Can anyone gain competitive advantage in the claims market?

A white paper from Whitespace Software.

According to a recent article published by accenture, "within the global insurance industry, the claims function occupies a unique place in determining competitiveness. It represents nearly 80 percent of the premium and is vital for achieving high performance in insurance through claims transformation."

Their research of 100 global insurers showed that:

- Less than one-half (49 percent) have integrated claims processing systems with first notice of loss systems.
- One-quarter (25 percent) say they still use claims systems that are mainly manual and paper based. "This indicates a weakness in claims infrastructure as vast amounts of information end up in paper files, unavailable to transactional systems. Consequently, there is little predictability, and less transparency, for the various parties involved in the claims process."

Significantly these figures were looking at top 100 Insurers, and the experiences of Whitespace Software suggest lower down the rankings these figures are even higher.

In the last 12 years Datarise, a wholly owned subsidiary of Whitespace Software, has been offering web based fully integrated solutions to the claims industries. Working with a diverse range of insurers, brokers, claims management companies and corporates, they have seen first hand the benefits their clients have derived from using a fully integrated software solution for their claims data. Claimsuite offers real-time information on claims data, from first notification through to the final balancing of the financials. Each sector that has adopted the Claimsuite solution has seen benefits ranging from better customer perception of the claims experience through to stronger negotiating positions with their insurers based on informed knowledge about their claims history. For all, there have been cost benefits,that, over time, more than justify their Claimsuite purchase decision.

One customer that has seen improvements at every level of their claims business is a major specialist claims administration subsidiary of leading midlands solicitor Harvey Ingram - Corclaim, who particularly endorse the sophistication of data manipulation made available to them through the Claimsuite solution. As their Business Manager Grant Shipway says:

"The beauty of the Claimsuite system is that it is extremely user-definable and very simple to use – notwithstanding that in some applications we may be capturing data in up to 500 different fields or categories. I've never before seen a system where data is so easily manipulated that someone new to it can be setting up their own particular reports within 10 minutes."

Claimsuite allows varying levels of access to data, so that although clients can access their data and develop reports on a wide variety of factors of interest to their business, *"the data integrity is never compromised thus ensuring that the management information supplied by the system is sufficiently robust to enable reliable decision making."*

Claimsuite also enables the claims handler to drive forward claims, therefore reducing the lifecycle of the claim, and minimizing unnecessary costs and potentially litigation thus potentially allowing for cost savings at every level of the process. Workflow can be customized to individual requirements, for example, allowing deadlines to reflect particular clients' SLAs. Significant deadlines can be made to perform various alerts, to assorted recipients.

Grant Shipway adds "*Corclaim clients have used trend analysis for example to identify training needs for drivers, or to alter the physical layout of a depot to reduce accident frequency, as well as to reduce supplier costs through enhanced transparency of claims costs. And of course a clear and detailed understanding of claims experience is invaluable for our clients in discussion on future rates with their insurers*".

Andrew Sedcole, MD of Whitespace software says, *"The joy of Claimsuite is its flexibility. It is suitable for every size of organisation involved in claims, either as an off the shelf boxed solution, or as a customized software product for the client who has a range of reporting requirements. The service provided by the Claimsuite Team is a crucial part of our offering, and our highly skilled and experienced group are adept at customising the system to our clients' requirements, designing very complex reports, and building import and* export channels so that Claimsuite's data can be synchronised with other external systems."

Claimsuite puts the customer at the centre of the claims process, a trend that unfortunately is still not being followed by enough organisations. Those that choose to adopt the Claimsuite solution have seen competitive advantage grow, costs cut, and future planning made simpler, a good reason for any organisation to re-evaluate their existing practices and look to technology to propel their business through the next 20 years.

In short there can be little doubt that a simple to use, sophisticated solution can provide benefits to users at every level, and can be demonstrated to provide the competitive advantage any organisation seeks in order to secure and protect its chosen marketplace.