

The app provides a conference agenda, information on sessions and speakers, sponsor and exhibitor details, and an interactive map. It also includes live blogging and reporting as well as a Twitter feed at **#acordloma**.

"People will be able to Tweet about their impressions of various sessions and expand on their networking opportunities," Huffman says.

New Takes on Old Favorites

The 2012 Insurance Systems Forum also incorporates changes to make favorite features even better. In the exhibit hall, for example, separate theatres for demos have been eliminated in favor of one central theatre that will feature 20-minute mini-sessions.

"There will be a lot of great, interesting content in the exhibit hall," Grossman says. "Having a single, central theatre accentuates that by making it easier for attendees to participate in the demo sessions that take place."

Additionally, the popular "Birds of a Feather" luncheon has been revamped. In previous years, lunch sessions were formal and moderated. This year, the luncheon features five sessions on emerging topics in a more casual format that encourages discussion and participation.

"We heard from attendees last year that they truly enjoyed the Birds of a Feather luncheon, but they wanted it to be more open and broad-based," explains Grossman. "This luncheon is a way for attendees to truly talk about what interests them and the key issues affecting them today."

"Our mobile app is one of the most exciting things we've introduced at the conference this year."

— Beth Grossman

Huffman adds that the overarching objective behind new program additions and revamped features is to provide attendees of the 2012 Insurance Systems Forum information they can immediately put to use in their own companies to help transform their business.

"The Insurance Systems Forum is a venue for business leaders, technology innovators, analysts, and solution providers to come together and learn how to achieve more and stay competitive in a challenging marketplace," he says. "We want people to leave with knowledge and tools they can take with them to drive innovation within their own organizations.."

A view of the 9th hole at Shingle Creek Golf Club, which hosts this year's conference golf tournament Tuesday morning. It was named among the nation's Top 40 new courses by Golfweek.

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Makeover for LOMA Customer Service Model

Revamped Course Evolves from Textbook to Lively, Interactive Internet Tool

By ***Bonnie Cavanaugh***

LOMA's new interactive customer service course is ready for prime time, just in time to be the talk of the annual ACORD LOMA Insurance Systems Forum.

Released in April, the course, ***ACS 101: Customer Service for Insurance Professionals***, covers the basics of customer service, with a heavy emphasis on skills, says Miriam Orsina, senior associate, education and training, at LOMA in Atlanta, Ga.

The course is part of LOMA's "Associate, Customer Service" designation (ACS) and is "extremely interactive" to give the student opportunities to practice skills and review information, she says. The course is designed to attract insurance company employees who may not have a lot of spare time to devote to education and training.

"With limited time, you do need to make it interactive and interesting, and throw a little humor in now and then to keep them interested."

— Miriam Orsina, Senior Associate, Education and Training, LOMA

"With limited time, you do need to make it interactive and interesting, and throw a little humor in now and then to keep them interested," Orsina says.

Education With an Entertaining Twist

ACS 101 takes about 10 to 12 hours to complete. The information it contains is broken up into four modules, each with two to four lessons, for a total of 11 lessons. Each lesson is designed so a student can complete it in an hour or less, she says. The student must pass a short exam at the end of each module.

Because this new model is offered online, it's "media-rich" with video clips and enables LOMA's course developers to model behaviors more effectively than they can do in a textbook, says Mark S. Adel, LOMA's second vice president for education and training.

"We've created characters that are very different from one another. Some are very good at customer service; none of them are perfect," Adel says. "One of them does pretty much everything wrong. Students learn by observing both good and bad customer service."

The course is also unique in that it's specific to the insurance industry; all the exercises and exams are integrated into the course. Additional activities, like branching scenarios, give the student a chance to make a decision and get feedback based on each decision. Video and audio clips are mixed in with the written text, and information is provided in small bites to liven up the pace and keep the student engaged.

A course demo can be found at ***https://www.loma.org/content/public/demos/ACS101/player.html.***

Customer Service as Differentiator

Insurance companies are putting more emphasis on customer service because the industry deals with issues that are very important to its customers: finances, health, and emotional situations where they are coping with life-changing events, Orsina says.

"You have to be able to empathize with a customer's situation," she says.

Additionally, insurance products can be very similar; if a company comes up with something new, it's not long before everyone else has something just like it, Adel says.

"We've created characters that are very different from one another. Some are very good at customer service; none of them are perfect. One of them does pretty much everything wrong. Students learn by observing both good and bad customer service."

— Mark S. Adel, Second Vice President, Education and Training, LOMA

"There aren't too many options for companies to distinguish themselves in the industry," he says.

"One of those options is to provide superior customer service."

"The new interactive version focuses on the information that someone new to a company — or customer service, or the industry as a whole — might need to know".

Content Overview

ACS 101 is offered in concert with the existing course, ACS 100: Foundations of Customer Service, a solely text-based course that includes a proctored exam. Students can take either course as part of a five-course ACS designation program.

While the prior model provides more general information about how customer service employees are selected and trained, the new interactive version focuses on the information that someone new to a company — or customer service, or the industry as a whole — might need to know. "It helps give these people a jump start," she says.

Lessons include Time and Stress Management; Listening and Understanding; Dealing with Upset Customers; and separate lessons on basics like Telephone Skills and Writing Skills, Orsina says. That includes proper usage of business-related emails, because while today's insurance reps may know how to text, they need to know the right way to do so in a business context; no emoticons or abbreviations.

LOMA has offered education and training since 1924 and continues to work closely with industry professionals to develop course content.

"We rely on them heavily to make sure all the information we provide is job relevant and industry specific," Orsina says. The Education & Training division also works with LOMA's more than 50 different committees to share best practices.

For this course, they relied on input and feedback from industry focus groups, an advisory panel and a separate review panel to make sure the course covered LOMA members' wants and needs in the customer service arena. Up to 25 insurance companies were involved in its development.

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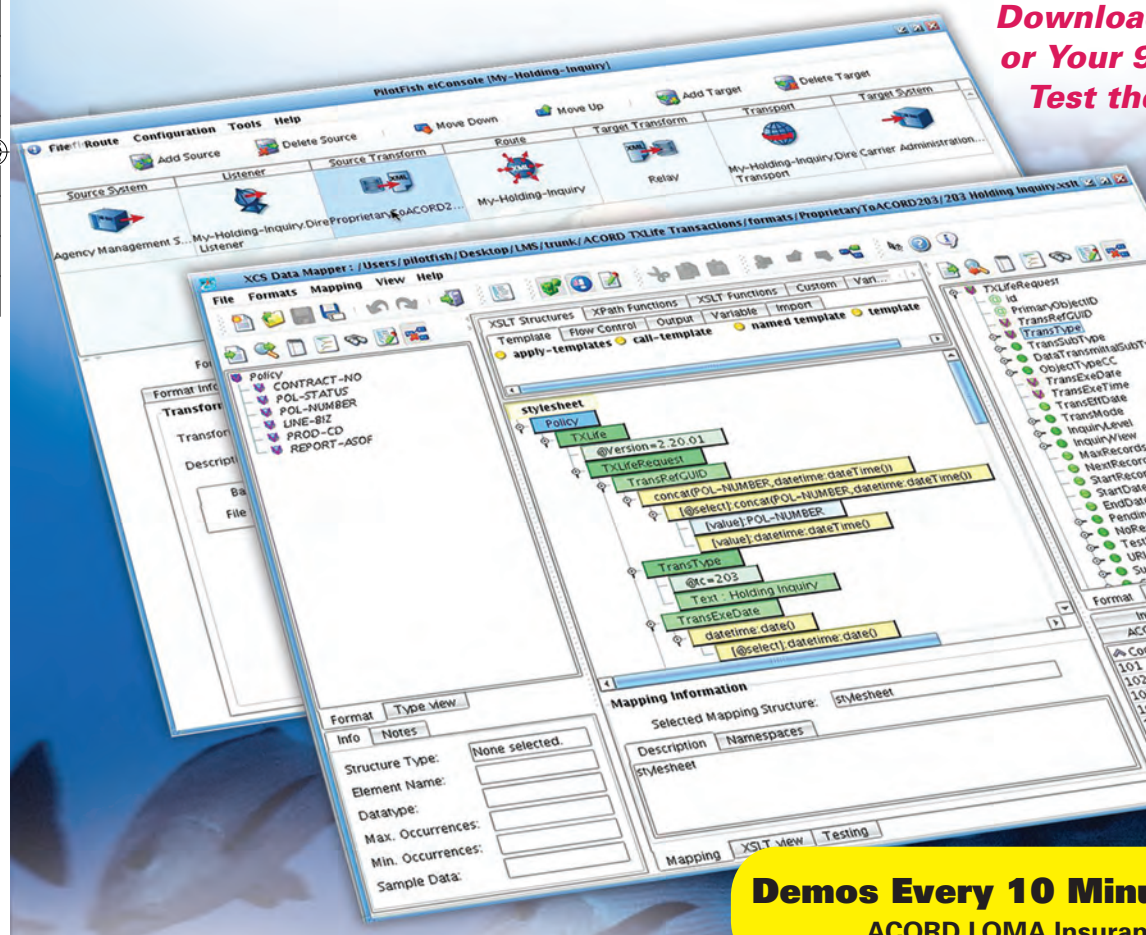

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Diving Deep for Details

Preconference Sessions Provide Insight Into Developments With ACORD Framework, Standards

By ***Michael Voelker***

The 2012 ACORD LOMA Insurance Systems Forum kicks off with a preconference session Tuesday focused on changes to the ACORD Framework and Standards that have occurred over the past year. For attendees, it's a good chance to catch up on the year's developments and to take a look ahead at what's in the works for the coming months.

"The preconference day offers a series of 'deep dive' sessions on many of the framework models as well as status updates on both standards activities and recent framework changes," says Shane McCullough, chief enterprise architect at ACORD.

Increased Agility

Tuesday's sessions follow separate tracks for framework and standards topics. In standards, the big news over the past year has been ACORD's commitment to "agile" standards development — providing focused, detailed and timely specifications for the industry at large.

> "In standards, the big news over the past year has been ACORD's commitment to 'agile' standards development."

"We've done a lot of work over the past year to become even quicker to adapt to our members' needs and to make it even easier for organizations to adopt the ACORD standards," McCullough says. In addition to featuring an exploration of ACORD's agile efforts in a morning session by Rick Heil, the conference highlights the theme of agility in seminars throughout the three-day event.

Tuesday morning also includes a two-hour presentation on the ACORD Information Model v2.2. "It's a detailed look into where we're at with the Information Model, including new content and changes to existing content that we have delivered over the past year, as well as an update on where the working group is headed," says McCullough.

The 11 a.m. to noon hour features several concurrent sessions, including two that explore both the current and future state of ACORD standards. ACORD's Yolanda Austin will detail life/annuity deliverables around forms, employee benefits, product profiles, product sales surveys, vendor invoicing, and work on health insurance product definitions, while James Bielak will look at property/casualty standards, including supporting professional lines, IICMVA with motor vehicle insurance reporting, forms and more.

This time slot also includes another framework track session related to the new version of the ACORD Business Glossary 2.0, led by Donald Maddox. "The Business Glossary hasn't changed in almost four years, however this year we're going to be delivering an entirely new glossary," McCullough says. "New content, new format, new look — a complete overhaul."

Plug and Play

Spanning both the standards and framework tracks is an afternoon update session on Plug and Play Consortium activities. Led by Ed Skoviak of MassMutual, Marianne Sherman of AXA Equitable and Mike Bauer of ACORD, the hour-long "Build Once, Reuse Everywhere" presentation highlights how Mass Mutual and AXA have utilized ACORD's plug and play standards to build interfaces quickly and gain unprecedented speed to market.

"For attendees, the session offers the chance to learn how ACORD's developments in standards allow insurers to build to exacting specifications and to truly enable a plug and play enterprise," McCullough explains. "It also is a chance to learn about what we've done over the last year with our Plug and Play Consortium."

Another afternoon session provides the latest information on the ACORD mapping efforts and the ACORD Standards Translator. Designed for enterprise architects, application architects, and other IT staff focused on data interoperability, the presentation covers traceability, migration and transformation within the mapping effort.

> "The 'Build Once, Reuse Everywhere' session highlights how Mass Mutual and AXA have utilized ACORD's plug and play standards to build interfaces quickly and gain."

"This session will provide a detailed look into the ACORD Translator tool, what we're doing to map our existing data standards to the data model and information framework, and how insurers can use the tool to migrate from one standard to another," McCullough says.

A common theme throughout all the tracks is that the work ACORD continues to do is a direct reflection of the needs of its members.

"We listened to our members and will continue to listen," McCullough says. "We've heard that we need exacting specifications that are easier to implement, and we've focused on our internal processes to make that happen. That is demonstrated in the work that has gone on over the past year, and it will be seen in what we do in the months ahead."

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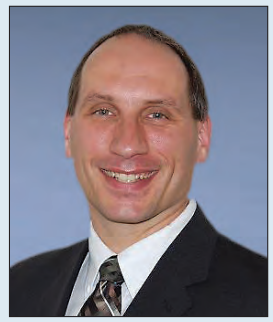
>
> ***— Shane McCullough, Chief Enterprise Architect, ACORD***



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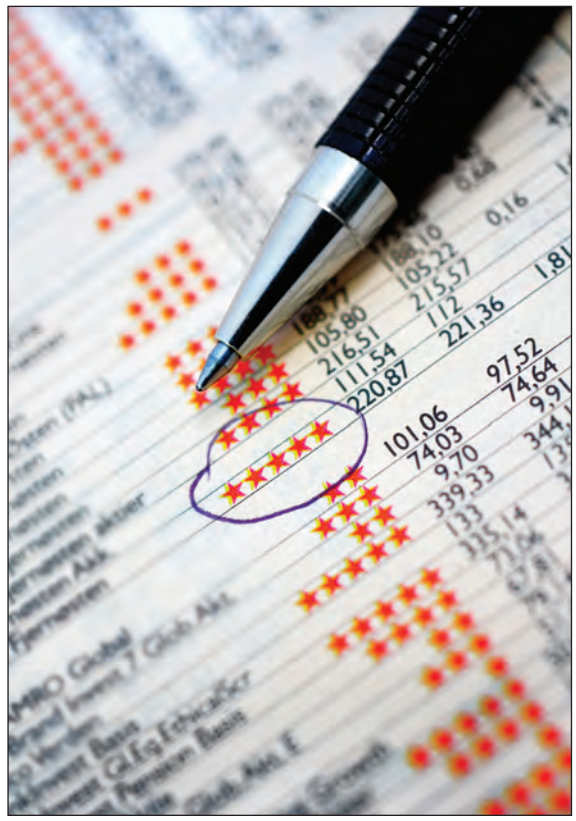
eAccounting in Half the Time, at Half the Price

Session To Show How Business Process Management Can Benefit Reinsurers

By ***Claire Wilkinson***



Bookies vs. Doctors: Who Makes Better Business Decisions & Why, & What Does It Have to Do with ACORD Implementations? is the intriguing title of a Wednesday afternoon session at this year's ACORD LOMA Insurance Systems Forum.

Phebe Arouni, e-business program manager at PartnerRe, will provide an overview of how the introduction of Business Process Management (BPM) enabled a reinsurer to implement eAccounting in approximately half the time it would have taken using traditional development methods.

> "Bookies learn from their mistakes. They document every single decision and learn from their mistakes. That's what Business Process Management allows you to do. It helps you to refine as you go."
>
> ***— Phebe Arouni, e-Business Program Manager, PartnerRe***

Arouni explains that the content of her presentation draws from an anecdote she heard while participating in the ACORD metrics initiative. To measure the value that BPM brings to a business, she says one way to think about it is how a doctor makes estimates, compared to a bookmaker.

"A doctor relies on prestige and status to make estimates, whereas a bookmaker is usually pretty accurate," she says. "For example, a bookmaker who says that he is 90% confident that the weight of a pretzel is between two to three grams is correct almost 90 percent of the time, whereas a doctor who says they are 90% confident that weight of a pretzel is between two to three grams is less likely to be correct 90% of the time."

The point of the story? It is important to calibrate estimations to give yourself the same level of accuracy as the bookmaker.

"Bookies learn from their mistakes. They document every single decision. That's what BPM allows you to do. It helps you to refine as you go," she notes.

Prior to using BPM, PartnerRe was using a claims system with different technology that was inefficient to maintain. So about a year ago, PartnerRe started to introduce BPM. According to Arouni, some of the key advantages of BPM are that it helps the carrier to streamline the business process and it also offers much greater flexibility and a lower implementation cost.

"Aside from the technology, BPM also provides us with a more flexible digital platform because it is not all hard coded. It's a platform that's more point and click. We sat down with the business and mapped out their business process using that tool," she says.

BPM also gives PartnerRe the metrics to evaluate the processing of a particular account.

"We can see where the bottlenecks are so we can actually refine the business process much better. If we see a lot of the work is being held up with a particular group or individual, then we know we need to look at how work is being assigned or route it more efficiently."

As far as cost savings, Arouni estimates that BPM is about half the cost of the old system and ongoing maintenance costs also have been reduced by half because there's less coding involved when changes have to be made.

Another advantage of BPM is the ability to implement workflow. Workflow helps to automate the business process instead of relying on email and paper exchanges.

Arouni explains: "Workflow makes it more of a bulletin board approach. If a task is on your to-do list it shows up in your personalized view and it's on your manager's watch-list. It's all in the open, rather than buried in email. This makes the process more transparent and easier to keep track of."

BPM also allows PartnerRe's accounting department to be more collaborative because the required auditing process is now automated, which means all information is shared and built into the system. "We automatically validate information now. You're not reliant on these fortresses of knowledge. There's no longer only one person who knows how to do a certain type of account."

As of now, PartnerRe has introduced BPM in the U.S. only, but it is evaluating its use in other parts of the business. In addition to accounting, the carrier would also like to apply BPM in the settlement area which brings the claim and accounting piece together and performs the actual payment.

As to whether this digital business platform will take off in the wider reinsurance industry, Arouni says time will tell. "Traditionally a lot of reinsurance business activity is paper-bound. If you just rely on paper you have no idea how much work is on someone's desk or what is way overdue. E-business in general provides much greater visibility, allowing you to see where the work actually is."

PartnerRe is currently working with just two partners who are able to provide digital information, but it is hopeful that number will grow. "We're trying to engage with other brokers who are not digitized," she says. "It's in our interests to get everyone moving ahead."

> "Ongoing maintenance costs have been reduced by half because there's less coding involved when changes have to be made."

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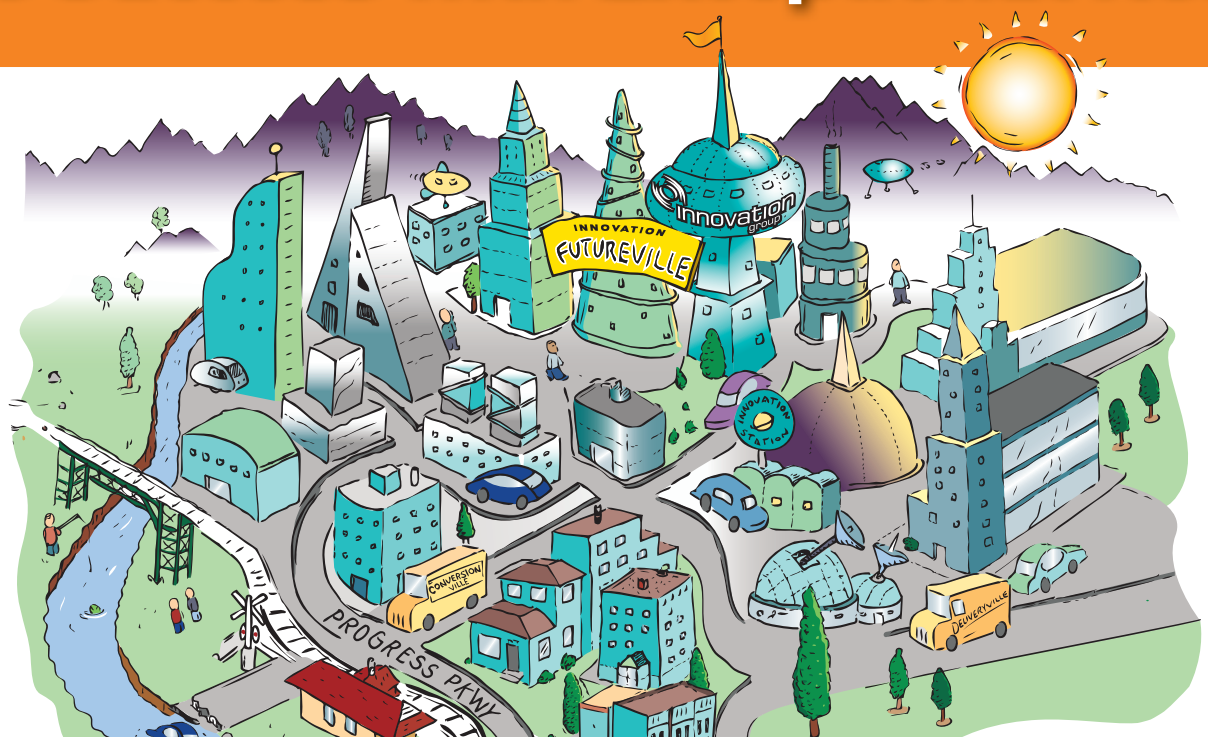

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