SPS

a Swiss Post company

«Successful application of Intelligent Automation in insurance industry»

In the insurance business, media interruptions are still part of daily life, causing inefficiencies even in simple business processes. Information submitted in digital format is still often processed in paper format. Intelligent Automation can help insurance companies eliminate such inefficient workflows and optimize their processes. Over the last twelve months, Swiss Post Solutions has performed a number of trials with Intelligent Automation in the insurance sector.

One such project was successfully completed at a UK motor insurer. Prior to the test run, Swiss Post Solutions had already begun organizing the e-mail communication (change requests concerning master data, general queries, claims notifications and correspondence regarding claims), which amounted to more than 1000 messages per day, into 30 categories to ensure that the information reached the right person. And some of these steps were also automated, using conventional OCR solutions. This automation proved however very costly as many tasks still needed to be performed manually. The automation rate was in fact only about 30 per cent, so that roughly 700 e-mails per day needed to be handled manually, which meant that staff members had to read the attachments to categorize the correspondence correctly. As part of its project, Swiss Post Solutions therefore examined how Intelligent Automation could do away with these inefficiencies and came up with a three-step solution:

– E-mail categorization by means of Artificial Intelligence (transferable to other unstructured documents such as letters that need to be scanned for digitization)
– Extraction of key information and data enrichment, again using Artificial Intelligence (resulting in structured information)
– Rule-based process automation with the help of robotics processing

E-mail categorization by means of Artificial Intelligence
At the start of the trial, a part of the incoming e-mail correspondence was assigned to the categories without any human interference, while the other part was processed as normal, i.e. manually. Thanks to the use of Artificial Intelligence, the system was able to learn from the manual work so that the workflow gradually shifted from manual to fully automated. This shift actually began only a few days after the system was first up and running.

After one month, the learning capability of Artificial Intelligence made it possible to increase the automated workflow to more than 65 per cent, so that only around 30 per cent of the e-mail messages needed to be processed with OCR.

Extraction of key information and data enrichment
After an e-mail message had been placed in the correct category and the reason for the correspondence had been established, Artificial Intelligence was employed to extract the key information from the documents, including for instance the name and e-mail address of the sender, the date of the message and the policy and claim numbers. This information was then matched with existing data on file. In this step, the system established whether the correspondent was a new or an existing client, when the last contact had taken place and whether the claim had already been filed. Through the use of Artificial Intelligence, case officers were given all the information they needed to proceed to the next step.

Rule-based Process Automation with the help of robotics process automation
If the consolidation of the new information with the data in the CRM system revealed that the correspondence concerned a new insurance policy, the case officer could rely on robotics process automation, which had already checked whether the submitted data was correct and whether all information required to issue a policy document was in place. The software then automatically generated the insurance policy and sent the data to the Swiss Post Solutions printing center for printing and subsequent mailing to the client. Based on the client's preferences, he/she was also automatically notified by e-mail or SMS. In cases where the information was incomplete, the software automatically sent an e-mail message to the client, asking him/her to complete an attached document.

If there were inconsistencies (e.g. date of birth or address not matching those on file) that required human judgment, the software handed the case over to the case officer who then got in contact with the client. By making use of Intelligent Automation, it was thus not only possible to significantly optimize existing workflows, but to offer policy holders real added value.

Preconditions for successful implementations of automation solutions
Clients can continue contacting their insurance company through the channel of their choice. All that matters is that as much information as possible is extracted from the correspondence for proper structuring and categorization. The extracted information is then enriched with key data from the existing CRM system for subsequent rule-based automated processing. Only after all this has been done, the use of robotics process automation is a viable solution. Otherwise, automation will not be as effective as it could be.

ABOUT SWISS POST SOLUTIONS (SPS)
Swiss Post Solutions (SPS) belongs to the Swiss Post Group and is a leading provider of outsourcing solutions for business processes, offering innovative document management services. Many international companies are already relying on the competence of SPS in the conception, development and implementation of end-to-end solutions. In addition, SPS offers consultancy services, focusing on the value drivers in business process outsourcing (BPO), namely site concept, process optimization and technology, including Intelligent Automation. SPS employs 7500 people and cooperates with specialist companies to offer clients in more than 20 countries added value, catering for a broad range of industries – from banking and insurance to telecommunications, media, utilities, transport and retail.