Agency Real-Time "Best Practice" Workflows And Implementation Strategies

Guidance for Carriers & Vendors

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Introduction

Real Time has provided independent agencies and brokers with a major advance in workflow that is greatly benefiting many firms today. Agency vendors and carriers should be commended for the considerable progress they have made with Real Time over the last several years.

The Real Time/Download Campaign formed a Real Time Agency Experience Work Group to identify the key distinguishing characteristics of real-time workflows provided by carriers and vendors that have resulted in the best agency experiences. The work group hopes the following recommendations will prompt an industry discussion as to how Real Time should continue to evolve in the future as we move to the next phase in Real Time implementations. We also hope our recommendations will assist carriers and vendors as they continue to improve their real-time functionality for their agents and lead to even greater agency adoption and usage.

The work group's overarching objective is to encourage carriers and vendors to provide agencies with a more consistent experience when using their real-time tools with multiple carriers – an experience where:

- the full range of real-time transactions are consistently offered for the major lines of business; and

- the workflows associated with the real-time transactions become more consistent across carriers and resemble the "best practice" workflows.

It is important to note that virtually all of the recommended "best practice" workflows are currently available for agencies today from vendors and carriers. We specifically note those in the document where we are unaware of current implementations.

The work group seeks to encourage all carriers to get started with Real Time. These "best practice" recommendations are designed to assist all carriers, no matter what stage they currently are in with their real-time implementations. It is recognized that carriers and vendors will implement these recommendations incrementally, based upon business objectives, their systems capabilities, resources, and security. We encourage carriers to consult with their agency technology advisory committees as they determine their Real Time implementation roadmap.

Section 1: Credential Management

Overview

Managing carrier passwords continues to be a major challenge for many agencies. One of the important benefits of the real-time tool[1] is its ability to automate the handling of passwords and relieve some of this frustration.

Before a carrier or vendor begins Real Time implementation, a team consisting of IT security and developers along with their business partners, should start with a well-defined plan to accommodate agency authentication and authorization that can be easily implemented at the agency level. There are a variety of ways agencies credential their agency users and understanding this credentialing saves the carrier or vendor valuable time as agency connectivity services are implemented or added to carrier/vendor offerings.

For carriers/vendors with Real Time already implemented, a review of their authentication/authorization process with their IT security should be a top priority.

Current Best Practices

Authentication should be handled within the real-time tool without requiring additional passwords or using "cookies" on the employee's desktop.

Two different options are outlined below for carrier and vendor "best practice" credential management workflow:

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[1] Real-time tool is defined as processes like Transformation Station, TransactNOW and comparative raters.

Workflow Option One

Have Agency System Administrator Manage User Authentication for Carriers Offering Non-Expiring Passwords

Implement non-expiring passwords, specifically for real-time transactions, that are managed by the agency administrator. This acknowledges the additional user authentication that has occurred when the user logs onto the agency's network, and subsequently logs into the agency management system. Carriers have taken two tacks to implement non-expiring passwords.

- Some carriers submit the user code along with a password consisting of a complex alphanumeric string to the agency's administrator. The administrator then sets up the user code and password for the user in the real-time tool in the management system. The user accesses that carrier exclusively through the real-time tool and is not privy to the carrier's code and password.

- The security team at another carrier determined that since agents using the real-time capabilities of their agency management system had authenticated to get into that system, they were comfortable with allowing trusted source status to those agents. When an agent first completes a real-time transaction through the management system and goes through the normal authentication process, from that point forward, the carrier attaches a temporary token to that agent. All future real-time transactions do not follow the normal authentication process and instead directly enter the carrier's system. This entire process is invisible to the agent

and the response has been extremely positive.

This carrier example provides a link in the XML response to the agent's system that allows access to the carrier's portal without having to re-enter their password. Note, this functionality is nice to offer agents but is separate from the password management capability.

Workflow Option Two

Implement Password Synchronization

Password synchronization is a web service implemented by the agency management system and made available to carriers to assist agencies in credential handling. Password synchronization allows agencies the flexibility of assigning credentials to individual agency personnel or a single agency password per carrier. Passwords can be updated while performing a real-time transaction and automatically update the carrier system and the agency real-time tool database for future use.

Agency authentication occurs by sending the specific user's agency management system id to the carrier as part of the transaction and can occur individually or by agency. When a carrier implements password synchronization, they are acknowledging the agency management system as a trusted source.

- The additional authentication occurs when the user logs into the agency management system prior to beginning the real-time transaction. The data that is passed from the management system and the carrier authenticates that the source is trusted.
- Password transactions initiated during Real Time are handled differently than those initiated directly with the carrier portal.

  For instance, a password expiration occurring during a real-time

transaction would not require the entry of the expiring password since it was already passed in the real-time transaction at the start of the transaction; and

If the password is updated during a real-time transaction, the user is automatically re-directed to complete his or her initially requested transaction.

Option A: Individual Authentication

With this authentication option, each user has a specific user id and password for the individual carrier.

Option B: Agency Authentication

This option enables agencies to have a single agency password per carrier while still tracking the user performing the real-time transaction. This occurs when the agency requires each user to have a separate ID and password to authenticate to the agency management system. This allows the many agencies that prefer a single agency password per carrier to assume the responsibility for authentication of its users through the agency system, which would be a significant benefit given the number of employees and carriers some agencies must manage. With this implementation, carriers can track the identity of the real-time user from the agency management system. This also allows carriers to comply with those states that now require carriers to track who is actually issuing the policies in agencies.

The following is an example of a carrier's implementation of password synchronization:

A real-time transaction is started in the agency management system. The current carrier password is passed in the background during the transaction. If the password is at expiration and needs to be updated, the user is then automatically directed to the carrier's website where the agent updates their password credentials.

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The new password is automatically synchronized back to the management system. This eliminates the need re-enter the user ID and password within both the management system and the carrier's website. Once the password is updated, the user continues on with the transaction.

This carrier example provides a link in the XML response to the agent's system that allows access to the carrier's portal without having to re-enter their password. Note, this functionality is nice to offer agents but is separate from the password management capability.

A carrier and vendor case study will be completed for password synchronization and a link will be provided to the document upon its completion.

Future Development

Potential Future Workflow Option

Federated Identity Management

Industry representatives from vendors, carriers and agencies are currently working together to derive a federated solution using a Trust Framework and security tokens. This framework would enable carriers to trust the authentication that takes place in the agency's management system using security tokens passed from the agency system to the carrier to identify and authenticate the source of the real-time transaction.

It is important to mention this solution is in its developmental infancy and may not be viable for all carriers and agencies to implement due to its technical requirements.

Real-Time Administrator Functions

It would be an important improvement in both security and efficiency for both agencies and carriers if the agency management systems were to introduce a new real-time transaction to allow the agency administrator to add and delete users (specifically terminated employees) from the carrier's database of authorized agency users and to receive a confirmation back from the carrier. An ACORD standard already exists for this type of transaction.

Next Steps

- Work Group recommends that the industry develop an Implementation Guide for password synchronization. As part of this effort, the ACORD standard for password synchronization will be reviewed to ensure it encompasses these recommended workflows.

- Conduct a review of the ACORD standard of the transaction to provision or de-provision a user.

Additional Resource

The Business Case for Improved Password Workflows within the Real-Time Environment (ACT, 2009) This report discusses many of these "best practices" in greater depth and explains why carriers should accord a higher degree of trust to the user's authentication through the real-time tool, as compared to transactions originating on the carrier website, because of the user's additional authentication by the agency management system or comparative rater.

Section 2: Implementation Roadmap for Real-Time Transactions and Lines of Business

Overview

Today, agents face the challenge that many carriers do not implement all available real-time transaction types or all lines of business. The gap created by this irregularity requires agencies to implement and train agency staff on multiple carrier workflows for one transaction type.

In 2010, the Real Time/Download Campaign agency survey identified "adding carriers with real-time functionality" as the number one enhancement agents would like to see. In the survey, the second highest agency rated enhancement to Real Time was "faster response time" during real-time transactions. Speed is achievable by using ACORD standards and web service transactions. This document will address real-time transaction "best practices" based upon using ACORD XML standards, which is strongly recommended over scripted solutions, and web service transactions.

Using ACORD standards and web services ensures quick transactions, reduces errors and facilitates streamlined connectivity between business partners.

The following is a prioritized and phased Real Time implementation approach for carriers and vendors. It is assumed that carriers and vendors beginning real-time transactions will have previously implemented download for personal and commercial lines of business. To learn more about download, please refer to AUGIE's (ACORD User Group Information Exchange) Commercial Download Policy Detail Agency Start-up Guide found on the ACORD website.

Implementation Roadmap

The following is a recommended implementation roadmap based upon business requirements that have been gathered from the agency, carrier and vendor communities. The roadmap begins with service transactions and highlights primary lines of business to assist carriers and vendors as they begin to initiate real-time development.

Carriers and vendors that have implemented portions of the roadmap are encouraged to review this document to ensure their transactions achieve current "best practices".

Prioritized Transaction Types – Personal & Commercial

Step 1:
- Billing Inquiry
- Claims Inquiry
- Policy Inquiry (including bonds) (PDF preferred; HTML as an interim step if needed)
- Link to carrier website
- Make a Payment
- Loss Run Inquiry
- Endorsement Bridge (no change data is sent to carrier)
- Quote with rate returned (bridge as interim step if needed)**

Step 2:
- First Notice of Loss Upload with attachments
- Activity Notifications/Alerts! (batch transaction)

- Book Roll (real-time batch upload; batch carrier response)

Step 3:
- Premium Finance Rate
- Premium Finance Issue

Future Development:
- Policy Issue Request
- Endorsement (with change data to carrier)

Prioritized Lines of Business

Step 1:
- Personal: auto, homeowners and package, if available
- Commercial: workers comp, auto, property (monoline), general liability (monoline) and BOP

Step 2:
- Personal: dwelling fire, umbrella, inland marine, watercraft, and flood
- Commercial: package, umbrella and inland marine

**It is important to note that two different types of agency systems have quoting capabilities: 1) an agency management which not only allows for comparative quoting but also includes inquiry, payment, endorsement functionality and 2) a comparative rater which is comparative rating software that streamlines the quote process. A carrier may need to address implementation for both types of vendors, depending on their mix of business (CL vs PL) or business strategy.

Next Steps

A subgroup of the working group will:
- Provide ongoing additional insights to assist carriers beginning real-time development
- Coordinate implementation guidance with ACORD
- Research how to handle umbrella policies that are rated/downloaded on a single policy with other lines of business

Section 3: Service Transactions

Real-Time Inquiries

Definition

Real-time inquiries can be defined as the ability for an agent to access their customer's policy, billing, or claims information, accessing the data from the carrier website, by using their real-time tool within the agency management system.

Overview

Real-time inquiries are highly utilized transactions and are therefore recommended as the first step to implementing Real Time for a carrier/vendor.

Carriers and vendors beginning to implement real-time inquiries can expect a high adoption rate due to frequency of use, simplicity of the transaction and a greater volume of carrier adoption leading to increased agency familiarity.

Clients' service expectations can be met or exceeded when agencies have access to their customer's data through real-time inquiry transactions. To ensure agencies have access to their client data, it is recommended that carriers provide agents online access to their client's data. Typically the online data access should include (at a minimum) the policy's current and prior two year terms.

In addition to online policy data access, it is recommended that carriers provide historical policy data for a period of an additional four to seven years upon request. This may be provided by the carrier online or in some type of manual process and in accordance with legal requirements and commitments made to their agencies.

Additional Items:

- Carriers should individually determine required retention statutory periods governing their organization and their agents and abide by those predetermined standards.

- Following an agency termination, the agency/carrier agreement should allow access to policy data electronically for the determined statutory period of time.

Current Best Practices

The following are two clearly defined transactions and their accompanying workflows that reflect the recommended "best practices" for real-time inquiries.
- There are two workflows in the industry due to variances in vendor functionality and the predominant workflow differences between leading management systems.

- Each of these workflows is accepted as an industry best practice and it is anticipated that carriers will take full advantage of vendor functionality when implementing connectivity for their agency partners. Carriers should develop to the greatest degree of functionality that is offered by the vendor they are working with.

Best Practice: Round Trip Inquiry

- Transaction is initiated and completed within the agency management system

- Inquiry allows for additional queries
  - Allows for navigational links (URLs to additional inquiries) within the returned transaction, enabling the

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user to navigate to other areas of the carrier website

- Multiple navigations open additional windows allowing the user to readily return to the original inquiry transaction window. *(This is a carrier website functionality issue.)*

- <u>Workflow example</u>: Real-time billing inquiry provides additional options such as allowing user to "Make a Payment" or "View a Policy". Selecting the link navigates the user to the carrier website (by passing user authentication), allowing the user to perform the succeeding activity.

- Inquiry creates a transactional record in the agency management system

- Inquiry creates a PDF (HTML as interim step if needed) to attach to client file in agency management system

    - PDF shall have option to attach to Activity screen in agency management system

    - May be emailed to clients

- Transaction must be quick

    - Speed of the transaction is crucial and the carrier should work to optimize the performance of the transaction. It will however be dependent upon the agency's connectivity such as their ISP, hardware and management system vendor.

Best Practice: Bridge to Carrier Website

- Real Time automatically logs the agent into the carrier website and displays the requested customer information

- Carrier provides the ability to print a PDF on the carrier website to attach to the agency management system.

- Navigation to other areas of the carrier website opens additional windows, rather than navigating away from the original transaction window. *(This is a carrier website functionality issue.)*

- <u>Workflow example</u>: Real-time billing inquiry provides additional options such as allowing user to "Make a Payment" or "View a Policy". Options open a separate window, allowing the user to perform the succeeding activity and to return to the original billing inquiry to then print a PDF to be attached in the agency management system and allow the user to complete the Activity in agency management system

- Inquiry creates a transactional record in the agency management system

The following transactions are unique and have specific best practices related to them.

Make a Payment

Option to be provided directly from the agency management system
- Inquiry will be a separate transaction from Billing Inquiry

Loss Runs

User shall be provided with the following inquiry options:
- Inquiry shall be a separate transaction from Claims Inquiry

- Inquiry shall be available on a per policy basis; or Inquiry shall be available on a full account basis

- Inquiry shall be made variable for user to choose either to include or exclude premiums

- Inquiry time period will range from one to five years

- Inquiry output will be available in a PDF and export to Excel format

Loss run policy claim data should include but is not limited to:
- Description of claim
- Date of Loss
- Addition of new claims
- Updated weekly at a minimum
- Change in claim status
  - Ex. Open/closed, change from medical to lost time
- Total amount incurred
- Changes in amount paid
  - Ex. Medical and indemnity
- Outstanding reserve amounts

Several things to consider when reviewing inquiry transactions:
- Management system functionality varies greatly, hence the influence on the user community for workflow preference as outlined in the best practices
- Carriers struggle to manage transaction costs and continue to analyze their transaction functionality. Some vendors may allow a carrier to enable multiple transactions during a single request, which can significantly increase the cost for the carrier.

It is the group's recommendation that carriers carefully analyze their own agencies' workflow preferences, as well as consult with their own agency tech councils, prior to implementation and develop solutions that take fullest advantage of the vendor's connectivity options.

Desired Enhancements

Agents desire to see the current Policy Inquiry option evolve into two real- time inquiries.

Policy Inquiry (current policy term and any document related to the policy term), to provide access to a PDF of the insured's complete current policy and any other documents the carrier provides to the client (both bridging and round trip rating technology).

Document Retrieval (related documents from other policy terms both historical and future), to allow the agent to access all of documents associated to a particular policy number (bridging technology). These documents include, but are not to be limited to, the following:

- Insured's declaration pages (for both renewals and endorsements)
- Agent's declaration pages (for both renewals and endorsements)
- Rating worksheets
- Documents for the current and two prior policy terms
- An option for the agent to request documents from the carrier for earlier years (years 4-7) with a turnaround of no more than five business days.

Agency clients shall be provided the ability to make an inquiry directly into the Carrier System from the Agency website.

- Carriers shall design most real-time messages and responses with the expectation that customers may receive them. The messages may be forwarded to them by the agent or directly accessed by the client through the agency's portal.
- Carriers shall return a client-ready PDF directly back to the agency system as part of the real-time response.

Agencies increasingly want to conduct real-time transactions during non-business hours. Carriers shall provide their agencies with full access to real-time

functionality 24/7. Acknowledging that many carriers must perform system maintenance, carriers will communicate with their agencies when maintenance is to be performed and the system will be unavailable.

The work group recommends the creation of a new real-time transaction request to be sent to the carrier which would send a "Sync" of a single policy in Policy Detail Download. The functionality would take the agent directly to the carrier's website location where the agent could request a copy of the carrier's latest policy data.

Real-Time Endorsements

Overview

Carriers are at differing stages in providing agents with real-time endorsement functionality. Many carriers offer an endorsement bridge that moves the agent from their management system to the carrier web portal automatically navigating the user to the endorsement change function while transferring varying amounts of electronic data.

Current Best Practices

The following are the recommended "best practices" for real-time endorsements.

Agent expectations include:

- **Navigate to Carrier Website**
  The endorsement request navigates to at least the carrier change page. Preferably, the user is navigated to the specific screen where the agent can make the change, such as the driver or vehicle screen.

- **Policy and Account**
  The endorsement transaction permits the agent to elect a policy level change or an account level change.

- **Renewal and Expiring**
  The change screen shall include the option to complete a change on an expiring policy, as well as the renewing policy.

- **"What if" Scenarios**
  The carrier's policy change screen should provide the agent the ability to perform "what if" scenarios (i.e., different deductibles, limits, etc.) by allowing the agent to develop a premium prior to submitting the change.

- **Printable Documents**
  When making a change, the agent shall be able to print all necessary documents for the client, such as ID cards, state specific forms (i.e., NY photo inspection forms), binders, evidence of property forms, etc. on the carrier website.

  The agent shall be able to print a PDF of the change with the verification # to present to the client.

Additional Options

Carrier Change Page (on the carrier website)

Carrier shall provide the agent during the change process with navigation to additional information related to the client such as policy or billing information, by opening a separate window for these additional screens/services.

Future Development

The following is an overview of the proposed workflow enhancements. To fully evolve real-time endorsement processing, it is our recommendation that a working group is formed to further analyze the needed workflow changes.
Phase 1: The agency processes the endorsement change request within the agency management system on a data entry screen. The data is electronically sent to the carrier, and the carrier

responds with a confirmation number (along with a carrier ID reference number) that the change has been processed. *Note: This would be an enhancement from the current real-time endorsement process because the agent receives a response back in their system and never sees the carrier website during the process.*

Phase 2: The response includes a PDF (without premium involvement) for attachment in the agency management system.

Phase 3: Ultimately, the response either includes 1) policy documents generated by the carrier or 2) the change data is made immediately available to the agency management system.

Items for additional discussion include:
- How can these enhancements be implemented for premium-bearing endorsements?

- How does the carrier return a PDF acknowledgement to the agent following an endorsement bridge transaction, when the real-time transaction disconnects after the bridge is created?

- How does the carrier return the endorsement data immediately back to the agency management system after the agent has made the change at the carrier, so that the agent can produce needed documents, without having to enter the change data twice?

- Is it a viable approach to design the real-time functionality so that when the agent begins an endorsement change, the carrier immediately sends the latest policy image to the agent so that the agent can make the changes on that policy image and then return it to the carrier for final processing and acknowledgement back to the agent?

Activity Notifications & Alerts!®

Overview

Activity Notifications and Alerts!® are a tool for conveying types of information and images from the carrier to the agent. They flow from the carrier directly into the agency management system workflow. Activity Notifications/Alerts!®, however, are not a substitute for implementing other types of real-time transactions or download capability that can send data that directly populates the agency management system.

Current Best Practices

The following are the recommended "best practices" for Activity Notifications and Alerts!®.

Agencies expect Activity notifications and Alerts!® will be used for:

- **Policy-Specific Messages**
  Client-specific, time sensitive policy related messages (policy about to cancel; claims have been filed, etc.)

- **Policy PDFs**
  Agents shall have the option to receive PDFs of policies when using Activity Notifications/Alerts!®.

- **Automatic Routing**
  Agency systems shall provide the capability to automatically route Activity Notifications/Alerts!® through the agency management system based upon agency defined preferences using the codes provided with these messages

- **One Source**
  When agents elect to receive particular information by Activity Notification/Alerts!®, they shall be able to turn off receipt of that information by other means

- **Carrier Bulletins**
  Critical carrier bulletins (change in binding authority; change in carrier appetite for specific risks, etc.)

For non policy-specific communications, carriers and vendors should consult the ACT (Agents Council for Technology) report, Independent Agency Preferences for Carrier Electronic Communications.

Future Development

Looking to the future, agents would like the capability to send activity notifications/Alerts!® to the carrier, creating a 2-way communication tool. These communications would be secure and meet growing privacy requirements. This contrasts to the unsecure email agents are often using today. The tool can be useful in handling many of the communications that take place between agent and underwriter with respect to mid-commercial submissions. Please see ACT's (Agents Council for Technology) recommendations from the mid-commercial work group regarding specific recommendations for mid-commercial workflows, along with ACORD's accompanying Standards Mapping Document for Mid-Commercial Submissions.

Next Steps

Develop the preliminary draft of an Implementation Guide to assist carriers in implementing Activity Notifications/Alerts!®. This will guide carriers as they address message content issues. A few examples of known issues include:

- Duplication of messaging agency personnel, such as sending a Carrier Bulletin via Activity Notifications/Alerts!® to all agencies and then sending it again via RSS feed.
- Duplication of message content, such as including information in the Activity Notifications/Alerts!® message header and in the message body.

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Section 4: Sales Transactions

Real-Time Quoting

Overview

Real-time quoting can be performed on two different types of agency systems: 1) an agency management which not only allows for comparative quoting but also includes inquiry, payment, endorsement functionality and 2) a comparative rater which is comparative rating software that streamlines the quote process. A carrier will need to address implementation for both types of vendors, depending on their mix of business (CL vs PL) or business strategy.

The real-time quoting "best practice" for agents is to be able to perform a round trip quote request with multiple carriers. If additional information is needed, the agent is prompted to add it or assumptions are made by the carrier's system during the rating process whenever possible, so that the quote request does not error out. This section focuses on personal and small commercial business where the quoting process is automated and occurs without underwriter intervention.

Most carriers offer these lines of business to be quoted on their proprietary systems already, making them ideal candidates for real time development. Each of the recommendations below apply to both personal lines and commercial lines, except where specifically noted. Please defer to the ACT (Agents Council for Technology) mid-commercial work group for recommendations on mid-commercial workflows, along with ACORD's accompanying Standards Mapping Document for Mid-Commercial Submissions.

Current Best Practices

The following are the recommended "best practices" for real-time quoting.

Agent expectations are:

Round Trip Rating

- "Round trip" real-time quoting without the need to bridge to the carrier is the "best practice" for personal and commercial lines. There are carriers offering "round trip" real-time rating for personal lines and commercial lines through both agency management systems and comparative raters.

Minimal Questions

- Carrier and/or vendor shall streamline the quoting process to include only those questions or data elements that are needed to obtain a quote

- The small business real-time quoting process should provide the agent with a quick indication whether a risk is eligible or not, prior to requiring the agent to enter additional information that may be needed to underwrite the risk.

Carrier Makes Appropriate Assumptions

- Carrier shall make logical assumptions when receiving quoting transactions. Where possible, this includes data not included in, the ACORD app or where the limit(s), deductible(s), coverage(s), etc. requested differ from what the quoting company. This reduces transaction failure rates.

- Carrier shall note these assumptions and differences when the quote is returned to the management system.

- The carrier shall not change coverage(s) submitted by the agency during the rating process unless the coverage(s) requested are not available from the carrier.
  - If the carrier changes the coverage(s) submitted by the agency, the carrier should make every effort to "bump" up the coverage and never reduce the coverage being offered to the client.

Bridge instead of Errors

If logical assumptions cannot be made and additional info is needed in the quoting transaction, the agent shall be directed to the carrier website to complete the information each carrier needs, in a carrier-by-carrier, logical fashion without erroring the transaction.

- For example, today some carrier's error the transaction, requiring the agent to correct the application in the agency management system and resubmit the Request for Quote which is an unacceptable workflow practice.

Clear Error Handling

If the carrier cannot avoid returning an error message, the error message should clearly indicate the cause of error and the corrective action to be taken.

Data Prefill

- Vendor shall send and carrier shall be able to accept all ACORD standard data from the agency's database to prefill the carrier's rating bridge, eliminating duplicate entry for the agent.
- Carrier and vendor real-time quoting tools shall support the use of data prefill from third party sources to reduce the agent's data entry (e.g., driver, vehicle & property information)

Retrievable Application

Agency management system shall "unlock" its database during real-time quoting immediately after the data has been sent to the carrier. This allows the agent to refer to the application information in the management system to respond to additional questions asked by the carrier's underwriting staff

Additional Options & Scenarios

During real-time quote responses, the agent shall be provided with the quote as well as additional "best options," including a link to go to the carrier website to access additional information, and "what if" scenarios, such as:

- Better/best coverage options with the premium indicated
- Available endorsement options
- Other marketing opportunities (e.g., Umbrella)

Best Insurance Score Used

For personal auto quotes, when the policy is written with two named insureds, such as a married couple, the quoting process shall automatically use the best score for rating the policy rather than requiring the agency to enter the quote twice (once with each person as the primary named insured).

Status Codes Unchanged on Rewritten Business

Vendor shall provide the agency the capability to retain its existing status code on downloads for rewritten business. The policy download received should not overwrite the "renewal" status code with "new" during this process. In this manner, the agency can differentiate between new and rewritten business in its system.

Future Development

Implement a "Policy Issue Message" that bridges the agent to the fully developed quote on the carrier's website to begin the final issue process. **(See real-time policy issue section.)**

Next Steps

The work group will explore the types of data some carriers are unable able to download to the agent, even though the carrier requires it be submitted as part of their real-time quote request.

- Why are carriers requiring more information, particularly underwriting information, and are unable to send it back to the agency as part of the download process?
- Are carriers storing this data?
- Does the AL3 record contain data elements to accomplish this task?

Real-Time Policy Issue

Overview

The three key requirements of real-time policy issue are that 1) the agent can review the fully developed quote before initiating the final issue process in case re-quoting is required; 2) that the reasons for any differences in the fully developed quote and the initial quote are explained; and that 3) a link is provided with the fully developed quote so the agent can return directly to the fully developed quote to begin the final issue process.

Current Best Practices

The following are the recommended "best practices" for real-time policy issue. Agent expectations are:

Link to Quote

Carriers shall provide the agent a direct link to the fully developed real-time quote enabling the agent to complete the issue process, and allow the agent time to re-quote the risk, if necessary and discuss the quote with the client.

- Current automation embeds an expiring URL that does not allow for extended periods of time to elapse between quote and issue, which is not sufficient for agencies. See future development for details on the desired enhancement.

Changes are Communicated Prior to Issuance

- The fully developed quote, using the insurance score, MVR and loss history report, shall be provided to the agent prior to the initiation of the final issue process.
- Carrier shall also provide explanation(s) for any change(s) from the initial quote providing the agent the opportunity to interrupt the process without issuing the policy if opting to do so.

Premium Quoted is Premium Issued

Carrier shall not issue policy with a premium different from the fully developed real-time quote that the carrier provided to the agent. In return, the agent must issue the policy within the specified carrier time period.

Future Development

Agents are requesting the industry to implement a new real-time transaction that would direct the agent to the fully developed quote on the carrier's website to begin the final issue process. Because this transaction is in Real Time, expiring URLs would no longer be an issue.

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Section 5: Roll Out of Real Time to Agents

Some carriers and vendors have achieved a higher real-time implementation rate with their agents than others. Carrier "hands on" support to assist agencies in implementing and learning real-time workflows has been particularly effective.

Carriers and vendors employing the following "best practices" have significantly improved their success rate when implementing real-time with their agents:

- Carrier has an Agent Technology Committee, consisting of agents familiar with using real-time technology, providing the carrier with continual feedback on real-time priorities and implementation.

- Carrier conducts a comprehensive education program with its staff so that marketing executives/field representatives are familiar with the benefits of real-time (both quoting and servicing transactions) and download.

- Marketing executives/field representatives, as part of their agency sales calls, encourage agents to use real time and download tools.

- Marketing executives/field representatives are familiar with carrier *and* agency contacts to assist agencies implementing or experiencing difficulties with Real Time.

- Carrier provides system specific webinars (webinars are often in partnership with vendors) or trained field representatives to assist agencies with implementation.

- Vendors and user groups provide both implementation and workflow focused webinars to assist agents with initial implementations, as well as workflow modifications, to get the most benefit from using real-time. User groups

have found that sessions that delve deeper into agency workflows have achieved greater buy-in from agencies, because they see how they can modify their workflows and visualize the time savings that will result.

- Carriers, vendors and user groups are knowledgeable about the successes their agents have had and evangelize these successes to the rest of their agency partners.

- Carriers and vendors provide agencies with real-time usage reports by user id, where possible.

- Carrier monitors real-time transactions for errors and contacts agents in real-time when they occur.

- Carrier keeps track of real-time transactions that have encountered issues, as well as agency help requests to identify significant problem areas in need of immediate attention.

- Carriers and vendors work with their agencies to ensure they are on the most current version of their agency software which will assist the agency to take the fullest advantage of the automation's capabilities.

Additional Resources:

Real-Time Stakeholder Commitments (Real Time/Download Campaign). This resource provides a series of recommended commitments by stakeholder designed to foster the greatest implementation and usage of Real Time among agencies, as well as carriers. Vendor specific information can be found directly on each vendor website. Materials specifying transaction adoption by vendor and carrier are available on these sites as well. For additional Real Time information, please consult getrealtime.org.