

Farmers improves its trading partner customer experience while reducing costs by several million dollars annually



FARMERS®

Location

Los Angeles, CA

Industry

Insurance

Business challenge

Create a centralized platform to improve customer service and management of trading partners such as, lien holders, mortgage companies, and Departments of Motor Vehicles

Solution

Sterling Integrator®

Benefits

- Improved customer service
- Optimized business practices
- Significant cost savings

Farmers® Insurance Group, Inc.

Customer background

Farmers® Insurance Group of Companies is a personal lines property and casualty insurance group providing a wide range of quality insurance and financial services, including homeowners insurance, auto insurance, life insurance, mutual funds, variable annuities, and more. Although a wholly owned subsidiary of Zurich Financial Services, Farmers is locally headquartered in Los Angeles, California, and currently ranks as the third-largest insurance group in the United States. Operating in 41 states across the country with approximately 20,000 employees, Farmers is responsible for helping more than 15 million customers plan for the future.

Business challenge

The nature of the insurance business requires companies to work with multiple government agencies whose regulatory requirements are in a constant state of flux. For example Farmers does business

in 41 states, with many state jurisdictions having unique formatting requirements. Farmers had previously kept existing partners on various platforms, making it difficult to identify a problem's origin and determine a solution. To keep up with changing requirements, Farmers determined the need for a more secure, reliable and flexible file transfer management platform. The new platform would simplify and consolidate data transfer processes, improve service to trading partners by adhering to established timeframes, and provide analysts with the necessary visibility to track and audit files directly, eliminating reliance on multiple departments and software products.

Solution

Farmers utilizes Sterling Integrator as a secure enterprise solution for file transfer management. Sterling Integrator provides Farmers the control, security,

and visibility required by Farmers and external partners. This improved visibility and control allows Farmers to operate more efficiently. Sterling Integrator equips Farmers with a variety of monitoring mechanisms, tracking tools, and presentation options that provide insight into operations, as well as visibility into the interactions between Farmers and external partners.

Sterling Integrator was deployed in phases for each business function over the course of one year. During the first phase, Sterling Integrator ran parallel to Farmers' existing mainframe. Farmers' business functions were then migrated to Sterling Integrator as the release management schedule allowed. This approach provided high availability and redundancy, as well as an easy back-out strategy. Sterling Commerce consultants managed the project efficiently and in a timely manner.

Key benefits

Improved customer service

Customer service to Farmers' trading partners has improved through the use of Sterling Integrator. Sterling Integrator is being used for fault handling and tracking of exceptions. Farmers is now able to quickly identify processing issues and correct them without involving multiple

departments. Farmers also established an automated report for overdue acknowledgement and e-mail notifications to keep partners informed throughout the file transfer process.

Optimized business practices

Sterling Integrator has optimized and transformed Farmers' Business Collaboration Network by helping it connect, communicate and collaborate better with customers, partners and suppliers. Prior to Sterling Integrator, it would take Farmers 1-2 months to setup and test new partners. Farmers can now complete the process in 5-7 days. Farmers has been able to reduce this time by consolidating processing and data transfer to one application.

Significant cost savings

Sterling Integrator allows Farmers to extend data management processes across the entire company, providing increased productivity and cost savings. Farmers has estimated savings of several million dollars in postage and print expenses for 2009. Additionally, by eliminating paper, Farmers is demonstrating commitment to improving our environment.

About Sterling Commerce

Sterling Commerce, an AT&T Inc. (NYSE:T) company, helps companies optimize and transform their Business Collaboration Network quickly, easily and securely so they can accelerate revenues, reduce costs and protect their enterprise. Sterling Commerce provides more than 30,000 customers worldwide with applications and integration solutions to connect, communicate and collaborate with their customers, partners and suppliers. Learn more at www.sterlingcommerce.com.

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