



Penn-America Group's Web Site Enhances Agent, Company Efficiency

DocuCorp's iPPS allows Penn-America Group's agents to focus on writing insurance without the hassle of keeping software and policy forms up to date. David Steele reports.

Penn-America Group was looking for a way to provide better customer service, reduce paper handling and enhance the value of its penn-link.com Web site. Though its solution is still in the early stage, initial tests indicate it perhaps can do all that with an Internet-based document and policy creation system from DocuCorp International (Dallas).

Penn-America Group, Inc. (Hatboro, PA), is a specialty property/casualty insurance holding company. Through subsidiaries Penn-America Insurance Co. and Penn-Star Insurance Co., it uses general agents to market and underwrite nationwide commercial property, general liability and multi-peril insurance.

Using old procedures, Penn-America would produce diskettes and mail one to each representative around the country every time there was an update or change to a form, according to Ransley Lennon, vice president of information technology. That generated extra work on the part of the agents who had to keep themselves up-to-date with both policy-producing software and form changes.

The answer was electronic document and policy creation via the Internet. In April 1999, the company focused on DocuCorp for a solution. One reason why: Many Penn-America agents already use DocuCorp's Policy Print System (PPS).

"iPPS is the Internet version, with similar features," notes Lennon, "which reduced the learning curve." The choice

also reduces software upgrade costs.

Additionally, Lennon likes DocuCorp's centralized document library administration and, he says, "endorsement form edition dates are kept current and up-to-date." Other key features: "Data reside on Penn-America's server—no file transfers or other procedures to transmit data are required." The iPPS software allows agents to access and produce policies remotely. Also, since information is located at the insurance company, the agency doesn't need to mail a copy of the policy to the company.



Penn-America's goal is to enhance the value of its penn-link.com site through deployment of a Net-based policy creation system.

Penn-America's system incorporates these elements: Microsoft (Redmond, WA) Windows NT with Service Pack 5 and Option Pack 4; Microsoft SQL Server, Data Access Components, Visual Basic 6.0 Runtime and Internet Explorer; and DocuCorp Internet Document Server 1.3 and DAP 9.7.

The DocuCorp contract was announced in June 1999; the full installation was completed this March. Lennon says it is too early to determine total costs. "The promise of iPPS has yet to be realized. It is not an overnight accomplishment."

At DocuCorp, Kerry LeCrone, senior vice president-services, says, "Penn-America's extensive library really allowed us to fully test all aspects of iPPS. In hindsight, we would probably have placed more emphasis on the testing of high-level functionality across the entire Penn-

America library, rather than focus on issues of presentation and workflow."

LeCrone adds, "We are actively planning a number of enhancements and features." These include full support for the new DocuCorp XML schema, an updated and streamlined presentation layer (interface) for easier site navigation and workflow, and enhanced business logic for immediate archive and retrieval abilities.

Meanwhile, at Penn-America, Lennon emphasizes, "With iPPS, agents don't have to worry about having the proper version or about waiting on the arrival of an updated diskette. When they access the forms via iPPS, they will know it is the correct form." ●

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SOLUTION: WEB DOCUMENT CREATION



COMPANY NAME:

Penn-America Group, Hatboro, PA;
\$84.5 million gross written premiums in 1999.

LINE OF BUSINESS:

Specialty P&C.

VENDOR/TECHNOLOGY:

DocuCorp (Dallas) Internet Policy Production System (iPPS).

THE CHALLENGE:

Offer agents an Internet-based solution for easier and more effective policy issuance.