

AIIG Insurance Completely Reimagines the Customer Experience

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We live in an age of reinvention. As technological innovations abound, almost every aspect of our daily lives is changing. People are communicating via innovative social channels, media is consumed on the go through digital streaming devices, and consumers are interacting with brands through customer experiences that would have been inconceivable just a few years ago. Customer engagement marketers are sensing an urgency to reinvent many of their strategies, or simply fade into irrelevancy.



These challenges are affecting businesses across almost every industry, which is what brought many major brands together for PegaWORLD 2015 in Orlando, Florida. Robert Noddin, President and Chief Executive Officer of AIIG Japan Holdings, took to the stage during a session titled, "Reinventing Insurance," to explain how AIIG Japan is innovating the way the industry thinks about customer engagement.

Since 1946, AIIG's Japanese location has acted as the brand's largest consumer operation outside of the United States. It has optimized sales and distribution for over 180,000 independent insurance agents and generated over \$7B USD in premiums. Recently, however, business success had become impeded by complex and antiquated systems that simply could not keep up with rapidly evolving agent and customer experiences.

AIIG realized that it needed to change the way it interacted with customers and rethink a host of data and analytical integrations. To solve the problem, AIIG turned to Pegasystems to develop AIIG Connect, which advanced the way it delivered an omni-channel customer experience. But even beyond the new technological capabilities, AIIG's ultimate goal was to actually transform the very idea of what an insurance agency meant to customers.

"We asked thousands of customers nationwide, 'When you think about insurance, how do you feel?'" Noddin said. "Thousands of people overwhelmingly said that insurance is reactive. After something bad happens, people then talk to an insurance company. So it has a very negative connotation."

By its very nature, insurance replaces things and reimburses value. But it does not mitigate the distress of losing personal treasures such as wedding photos or family heirlooms.

"So the key, the idea, the innovation opportunity was to turn these negative perceptions around, and to do things differently," Noddin continued. "If we can't repair the emotions or replace the history, the best thing we can do is to educate people on how to avoid the risk."

With hundreds of thousands of data points at its command, AIIG knew it could leverage the power of AIIG Connect to cross reference customer information in unique ways and offer a valuable service in the process.

For example, if AIIG knows that one customer lives in location A and works in location B, then that information, when combined with the GPS route of his or her morning commute, allows AIIG to suggest alternative and potentially safer routes to and from work.

Noddin equates this example to the path of a storm. People are already accustomed to the predictive nature of forecasts to avoid bad weather, and AIIG sees no reason why that cannot also apply to the predictive risk-avoidance aspects of daily life as well. During his talk, Noddin applied this logic to a number of insurance-based scenarios including the liability concerns of homeowners, senior citizens, and small business owners.

"Why can't I tell a small restaurant owner that owns a noodle shop, for example, that here are the three things that you can and should do differently to reduce the likelihood of someone slipping, falling, and having an accident?" Noddin asked. "It is all there. We have the information, but the trick is getting it to the customer, and driving the process that uniquely educates and shapes each experience."

This is the journey that the brand set itself upon nearly two years ago. AIIG wanted to reinvent a process with the consumer entirely in mind, which is almost a complete reversal of how the industry has typically viewed the customer experience up to this point.

The journey is not yet complete, but so far AIIG has made some impressive strides along the way.

"We are partway through this process right now and we have successive ways to go," said Noddin. "But the process we are going through now is redefining how we interact with our customers, and how our agents interact with their customers. We are working toward making it more seamless, more natural, more intuitive, and more human." ●

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