

LIKE A DUCK TO WATER, SOLAR VELOCITY **SUCCESSFULLY DELIVERS** A HIGHLY TECHNICAL BUSINESS SOLUTION TO INSURANCE **GIANT** AFLAC:

SOLUTION DESIGNED TO OVERHAUL AND AUTOMATE THEIR INTERNAL SALES COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY



Aflac™

## SOLUTION

Strategy

Rollout

User Interface

Messaging

Programming

Website



## OVERVIEW

Aflac Incorporated is the largest provider of supplemental insurance in the United States. Aflac, a Fortune 500 company, was founded in 1955 and is based in Columbus, Georgia. In the United States, American Family Life Assurance Company (AFLAC) provides accident and health insurance policies to individuals and employers and also underwrites a range of insurance policies.

## SITUATION

Aflac was seeking to dramatically improve how the corporate office communicated frequent changes of their 180+ products to their 11,000 sales men and women who were scattered around the country.

In the typical sales process, a salesperson would bring his or her laptop and meet with a potential customer face-to-face. Based on the answers to a series of questions, the salesperson would determine which five or six products might be the best fit and pull up the information on the laptop. Because a salesperson made customized recommendations onsite, it wasn't feasible to bring with them in advance the sales materials or desired product slicks.

This manual sales process was very time consuming and non-standardized. It wasn't reasonable to expect a salesperson to be an expert on all 180 products and know how they best suited different customers. Or, to keep track of which products had been updated by corporate.





## CHALLENGES

Due to the healthcare industry's constant nature of change, Aflac needed to more quickly and efficiently communicate product changes to their sales team. Aflac wanted a new solution but had a variety of challenges:

- A trust-worthy partner was necessary due to the privacy issues involved with accessing proprietary sales information and internal processes
- Reduce printing costs and waste by minimizing the usage of printable flyers—their current method of keeping the sales force current and up to date on all 180 products
- A technically-proficient yet creative firm was critical to implementing the appropriate solution and ensuring sales force buy-in

## APPROACH

Solar Velocity (SV) was already working as a solutions partner for Aflac by providing them with creative projects on an as-needed basis. But to create a true business solution for an integration of this size, SV had to go beyond the creative and produce sophisticated web and technical elements from conception to implementation. SV had to first demonstrate their technical capabilities with Aflac's IT group.

To be certified and gain approval, SV had to pass rigorous quality and capabilities testing to meet Aflac's level of requirements for both coding, delivery and support. Both teams knew this was a highly visible production application that required a seasoned team for development and maintenance.

Team members included a SV technical project manager and team of developers that interfaced with Aflac's VP of Sales and Marketing and their internal IT team. **The comprehensive business solution included two components: 1) design and implementation and 2) the internal product rollout.**



## SOLUTION

# 1. **Design and Implementation**

Because the sales process at Aflac is very consultative in nature, Solar Velocity (SV) had to meet the challenge of designing a solution around understanding the decision tree and how that would affect results. This involved coding complicated technical algorithms on the back-end along with designing a simple user interface on the front-end.

This software program and application was designed to be downloaded on every sales laptop and interface with the corporate internal network. The program consisted of a very traditional, user-friendly branded front-end that had to be relatively simple for the non-technical sales team. Back-end algorithms ensured the sales slicks and information—which were updated on the intranet from corporate—would automatically update and save on the salesperson's laptop or desktop. SV created this all Windows-based solution written in .net and Microsoft SQL server, per Aflac IT requirements.





## SOLUTION

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### ● ● ● Solution Features

- An application was designed with a simple install on each machine that would help the sales team walk through questions with prospective clients, get the top 10 results back, click on the results and automatically pull up the most recent sales slicks and product information.
- A web service and API was created so that when a sales person logged onto the internet and opened the application, the system would check to see if it contained the most recent data. If not, the system would automatically detect only those slicks that had been updated—saving time, speed and bandwidth.
- When a sales person was connected and logged on to the internet with his or her ID, Aflac corporate got an added benefit: they could capture usage by the product, which they didn't have access to previously.
- On the web server, SV designed an administrative area where the Aflac team could make updates to questions, product slicks and other necessary documents on the back end.
- Two levels of data were incorporated: an HTML text view of each result and the actual product slick itself. The additional HTML component allowed a sales person to pull up a product and click on the summary of interest versus downloading the entire slick.
- SV created a separate website to do the exact same thing as the software program in case a sales person didn't have access to their computer or have the product installed.



## SOLUTION

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# 2. Launch

After a successful implementation, the next step was to roll out the product to Aflac's sales team. Solar Velocity (SV) coordinated the launch with Aflac's annual sales meeting where the top 1200 sales reps would be in attendance.

SV launched the product to the sales reps in a branded tool kit that had a USB drive component. The USB drive contained the auto installer for the software application. For the remaining sales force not at the meeting, a link was available on the server. The tool kit, well received at the sales meeting, drew a buzz about the new product.





## RESULTS

The kit was extremely well received by the top sales people at the annual sales conference. Over 12,000 downloads were reported on the self-service website. The use of the tool decreased sales presentation time by an average of 40% and greatly improved the accuracy of the information. Tailoring a package of solutions to a customer's need on the spot was reported to increase closure rates by an estimated 15%.\*

SV continues to maintain an ongoing support agreement to assist the internal team with technical updates, upgrades and training.



## ABOUT SOLAR VELOCITY

Solar Velocity is one of the fastest-growing interactive marketing and technology firms in the Southeast. Founded in Atlanta, GA, Solar Velocity is an award-winning, full-service marketing company that blends traditional marketing with cutting edge website design, social media, search marketing and web/mobile development. Solar Velocity's innovative services produce measurable marketing campaigns and interactive software for medium and large businesses.

Since 1999, Solar Velocity has come to the rescue of clients—one project at a time. As defenders of truth, justice and effective marketing, the Solar Velocity team has been pioneering marketing and technology solutions for hundreds of companies. Clients include AT&T, Lotus Cars, AFLAC, and BP.