

CSSI to help with Peace Hills' cyber plan

Though the market crunch over the last few years has hit Peace Hills Insurance fairly hard, president and CEO Diane Brickner is continuing her support of strategies that would improve the company's technology.

Despite the challenges, the Edmonton-based insurer stuck to its computer system makeover plan. It was in for a dime, in for a dollar, I would guess. The Prairie company has expressed ambitions to expand eastward, and though it has pulled in its horns on that score, at least for the time being, having a modern computer system able to match growth is a must.

With its 350-plus brokers patiently waiting, Kathy Coogan, VP finance and IT, was finally able to report the conversions of policies was completed last year.

Last month Peace Hills topped that achievement off by announcing that Custom Software Solutions Inc. has been selected to take the company's IT makeover up another notch.

The Virden, Man., software gurus' I-Company product includes I-Biz, its I-Broker portal product, and CSIO download modules. Those products allow Peace Hills a complete integrated solution to interact with its brokers.

Once the CSSI solution is implemented, I-Company will facilitate real-time single-entry policy transaction processing and exception-only underwriting for all transaction types, including policy change.

I-Company will validate and enforce underwriting edits for private passenger auto, commercial auto, habitational and farm to allow for straight-through processing of all Peace Hills transaction types. This complete company-to-broker solution communicates/integrates with the Company Policy Management and

Accounting System, provides CSIO capabilities, allows web connectivity to the company via a web portal and includes support for other broker management system communication tools in the market. Those tools would include I-Biz for Brokers running CSSI's IntelliQuote and The Broker's Workstation.



Brickner

"We know many of our competitors have implemented various ways of electronically interacting with brokers," says Brickner. "The feedback we've received from our brokers was that most of these solutions required double entry, therefore increasing their workloads. Our main objective was to find a product that would provide a true single-entry solution."

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More news from CSSI: in March, Portage Mutual signed on for New Business Upload connectivity from The Broker's Workstation (TBW) and IntelliQuote, CSSI's stand-alone rating and underwriting tool. The project will connect the mutual's new business upload web service using CSIO XML 4.3 and will include both personal lines auto and habitational in all the regions where Portage conducts business.

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The first straight-through processing of commercial data using the CSIO XML standards is the objective of an agreement between SGI CANADA, the p&c arm of Saskatchewan Government Insurance, and Policy Works, announced in March. The integration between SGI CANADA's underwriting system and Policy Works'

Commercial Management System (CMS) desktop solution will offer no-touch processing which will enable brokers to send submissions and receive quotations electronically without a web portal. The real upside of that is: no new portal or system to learn.

"Partnering with Policy Works creates the opportunity for us to accept real-time policy transactions from our brokers across Canada who have chosen to use Policy Works themselves," says Andrew Cartmell, president and CEO of SGI. The integration should be completed sometime this summer.

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During their annual education conference this year, Keal Technology confirmed what we've been hearing brokers complain about for years, and it bears repeating again. According to a survey developed for the tech vendor by The French Group, 84 per cent of brokers think the industry needs fresh leadership when it comes to broker and carrier relations. Over half the respondents said changes in distribution have impacted their business units, and keeping up with technology is a leading challenge.

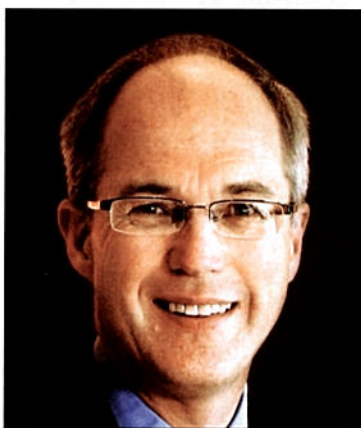
"When asked about the ever-evolving

insurance distribution landscape, 69 per cent believed new players would continue to gain market share," says the survey. To be competitive, it says, brokers need to embrace change (78 per cent), train staff to be more proactive (78 per cent) and invest in technology (64 per cent).

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Guidewire Software, an American firm providing a suite of

products spanning policy management, billing and claims, received the Insurance Canada.ca Technology Award for "its implementation of technology which had the greatest positive impact on the business of insurance in Canada." **IW**



Cartmell