

San Cristóbal Seguros Partners with Guidewire for a Cultural and Business Transformation

Argentinian Insurer Uses Guidewire ClaimCenter to Innovate Claims Processing



San Cristóbal Seguros

Headquarters

Rosario, Argentina

Operations

Argentina, Uruguay

Business Lines

Personal and Commercial: Auto, Homeowners Property, Personal Accident, Life Insurance, Other Risk, Boat, Aircraft
 Commercial: Commercial Property, General Liability, Caution, Agriculture (Hail Storms, Animals), Hail for Commercial, Transport, Technical Insurance, Total Risk Operation

Employees

778

Website

sancristobal.com.ar

Product(s)

Guidewire InsuranceSuite

San Cristóbal Seguros: History and Business

San Cristóbal Seguros was founded in Rosario, Argentina, in 1939. With a history of 77 years in general insurance, the company has built a strong reputation of financial strength and commitment to solvency. Over the last two decades, it has survived macroeconomic challenges such as hyper-inflation and managing currency with three exchange rates. Many of its competitors left the insurance industry during that time because they were unable to sustain success within this volatile market.

“San Cristóbal Seguros is the fourth-largest insurer—and is ranked first in financial assets—in the Argentinian market. Its offices have more than 2,700 advisors serving over 700,000 policyholders. About 75% of the company’s business comes from channel partners (brokers and retail agents), with the remainder coming from banks, retail, and other partnerships,” says Vanessa Rocca, General Manager.

The Challenges of the Argentinian Insurance Market

San Cristóbal Seguros competes in a market in which insurers face the challenges of overcoming outdated pricing strategies and meeting the needs of both customers and channel partners to provide fast, simple, and completely digital solutions.

“The Argentinian market is very competitive and highly regulated,” says Daniel Gabas, Chief Information Officer. “There are +100 insurance companies, with none of them really evolving to meet today’s needs.

And we’re all trying to be the first one to think about the customer’s needs and how to improve their experience.”

Benefits

- 80%+ customer satisfaction scores
- 56% online status check
- 19% online FNOL
- Improved scalability and efficiency

"I think that the most important thing that ClaimCenter gives us is the ability to measure performance, improve our standards, and even improve our processes. This is what we are doing today."

— Gustavo Palotta, General Manager, San Cristóbal Seguros

"In the Argentinian market, people want things to be fast, digital, and easy. This applies to the entire Argentinian market, not just millennials," adds Gustavo Palotta, Corporate Commercial Manager.

The Challenge: Finding a Complete Digital Solution

San Cristóbal Seguros was using a legacy claims system that was heavily dependent on a paper filing process for claims. The process was slow and the average claims cycle time was three months. High customer involvement required policyholders to complete many steps to access or complete crucial parts of the claims process. For example, a policyholder would typically have to visit a physical San Cristóbal Seguros branch to complete paperwork or to present documents.

From an internal perspective, there was a huge need for a completely digital solution. Employees were often faced with overcoming data integrity challenges and maintaining data in one repository. "With our legacy system, it was extremely difficult to find files or customer information," says Daniel Gabas. "We also didn't have 24/7 technical support."

"When we evaluated the challenges that we would face in the next four or five years," explains Gustavo Palotta, "we decided that our previous legacy system was not enough to sustain our success in the future."

The Solution: Guidewire ClaimCenter

A strategic vendor selection process took San Cristóbal Seguros more than six months. Each vendor was judged on functionality, integration capabilities, analyst reports, and its leadership position in local and global markets.

As Gustavo Palotta describes the process, "Guidewire quickly understood our needs, and this was obvious compared to other competitors."

After reviewing more than 20 solutions, the company chose Guidewire ClaimCenter® to transform its claims system.

"We chose Guidewire based on its position as a market leader," Daniel Gabas says, "and on its commitment to customers."

A Successful Go-Live: Argentina and Uruguay

The ClaimCenter implementation project was successfully completed in 14 months—on time and on budget. The project involved 40 people, including internal San Cristóbal Seguros employees as well as SBI Technology, a Guidewire system integrator.

San Cristóbal Seguros celebrated its ClaimCenter go-live in Argentina in September 2015, followed by Uruguay in June 2016. Both go-lives included all lines of business in both Auto and Homeowners.

"We come from a very traditional background," explains Daniel Gabas, "where IT and business are completely separated. Guidewire introduced us to a new way of working. Our people started to see economic cultural and operations results. When they started to see all that, they began to appreciate what we had done during the project."

ClaimCenter Benefits

The insurer has realized a wide range of benefits from its ClaimCenter implementation, including the following:

- Digital solution improves employee and customer satisfaction
 - Employees: Claim handlers have increased satisfaction with the elimination of both paper usage and a manual filing system. They also now have the ability to route and assign claims appropriately through an automated assigning system in ClaimCenter. They no longer need to use side notes because alerts in the system provide easy notifications.
 - Customers: For service and the resolution of inquiries, policyholders now have direct access to their claims online. They are no longer required to visit a physical San Cristóbal Seguros branch to submit documents.
- Reduced claim cycle time: The average claims cycle time has been reduced from three months to one month.
- Better visibility of claims attributes: With ClaimCenter, the insurer has the ability to effectively segment and route claims by complex criteria and identify bottlenecks in the claims process.
- Implemented change management and training programs within the overall implementation process: San Cristóbal Seguros considered its employees to be such a critical part of the company's success that it invested in change management, training, and communication programs. That experience with the ClaimCenter implementation helped them prepare employees for success in subsequent programs with PolicyCenter and Billing Center. Previously, a formal training program was not possible due to the complexity, lack of documentation, and informality of the previous process. After the ClaimCenter implementation, a new hire can be fully trained in ten days.
- On-time and on-budget implementation: "Agile methodology was a new and huge change for us," Daniel Gabas says. "Previously, we didn't have any knowledge of Agile processes. Because the implementation process was based on the Agile methodology, we were able to have complete control over the ClaimCenter project and deliver ontime and on-budget."
- Increased customer satisfaction: With ClaimCenter, San Cristóbal Seguros customers can interact with the claims process—at their own convenience—however and whenever they prefer.
- Culture transformation: Implementing ClaimCenter completely changed the company's culture. The leadership could better manage employee efficiency by re-organizing teams according to new job roles and responsibilities. Gustavo Palotta describes the changes as follows: "I think that the most important thing that ClaimCenter gives us is the ability to measure performance, improve our standards, and even improve our processes. This is what we are doing today."

An Ongoing Transformation: PolicyCenter and BillingCenter

San Cristóbal Seguros continues its plans to remain competitive with existing insurers as well as new market entrants. After realizing the benefits of ClaimCenter, it decided to completely transform its core systems with Guidewire PolicyCenter and Guidewire BillingCenter. Doing so will help the company further expand into new countries in the South American market, including Peru, Chile, and Paraguay.

"We are proud to be the first insurance company in the Argentinian market to use Guidewire applications," concludes Daniel Gabas.

Guidewire is the platform P&C insurers trust to engage, innovate, and grow efficiently. We combine digital, core, analytics, and machine learning to deliver our platform as a cloud service. More than 500 insurers, from new ventures to the largest and most complex in the world, run on Guidewire. For more information, contact us at info@guidewire.com.