

Interview

Dynamics and Accenture Duck Creek: the integration journey

Accenture Duck Creek partnered with Avanade to enhance an application programming interface (API) to its policy software, allowing property and casualty (P&C) insurers to leverage Microsoft Dynamics CRM when making quotes. Rebecca Gibson finds out more



Jeff Wargin
Accenture Duck Creek

How is Microsoft Dynamics CRM integrated with the software?

Jeff Wargin, managing director, Accenture Duck Creek: Accenture Duck Creek Policy has an extensive API library and we wanted to make it easier for insurers – and partners like Avanade – to access and process the capabilities within our software suite from anywhere, including outside the software. Using the customer data stored in the Microsoft Dynamics CRM app and the Accenture Duck Creek Policy software through the enhanced API, insurers can quickly produce a quote, which will be automatically stored for future reference.

Steve Magennis, senior director of software at Avanade: Avanade served as the systems integrator during the project and we used our CRM for Insurance solution to combine the core capabilities of Accenture Duck Creek insurance software with the capabilities of the Microsoft Dynamics CRM platform.

What makes Microsoft Dynamics CRM a good platform to combine with Accenture Duck Creek Policy?

Magennis: Although I've worked with the Accenture Duck Creek team for a number of years and Avanade is closely aligned with the Microsoft Dynamics CRM and insurance teams, we'd never bridged the two products. When we approached Accenture Duck Creek about doing something together we found that they were already working on enhancing their API for policy administration, so the timing was perfect. Microsoft Dynamics CRM has now become the 'connective tissue' for

Avanade that takes the best core system capability of Accenture Duck Creek and combines it with the ability to increase customer engagement in a digital world and improve the efficiency of internal business processes.

Wargin: Microsoft Dynamics CRM complements the functionality offered by Accenture Duck Creek Policy. The products sold by carriers in the P&C insurance sector often change rapidly and while CRM platforms provide enhanced customer, campaign and sales management capabilities, insurers often run into challenges when producing quotes. Our policy software has the functionality to manage the variability of products and rating, so when the two platforms are combined, P&C insurers can easily manage all of the necessary data and augment the end-to-end user experience.

How might the new Microsoft Dynamics CRM integration benefit P&C insurers?

Wargin: Using Microsoft Dynamics CRM as part of the quoting process enables P&C insurers to gain a 360-degree view of the customers, including their personal details, case history, and third-party information. Meanwhile, Accenture Duck Creek Policy enables users to access pertinent insured and risk data when completing the underwriting process. Many P&C insurance carriers now use CRM platforms, rather than traditional legacy systems, to manage front-office applications, sales forces, producers and agency channels. Accenture Duck Creek wants to help customers manage their front office in the most beneficial way and our enhanced API is focused on doing that.



Steve Magennis
Avanade

“Microsoft Dynamics CRM complements the functionality offered by Accenture Duck Creek Policy”

Jeff Wargin

Accenture Duck Creek

What role did the Accenture Duck Creek-Avanade-Microsoft alliance play during this project?

Wargin: Microsoft is investing heavily in its Dynamics CRM platform, Avanade wants to expand its presence in the vertical markets and Accenture Duck Creek wanted to extend its API library and ‘Anywhere’ partner initiative. It’s something we’ve been talking about for a long time and our priorities finally aligned.

Magennis: The fact that the three companies have such a tight working relationship helped us accelerate the project, give it visibility in all levels of our respective organisations and deliver results quickly.

Yellowtail South Africa forms new distribution partnership with Figlo

Yellowtail South Africa and financial software provider Figlo launched a new African distribution partnership on 1 July 2014.

Working in collaboration, the companies will provide customer-centric software solutions to companies within the financial planning industry across South Africa.

“Yellowtail has worked with Figlo to localise its financial planning solution so that it meets the needs of the South African consumers that are increasingly tech savvy and are major users of mobile technologies,” said Adrian Van Stolk, CEO Yellowtail. “By implementing the Figlo solution, South African financial services organisations are able to adapt their financial planning tools to meet the upcoming legislative requirements.”

By implementing Figlo’s multi-channel solution, financial services organisations will be able to adapt their financial planning tools to offer their customers real-time, tailored financial planning on any mobile device.

In addition, it enables enterprises to comply with the legislation introduced as part of the Retail Distribution Review (RDR) and the Treating Customers Fairly (TCF) policy, established as part of the South African government’s 2011 mandate

to reform the financial services sector. Both RDR and TCF have a key focus on promoting sustained economic growth and development by ensuring financial stability, consumer protection and financial inclusion.



“By implementing the Figlo solution, financial services organisations are able to adapt their planning tools to meet legislative requirements”

Adrian Van Stolk

Yellowtail

Brand name central to bank value

Maintaining a reputable brand name associated with trust, security and quality could become central to the value of traditional banks in the future, according to a PwC study.

PwC’s *The Future Shape of Banking* report suggested that a market economy could readily exist without traditional physical banks by 2025-2030, as banking services evolve into technology-enabled channels, allowing customers to switch between banks and other financial services providers more easily.

However, the study indicated that banks still retain an advantage because customers do not yet trust the security of alternative banking providers. Instead, they are attracted by the powerful brands of familiar, well-established banks that have extensive experience in

providing financial services and products, offer quality services and are strictly regulated.

To ensure they remain competitive as the barriers preventing non-banks from providing formerly ‘core’ banking services decrease, traditional banks must adapt and invest heavily in customer services, as well as rediscover and reassert their core role in society. In addition, they need to improve operational efficiency and secure the ongoing support of policymakers.

According to PwC, this will help traditional banks develop greater insights into customer behaviours and preferences and strengthen their brands. It could also help to solve the transaction cost problem when customers choose how and with whom to bank.