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Tech Talk

Time to 'Get Real'

By Frank Sentner, Director of Strategic Technology

The absence of a single entry data interchange system continues to confound the industry. Efforts have been made again and again to solve the problem, but thus far they haven't panned out. This lack of a solution can make a real difference to your bottom lines.

Carriers are pushing more and more of the cost of data entry for commercial submissions down to your CSRs. As a result, your staff is unable to solicit proposals from as broad a range of carriers as you have in the past.

There are many avenues that your firm can explore to get assistance finding tactical solutions to the need for real-time data exchange with carriers and clients. The web site mentioned in the headline of this column, "Get Real," at www.getrealttime.org is one of the best sources of information on the technology and business process improvements available today.

The first step in successfully pursuing real-time data integration with your carriers and clients is to assign someone within your firm the responsibility and authority to address these issues. A next step may be to join ACORD so that your firm's representative has the tools he or she needs to pursue the priorities set by management.

In my role as director of strategic technology for The Council, I attend ACORD and AUGIE (ACORD User Groups Information Exchange) meetings. Although a few Council member firms are active in these meetings, most are not. But getting involved with ACORD is well worth considering as we strive for some degree of uniformity in the marketplace.

Being active in your management system user group and supporting the efforts of GetRealTime.org also will help you meet your goals and improve your margins.

If you have any questions on this or other technology-related subjects, you can always call me (860-794-7806) or e-mail me (frank@sentwood.com). Being able to consult with me on technology is one of the benefits that comes with your Council membership.

In the meantime, The Council continues to look for a viable option for creating an efficient and progressive industry-wide data management

e poll

Peter Elkind, who writes for Fortune magazine and recently co-authored a book about the Enron scandal, is said to be shopping a book proposal based on the meteoric ascent and descent of former New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer. The opening bid, reportedly, is \$350,000. What's the best title for this book?

- "Dial 'S' for Stupid"
- "Eliot's Mess"
- "The Rise and Fall of the Roamin' Emperor"
- "Living la Vida Loca"
- "Psycho"

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