

AdminServer on Sun

Leave Legacy Systems Behind and Create Agile Insurance Solutions



AdminServer

Highlights

- Find ways to get ahead — Leave legacy systems behind with a flexible, open policy administration solution from AdminServer and Sun
- Select a platform that offers choice — Choose from Sun's portfolio of system and software architectures
- Innovate without limitations — Create new insurance offerings rapidly and easily without the constraints of antiquated legacy systems
- Trim IT budgets — Opt for a single, powerful Sun platform for AdminServer solutions
- Speed development and deployment — Take advantage of the powerful AdminServer rules engine and quickly develop business rules to fit any scenario
- Get more work done faster — Leverage the automated processing of AdminServer, boosted by Sun's blazing system performance
- Streamline operations — Deploy a service-oriented architecture that can utilize the Web for service delivery
- Prepare for tomorrow — Select an open, scalable Sun platform that can grow with business requirements



The insurance industry is challenged to offer increasingly sophisticated policy offerings in shorter time frames. Legacy software and programming tools are failing to keep pace with swiftly changing market conditions, forcing organizations to handle critical needs with outdated system capabilities. To address these concerns, AdminServer designed a flexible, powerful software suite that streamlines straight-through processing and helps satisfy customer demands. The AdminServer suite further enhances policy administration by automating many manual tasks, freeing administrative staff for other work.

Running on open, powerful Sun platforms, the AdminServer software gives organizations the ability to scale and tailor solutions to meet new business conditions. The result is an insurance industry solution that helps companies quickly get ahead, and stay ahead, of the competition.

The need to move ahead

As the market clamors for more sophisticated and diverse Life, Annuity, Reinsurance, and Health offerings, insurance companies are realizing that existing legacy insurance applications cannot be modified in a cost-effective manner for new product offerings. These applications are not just failing to keep pace, they are now an obstacle to innovation.

Without a flexible solution, insurance companies are unable to enhance features and functionality, implement custom options, or in some cases even offer new products. As a result, organizations are looking for proven, next-generation applications that can quickly facilitate the creation of new and interesting products to satisfy demand.

The failure of legacy systems to support diverse sets of business rules within a single application is forcing companies to deploy multiple systems for different products. New servers must be added every time a new insurance offering is introduced, leading to a tangled mess of systems and applications. The resulting need for administrators with different skill sets, coupled with unnecessary complexity, can rapidly drive up costs.

More flexibility. Faster deployment. Less cost.

In order to meet changing business demands and keep costs manageable, carriers need enterprise-wide tools that can eliminate these obstacles. Customizable, high-performance insurance solutions running on powerful, flexible systems are a must if organizations are to be able to innovate and stay ahead of the competition.

The AdminServer System

AdminServer System is a comprehensive policy administration and contract management system for the insurance industry that helps tackle the twin challenges of increasing market demands and ballooning IT overhead. The AdminServer software consists of a number of chassis, enabling offerings for Life, Annuity, Health, and Reinsurance lines of business to all run on a single, consolidated system.

Increased productivity and reduced costs

Because the AdminServer software utilizes advanced and innovative technologies, the environment is not forced to adapt to the application — the software can adapt to each unique client environment. As a result, insurance carriers avoid legacy system constraints, such as batch, manual, and exception transaction processing by clerical staff. By fully automating manual procedures and exception processing, transaction times and IT overhead costs are reduced, along with the likelihood of human error. In addition, transactions can be handled in real-time. The result — improved productivity in operations and administration along with increased customer service and satisfaction.

Often overlooked in IT cost estimates, training costs can also be reduced when implementing the AdminServer software. Using the software helps companies move multiple insurance offerings onto a single platform, reducing the need for multiple administrator skill sets, lowering administrator training costs, and increasing productivity and efficiency. Because the AdminServer software is browser-based and automates manual processing functions, even the cost of training customer service representatives can be reduced.

Speed, simplify, and consolidate

The AdminServer software incorporates a powerful rules engine that controls business rules at the company, plan, fund, state, client, policy, coverage, and activity level. The rules are flexible and scalable enough to define any business function. As a result, the innovative rules engine enables quick manipulation of product features and functions. Unparalleled flexibility helps formulate nontraditional insurance product offerings, accelerate customizations, reduce time to market, and improve responsiveness to market conditions.

In addition, the rules engine incorporates powerful modeling capabilities that permit consolidation of multiple platforms onto a single system. Consolidation simplifies administration, streamlines operations, and helps increase return on investment.

Powerful service-oriented architecture design

The AdminServer and Sun solution employs an advanced service-oriented architecture (SOA) that is designed for the insurance industry. This architecture makes it possible to integrate virtually all IT resources, even incorporating data silos and previously incompatible legacy and .NET applications with Java™ technology-based applications. In the vanguard of emerging technologies, service-oriented architectures are the preferred method for delivering services over the Web, regardless of platform. This type of framework offers exceptional flexibility and high return on investment. The adaptability of the service-oriented architecture helps ease customization and shorten time to market.

The AdminServer architecture is comprised of two tiers: a presentation or application tier, and a business logic or database tier, with a browser-based front end (Figure 1).

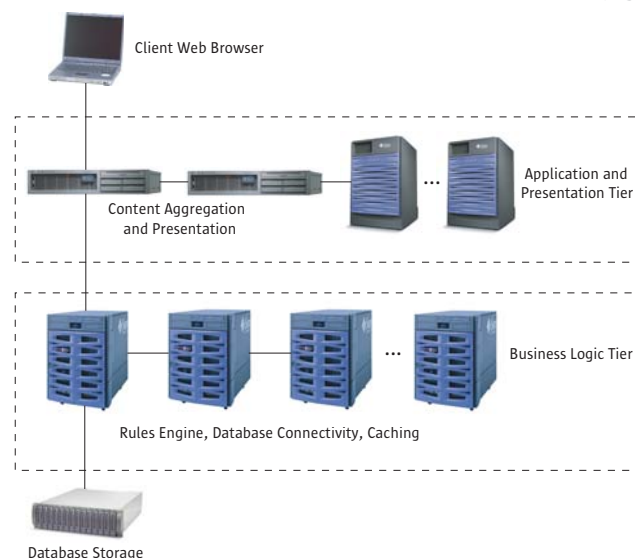


Figure 1. The AdminServer n-tier architecture utilizes Java Platform, Enterprise Edition technology.

The application server tier utilizes the Java Platform, Enterprise Edition (Java EE), providing a service delivery platform in a next-generation services infrastructure. The database tier supports Oracle 9i or 10g, IBM DB2, or Microsoft SQL Server. The browser-based front end facilitates system access. Because all tiers can scale horizontally, the solution can grow and adapt as business needs change.

Powered by Sun

An innovative software solution deserves a flexible platform that can keep pace and adapt to changing demands. Sun systems scale from entry-level blades and rackmount systems to high-performance, enterprise-class servers that can dramatically increase throughput and reduce energy consumption. Because Sun servers run the powerful Solaris™ Operating System (OS), organizations can begin on a small system and move to a larger server without modifying applications. As a result, the server platform can be matched to current business requirements without sacrificing future growth.

Take advantage of the Solaris 10 OS

A \$500 million investment in research and development produced the Solaris 10 OS, an industry-leading operating system with over 600 new features. Traditionally known for being open and scalable, the Solaris OS provides binary compatibility, technology that makes it possible to run software on every Sun server within a processor family, lowering costs and providing investment protection. In addition, the state-of-the-art Solaris 10 OS boasts indisputable performance advantages for database services, with world-record benchmark results.

Experience extreme performance

Sun offers a broad server product line of open, scalable systems designed with performance in mind. Among Sun's newest offerings are Sun Fire™ servers with CoolThreads™ technology for high performance coupled with eco-friendly energy savings.

Based on the new UltraSPARC® T1 processor, Sun Fire servers with CoolThreads technology incorporate an innovative chip multithreading (CMT) design that provides eight cores and 32 threads for massive thread-level parallelism and increased application throughput. Additional new server offerings include Sun Fire x64 servers — fast, energy-efficient servers that run virtually any operating system, including the Solaris OS, Linux, Windows, or VMware. With up to 16 Next-Generation AMD Opteron™ processors, Sun Fire x64 servers add yet another high performance choice to the Sun server line.

Leverage high availability

The Solaris 10 OS offers new capabilities, such as Predictive Self-Healing technology and the Solaris ZFS file system, to enhance availability. These features help drive near-zero downtime, particularly when using the Solaris OS in combination with Sun Fire servers. Predictive Self-Healing technology maximizes availability in the face of software and hardware faults. By automatically diagnosing, isolating, and recovering from many hardware and software faults, business-critical applications and essential system services continue without disruption in the event of software failures, major hardware component failures, and even software misconfiguration problems.

Solaris ZFS is a revolutionary new file system that automatically detects and corrects silent or accidental data corruption to help ensure data integrity. One of the first commercially available 128-bit file systems, Solaris ZFS is designed to simplify data management by eliminating the need for a volume manager. System administration tasks that typically can take more than 40 minutes to complete using a volume manager can now be executed within a matter of seconds with no file system downtime.

“ We view Sun’s market-leading technology as an optimal operating platform for enterprise-class customer application delivery.”

Kevin Walma

Chief Information Officer, AdminServer

Maximize return on investment

Implementing the AdminServer software across the enterprise can help organizations drastically reduce the total cost of ownership (TCO) of policy administration and management, with one customer publicly reporting a 49-percent ROI. Running the AdminServer software on Sun provides the foundation for a robust, flexible policy administration solution that can grow with the business. The AdminServer software running on Sun servers with the Solaris 10 OS produces greater efficiency and performance while improving infrastructure scalability and reliability. In addition, the solution helps reduce costs, shorten time to market for new offerings, and accelerate service delivery.

Create innovative new product offerings

By freeing organizations from legacy tools and systems, the AdminServer and Sun solution can help meet demand for new insurance instruments. Powerful AdminServer software features facilitate the development of new functions to meet market demand. The unique AdminServer rules engine is powerful and flexible enough to enable creative new product offerings, leading to almost limitless possibilities for features, calculations, and functions.

“The potential from our combined solutions and organizations translates to tremendous value for our mutual clients. We are excited to be a part of Sun’s SOA initiatives in the insurance sector.”

Kevin Walma

Chief Information Officer, AdminServer

Gauging application performance

Businesses are constantly searching for new solutions and technologies that help get more work done faster and produce more revenue. One way to do that is to find solutions that can process more transactions in less time. While no two businesses, computing environments, or even workloads are ever the same, it can be helpful to look at performance in a given environment to understand how the Sun and AdminServer solution might apply.

To gain insight into solution performance on a Sun infrastructure, Sun and AdminServer tested a sample configuration. For this exercise, the application tier consisted of two Sun Fire T2000 servers and one Sun Fire E4900 server. The database tier employed an IBM DB2 database on a Sun Fire V890 server. All systems ran the Solaris 10 OS. A sample data set consisting of production-ready insurance contracts mimicked the load of a new system, with different activities simulating typical policy transactions.

Kevin Walma, AdminServer’s CIO commented, “Benchmark testing has demonstrated that the AdminServer solution provides near linear scalability as CPU resources are increased. This allows customers to achieve desired throughput levels through the addition of processing nodes.”

Testing results have provided AdminServer with a benchmark to more accurately scale for any size insurer’s block of business on Sun systems. Because every environment is different, implementation factors, such as transaction mix and specific business rules, can affect solution performance. To find out how the Sun and AdminServer solution can help in your particular insurance application environment, contact a local Sun sales representative and schedule an analysis.

Move ahead of the pack with Sun and AdminServer

AdminServer is a premier solutions provider, delivering administrative system solutions, services, and consulting to the insurance community since 1998. Specializing in annuities, pensions, life insurance, and reinsurance, AdminServer is committed to open standards and the development of innovative offerings for the insurance industry. Sun is a premier provider of open source-based technologies, along with robust, scalable, powerful server platforms. Together, Sun and AdminServer provide a leading-edge solution that gives insurance firms an opportunity to create state-of-the-art products for the industry.

Learn More

For more information, visit sun.com or adminserver.com, or contact your local sales representative.

AdminServer offers the only annuity, health, life, and reinsurance policy administration system designed specifically as a Web-based application employing Java EE strategies and technologies. Sun is at the forefront in the development of Java EE technologies, making Sun the logical platform choice for running the AdminServer software. A strong proponent of Web-enabled service delivery, AdminServer is joining the Sun Service-Oriented Architecture for Insurance solution initiative, one of several SOA initiatives Sun is spearheading for the financial services market.

Sun and financial services

For over two decades, Sun has provided the flexible, scalable, cost-effective infrastructures on which financial institutions can build innovative solutions. Incorporating the latest trends in high-speed interconnect technologies, next-generation processors, and improved reliability, manageability, and serviceability, Sun solutions facilitate the adoption of leading-edge, high-bandwidth network infrastructures, service-oriented architectures, and services.

