Engaging with Ruschlikon - Selecting Technology Options and Vendors

Focus on eAccounting and Claims administration Non-life

Version 2.3

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Contents

1. Introduction

1.1.   Preface

The Ruschlikon Initiative is a proven global eAccounting and Claims initiative, providing significant business benefits to the (re)insurance industry. Since over a decade, it connects leading players of the (re)insurance industry to advanced back-office processes such as technical accounting, claims and financial handling. Since 2019, the Ruschlikon Initiative has also focused on advanced electronic placement processes from submission to bind.

Link to Ruschlikon Homepage: http://www.ruschlikon.com/

1.2.   Purpose of the document

This document provides guidance on available technical options for eAccounting and Claims, in line with the Ruschlikon process. Once the ePlacing community is more advanced, the inclusion and/or establishment of a guidance paper is envisaged.

1.3.   Disclaimer

The document is not an endorsement nor a recommendation of any vendor or a specific technology implementation option. It does also not provide an exhaustive list of 2016-10 ACORD certified and Ruschlikon capable vendors.

1.4.   Useful information around Ruschlikon

- What is Ruschlikon
- How does Ruschlikon achieve these benefits
- Ruschlikon Case Studies
- Ruschlikon Adoption Directory (RAD)

2. Technical implementation approach and options

Whether the Ruschlikon interested business partner is a Broker, Insurer, Cedent, Reinsurer or Co-insurer, there are solutions available to suit any organisation and operational needs, whether that is full integration or using a message management tool (MMT). The implementation approach and the key components and characteristics for each method of sending and receiving ACORD messages are described below.

There are three main options available to realize the benefits of using the ACORD data standards and Ruschlikon best practice. Each approach brings different benefits, so interested implementing companies should consider the degree of automation their organisation wants to achieve as this will influence the appropriate way forward.

2.1.   Full integration

In the full integration option, the organisation will need to implement various components to engage with any messaging partner. Those components are the following:

- Message capable (re)insurance administration system and/or
- ACORD capable gateway and/or an API integration layer for the message exchange
- DRI (Document Repository interface) mechanism for the seamless exchange of documents relevant for each transaction (supporting documents)
- If the (re)insurance administration system is not ACORD message capable, there is a need for an extraction/transformation tool

Straight through processing (STP) delivers significant benefits in terms of client service, higher operational efficiency and lower administration costs.

From a sender viewpoint, this would imply automatic generation of all messages without user intervention.

From a receiver point of view there is no manual intervention required between the interactions of the messages with internal transactional systems.

Typically, organisations often start their Ruschlikon implementation using a message management tool (MMT) and work towards full integration as a phased project.

2.2.   Message Management Tool (MMT)

A MMT is an online portal which allows business partners to receive, review and respond to messages. Most vendors will have an array of API's to integrate the data and documents associated with a TA, FA or CM. The data can either flow into a downstream system before or after an acceptance/query has taken place. Most vendors will also have a set of API's to trigger an acceptance/query from a downstream system, which moves them one stage closer to their STP goal.
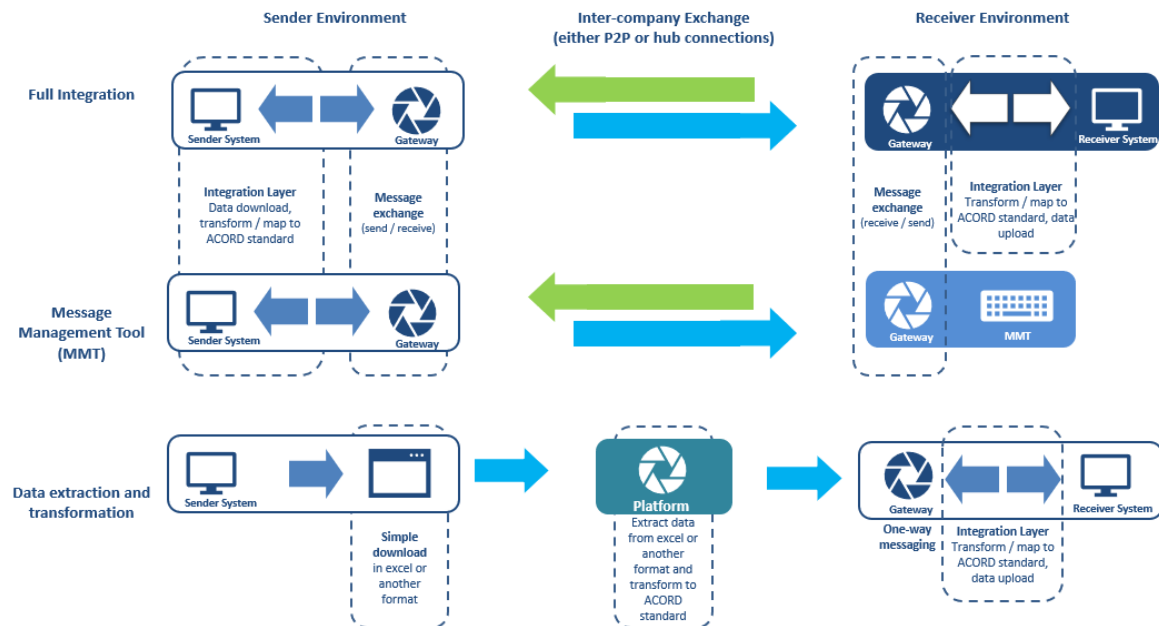
2.3.   Data extraction and transformation

Several data exchange platforms exist that processes non-standard data in spreadsheets (and other formats) from sending companies into ACORD messages for onward transmission to receiving companies. Receivers then use their existing messaging gateway to load these electronic messages into their internal systems.

It allows sender companies to produce the accounts to an ACORD standard without investing in messaging capability/technology, while it delivers considerable time and cost reductions for the receiving companies, provided all message relevant information is available on the output document from the sender company.

3. Key components

This section of the document describes the key components that can be used to support messaging.

3.1.   Full integration

Most participants will have a back-end system that manages business relationships, contract information, etc. and this should be enabled to generate and receive ACORD messages, either through a gateway or API integration. A gateway is a software product that allows business partners to exchange standard ACORD messages over the internet.

Essentially, gateway products 'plug' into existing participating organisation's internal systems which do not have native ACORD capability to provide the ability to send and receive valid ACORD messages in any published standard.

The gateway validates messages and manages security. It also manages, distributes and handles responses to messages and provides integration capabilities to internal systems.

3.2.   Message Management Tool (MMT)

A Message Management Tool (MMT) is a user interface that allows a user to easily manage the receipt, review and response to ACORD messages. It is often called 'portal' or 'hub'. The user interface will be underpinned by an ACORD gateway which delivers the necessary responses to its intended destination.

3.3.   Data extraction and transformation

If a sender's administration system cannot generate the relevant ACORD GRLC Standard needed to form an EBOT/ECOT transaction, a transformation tool can bridge the gap. To support this, the sender's administration system output must be provided in a structured format i.e. CSV, XLS, XML, JSON or PDF containing all message relevant information as indicated in the Technical Implementation Package (Click here for the link to the Technical Implementation Package). The transformation tool will map the data to the appropriate ACORD GRLC standard and, combined with a gateway, send electronic messages to the receiver.

The same principle applies to the receiver who may use a transformation tool to map the incoming documents/data sets to the ACORD GRLC data standard for onwards processing.

3.4.   Connectivity options: Peer to peer or hub

The previously outlined integration options are set up as either

- peer to peer connections or
- via message hubs (API hubs)

In the case of peer-to-peer connections, the organisation or their gateway vendor are individually managing each connection with each trading partner.

When using a hub, an organisation establishes one connection to the hub that allows receiving validated message from all companies with established connections to the hub, e.g. 'Connect once to connect to all or many'

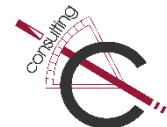# 4. Categories of vendor offerings

4.1.   Broker administration system vendors (as sender or receiver)

Vendors providing technology solutions that manage the broking process, from placement to billing as well as claims management and technical accounting. Systems may also include document production, workflows and management information.

4.2.   Cedent / (Re)insurer administration system vendors (as sender or receiver)

Vendors providing technology solutions that manage the lifecycle of insurance and reinsurance business to support underwriting, technical & financial accounting, claims movement & settlement.

4.3.   Gateway / MMT providers

Vendors providing software that facilitates the electronic transport of data and documents between business partners using ACORD standards. Message Management Tools (MMTs) can be used to view and respond to messages without any integration.

4.4.   Integration component vendors

Vendors providing various integration components that enable the creation of valid ACORD messages to be automatically generated from data emanating from the sender's applications and/or provide the capability for data to be ingested into the receiver's applications, thereby removing time consuming and potentially error prone manual rekeying from the (re)insurance administration process.

For more information on vendors that can assist in adopting ACORD GRLC data standards and Ruschlikon best practice, please refer to the Ruschlikon Adoption Directory (RAD) which is available under the Resource section of the Ruschlikon website. Please click here for a direct link to the RAD.

The RAD gives a non-exhaustive and high-level overview of Ruschlikon active organisations (practitioners, as well as vendors) in the non-life Accounting and Claims area. It provides useful information on their Ruschlikon capabilities, including information on geographical scope and contact details if more information is required. The companies represented on the RAD indicate their capabilities as a sender and/or receiver for all or just a subset of message types following either the 2015-04 or 2016-10 ACORD GRLC data standards, including the supported document transfer methods.

5. Additional information

5.1.   The digital journey

The progress of the (re)insurance industry towards greater digitization and automation continues to grow at a rapid rate. Yet this transformation will only be effective and efficient if it uses standards at the heart of the journey.

Organisations find themselves at different stages on their digital journey, but the Ruschlikon initiative, powered by ACORD, uses data and process standards to support them. Regional implementation group leaders often are the first point of contact.

Whether a company is ready to share data via peer-to-peer electronic messaging, or digitizing paper documents, the Ruschlikon community can provide tools and guidance that cater for every level of maturity.

Implementation Guides, Data Dictionaries, schemas for validation, as well as working examples aid implementation efforts, whilst data extraction tools can help to transform unstructured information into structured data that can be reliably exchanged and used for automation.

Link to the Regional Implementation Groups of Ruschlikon: https://www.acord.org/standards-architecture/ruschlikon/ruschlikon-regional-implementation

5.2.   Costs and benefits of Ruschlikon implementation

As outlined in section 2, various business partners have different needs and prerequisites. Current capabilities and future needs, from a process and/or a technical perspective vary. Ruschlikon

engaged vendors are well positioned to help prospective implementers, establishing the required gap analysis and helping with business cases.

Please click here for a direct link to the RAD.

Ruschlikon case studies published on the homepage can help establish business cases. The case study owners are always happy to share their experiences.

Please click here to view Ruschlikon Case Studies.

5.3. ACORD/Ruschlikon resources

For self-builders, there are various ACORD resources available. Implementation guides, Reference guides, Test Harness, etc. which can be found on the ACORD website. Much of the material is accessible to ACORD members only, whilst other material is accessible to everyone.

To ease the engaging process and initial setup of a potential new Ruschlikon messaging user, ACORD provides a "Test Harness". This allows the users to simulate interaction with other parties and verify if the messages generated by their own systems are adhering to the ACORD standards.

Link to ACORD homepage: https://www.acord.org/

6. Concluding remarks

There are clear business benefits to being involved with the Ruschlikon initiative. Ruschlikon is a committed community of brokers, carriers, and reinsurers (and their vendors), all striving towards the reduction of back office frictional costs and streamlining processes for the (re)insurance sector by implementing global ACORD Data Standards together with an agreed set of business processes and rules.

There is governance in place, and the standards employed are mature and stable – i.e. the initiative is already set up with partners end points in place.

Link to Ruschlikon Adoption Directory (RAD)

Onboarded practitioners from the various industry partners, organised in regional implementation groups, are committed to share their wealth of experience with more recent joiners and prospective Ruschlikon members and provide support on your eMessaging journey.

Please do reach out to contact@ruschlikon.com for any assistance or get in contact with your closest regional implementation group chair(s): Regional Implementation Groups (acord.org).

7. Other Useful Resources

- [Login (acord.org)](#)
- [What is Ruschlikon?](#)
- [How does Ruschlikon achieve these benefits](#)
- [Ruschlikon Case Studies](#)
- [Link to Ruschlikon Adoption Directory (RAD)](#)
- [Regional Implementation Groups (acord.org)](#)
- [Engaging with Ruschlikon – Selecting Technology Options and vendors](#)
- [Ruschlikon-edeployment-guide_may-2024-1.pdf (acord.org)](#)
- [Best Practice Guide (Post-Placement) v 1.0 (acord.org)](#)