

## Sun Life Creates One Link to Many Back Offices

Scivantage's middle-office software to be utilized to ease the transition.

By Penny Crosman

Wall Street & Technology

June 20, 2007

Independent Financial Marketing Group (IFMG) — a subsidiary of Sun Life Financial that operates retail investment centers in retail banks — announced that it's connecting its 3,500 securities and insurance brokers, who mostly work out of retail bank branches in 48 states, with the back offices for all the products they sell. The initiative will be completed with the help of Jersey City, N.J.-based Scivantage's middle-office software.

"The account-opening processing is paper intensive," says Roni Mizrahi, chief information officer of IFMG, which has agreements with 60 fund companies and 45 insurance carriers. "We sell more than 250 annuity products and 7,000 mutual fund products. For any rep, keeping track of all the paperwork requirements for these products is a daunting task. We decided to make the process easier for reps and to increase their ability to spend more time meeting client needs rather than chasing paperwork; we needed an automated solution to get us there."

Mizrahi says he looked at brokerage applications that would provide account opening and real-time trading with multiple back offices. Scivantage's solution already had links to IFMG's clearing firms —

Pershing and National Financial for equities and fixed-income products, and ADP for mutual funds — Mizrahi notes.

The new platform will be an extension of the brokers' existing platform, maintaining the look and feel they're used to, according to Mizrahi. But while account-opening is a paper-based process today, the Scivantage software will automate the process start to finish, he contends. It will provide a single data entry point for brokers that looks similar to TurboTax for the securities business, Mizrahi says, noting that it will be a big change from filling out the myriad paper forms of insurance companies, mutual fund companies and clearing firms.

The brokers don't need to know, for example, which clearing firm will be used. "We expect to have a lot less NIGO, which stands for Not In Good Order business — i.e., exceptions," Mizrahi relates. "Therefore, the cost of sales will decrease significantly. We expect a 30 percent decrease in the follow-up and NIGO rate when we fully implement the application."

Until now, brokers have had to be taught how to use the ADP, National Financial and Pershing front ends, which all have

different user interfaces, capabilities and nomenclature, Mizrahi adds. "With Scivantage, we have one training program we provide and one platform that we can change as our business changes," he says. "That level of abstraction from the back offices will help us with reporting, commission accounting and managing client assets."

The project started in April 2006 and all back-office conversions were completed in April 2007. The firm now is in the process of deploying the application in the field, according to Mizrahi, who says the first wave is due for completion June 18.

The next stage is to extend the automation of paperwork generation to the funds' families and carriers. Then IFMG will add digital signatures and digital archiving to the platform to achieve straight-through processing and simplify account maintenance, Mizrahi says. Scivantage also will provide added IT support for the brokers, who often have to rely on the IT staff of the bank out of which they work, he notes.

"This has been one of the most significant technology projects we've done in the last eight years in this company," Mizrahi says. "Implementing this technology is integral to the success of our brokers."

(#14469) Reprinted with permission from the June 20, 2007 online edition of Wall Street & Technology. Copyright 2007 CMP Media LLC. For more information about reprints from Wall Street & Technology, please contact PARS International Corp. at 212-221-9595.



10 Exchange Place, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Jersey City, New Jersey 07302  
toll-free 866.724.8268  
t 646.452.0050  
f 646.452.0049  
info@scivantage.com  
www.scivantage.com