



Strategy for Enhancing American Family Insurance's Message Central

Project Sponsor

American Family Insurance

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1 Executive Summary

The purpose of this project is to help American Family Insurance assess and improve the awareness, usability, and effectiveness of Message Central, and identify improvement opportunities. Message Central is the primary resource for communicating strategic, tactical, and administrative information to a remote workforce. Since its development in 2007, no proactive measures have been taken to assess the usage of Message Central. Therefore, in order to develop effective recommendations, three different methods of data collection were utilized to collect a representative sample of information. These three different methods consist of a survey, interviews, and external company benchmarking.

A survey consisting of 15 questions was administered online to 300 field agents working with American Family Insurance. In general, results indicated that agents find Message Central to be a very useful resource. However, several agents voiced dissatisfaction with certain aspects, such as accessibility, usability, and content. To gain further insight into these shortfalls, interviews were conducted to collect supplemental information.

Before making recommended improvements to Message Central, it was critical to understand how other companies communicate pertinent information to a remote workforce. Five companies both inside and outside the industry were contacted and interviewed via phone. From this, the team was able to gather additional ideas that were currently being implemented in other organizations.

Building on the results from the survey as well as the internal and external company interviews, it was clear that even though Message Central is a valuable communication channel for American Family Insurance's remote workforce, there is room for improvements to optimize the use of the platform. The improvements are divided into two categories that can be seen as levels of changes: small improvements that are easy to implement and larger improvements that are more challenging to implement. However, if American Family Insurance is serious about optimizing Message Central and taking it to the next level, an integrated system of role-specific information and messages with customization abilities should be considered. While there are several recommended strategies to improve Message Central, the goal is not to see all recommendations implemented. Rather, the team strived to give American Family Insurance enough ideas and information to make strategic decisions about the future of Message Central.