

# Digitized Claims Doesn't Mean Personalization is Gone

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This past year has kicked digitization in the insurance industry into high gear. Some industry observers are concerned that the move towards more digital claims processes will result in a far less personalized experience for customers. However, digital workflows can enable a level of customization that actually improves the customer experience and increases the ROI of human-to-human interactions. Here, I'll be discussing the opportunities that smart digital journeys can provide.

## Is Digitization at Odds With a Human Claims Process?

It would be natural to think that a more digitized and automated claims process would somehow be at odds with a claims experience involving personal interaction. However, digital technology often promotes a more human customer experience. That's because when claims agents have grunt work automated, they have more time and energy to invest in personal, high quality interactions.

Imagine a typical claims agent. Their day is spent asking customers for more details on the FNOL, reworking NIGO documents, manually inputting data into the system, and sharing policyholder paperwork with back office employees. They frequently have to chase customers for supporting documents and evidence and getting them to finish all the steps involved.

In this environment, customer-facing employees rarely have time to truly empathize with their customers' situations or provide personalized services. When cumbersome manual work is required, there simply isn't enough time to treat each claimant like an individual.

Digitization has the capacity to offer much-needed reprieve from mindless tasks, allowing employees to spend less time filing paperwork and following convoluted procedures, and more time providing personalized, empathetic service.

## 3 Key Ways Digitized Claims Supports Personalization

From faster turnaround time to greater accuracy, here are three ways digitization can improve the insurance customer experience:

### *Reaching the Customer Where They Are*

When property is damaged, emotions are running high. Amid this stress, customers need to alert their insurance company and share evidence from any location. In some cases, especially with property damage, customers may not have access to internet from any source other than the smartphone in their pocket. Therefore, the insurance company needs to assume that devices like computers, scanners, and fax machines are not accessible.

Mobile-optimized claims technology allows insurers to submit urgent claims from any location, whether they are stuck on the road, in a hotel, or any other location. Allowing customers to submit claims easily from anywhere and any device significantly reduces frustration.

### *Speeding Up the Claims Process*

Typically, the insurance claim process can be resolved within two to six weeks, but it can sometimes take longer than that. When dealing with customers who have suffered from property or auto damage, particularly if it's severe, resolution is needed faster.

In these situations, resolution has two components: the payout of additional living expenses (ALE) while repairs are happening, and the final reimbursement. The last thing stressed-out claimants need is to wonder whether they are eligible for ALE, get reimbursed for expenses, and wait an extended time to reach settlement. Allowing customers to submit photo and video evidence through their smartphones, send digital documents, complete eSignatures, and easily fill out electronic forms from any device prevents an endless back-and-forth between customers and the insurance company. With better technology, customers can return to a more normal way of life quickly.

### *Improving Payout Efficiency*

The very reason customers are calling the insurance company is to arrange a payment plan so they can get the damage repaired. However, customers cannot begin fixing anything until the insurance company confirms they will cover it. Given this reality, insurance companies should embrace instant payment processes. Instant payment technology expedites the reconstruction process with a speedy and accurate payment plan.

Incidental and loss of operations costs (such as hotel stays, restaurant meals, and car rentals) continue until payment is completed. Obviously, it is in the insurance companies' favor to adopt quick payment methods to minimize their overall spending. But this also helps customers, who can get back on their feet quicker.

### **The Bottom Line**

Property and auto incidents are serious business, resulting in tremendous customer stress. Without efficient customer-facing technology, that stress is exacerbated. Insurance companies should harness dynamic software to reach customers where they are, speed up the end-to-end claims process, and expedite the payout of ALE and final reimbursement.

With every step of the process accessible, automatic, and intuitive, insurance claims agents can spend less time on cumbersome processes, and more time on providing the human, white glove treatment that will earn their customers' loyalty.