

ALFA VISION & ALFA SPECIALTY INSURANCE INSTALLS ABSMESSAGE ON ALL OF ITS SYSTEM i MACHINES

The Vision Insurance Group was founded in 1998. The Vision Insurance Group, LLC was purchased by Alfa Mutual Insurance in 2001. Since then, the company has gone through name changes, and is recognized as Alfa Vision & Alfa



Specialty Insurance Companies. The company is part of Alfa Mutual Insurance which was founded in 1946, and provides insurance and other financial services in 12 states. These states include core operations in Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia with additional products marketed in Texas, Missouri, Indiana, Ohio, Virginia, Tennessee, Arkansas, Kentucky and North Carolina. The Alfa Home Office is in Montgomery, Ala. Alfa Life Insurance currently has more than \$25 billion in force and Alfa's property and casualty companies service over 1 million policies. Alfa Vision & Alfa Specialty Insurance Companies utilizes over 4000 independent agents to produce revenue.

J. Michael Bresson is the IT Computer Operations Manager at Alfa Vision & Alfa Specialty Insurance Companies, and manages the Computer Operations group which includes the Power Systems monitoring group. Alfa Vision & Alfa Specialty Insurance Companies use technology strategically to differentiate itself from competitors and to provide an innovative service offering to new and existing customers. If Alfa's systems are not up, their competitors receive the business. The System i is a critical part of Alfa's business and a key platform for them.

Alfa Vision & Alfa Specialty Insurance Evaluates absMessage

Alfa Vision & Alfa Specialty Insurance Companies already had another message management solution in place for more than ten years. After meeting with Software Engineering of America (SEA), Alfa Insurance decided to trial SEA's absMessage. "We felt that SEA presented a better solution for our business," explained Bresson. "SEA met our needs from the initial sales consultation, to the capabilities of absMessage, to their flawless support and training. Moreover, we were slow in installing some of our new technologies, and I wanted to boost productivity in the Power Systems monitoring group. absMessage enabled us to do that."

"SEA solved many problems for us. For the first time we were able to monitor our entire System i network centrally and increase System i uptime, and the absMessage solution delivered a lower cost to the business."

absMessage Improves Productivity

Alfa Vision & Alfa Specialty Insurance Companies chose SEA's absMessage for its powerful message management and alerting features, and its centralized view of their systems through a GUI interface. This means that the Monitoring team need only look in one place - rather than system by system - for all of its message and resource issues.

"I was looking for a better way to automate the iSeries without having to babysit the message queues," noted Bresson. "If our applications are not up and running 24x7 we need to know if there are any issues right away. We can't afford to lose business if a program is waiting on a message."

absMessage took over the job of monitoring the message queues and critical resources, enabling the Monitoring team to work on other projects and tasks elsewhere.

absMessage immediately sends alerts on messages and systems resource issues as they arise, giving their operators the opportunity to address these notifications in real time - which is essential to Alfa Vision & Alfa Specialty Insurance. With absMessage's smart filters, operators receive alerts based on message type, job name, program name and many other definitions, and can reply to messages through any system or mobile device within reach - a 5250 screen, web GUI, smart phone or text message.

The Computer Operations Group was also pleasantly surprised at SEA's support. "Initially, the product did not present the need for formalized training," continues Bresson. "However, each environment is set up differently. After having to utilize the support, it was the final piece I needed to ensure that I chose the right company."

Alfa Vision & Alfa Specialty Insurance Almost Eliminates System Downtime

Alfa Vision & Alfa Specialty Insurance installed absMessage on all of its System i machines, and evaluated absMessage for thirty days. During that time, Alfa Vision & Alfa Specialty Insurance was able to almost eliminate system downtime by tailoring system message alerts to the support escalation process. This was key to ensuring that their revenue flow was not halted and would continue without interruption.

Bresson indicated that SEA's other products, in addition to absMessage, were of interest to Alfa Vision & Alfa Specialty Insurance Companies moving forward. "Without a doubt as long as I have oversight in our Power Systems monitoring group, I will be using absMessage."

Established in 1982, Software Engineering of America has built a global reputation as a leader in the field of enterprise software solutions. Over 10,000 data centers of all sizes and configurations are utilizing one or more of SEA's products, including 9 of the Fortune 10 as well as 425 of the Fortune 500 companies.