The Future Of Insurance Is Mobile
by Ellen Carney, September 28, 2012

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Mobile Is Changing How Insurers And Customers Are Interacting
Mobile is a pervasive element in the daily lives of insurance customers. That ubiquity is driving digital teams to leverage mobile's power to deliver the right information at the right time and in the right customer experience. The role that mobile plays is putting mobile on the agenda of insurance boards.

Mobile Convenience Empowers Customers And Presents New Business Opportunities
Insurers have fewer customer interactions than many other industries. Mobile delivers content when it's most needed in a context that's most relevant, leading to additional sales and more loyal customers. Forrester's SUPER framework ensures that mobile initiatives will meet business objectives.

Mobile Will Bring About Fundamental Changes In Insurance Business Models
Mobile will be the catalyst for changes that will ripple across the insurance industry and ecosystem. Products, payments, distribution, underwriting, operations, and even what constitutes intellectual property will look very different in 2020 because of the native capabilities of mobile devices.
The Future Of Insurance Is Mobile

Vision: The Mobile Insurance Strategy Playbook
by Ellen Carney
with Benjamin Ensor, Julie A. Ask, Auke Douwe Veenstra, Carrie Johnson, and Myriam Da Costa

WHY READ THIS REPORT

Hold on tight — the business of insurance is changing, in large part due to customer demand for better experiences. What’s fueling this changing demand? Mobile devices are everywhere, mobile apps are getting smarter, and busy consumers and agents are substituting mobiles and tablets for PCs. Digital insurance professionals must tap into the power of mobile context to deliver the right information at the right time, empowering customers and agents. Mobility will change the way insurance companies market to, sell to, and deliver service to customers, opening up a series of opportunities for insurance companies. This report forms part of our mobile insurance strategy playbook and lays out Forrester’s vision of how digital insurance teams can seize the opportunities being created by mobile devices. It maps the evolution and the key principles eBusiness professionals should follow to maximize their opportunity within this rapidly changing and transformative space.

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Forrester conducted a number of interviews with digital insurance executives responsible for mobile strategies within their firms, including belairdirect, Generali, Groupama Insurance, New York Life Insurance, Progressive Casualty Insurance, TD Insurance, and The Hartford Financial Services Group (The Hartford), among many others. Further insights came from ongoing interactions with technology vendors.

Related Research Documents

2012 Mobile Trends For eBusiness Professionals
May 2, 2012

The Future Of Mobile eBusiness Is Context
May 1, 2012

Mobile Is The New Face Of Engagement
February 13, 2012
MOBILE IS MOVING CUSTOMER ACCESS FROM DESKS TO HANDS

Mobile is shaking up the business of insurance. Not since the advent of the PC Internet has the insurance market had such an attractive — and vexing — means to reach consumers and distributors. Customers today want the financial services they buy and sell to be simpler, faster, and cheaper than ever before. And customers increasingly expect that these engagements will be enabled by a mobile device. Consider that:

- **Mobile devices are pervasive.** Customers are awash in mobile. Globally, there are 6 billion mobile subscriptions, equivalent to 87% of the world population.\(^1\) And the mobile penetration rate is growing, up from 5.4 billion in 2010 and 4.7 billion mobile subscriptions in 2009. Developed markets now average more than one mobile subscription per person: 110 mobile subscriptions per 100 inhabitants.

- **Mobile app downloads are exploding.** With nearly a million mobile apps available in Apple’s iTunes and Google Play, consumers can find handy mobile apps for nearly everything. By Q3 2011, consumers had downloaded more than 18 billion apps from iTunes alone and were continuing those downloads at a furious billion-a-month pace.\(^2\) Digital insurance teams — and their internal and external mobile development partners — are paying close attention to this customer appetite and are stepping up with applications that provide value and insight into their financial lives.

- **Consumers are using mobile devices more than ever.** Mobile is changing the way that consumers learn about, choose, and buy products of all types. With more mobile devices available within easy reach, US consumers are tapping into this ready convenience to research, buy, and service their financial needs, including insurance (see Figure 1). In the US alone, consumers are forecasted to spend more than $10 billion on nondigital goods on their mobile phones in 2012, and that spend will grow to $31 billion by 2016.\(^3\) Europeans are also living la vida mobile, with 18% of iPhone users reporting that they spend 10 or more hours surfing the mobile Internet each week.\(^4\)
The Future Of Insurance Is Mobile

**Figure 1** Consumers Are Mobilizing Their Financial Lives, Including Insurance Needs

“How interested are you in using your mobile phone for each of the following activities?”

(4 or 5 on a scale of 1 [not interested at all] to 5 [very interested])

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25-34</th>
<th>35-44</th>
<th>45-54</th>
<th>55-64</th>
<th>65+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>File or check on an insurance claim</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay my insurance bill(s)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage almost all of my financial matters (i.e., as the main channel for my personal financial life)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: 7,538 US online adults (18+) with a mobile phone

Source: North American Technographics® Financial Services Online Benchmark Recontact Survey, Q3 2011 (US)

**Five Mobile Drivers Are Pressuring Insurance Leadership Action**

As mobile Internet use becomes pervasive in the daily lives of customers and agents, this portable touchpoint is influencing the business of insurance — and demanding a prominent place in business strategy. Mobile has become a boardroom topic because:

1. **Consumers’ expectations are rising.** New mobile tools mean that consumers are even more firmly in the driver’s seat when it comes to choosing insurance. New technology-enabled experiences and competitors are reshaping consumer expectations about insurance. And beware not meeting those expectations, since consumers are now willing to air their gripes about their insurers in social displays that mobile is making immediate.5

2. **Data demands drive more mobile connections.** Insurers are looking to capitalize on a priceless asset: big data. Smart mobile devices let insurance customers connect to social networks and smart cars and homes. This makes valuable contributions to individual insurers’ and collective industry’s big data pools and can be used in building intellectual property, creating targeted marketing campaigns, creating customized risk products, or even offering market-based risk pricing. Mobility fuels the big data engine with analytical insights that will lead to better underwriting, new intellectual property, and finely honed segmentation to drive a keen industry objective: profitable growth.
3. **Fast-growing markets are beckoning.** Growth remains a priority for insurance providers globally. That desire for growth is expressed in priorities that include customer acquisition and retention, geographic expansion, and new distribution partnerships. Developing markets with large, emerging middle classes like India and China — which are home to 31% of the globe's mobile users — are particularly appealing. In 2011, telecom provider MTN and Holland Insurance partnered to bring low-income earners in Ghana a product called mi-life, a mobile money life insurance policy. A carefully considered mobile strategy will be an essential underpinning of the digital insurance team's global expansion objective.

4. **Profits are under greater pressure.** Last year's severe natural disasters and extreme weather are prompting insurers to look at better ways to manage property and casualty loss ratios and loss adjustment expenses. In the US, healthcare reform is putting private health insurers on notice to get their costs under control at a time when their digital teams are trying to work out how to sell directly to individual customers while managing adverse selection risks. Mobility offers insurance companies opportunities to increase efficiency, reduce claims costs, and stem premium leakage.

5. **Big and influential entrants are powering mobile.** Venture capital firms are fueling mobile power, investing $6.3 billion in mobile carriers, devices, apps, and infrastructure. Google has already shown its interest in insurance, plunking down nearly $62 million for UK insurance price comparison site BeatThatQuote.com. US healthcare comparison provider Castlight Health's mobile application lets consumers instantly compare healthcare providers based on the cost and quality of services, letting consumers — and health plans — more effectively manage healthcare costs (see Figure 2). These capital injections are leading to new — and customer-empowering — mobile insurance ventures that threaten to disrupt established insurance patterns.
The Future Of Insurance Is Mobile

Rising customer expectations and a dynamic competitive landscape are driving digital insurance teams to fulfill the potential of their mobile strategies. How will mobile devices influence insurance product development and distribution through the end of the decade? Mobile strategies will enable:

- More frequent engagement with policyholders. The insurance industry is challenged by the very nature of its business: providing risk protection for events that will likely never happen. As a result, the opportunities to interact with customers are just not that frequent. Digital insurance teams are turning to mobile apps to promote their brands — and increase engagement opportunities — in a variety of ways, from games like Car Park Challenge from Australian insurer National Roads and Motorists’ Association to teaching tools such as State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance’s highly rated Driver Feedback app that uses a smartphone’s built-in global positioning system (GPS) and accelerometer to score driving, compare trips, and offer tips for safer driving.

- New sales opportunities. In the face of modest premium growth, it’s no surprise that accelerating new product development to drive premium revenue is a priority for insurers. Japan’s Tokio Marine launched an array of mobile ad hoc insurance products beginning in 2010,
including sports, travel, and, most recently, a first-of-its-kind one-day auto insurance designed to provide temporary coverage when borrowing a parent’s or friend’s car.¹⁴ Canadian insurer RSA uses its mobile app to promote its commercial insurance offerings to business owners who have downloaded the firm’s consumer app.

- **Better underwriting.** Mobile technology will enable innovations in how customers buy and how insurers price insurance. Tapping into an insurer’s big data repository, usage-based pricing models like pay-as-you-drive (PAYD) could be refined to be based on driving behavior, routes traveled, the claim history for a stretch of road, weather patterns, and even the other drivers on that route and then packaged as a new auto insurance product through the power of mobile intelligence. For example, Mobile Life Guard, an app developed by the University of North Texas, uses the various sensors on smartphones to analyze vehicle, road, and driver behavior and record the data for future use, enabling more accurate and rapid underwriting.¹⁵

- **More engaging sales tools for agents, brokers, and advisors.** Mobile is changing the nature of interactions between consumers and insurance agents. Touchscreen-based tablets like the iPad seem purpose-built for the needs of the insurance agents, brokers, and advisors. They are lightweight and speedier to boot up than PCs, and the high-definition resolution of the displays makes them ideal for an agent, for example, to turn an illustration into a faster life insurance sale. Progressive Casualty Insurance has launched a mobile tablet solution, ForAgentsOnly, for its agents (see Figure 3). Likewise, mobile apps like fring enable group video calls, ideal for advisors who need to connect a prospect with complex life or commercial insurance needs to a specialist at HQ.

- **New distribution opportunities.** In developing economies, mobile phones offer an entirely new distribution channel to consumers who aren’t online and can’t be served economically through traditional agents. Services like Malaysia’s Tune Talk marry mobile service providers and life insurers, using the mobile phone as an electronic wallet for premium payment.¹⁶
New Business Opportunities Will Depend On Mobile Context

Mobile's constant connectivity offers insurers a continuous opportunity to connect with customers and agents in a highly relevant, contextual, and immediate way. Insurance customers, agents, and brokers will embrace new services if they are fundamentally more convenient — if the benefits of use outweigh the barriers to adoption. Three key benefits are crucial to successfully execute on the convenience contract:17

1. **Immediacy delivers content when customers need it most.** Immediacy is timeliness that's not limited to an exact measure of minutes or hours. For example, customers will want to know immediately that a tow truck is on the way or the location of the nearest shelter when a storm is bearing down on their home, while getting a quote for auto insurance has less urgency. Digital insurance professionals recognize the value of immediacy but are hampered by internal limitations when it comes to real-time data.
2. **Simplicity removes usability hurdles.** Simplicity is driven by the right decisions on the content, services, and features that make sense for mobile as well as how well mobile experiences are designed, such as iDental's effective use of spin wheels rather than keyboards to choose which dental specialist a user is looking for (see Figure 4). Simplicity must be revisited regularly, as the pace of new mobile technology knocks down usability barriers.

3. **Context makes content relevant to the individual.** Context involves the use of information about the customer such as location, time of day, or past behavior to personalize or tailor experiences, and by minimizing steps and manual entries, it simplifies the interaction. Aviva UK Health offers a mobile My Stress Kit app to help users identify stressors, manage them, and even track their stress levels over time (see Figure 5). Mobile's more compact form factor means that these experiences are more personal — unlike PCs, which can be shared.

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**Figure 4** iDental Makes Finding A Specialist Simple With Spin Selector

![Figure 4: iDental Makes Finding A Specialist Simple With Spin Selector](image)

Source: United Concordia iDental iPhone app

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.
Figure 5 Aviva’s My Stress Kit Helps People Manage Their Stress Levels

Source: Aviva UK Health iPhone app

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.
Mobile Will Guide Customers Throughout The Insurance Buying Journey

Mobile is changing the nature of engagement throughout the customer life cycle. Consider how mobile devices will accompany customers and agents as they go through insurance business processes, beginning with marketing and quoting at the top of the funnel through to purchase and support at the bottom (see Figure 6). Their ubiquity means that mobile devices will enhance, displace, or add new capabilities for customers to:

- **Discover.** Customers have to find out about a brand, product category, or personal need. Trigger events such as advertising, a major purchase, a claim, and life events drive the discovery phase. For example, thanks to mobile’s location-based services, offers for travel insurance pop up on smartphones as consumers enter an airport terminal or stow their luggage on a rail car, as well as to meet the risk needs of sports enthusiasts as they approach a golf course, ski lodge, or marina.

- **Explore.** In this more immersive phase, customers explore their options, considering brands and distribution channels. When buying insurance, consumers can click on QR codes or snap tags or do online searches with their smartphones and then visit a variety of digital sites including social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube; visit comparison sites such as the UK’s Confused.com and GoCompare.com or Leaky in the US; talk to local agents; or even consult with benefits specialists at their workplaces or trade associations.

- **Buy.** Customer experiences during this phase include availability and satisfaction with the insurer’s quoting and binding process. It also includes the actual premium, the perceived value, and the experience of connecting to an insurance provider’s sales channel, including finding a nearby agent. This makes effective agent locators such as the Texas Farm Bureau’s a key digital insurance function. Whether the sale is direct from the insurer’s mobile app or website or through an agent or an online aggregator, the digital insurance and marketing teams must stay on top of the experience in these touchpoints, including post-binding processes like account onboarding.

- **Engage.** After buying insurance, customers engage with insurance providers in lots of ways. To keep customers loyal — and capture positive ratings or referrals — digital insurance teams need to engage with the customer immediately, regardless of the touchpoints he or she uses. Insurance customers will interact with their providers through mobile insurance bill pay; a tablet-enabled open enrollment renewal; and mobile claims functionality for filing First Notice of Loss and checking claims status. Insurance technology consultancy West Monroe Partners has built a mobile app for the homeowners market that includes a hail claim function that ties a live hail map feed to support the severity of the damage being claimed. It also offers helpful reminders to homeowners that they’re obligated to protect their property from further damage and links to local contractors (see Figure 7).
### Figure 6 Mobile Apps Help Customers Navigate Complex Business Processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer objective</th>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Discover</th>
<th>Explore</th>
<th>Buy</th>
<th>Engage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connecting with a new life insurance agent</td>
<td>Bob and his wife have retired to a smaller house in a new area.</td>
<td>• Noticing that his life insurer offers a basic mobile application, Bob downloads the app to his smartphone.</td>
<td>• Bob uses the agent locator app and uses the helpful ZIP code look up feature, since he still can’t remember his new ZIP code. Eight agencies sell for his life insurer.</td>
<td>• He clicks on a link in the app that sends an alert that he’d like to schedule an appointment.</td>
<td>• He uses a helpful calculator from this prospective life insurer mobile website to learn how he can get to his retirement goals faster.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Insurer objective**

- Generate awareness

**Prompt**

**Instigate**

**Earn loyalty**

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.
### Figure 6 Mobile Apps Help Customers Navigate Complex Business Processes (Cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer objective</th>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Explore</th>
<th>Buy</th>
<th>Engage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connecting with a new life insurance customer</td>
<td>Agent Jay just got a new life insurance client lead. <strong>•</strong> Jay recently had his office manager work with his best life insurer to update their agency information. <strong>•</strong> While on the road, he gets a lead alert on his tablet: An existing policyholder has just moved to town.</td>
<td><strong>•</strong> Jay uses his tablet to access the insurer’s admin system. <strong>•</strong> He views the face value, premiums, and payment history of his prospect.</td>
<td>Since he has an appointment with this new prospect, he ensures that he’s got a full suite of illustration apps on his tablet, including a new life product he’s just taken on.</td>
<td><strong>•</strong> Jay uses the illustration apps from both life insurers in his evening meeting with the new prospect, Bob. <strong>•</strong> He uses the tablet to retrieve a quote Bob got online and confirms that this indexed annuity would be appropriate for Bob’s life stage. <strong>•</strong> Jay uses his tablet e-app to push Bob’s application for underwriting and medical.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insurer objective</th>
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<th>Instigate</th>
<th>Earn loyalty</th>
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Source: Forrester Research, Inc.
**Figure 6** Mobile Apps Help Customers Navigate Complex Business Processes (Cont.)

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<th>Customer objective</th>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Discover</th>
<th>Explore</th>
<th>Buy</th>
<th>Engage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Buying a first car policy | Yasmin is buying a used car to get to work and needs insurance. | • Yasmin spots and scans a QR code for an insurance app in a magazine and downloads the mobile app.  
• She flips through the app to see what functionality is there. | • Yasmin visits a dealer to find a car. She uses the insurer’s app to compare two cars and identify vehicle recalls.  
• Yasmin uses the app to scan the car’s licence plate and her driver’s licence to get an auto cover quote.  
• She chooses and buys the car she prefers from the dealer. | • She chooses a pay-as-you-drive policy because she’s a careful driver (unlike her brother).  
• The app prompts her to buy a bundle including renters insurance, which she also needs. | • Excited by her productive day, Yasmin uses the app to post pictures of her car on Facebook.  
• When she gets home, she uses the app to build an inventory of her new apartment. |
| Accessing health policy information | Sandy wants to know more about having her son Zach’s tonsils removed. | • Sandy uses a mobile app offered by her employer to see how much of her deductible remains.  
• It’s higher than she thought, and she uses the app to learn what a tonsillectomy could cost. | • Her mobile app tells her that costs will range from $4,200 to $6,500 for providers covered by her plan.  
• She uses the app to learn where doctors are located and to scan patient reviews. | She finds a surgeon who doesn’t have the lowest cost but has the most and highest patient ratings. | • Sandy clicks on the office number shown on the mobile app and schedules an appointment for Zach.  
• After his recovery, she uses the app to add her rating. |

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.
**Figure 6** Mobile Apps Help Customers Navigate Complex Business Processes (Cont.)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Customer objective</th>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Discover</th>
<th>Explore</th>
<th>Buy</th>
<th>Engage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Filing and managing a claim | George's roof has been damaged in a hailstorm. He needs to make a claim. | • George clicks on his insurer’s mobile claim center.  
• He uses the spin wheel to select home claim, the loss as hail damage, and another spin wheel to rank the damage as “severe.” | • George heads up to the roof and takes a number of pictures with his smartphone; he attaches these to his claim.  
• He uses a voice recording feature in the app to describe areas of shingle damage.  
• George also highlights the live hail map feed to support the claim severity. | • George receives a text acknowledgement that his claim has been received along with a claim number.  
• He uses the location-based contractor finder to learn about nearby roofing contractors. | • The mobile app informs him that as the homeowner, he is obligated to protect his property.  
• The app’s storm tracker shows that another storm is on the way, so he enlists his teenage son to lay a tarpaulin to protect the roof from further damage. |

**Insurer objective**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.
Figure 7 West Monroe's App Documents Hail Claims, Reminds About Protection Responsibilities

Source: West Monroe Partners mobile app

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.
DIGITAL INSURANCE EXECUTIVES MUST CREATE A STRATEGIC VISION FOR MOBILE

Mobile has changed the way that customers envision an insurance company. They can now hold it in the palm of their hand, and their entire relationship with an insurance company — from quotation through to claim — could take place through this single device. Before rolling out more standalone mobile applications — never mind a mobile strategy — it’s critical that digital insurance teams lay out their vision for how mobility will change the way the firm markets to, sells to, and services customers and, where applicable, how it can improve relationships with agents. Otherwise, what the insurance provider might have envisioned as a mobile toolkit might end up only being a mobile toy box, failing to deliver the expected convenience promise. Digital insurance professionals should use mobile devices to deliver a new generation of insurance services that are SUPER:19

■ **Simple.** Mobile apps use the capabilities of mobile phones to simplify customer interactions by taking steps out of a variety of processes. Progressive, for instance, uses the phone’s embedded camera to simplify quoting, claiming, and payment processes for its auto insurance customers (see Figure 8).20 The UK’s Confused.com lets registered customers get new car insurance quotations simply by texting their car’s license plate to the firm.21 American Family Insurance’s DreamVault mobile application already offers a speech-to-text function to update a home contents inventory (see Figure 9). Direct access to basic information without signing in, which is gaining popularity in industries like retail banking, speeds up access to must-know information like claim status.22

■ **Ubiquitous.** Customers want to interact with their insurance providers whenever and wherever. For the environmentally conscious, the context manifest in location-based services from insurers like Electric Insurance points them to their nearest electric car charging stations. Esurance Insurance’s mobile app not only serves up the expected location-based information like the closest gas station or towing company but also recognizes that users might have a cupcake craving while they’re waiting for a damage estimate or a crumpled fender to be replaced.

■ **Personal.** With such competition for insurance wallet share, digital insurance teams need to keep customers loyal, including tapping into mobile’s power to create “just for me” experiences, by changing content, navigation, and presentation based on user preferences, mobile context, or recommendation algorithms. Brightdriver addresses the boredom of commuting with a mobile game that uses speech inputs (and audio outputs) to tally points based on the driving behavior over the route, rewarding good driving with personalized discounts and promotions.23 And US insurer Infinity Insurance lets customers change the language displayed on its mobile app to Spanish with two taps on a touchscreen, while Farmers Insurance’s agent locator lets users pick from one of 25 languages and then points them to agents who speak it.

■ **Empowering.** Smartphone features like global positioning systems (GPS) empower customers by putting needed information at their fingertips when they need it, such as a list of nearby insurance agents or the closest healthcare providers that participate in their insurance plan. US
affinity insurer Horace Mann Educators provides its teacher customers with a helpful mobile
guide to changing a flat tire or jump-starting a dead battery. Aetna’s iTriage mobile app helps
customers answer questions like “What medical condition could I have?” and “Where should I
go for treatment?” as well as offering news, alerts, and average cost data.

- **Reassuring.** Digital insurance teams are also turning to mobile to provide safety nets for their
customers. Florida-based home insurer Security First Insurance provides a hurricane tracking
feature in its mobile app that also links to the closest open Red Cross shelter (see Figure 10).
Esurance offers another kind of assurance with its mobile RepairView claim tracking function,
letting claimants see repair shop photos of repairs underway and adjust plans for transportation
if the repair is taking longer than expected (see Figure 11).
Figure 8 Progressive Lets Customers Get Quotes, File Claims, And Pay Bills By Taking Pictures

Source: Progressive iPhone app

Figure 9 American Family's DreamVault Uses Speech To Text As Input For Contents Inventory

Source: American Family Insurance mobile app
Figure 10 Security First’s Mobile App Offers Helpful Disaster Tools For Florida Homeowners

Source: Security First mobile app

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.
The Mobile Future Will Empower Insurance Customers

As mobile devices change in form and become even more feature/function dense, these helpful assistants will shift from simply being a handy access means to an insurance provider’s mobile Web to driving highly context-aware customer engagement — and empowerment.  

Consider how emerging mobile innovations will forge tighter — and smarter — bonds among consumers, agents, and insurance providers. The mobile insurer of the future will:

- **Apply common sense.** Mobile phones are serving up lots of capabilities. But each of the million or so apps works in isolation from other apps, has its own interface, and can’t cooperate to meet a user’s needs. Researchers are looking to enable common-sense, contextual reasoning by using natural language and speech recognition to perform complex tasks that would encompass multiple apps. How could this be used in an insurance context? Imagine mobile functionality that’s smart enough to “speak up” and alert an insured driver that she doesn’t have enough time between two appointment locations in her daily work diary to safely drive from one to the other.
Augment reality. Context will get turbocharged through mobile augmented reality by using the camera, GPS, accelerometer, gyroscope, and compass to let users explore and learn about places around them. Commonwealth Bank of Australia launched its augmented reality mobile app, Property Guide, to help home buyers make smart property decisions, thanks to insights that overlay on the building image. Insurers could overlay claims and municipal property inspection data to aid property underwriting or eliminate the need for home inspections.

Photograph it. Mobile app developers are already thinking beyond Progressive's use of images for getting a quote. How about using the camera to address a common insurance shopping behavior — channel hopping? MIT's Media Lab created a framework for getting tasks done across devices, ideal for busy on-the-go agents. Deep Shot lets users take a picture of the screens on one device — filling out a form, perhaps — and then transfer the work state to a new device like a mobile phone.

Tap into emotion. Think technology can't be as smart as an agent? Think again. Marry voice recognition software with software functionality already deployed in call centers to identify angry customers, and tools like Apple's Siri become quasi-intelligent. Using video chat and facial expression analysis, the subtle cues that prompt insurance agents to shift their sales strategies could be achieved through a mobile touchpoint. This “digital intuition” can move stressed claimants automatically to a human agent, better identify and qualify risk factors, recover from an almost lost sale, and reduce the cost of sale.

Tune social intelligence. Mobile devices produce lots of data and even better insights. Health insurers are keenly interested in improving their customer advocacy and accelerating diagnosis and treatment in order to reduce treatment costs and improve outcomes. Healthcare startup Ginger.io's mobile app collects SMS data, calling data, and location data, and based on the changes in communication patterns, it can detect changes in health like the onset of the flu or even depression. It can alert users, and potentially medical providers and authorized caregivers, thus reducing healthcare — and insurance — costs.
RECOMMENDATIONS

MOVE BEYOND MOBILE “WHAT” TO MOBILE “HOW”

Mobile insurance experiences are evolving as fast as new technology gets incorporated into what seems like a near-continuous stream of new phones with new features. Digital insurance teams need to scan the mobile landscape for innovations that can create better consumer or agent experiences, increase efficiency, and reduce costs. But for mobile initiatives to deliver the expected outcomes, digital teams need a vision that moves their firms from experimentation to mobile maturity. Later research in this playbook will address how digital teams can:

- **Plan for customer centricity through mobile.** It’s easy to be lured by mobile’s siren song: many thousands of mobile apps and hundreds of new apps being released into mobile marketplaces daily. For mobile to meet customer expectations, the benefits have to exceed the considerable barriers to usage. Use Forrester’s SUPER framework as a guideline to create your own vision. Choose the elements that are relevant to your customers, capabilities, and strategies to create your own vision of customer-centric mobile solutions.

- **Benchmark (and inventory) their mobile assets.** Compared with core applications, the cost to build a mobile app is relatively inexpensive, ranging from $50,000 to $500,000. As a result, random acts of mobile have propagated across many businesses, often with little thought to how these mobile apps should be integrated with policy administration, claims, or agency management systems or even if they deliver the functionality envisioned. An essential part of your strategy will be to inventory your organization’s mobile applications; assess how each satisfies the need for context, convenience, and immediacy; and work out how you’ll measure mobile application performance.

- **Anticipate — and analyze — their mobile failure points.** Creating and implementing a sound mobile strategy is challenging. There are few precedents and few examples of sustained, profitable mobile initiatives in insurance. Success in mobile will demand that you take a systematic approach, beginning with understanding your customers or target audience via their Mobile Technographics® Profile. Forrester’s Mobile POST process relies on the same four steps of strategy formation — in order of people, objectives, strategy, and then technology — that will ensure that you achieve the business impact of mobile.

- **Implement a mobile governance framework to ensure business strategy alignment.** A powerful indicator of just how strategic mobile is to an insurance provider is the presence of a structure to govern all things mobile within the organization. And by all indications, the digital team owns the mobile strategy. As digital insurance leaders, you need to assemble a variety of stakeholders including marketing, underwriting, claims, business intelligence, IT, procurement, and vendor management into a team that will govern the direction and decisions about your mobile strategy that affect the customer experience.
Optimize the mobile strategy continuously. With real dollars now at stake and heightened customer expectations for mobile experiences, eBusiness professionals know they must optimize their mobile portfolio of sites and apps to deliver on agreed objectives and stay ahead of the competition. That means you must confront two parallel mobile challenges: first, the mandate to deliver mobile business value now, and second, the need to accommodate the latest (but right-for-the-business) mobile tech innovations in order to meet rapidly changing customer expectations. You and your team must implement a formal mobile optimization program that accommodates both tracks.

WHAT IT MEANS

MOBILE WILL REMAKE INSURANCE BUSINESS MODELS BY 2020

Mobile will be the catalyst for insurance transformations that will ripple beyond just how customer interactions are changing. The impact of mobile will be felt across the insurance industry and ecosystem. Products, payments, distribution, underwriting, operations, and even what constitutes intellectual property will look very different.

- Private passenger auto becomes fully automated. Mobile's convenience, married with a mother lode of customer analytics, will dramatically change the private passenger car insurer. While direct insurance has long promised low rates in exchange for self-service and personal information, the native capabilities of mobile devices, along with telematics, will power even greater intelligence and convenience, reducing paper, manual processes, and even human intervention. As a result, motor insurance will become like a “dark data center”: a fully automated, lights-out “assembly line” process, freeing up smart insurance talent who can then focus on improving less efficient processes and lines like dwelling cover or commercial lines. Dutch insurer Verzekeruzelf is already marketing its industrialized car insurance business.34

- Usage-based insurance gets a new lease on life. New mobile apps will prompt digital insurers to take another look at offering usage-based car insurance. Many insurers are drawn to the value proposition of usage-based insurance — underwriting the safest, low-mileage, defensive drivers and getting lots of driver behavioral data in exchange. Smartphone apps — and even the vehicles themselves — will capture new kinds of driver, auto, and even roadway intelligence to create new proprietary risk-reward algorithms that fundamentally create a personalized car policy. Another significant benefit would be lower entry barriers, since the algorithm could use different driving attributes than those that are protected by at least four US patents.

- US life insurers become fast manufacturers and leave the distribution to health plans. Not all insurance lines will benefit evenly from the mobile advantage. Mobile's convenience and context factors shift the distribution point and relegate life insurers into new roles as product
factories to be distributed or even white-labeled. Life insurers have done little when it comes to consumer-facing mobile apps beyond games and calculators. But this is just when US life insurers face the disappearance of an important distribution point in the healthcare reform era: employers who will push employees to exchanges for healthcare coverage.35 Aggressive health insurers are already looking to offer voluntary benefits like supplemental life that can be bundled with a health insurance policy.

- **Efficient big data insurers cherry-pick the optimal risk.** Mobile analytics will provide the energy for insurance big data business power plants, and that data about consumers and their behavior will be the most strategic asset that insurers possess. Why? With the insights that mobile-enabled big data strategies provide, digital insurers will be able to select and price the most desirable risk at the optimal time for customers. That just-in-time insurance means that insurers’ mobile apps — and the underlying core systems — will operate like the black box algorithmic trading business of buy-side institutional investors.

- **Mobilized agents and brokers specialize in complex risk.** With more of the insurance supply chain being mobilized and automated and running with less human intervention, agents will evolve into “mobile agent habilis.” Some jobs in insurance are too unpredictable even for digitally intuitive and quasi-smart mobile devices, so agents will become focused on providing human reassurance to customers who want to pay for it and on the more difficult, unusual, or intricate lines of insurance like specialty lines. Agents will use tablet tools to master the more complex risks of specialty lines business for collecting the risk inputs that home office underwriters need and will use the high definition display of tablets to educate buyers about complex risk mitigation strategies. Agents who don’t evolve will go the way of the dodo.

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**SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL**

**Methodology**

For the North American Technographics® Financial Services Online Benchmark Recontact Survey, Q3 2011 (US), Forrester conducted an online survey fielded in September 2011 of 8,266 US online users ages 18 to 88 as a subsegment of the North American Technographics Online Benchmark Survey, Q3 2011 (US, Canada) population. For results based on a randomly chosen sample of this size (N = 8,266), there is 95% confidence that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 1.08% of what they would be if the entire population of US online individuals ages 18 and older had been surveyed. Forrester weighted the data by age, gender, income, broadband adoption, and region to demographically represent the adult US online population. The survey sample size, when weighted, was 8,204. (Note: Weighted sample sizes can be different from the actual number of respondents to account for individuals generally underrepresented in online panels.) Please note that this was an online survey. Respondents who participate in online surveys have in general more
experience with the Internet and feel more comfortable transacting online. The data is weighted to be representative for the total online population on the weighting targets mentioned, but this sample bias may produce results that differ from Forrester’s offline benchmark survey. The sample was drawn from members of MarketTools’ online panel, and respondents were motivated by receiving points that could be redeemed for a reward. The sample provided by MarketTools is not a random sample. While individuals have been randomly sampled from MarketTools’ panel for this particular survey, they have previously chosen to take part in the MarketTools online panel.

Forrester’s North American Technographics Financial Services Online Benchmark Recontact Survey, Q3 2011 (US) includes many additional questions and parameters by which you can analyze the data contained in this report. If you wish to subscribe to Forrester’s Consumer Technographics services, please contact your account manager or data@forrester.com. If you are an existing Technographics client, please contact your data advisor at consumerdataadvisor@forrester.com.

**Companies Interviewed For This Report**

Ara Trembly
belairdirect
Brightdriver
Capgemini
Century Capital Management
Discoverture Solutions
Enservio
Erie Indemnity
Esurance Insurance Services
Fineos
Generali
Groupama Rhône-Alpes Auvergne
Guidewire Software
The Hartford Financial Services Group
HCL Technologies
i3 Innovation In Insurance
IBM
Infosys
Interactive Intelligence
Liberty Mutual Insurance
Mitchell Insurance
New York Life Insurance
Progressive Casualty Insurance
Renaissance Group
SSP
SunGard
SwordInsurance
Symbility Solutions
TA Associates Management
TD Insurance
TechAssure Association
Tokio Marine
West Monroe Partners
Wolters Kluwer
Xerox
ENDNOTES

1 At the end of 2011, there were 5.981 billion mobile subscriptions globally, with mobile penetration amounting to nearly 87% of the global population. The definition of developed countries is based on the United Nations M49 composition and includes North America, Europe, Japan, and Australia/New Zealand. Source: ITU Mobile-Cellular Telephony Statistics (http://www.itu.int/ict/statistics).

2 At Apple's Apple iPhone 5 launch event in October 2011, the company announced that Apple customers had downloaded 18 billion apps to date, at a rate of more than 1 billion per month. In addition, Apple stated that it had paid out $3 billion to third-party developers, up from $1 billion in June 2010. Source: Sarah Perez, “More Than 1 Billion iOS Apps Are Downloaded Each Month,” TechCrunch, October 4, 2011 (http://techcrunch.com/2011/10/04/more-than-1-billion-ios-apps-are-downloaded-per-month/).

3 Mobile commerce is expected to reach $31 billion by 2016. While this represents a compounded annual growth rate of 39% from 2011 to 2016, mobile commerce is only expected to be 7% of overall eCommerce sales by 2016. The actual amount of mobile commerce dollars is relatively small, but the influence of mobile devices is understated, both by latent demand not met by unoptimized mobile sites and by the tremendous amount of mobile “preshopping” that drives transactions in other channels. See the June 17, 2011, “Mobile Commerce Forecast: 2011 To 2016” report.

4 Forrester asserted that mobile Internet would enter a virtuous cycle in which a growing audience would attract more consumer brands and more mobile-relevant content would attract larger audiences. However, the phenomenon happened more quickly than had been forecast in 2009 — mostly due to the accelerated pace of smartphone adoption. As a result, Forrester has updated its forecast and now expects 29% of European consumers to be connected to the mobile Internet at least monthly by the end of 2011. See the December 15, 2011, “Western European Mobile Forecast, 2011 To 2016” report.

5 That means that mobile strategies that enable feedback and reviews will be important mechanisms to let consumers vent and also to allow digital insurance teams to quickly address customer satisfaction issues and stem brand impact.

6 In Forrester's Forrsights Budgets And Priorities Tracker Survey, Q4 2011, 35% of the North American insurance providers surveyed called out expansion into new geographic markets as a leading business priority for their firms in the coming year. See the December 12, 2011, “Tech Opportunities In The North American Insurance Industry” report.

7 In February 2012, global telecommunications provider Ericsson reported that China accounted for 998 million subscribers, while India tallied 881 million of the nearly 6 billion mobile subscriptions globally. These two countries also accounted for 35% of the net mobile subscription additions in 2011. Source: “Traffic And Market Data Report,” Ericsson, February 2012 (http://www.ericsson.com/res/docs/2012/tmd_report_feb_web.pdf).

8 The mi-life service enables life insurance seekers to send a text message to a number on their mobile phones that directs them to a menu of products on offer. Alternatively, the person can contact an MTN service center to register for a policy that can be managed over the phone. Ghanaians who buy mi-life life insurance for two people can have coverage from $765 up to $3,062. Premiums are paid via MTN’s mobile

9 According to investment banker Rutberg, mobile app investments, including consumer, enterprise, and telecom, represented the second largest share of that $6.3 billion pie after infrastructure, accounting for $1.8 billion, or 29%. Source: Rajeev Chand, “Venture Capital In Mobile,” Rutberg, January 20, 2012 (http://www.rutbergco.com/2011review.pdf).


11 Castlight itself has attracted the attention of the venture capital community, landing more than $183 million in venture funding, including its most recent $100 million Series D funding in Q2 of 2012. Source: Rip Empson, “Castlight Lands A Whopping $100M D Round To Bring Transparency To Healthcare Costs,” TechCrunch, May 1, 2012 (http://techcrunch.com/2012/05/01/castlight-100m/).

12 Digital disruption is about to tear down and rebuild every product in every industry. Thanks to digital platforms, your customers live in a world of heightened expectations and abundant options; they can get more of what they want, in more places, at more times than ever before. Seizing this opportunity, digital disruptors threaten to make you irrelevant by delivering a more compelling product and service experience than you can and at a lower cost, often without even knowing that they’re upending you. See the October 27, 2011, “The Disruptor’s Handbook” report.

13 In Forrester’s Forrsights Budgets And Priorities Tracker Survey, Q4 2011, when we asked about their top three insurance industry priorities for 2012, 58% of the 89 US and Canadian insurance IT decision-makers responding stated accelerating new product development, followed closely by 57% reporting enhancing policy holder experience.

14 In October 2011, Tokio Marine and Nichido Fire Insurance launched the industry’s first One-day Auto Insurance, which can be purchased at any time via mobile phone. This new type of auto insurance can be purchased for ¥500 or ¥1,000 per day for just the number of days needed. Source: Tokio Marine Holdings (http://ir.tokiomarinehd.com/en/Message.html).

15 The Mobile Life Guard system is designed to monitor the actions of drivers. The system works by using an app installed on a smartphone that leverages the various sensors on the device. It is said to be able to "analyze" vehicle, road, and driver behavior and record the data for future use. There is also a learning- and behavioral-correction element. If there is a sudden swerve or sudden braking or acceleration, the action will trigger a verbal announcement of the event. Source: Junior Yearwood, “The Mobile Life Guard: Guardian Of Safety Or Big Brother?” Mutual Fund Observer, January 2012 (http://www.mutualfundobserver.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/mobile-life-guard.pdf).

16 As a loyalty reward, Tune Talk includes a life or permanent disability insurance policy as long as the mobile subscriber meets a regularly monthly purchase of mobile services. Source: Tune Talk (http://tunetalk.com/services/insurancefaq).
Given small screens and limited input options, the design and delivery of excellent mobile experiences is a monumental challenge. So how do you create excellent mobile products? Around consumer convenience. Consumers will embrace new products and services if they are fundamentally more convenient — that is to say, if the benefits outweigh the inhibitors to adoption and usage. These three key benefits are crucial to deliver convenient mobile services: immediacy, simplicity, and context. See the May 1, 2012, “The Future Of Mobile eBusiness Is Context” report.

Texas Farm Bureau has built particularly good agent locator functionality in its iPhone app that makes a personal connection to the agent, including map location, directions, photographs of each agent in the office, and click-to-call or -email the agent functionality. Source: iTunes (http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/texas-farm-bureau-insurance/id479005187?mt=8).

SUPER services are simple, ubiquitous, personal, empowering, and reassuring, but delivering this new generation of digital financial services demands the effective integration of customer touchpoints and the underlying systems and processes. Building or updating technology platforms will almost certainly be a complex part of building these next-generation services. See the March 11, 2011, “Next-Generation Digital Financial Services” report.


To use the QuickQuote service, Confused.com customers who have previously given the company their mobile phone number just need to text the registration number of the car to 66800 to get quotations in seconds. Source: Confused.com (http://www.confused.com/quickquote).


Brightdriver is an early-stage startup with roots in MIT’s Media Lab. Along with keeping commuters occupied with something that focuses their attention on the right thing — safe driving — the app also is an inexpensive collector of driver data that can be used for pay-as-you-drive (PAYD) programs at a lower cost than hardware-based onboard diagnostics (OBD) technology. Source: Brightdriver (http://www.brightdriver.com).

A power shift happens when a billion people use mobile devices to engage with brands, information, and each other: Mobile apps empower customers, partners, and employees wherever they are in the context of that moment. See the February 13, 2012, “Mobile Is The New Face Of Engagement” report.

Common-sense knowledge spans a huge portion of human experience, encompassing knowledge about the spatial, physical, social, temporal, and psychological aspects of typical everyday life. Because it is assumed that every person possesses common sense, such knowledge is typically omitted from social communications, such as text. A full understanding of any text, then, requires a surprising amount of common sense, which currently only people possess. MIT researchers are seeking to find ways to provide such common sense to machines. See http://conceptnet5.media.mit.edu/
While not an insurance provider, Blackboard has added augmented reality to the company’s Blackboard Mobile Central service to help new college students get acclimated more rapidly in their schools’ college campuses. This kind of functionality could easily be modified for the homeowners market to meet the needs of a variety of roles, from agents and home inspectors to claims adjusters. Source: “Blackboard Launches Augmented Reality for Mobile Campus Apps,” Blackboard press release, April 25, 2012 (http://www.blackboard.com/About-Bb/News-Center/Press-Releases.aspx?releaseid=122627).

Commonwealth Bank of Australia is generating 1% of its overall mortgage leads by using mobile augmented reality (AR) within a homebuyer’s research application to enhance its home-buying service. See the December 22, 2011, “Case Study: Home Buying With Mobile Augmented Reality” report.

A user task often spans multiple heterogeneous devices — for example, working on a PC in the office and continuing the work on a laptop or a mobile phone while commuting. However, there is a lack of support for users to easily migrate their tasks across devices. To address this problem, MIT researchers created Deep Shot, a framework for capturing the user’s work state that is needed for a task (e.g., the specific part of a webpage being viewed) and resuming it on a different device. Source: Tsung-Hsiang Chang and Yang Li, “Deep Shot: A Framework For Migrating Tasks Across Devices Using Mobile Phone Cameras,” MIT CSail, (http://people.csail.mit.edu/vgod/projects/deepshot-chi2011.pdf).

Siri is Apple’s helpful voice-activated assistant. While Google first introduced voice search on its Nexus One device in January 2010 and Microsoft embedded its Tellme platform in Windows Phone 7, these are simply new interfaces to search. Apple is the first to market a service — Siri — that is so tightly integrated with the device ecosystem. What makes the Siri assistant unique is that it goes beyond input and interprets a natural language statement or request based on the user’s context and history. See the November 22, 2011, “iPhone 4S Cements Apple’s Product Strategy Leadership Position” report.

People express and communicate their mental states — such as emotions, thoughts, and desires — through facial expressions, vocal nuances, gestures, and other nonverbal channels. The MIT Media Lab has developed a computational model that enables real-time analysis, tagging, and inference of cognitive-affective mental states from facial video. This framework combines bottom-up, vision-based processing of the face (e.g., a head nod or smile) with top-down predictions of mental-state models (e.g., interest and confusion) to interpret the meaning underlying head and facial signals over time. The system tags facial expressions, head gestures, and affective-cognitive states at multiple spatial and temporal granularities in real time and offline, in both natural human-human and human-computer interaction contexts. A version of this system is being made available commercially by Media Lab spinoff Affectiva, indexing emotion from faces. Source: MIT Media Lab (http://www.media.mit.edu/research/groups/affective-computing).

Ginger.io is another innovative startup that can trace its roots to the MIT Media Lab. The company’s platform is a combination of smartphone applications and a web-based dashboard used to passively track patient behavior relevant to their mood, memory, and functional status. Source: Gregory T. Huang, “Ginger.io Raises $1.7M For Mobile Health IT, Rides Wave Of MIT Media Lab Startups Trying To Understand People,” Xconomy, October 18, 2011 (http://www.xconomy.com/boston/2011/10/18/ginger-io-raises-1-7m-for-mobile-health-it-rides-wave-of-mit-media-lab-startups-trying-to-understand-people/).
32 Depending on the maturity of mobile strategy, mobile applications can range in cost from $25,000 to as much as $500,000. See the February 13, 2012, “Mobile Is The New Face Of Engagement” report.

33 Mobile is hot, but too many executives take a backward approach to developing a mobile initiative and begin with technology decisions such as “We need an iPhone application” or “Let’s do something with SMS.” Too often, teams focus on the wrong thing first: technology. Instead, firms should first ask which consumers they want to reach and how they use mobile, then establish clear objectives and lay out a strategy. See the May 10, 2012, “A Systematic Approach To Mobile Strategy” report.


35 According to LIMRA, the percentage of American adults with group life insurance has surpassed adults owning individual life insurance (36% versus 35%). Source: “Facts About Life,” LIMRA, September 2011 (http://www.limra.com/newscenter/pressmaterials/11FOL.pdf).
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