Smart Communications
SMARTCOMM™

The AA Future-Proofs Member Communications

About the Customer

The AA is the largest automobile breakdown cover organization in the UK and has been providing help to motorists since 1905. In its early pioneering days when motoring was a risky pleasure, The AA sought to improve conditions for a small but growing band of drivers. Today in the UK, there are 33 million drivers, almost 30 million cars and 15 million AA members. The AA also has a successful insurance business, a national driving school, and a publishing and travel arm.

Business Challenge

In the age of the digital consumer, not all insurers are equal. Changing consumer expectations threatens traditional insurers who have not yet taken the necessary steps to future-proof their business. Today's insurer must have the technology to service different customer channel preferences, offer customers a personalized experience with their brand, and scale offerings to meet growing demand.

The AA was motoring along with its legacy document generation system, relying heavily on its mainframe systems and on external expertise to create and change member documents and the rules controlling their composition. They weren't satisfied with their ability to personalize communications for each member and wanted to make correspondence more relevant, clear, and visually pleasing. Another problem The AA faced was scalability - they couldn't produce the millions of documents required to serve their large member base each month efficiently or cost-effectively across different lines of business.

The AA recognized the importance of continually enhancing its services to safeguard its reputation, revenues, and members. Andrew Gisby, IT Director at The AA explains, "We saw improved quality and personalization of our member documents as an opportunity to further enhance our service to them and help achieve continued business growth." They knew that aligning with evolving member expectations and projected business growth would require a customer communications technology upgrade. "Depending on third parties for the production of new documents or implementation of changes to existing documents made the process costly, lengthy, and onerous for IT to manage," says Gisby. "As part of our IT strategy moving forward, we wanted to reduce our reliance on external contractors for key processes such as document generation."

The Solution:

SmartCOMM by Smart Communications

Omnichannel communication offers members the choice

In-house management of customer communications process

Business Outcomes

At the same time that The AA was seeking to improve the quality and efficiency of its member communications, the organization became part of the Acromas Group of companies. Its sister company, Saga, had already been using SmartCOMM™ for several years and was experiencing significant marketing and efficiency benefits. After seeing Saga's results, SmartCOMM was an easy choice for The AA.

SmartCOMM's open standards SaaS architecture enabled a rapid deployment, integrating seamlessly with a number of different systems including The AA's legacy mainframes, its new policy administration system, and its IBM Filenet archiving system. Within just three months, SmartCOMM was being used to generate exceptionally visual and highly personalized quotes, renewals, and other customer conversations across The AA's insurance business. Ease of integration also enabled The AA to take advantage of additional data sources that were not previously used with its legacy system to increase the personalization and relevance of communications for its members. While IT was closely involved in the integration, The AA was able to hand off the production and editing of business and customer communications to a business team, which continues to be responsible for the creation and modification of all of these templates. As part of the Business Change Team, this unit works with other teams within the organization, including Marketing, User Acceptance Testing (UAT) teams, product management, compliance, and IT. One of its strategic IT objectives was to bring the management of and expertise in its customer communication process in-house, thus reducing reliance on customized development by third parties. "SmartCOMM allows us to take a massive step forward in terms of personalization and visual quality. We also gain greater flexibility and faster time-to-market for new customer engagement --- with much less involvement from IT," confirms Gisby. "Because SmartCOMM enables business users to create and manage materials, IT can now focus on more strategic needs that further improve our systems and processes."

SmartCOMM enables The AA's Business Users to preview changes quickly and easily prior to launch. Previously, this would have required considerable development and IT time, and an external print house would have had to physically print a document pack in order for changes to be verified, all of which cost The AA time and money. This leads to improved efficiency in customer communications creation, allowing them to produce highly customized member documentation quickly and in a cost-effective way.

"The omnichannel capabilities of the SmartCOMM platform enable us to offer our members a choice in how we communicate with them, which not only means better service for them but also helps reinforce our Financial Services Authority commitments to treating members fairly."

– Andrew Gisby, IT Director, The AA

> **"The ability to flex our messaging depending on a member's profile and quickly implement changes enables us to be more creative and targeted with our marketing. Also, by being able to preview new communications and changes without incurring high development or printing costs, we can achieve more within our budget."**
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> – Michael Cutbill, Marketing Director, The AA

Future Plans

Now that SmartCOMM™ has increased efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and customization across its insurance business, the platform is being implemented across The AA's membership services division. The organization is also making more of its information available online for members and plans to increase its use of digital communication channels in the future.

SMART COMMUNICATIONS™

www.smartcommunications.com

Connect With Us

Smart Communications is a leading technology company focused on helping businesses engage in more meaningful customer conversations. Its Conversation Cloud™ platform uniquely delivers personalised, omnichannel conversations across the entire customer experience, empowering companies to succeed in today's digital-focused, customer-driven world while also simplifying processes and operating more efficiently. Smart Communications is headquartered in the UK and serves more than 650 customers from offices located across North America, Europe, and Asia Pacific. Smart Communications' Conversation Cloud platform includes the enterprise-scale customer communications management (CCM) power of SmartCOMM™, forms transformation capabilities made possible by SmartIQ™ and the trade documentation expertise of SmartDX™. In 2021, the company acquired Assentis, a leading European software solutions provider specialising in customer communications management (CCM) with a focus on the financial services industry.