

AI technology helps customers get back on the road sooner

Sydney - 01 Nov 2017: Leading Australian insurer Suncorp today announced it has successfully integrated IBM (NYSE: IBM) Watson artificial intelligence technology into its online claims process. This will help further streamline the more than 500,000 motor claims Suncorp receives each year.

Using IBM Watson's Natural Language Classifier, the system analyses customer descriptions of motor vehicle accidents – which are often written in a conversational way, including colloquialisms and Australian slang – to help Suncorp better understand the circumstances and confidently determine liability.

The new digital solution relies on Watson to conduct liability analysis and assist in fast-tracking simple claims, such as single vehicle incidents with detailed descriptions. If the incident description provided by the customer is limited, or there is a low confidence score from the system in determining liability, the claim is quickly routed to a claim consultant to help make the liability decision.

Since going into production in June 2017, the proportion of customers who were fast-tracked through the process has tripled, enabling claim consultants to focus more time on complex scenarios, while helping more customers get their vehicle into a repairer and back on the road faster.

The technology enables claims to be lodged, excess paid (or waived based on the decision) and repairs booked within 5 minutes.

"This technology augments our claim consultant's knowledge and expertise, providing data-driven insights and instilling greater confidence in our liability decisions. It has also helped us speed the process for our customers, while improving their experience at a time that's often very stressful," Gary Dransfield, CEO Insurance, Suncorp, said.

"Ultimately this enhances our customers' experience by delivering innovative digital solutions to help make the claim process easier.

"Previously, depending on the complexity or details around a customer's claim, they could be diverted to a claim consultant for a phone call, who would then use their judgment to make the liability decision," Mr Dransfield said.

"By integrating Watson, not only is our claims process streamlined, but we have further improved the consistency of our liability decisions, while establishing a reliable reference point based on a very large history of claims and industry guidelines."

"This is a unique application of artificial intelligence that directly impacts the lives of everyday Australians, while helping Suncorp's team focus their time on the more challenging incidents," said Mark Allaby, Managing Partner, Financial Services, IBM Australia.

"Suncorp is fast becoming one of the leading Australian organisations for digital innovation and technology, and this is due to their commitment to keeping the customer at the heart of their ongoing transformation."

Suncorp trained Watson on the complexities associated with determining liability in motor vehicle accidents

using nearly 15,000 de-personalised claim scenarios and the resulting liability determination, in line with guidelines from the Australian Prudential Regulatory Authority (APRA). By the end of the trial period, Watson could accurately determine liability for around 90 per cent of cases.

This technology is being used across Suncorp's Personal Insurance brands including, AAMI, Suncorp, GIO and Bingle.

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