

Customer Case Study

Agis Healthcare Insurance

Unified Portal Cures Complex IT for Customers,
Employees and Partners

Solution:

Unified Portal

Product:

BEA WebLogic Portal[®]
BEA WebLogic Server[®]
BEA Tuxedo[®]

Industry:

Health Insurance

Country:

The Netherlands

Business profile

Agis Healthcare Insurance is one of the leading providers of health insurance in the Netherlands.

Solution

- Hospital, healthcare provider, and patient Portal
- Consolidation of 3 previously disparate Web sites
- Tight integration with claims processing application and mainframe-based legacy systems
- Single sign-on and extensive customer self-service capabilities
- Automation of many labor and time-intensive processes

Benefits

- Substantial ROI derived from increased employee productivity and streamlined workflows
- Lower operating overhead due to expansion of Web-based self service
- Consistent, reliable customer experience across the entire Web presence
- Faster claims process and improved cash flow for participating healthcare providers
- Accelerated decision making on patient eligibility for major procedures
- Portal supplements Agis sales organization by accepting applications for new policies

Agis Healthcare Insurance used BEA WebLogic Portal to unify access to products and services for some two million customers, employees and partners. As well as improving productivity by automating workflow and integrating diverse applications, the portal helps reduce cost through customer self-service and has created a consistent online customer experience for the first time.

Business process challenge

Agis Healthcare Insurance is one of the leading providers of health insurance in the Netherlands. The company was formed through the merger of three Dutch insurance firms—Anova, Anoz, and ZAO—and serves more than 1.8 million customers. Agis Healthcare Insurance serves two primary audiences, hospitals and healthcare providers and insured business and individuals (patients).

One of the fundamental challenges facing a company that has grown through acquisition is to seamlessly integrate people, processes, and systems into an efficient and cohesive organization. Effective integration and consolidation of resources is key to minimizing costs associated with mergers, maximizing the shareholder value, and ensuring that new and existing customers receive a reliable, predictable level of service.

A second major challenge for Agis is the increasingly competitive insurance sector in the Netherlands. In recent years, aggressive market forces have driven rapid change, and deregulation has allowed new competitors to enter the market. To maintain a leadership position, Agis realized that it would have to evolve its business with an emphasis on increased automation, employee productivity, and self service for insured individuals and healthcare providers.

The information technology (IT) team at Agis made a strategic decision to leverage Internet technologies to address these two primary challenges. Agis decided to build a unified portal that would provide patients, healthcare providers, and hospitals with timely, simplified access to the information and forms they need to conduct insurance transactions. The portal would be a centralized point of access to the applications and legacy systems of all three business units within Agis, ensuring a consistent customer experience.

“There were three main drivers behind our decision to build the portal,” said Herman Schreuder, manager of Technology and Innovation at Agis. “First and foremost, we wanted to present a common look and feel to customers across all our lines of business. Second, we wanted to deploy a unified infrastructure so we could tightly integrate all our applications at a lowered cost. Our systems had all been built independently, making it very difficult to share information across the organization and causing our processes to be inefficient. Third, for the long term, we wanted to lay an extensible foundation that could support our plans for responsible growth.”

Solution

Agis considered a number of platforms, including one from Microsoft, for its enterprise portal and finally selected the award-winning BEA WebLogic Portal. In addition, Agis is also using the integration capabilities of BEA Tuxedo to integrate its Tuxedo-based claims processing application with the new portal, as well as for integrating legacy systems, such as their Unisys mainframe application which stores client information.

“We evaluated several platform options,” said Schreuder. “What led us to the final decision was BEA’s focus on providing a simplified, unified platform, along with the rich functionality we need to address our current business requirements. Our IT environment was complex—and we could not afford to have that complexity surfaced to the customer. The BEA solution allowed us to simplify our current IT environment—setting the foundation for addressing whatever future requirements come our way.”

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Herman Schreuder, Manager of Technology and Innovation at Agis Healthcare Insurance

Agis also cited its previous experience with BEA and its firsthand knowledge of BEA’s outstanding scalability, reliability, and performance as reasons for the selection. “Our Poseidon claims-processing application had been running on BEA Tuxedo for quite some time, so we had a chance to see BEA’s technology in our production environment,” said Schreuder. “The application performs flawlessly, which gave us tremendous confidence that the portal built on BEA would work equally as well.”

Schreuder added, “We were impressed with the support for open standards that BEA provides. That’s essential to protect and extend the lifecycle of our infrastructure. It also simplifies and reduces the cost of integration, and it gives us great flexibility as we make decisions about the future of our business.”

The BEA solution also included extensive consulting services. BEA professional services assisted with the portal design, architecture validation, and software development. In addition, development services were also provided by systems integrator, Pink Roccade. “BEA’s consultants were extremely valuable,” said Schreuder. “They helped us shorten our time to market and ensure that the portal would provide us with the scalability and extensibility we’ll need in the future.”

The new portal offers a wide range of functionality. The goal of the portal is to allow hospitals, healthcare providers, and patients to do business with Agis Healthcare Insurance through a single, simplified interface. No longer forced to access multiple systems, patients can perform administrative tasks such as changing their personal information, getting a quote for new insurance coverage, and searching for relevant content. Hospitals and healthcare providers can submit claims through the portal, which route automatically to Poseidon, Agis’s claims processing application, and can contact the customer-service department for information about pending claims. In addition, Agis is offering value-added services through the portal such as an information service that allows insured individuals to ask questions about health, answered by licensed healthcare professional. Individuals can also post birth announcements to the portal.

The portal allows Agis to present a consistent online experience to all customers for the first time since the three smaller companies merged. “When we decided to develop a common portal presentation layer for our business, we felt that it was the ideal time to implement an entirely new infrastructure that moved us away from our older limited architecture and prepared us to be more competitive and agile in the future,” Schreuder.

That vision of the future included streamlined processes for internal Agis users. Not only would customers have a single point of access to Agis applications for cost effective self service, but employees would, too. With single sign on, Agis employees would be able to move between applications and data sources with ease to accelerate the completion of tasks and respond to customer inquiries in a timelier manner.

In addition, Agis will implement a content management solution from Documentum, to allow richer and more comprehensive access and search on libraries of health related content.

Results

The portal went into production in September 2002, after six months of development. Today, it is used by the company’s 1.8 million customers, as well as all 2,000 Agis employees. In addition, the portal is open to all participating hospitals and healthcare providers in the Netherlands that accept Agis insurance plans. Since the portal went into production in September 2002, the portal has had over 80,000 unique visitors per month.

The benefits for Agis, its patients, and healthcare providers have already been substantial. For Agis, the immediate ROI was in the form of increased productivity and lower operating costs. Simple processes that used to require human intervention from an Agis service representative, such as a change of address, can be handled directly by customers and are automatically propagated in the back-end system. Many business critical functions, such as claims submittals, have been automated, reducing the opportunity for error and enabling Agis to process a greater volume of claims in a shorter period of time.

Patients are also taking advantage of the online access to medical advice and information. Questions submitted online are guaranteed to be answered within 24 hours. In addition, when the Documentum piece of the solution goes into production, self-service access to health-related content will be even easier. This capability will help to further reduce the need for costly human intervention by Agis service representatives.

“The rich set of functionality provided by the portal is making us a more attractive insurer and is helping drive new business,” said Schreuder. “We’re able to give customers more value for their money, and we’re empowering them to take a more active role in their own healthcare. We see this portal as a powerful marketing resource.”

Healthcare providers are benefiting by having their claims (e.g. declarations), processed

much faster. Faster processing means faster payment. In addition, Agis is benefiting from BEA's strength in integration. The integration of the Poseidon claims processing application with the portal using BEA Tuxedo is an example of the BEA platform's ability to extend the useable life of existing IT resources, which reduces the burden on the IT staff and greatly extends the ongoing ROI for existing applications.

"Someone recently asked me, based on my experience with this project, if I'd select BEA again," said Schreuder. "Absolutely. The quality of the software and the strength of BEA's consulting team have been outstanding. In a short time, we moved from a disjointed IT architecture, in which it was difficult to share information and work efficiently, to a tightly integrated infrastructure that is making our business stronger and smarter. We're able to present a common face and a consistent level of service to our customers. We're more competitive, and we're able to react to changing business conditions with rapid application development and deployment."

[About Agis healthcare insurance](#)

The Agis Healthcare Insurance is a social organization, which is committed to preserving the health of its customers by guaranteeing them good and affordable healthcare whenever they need it. This is the inspirational source for all our personnel. This personnel (approx. 2000) serves 1.8 million insured customers. www.agisweb.nl

[About BEA](#)

BEA Systems, Inc. (NASDAQ: BEAS) is a world leader in enterprise infrastructure software, providing standards-based platforms to accelerate the secure flow of information and services. BEA product lines—WebLogic®, Tuxedo®, JRockit®, and the new AquaLogic™ family of Service Infrastructure—help customers reduce IT complexity and successfully deploy Service-Oriented Architectures to improve business agility and efficiency. For more information please visit bea.com.

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