



Farmers Home Mutual Insurance Company

Leading insurer improves agent services and reduces administrative costs with Web-based system built around Adobe® Intelligent Document Platform

FARMERS HOME MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY

- A leading provider of personal insurance products, including auto, homeowners, renters, and watercraft
- Revenues: \$64 million in 2003
- Size: 51 employees and more than 1,500 independent agents in 250 agencies in Minnesota, Utah, Nevada, and Washington
- Headquarters: Bloomington, Minnesota
www.farmershome.com



INDUSTRY

Insurance

SOLUTION

- Application Processing
- Account Enrollment

PRODUCTS USED

- Adobe Form Designer
- Adobe Central Pro Output Server

Company Profile

Farmers Home Mutual Insurance Company offers a wide selection of personal insurance products through a network of more than 1,500 independent agents in four states. Because agents who sell Farmers Home Mutual products also sell insurance services from other providers, it is essential that the company provide an efficient and easy way to sell its services. To support this goal, Farmers Home Mutual is using the Adobe Intelligent Document Platform as part of a Web-based system to enable independent agents to generate all the paperwork needed to enroll clients for new services.

Challenges Faced

- Improve services for independent insurance agents statewide
- Minimize errors on insurance applications from agents

Key to success in the competitive market for insurance services is enabling agents to quickly and reliably enroll clients for services. Traditionally, agents have relied on paper-based processes that involved filling out dozens of forms, often entering the same information on multiple forms. Completed forms were then sent to Farmers Home Mutual, where data was entered manually into the company's client database. These manual processes increased administrative costs and lengthened the process of issuing policies by weeks. To improve services and reduce costs, Farmers Home Mutual wanted to adopt a Web-based system to automate the process of enrolling clients for services.

Incomplete forms are one of the main causes of application processing delays. Materials can be incomplete for many reasons, including agents accidentally overlooking fields on forms or entering information into the wrong fields. Incomplete forms must be returned to the agents, corrected, and then resubmitted—driving up costs for Farmers Home Mutual as well as the agents.

Additional errors can arise when Farmers Home Mutual employees have to manually enter form data into a legacy policy processing system containing client information. To help minimize errors and speed forms processing, the company wanted to automate many of the steps of completing and processing policy application forms.

Success Strategy

Farmers Home Mutual adopted the Adobe Intelligent Document Platform as part of a Web-based system that generates all the paperwork agents need to enroll clients for services. The company is also using Adobe solutions to produce final policy applications and declarations in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) that are available online to agents and printed for delivery to clients.

Using the online system, agents can enter client information into a Web-based form and then submit the information to Farmers Home Mutual's central client database. The submitted information is automatically exported as XML data and populated into the appropriate insurance application forms, which the system identifies based on an agent's request. Completed forms are then returned to the agent for printing and signing.

Results

RESULTS

- Reduces Farmers Home Mutual's administrative costs by more than \$500,000 annually by eliminating manual data entry
- Shortens time to process applications by as much as 70%
- Minimizes errors on insurance applications and improves accuracy of data in the company's back-end systems
- Enhances agent services with automated generation of completed forms and Web-based delivery of policy manuals

"The automated system using Adobe solutions helps reduce our administrative costs by more than half a million dollars annually."

Frank Raasch,
Enterprise Technology Manager,
Farmers Home Mutual Insurance Company

Farmers Home Mutual estimates that it costs more than \$20 to manually process an application, including keying client data into the database and, if needed, returning materials to agents for additional information. With more than 25,000 applications received annually, streamlining application processing is important for the company. "The automated system using Adobe solutions helps reduce our administrative costs by more than half a million dollars annually," says Frank Raasch, enterprise technology manager for Farmers Home Mutual.

In addition to measurable cost savings, the Web-based system speeds application processing by as much as ten days by eliminating delays associated with mailing materials. Additional efficiencies result from the increased accuracy of information from agents, which is now saved directly to back-end systems. "We can process applications as much as 70% faster," says Raasch. "The online forms also handle basic calculations and verify that agents enter the correct type of information. Furthermore, we minimize errors by eliminating the need to have our staff manually key information into databases."

In many ways, the administrative efficiencies of the system are secondary to the primary benefit of improved broker services. With the ability to complete online forms and receive completed insurance application forms in return, agents can now spend minutes, instead of hours, enrolling clients for Farmers Mutual Home products and services. Rapid creation and delivery of policy declarations in Adobe PDF is also beneficial because it helps ensure that agents have the correct materials on hand and can respond quickly to questions from their customers.

"Our success depends on enabling agents to offer our products and services to their clients as quickly and efficiently as possible," concludes Raasch. "Integrating Adobe solutions into our Web-based system boosts the level of services that we can provide and greatly reduces our everyday operating costs."

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