How ACORD Can Be Used As a Best Practice For Data Integration

Tana Sabatino, Vallue Consulting Inc.
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Executive Summary

In the insurance industry, companies have accepted that systems, strategies and data all developed in silos are making it difficult for them to grow and adjust to today's market demands. The obstacles imposed by siloed approaches are painfully obvious to companies as they try to gain a better understanding of their customers and meet the growing constraints imposed by compliance and regulatory requirements.

The need to share data across organizations, geographies and business functions has moved integration initiatives to the forefront of IT organization plans. Yet companies often find it difficult to even begin such efforts due to their overwhelming set of complexities.

To make data integration manageable, a phased approach is necessary. However, since this tactic means the effort is not a single project that 'finishes' but one that takes place over time across separate initiatives, the approach introduces different complexities regarding design, planning and management strategies to allow the effort to succeed.

Any type of integration project that includes the presence of disparate data must have the ability to normalize information so that it can be shared between systems and people. This becomes a major obstacle for companies since data is not normalized in their existing systems, nor have they successfully deployed enterprise models for serving this purpose.

ACORD, as an industry standards body, offers IP that contains data models which can be used to jumpstart an integration effort by providing the starting point for a normalized information model. Still, when companies consider an ACORD based strategy, they think they must use the standard as defined out of the box or there is no advantage ACORD can offer.

This paper enlightens the reader on various strategies for benefiting from ACORD's IP. It explores a company's unique business requirements alongside internal and external influencing factors and offers targeted approaches to using ACORD standards for accomplishing data normalization. In addition, regardless of the strategy chosen, this paper discusses the management complexities introduced by phasing in integration work and offers solutions, both from an organizational structure and tooling support, for addressing these issues.

Capitalizing on industry standards work in a fashion suitable for your environment, combined with a management process and appropriate tools to manage metadata and address data quality issues, companies can achieve the elusive integrated environment.
Intro: Achieving Enterprise Data Integration

In the insurance industry, several market drivers are bringing data integration efforts to the forefront. Companies have recognized that their current siloed systems and processes make their business models antiquated and unsustainable in the new age of internet e-commerce, the technically savvy customer, and regulation tightening.

We've recognized for years that the best way to grow top-line revenue is to sell more to existing customers. Retaining a customer is much less expensive than acquiring a new one, and customer retention and loyalty have been proven to increase dramatically as the number of products per customer grows. At the same time, the costs associated by the consumer to switch companies evaporate due primarily to the Internet and new business models such as self-service, multi-quoting, agency disintermediation, and increased variety in distribution channels.

Growing regulatory concerns, ranging from the Patriot Act to Sarbanes Oxley to HIPAA, have put significant pressure on companies to improve their compliance monitoring and enforcement capabilities.

Finally, the need to provide the business with a 360 degree view of customers, products, and sourcing has compelled IT to seek ways to aggregate and normalize master data from a variety of operational and legacy sources.

But despite the importance of the business requirements, IT organizations are faced with a formidable challenge. Lack of integrated data often makes it difficult, if not impossible, to achieve these goals.

In many companies, data remains in product, channel, geographic and business unit silos. They have multiple systems - some developed in-house and some developed by multiple outside vendors. These systems are built on different technologies including different hardware, operating systems and database engines. And of course they all have vastly different internal data structures. Due to mergers and acquisitions, this problem multiplies as the technology puzzles of different companies merge into one giant strung together enterprise.

Even though a company's various lines of business may be managed by different departments or even subsidiaries, this structure needs to remain insular from the customer and risk compliance officer. Information must be integrated in order to move from a departmental view of data to a cross-enterprise focus and an interconnected business.

Many tasks are necessary to integrate data. A data integration solution must access data from existing heterogeneous systems. It must profile source data to enable IT and business users to understand its content, quality, and structure, as well as cleanse the data to ensure quality. Transformations ensure data is in the right form for use in other systems or by other people. The solution must then deliver data by loading it into a data warehouse or operational systems, or by making it available on-demand to end users via dashboards, reports or other mechanisms.
While the challenges of integration are obviously daunting, they need not be insurmountable. An integrated enterprise can be achieved if the effort is divided up into realistic projects and managed appropriately.

A company cannot consider integration a single project. This approach makes integration impossible and leads to multi-year multi-million dollar failures. It is too immense to do all at once. Instead, companies must plan to achieve integration in smaller chunks, over time, with smaller projects. For instance, successfully integrating two commission related systems moves the company forward in the right direction. That work can then be leveraged from one project to the next. A phased approach, based on the key business drivers of the company, will make integration achievable in the long run.

But to enable the ability to tackle integration in a phased approach, planning and design needs to happen up front that allows each project to address integration in a common, consistent way across the enterprise.

IT must eliminate development redundancy by allowing developers to use a common set of tools and best practices, and by leveraging development work from one project to the next. But even more important, IT must use a uniform approach to cleansing and normalizing data to ensure data consistency and integrity as well as to control access to data.

How does one cleanse and normalize the data? To 'cleanse' the information, one first has to know what they’re trying to cleanse it to. So the critical component in all this is the ability to normalize the data. From Wikipedia "broadly, normalization is any process that makes something more normal, which typically means conforming to some regularity or rule, or returning from some state of abnormality." When applied to the specific topic of data integration, normalization implies data modeling. The data model provides the necessary regularity that allows the data to be expressed in common, consistent or 'normal' terms.

Some companies, having the unfortunate experience of failed data modeling efforts in the past, try to veer away from models and instead try to map the data together. Consider the following, rather simplistic, example of trying to map three lists together. One can quickly see how difficult it may be to try and map disparate data "together" without some sort of target.

Most often in these attempts, one of the systems structures becomes a defacto target simply because the exercise is unachievable without one.

By developing a data model, one creates that target to which data must adhere. And normalizing information across systems becomes feasible.
From a traditional data modeling approach, most companies get caught in the ‘do it all’ modeling methodology. It is hard to approach data modeling from another stance. For instance, if someone models person information based on data that is captured in a commission system, he may miss out on important fundamentals that are only known if he takes the scope of the administration system into account. Thus by using a phased approach, one faces the possibility of redoing what was done for the commission project in order to make it fit for administration purposes.

This is where industry data standards can help. In particular, the insurance industry has a library of data standards that have embedded data models and normalization rules that could help jumpstart any integration project and avoid the potential rework a company may otherwise face as one attempts to leverage work from one project to the next. But the standard, right out of the box, may not be the best fit for your needs. To best determine an approach for using industry standards, one first has to understand what is available, the type of integration problem being tackled, and the various options suited for addressing that problem. With this combined knowledge, a company is positioned to make an educated choice that allows them to capitalize on industry standards efforts in a way that satisfies their requirements.

What's Available Today within ACORD's Data Standards

ACORD (Association for the Cooperation of Research and Development), whose members are made up of carriers, agencies and software providers, has taken a leadership role in the setting of data standards in the insurance industry. ACORD participants represent the needs of the industry, focusing their energy on defining both the business requirements as well as the technical structure.

Of particular interest are the XML standards developed by ACORD for both the life insurance and property/casualty insurance industries.

These standards are the result of thousands upon thousands of man-hours, capturing data requirements from many different carriers, agencies, and solutions providers for a wide variety business uses in the insurance industry. The amount of intellect that goes into creating these standards cannot be negated.

What is less known, however, is that they all the ACORD XML standards include a data model. In basic terms, data modeling is nothing more than defining the data elements and the relationships between them. In order to develop XML standards that can be used consistently in a cost effective manner, data modeling must happen.
In the life industry, developing a data model is an explicitly stated objective. This model supports life insurance, disability insurance, annuities, investments and long term care products. It covers the information needed for a wide variety of business processes, from product profiling and new business, to commission settlements, policy administration and claims settlements. This model is published as an object hierarchy diagram, within an XML schema dedicated to just the data model portion of the standard and within the ACORD help file and supporting documentation. These ACORD assets can be used to fully understand the data structures within the standard.

In the P&C industry, while a data model is not a stated objective of the standards participants, they nonetheless spend a significant amount of time modeling data in order to normalize information and represent concepts consistently across messages. This standard addresses the needs of a large number of product lines for both personal and commercial lines, particularly around the sharing of policy and party information in support of new business and renewal processing. Since the P&C industry has shied away from describing their effort as a ‘data modeling’ effort, finding the data model is a bit more challenging than that of the life industry.

There are 2 main differences:
1) The model is not published as a picture
2) The standard does not employ a separate XML schema just for the underlying data model that is distinct from that of the transactions. Both data and transaction components are published together.

Thus to find the actual model, you have to identify the line of business you want and select a message for that line of business. By investigating the contents of that message, it becomes obvious that there are parties, policies, coverages, relationships, etc. This is the model. And if you look across the messages, you’ll see that while there may be over 1000 messages, the vast majority all use the exact same aggregates and only differentiate at the line of business details itself. And every one of the 38 average messages within a line of business utilizes the same exact data structure. So while it may not be called a ‘model’, there is definitely one in there.
ACORD also has a standard for the property and casualty reinsurance and large commercial industry. This standard, similar to the life standard, states that having a data model is an objective of the standard. Where it differs from ACORD Life, however, is that the data model itself is not represented in its native form in the XML messages. Thus, to find this data model, one utilizes the documentation database provided by ACORD. The interface itself demonstrates the model as well as provides mappings to the XML structures. This provides a level of abstraction between the data model and the XML structure itself.

Separately, ACORD is embarking on a new initiative to attempt to combine the efforts across the industries into a single cohesive set of standards, which includes a business process model, business data dictionary, and common architecture and design principles. While still in its infancy, companies may find portions far enough along to jumpstart an internal integration effort. The business process model, for instance, serves as an excellent starting point for companies to determine the overall scope of their systems and integration opportunities.

The key to successfully using these standards as part of an integration strategy is figuring out how to apply this knowledge to your effort. It is not a choice of either using the standard as defined or ignoring it. The grey areas between those options are where you'll see the pay-off.
How ACORD Can Be Used as a Best Practice

When companies embark on a project that completely ignores what is readily available today, it begs the question "Why?" And the answer is typically "the standard did not meet our needs." "Which needs does it not meet?" is the next obvious question. And the answer tends to be that they really are not sure, but just know it will not be a perfect fit.

The key to benefiting from ACORD is to recognize that it need not be an 'all or nothing' choice. When meeting with companies on how to utilize ACORD as part of an overall strategy, there is often resistance. Architects believe 'it’s a messaging standard. We're designing a database'. 'Their names don't match our names'. 'We use other standards, not just ACORD'. 'We have data requirements that are not defined in ACORD'. 'We think we can do better'. These are all valid excuses and if the only option were to use ACORD as is or go it alone, then this resistance is completely justified. But there are many valid approaches and in particular different levels of granularity beyond just an 'all or nothing' approach that lets a company capitalize on what is readily available.

When evaluating your business processes and integration needs, various internal and external factors come into play. Factors to consider include:

External Factors (today and in the future):
- What is the degree of integration and data exchange with external trading partners?
- What distribution channels are utilized for selling/supporting products?
- What role do third party administrators play?
- What is company's strategy regarding mergers and acquisitions?

Internal Factors:
- What integration standards are utilized across systems within the enterprise, whether industry level, vendor based, or internally developed?
- What data standards are already in place at the company? Is there a data model? Is there a data dictionary? Are there data naming conventions?
- What lines of business are supported? What are considered primary versus secondary lines?

Once the company factors are identified, the next step is to understand what the ACORD standards offer. Despite the fact that it is a challenging process to discern the data models buried within the ACORD standard, it is a necessary step to determine how close of a match the standards are to your current needs. Do this before considering a solution. Too often companies make a decision on how they will utilize ACORD standards based on a high level familiarity with the organization and not a realistic assessment. In some cases, using ACORD out of the box won't meet your needs and as a result a lot of resources will be spent forcing it to fit. On the other hand, if your company adopts an uninformed "anti-ACORD" mentality, it may be too late when you discover that ACORD fits your company's requirements just fine.

With a combined understanding of ACORD's IP and a company's influencing factors, an organization can evaluate the opportunities available. There is no single solution that works for everyone. Different companies have been successful across a wide range of approaches, all of which capitalized on ACORD in some fashion.
The chart below depicts various approaches to using ACORD’s data structures. These various approaches, all of varying degrees of ACORD conformity, are better suited for some problems than others. They can be mixed and matched within an environment as well, depending on the complexity of the integration problem and the number of factors involved.

**ACORD Utilization Options**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>External Factors Today and in future</th>
<th>Internal Factors What is already in place?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACORD plus extensions</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACORD when not prohibitive plus extensions</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combine multiple ACORD standards</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilize underlying principles of ACORD standards</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combine ACORD with other standards</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilize ACORD model structure with own properties</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilize ACORD properties with own model structure</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**External Factors**

When external integration is the primary focus, utilizing ACORD directly is a leading option for two primary reasons. One is that some of your trading partners may already be utilizing ACORD. More compelling, however, is that it leaves the design considerations to a neutral third party and keeps the company from having to negotiate the use of a proprietary integration strategy amongst multiple trading partners.

The most understood approach to capitalizing on ACORD is to simply use the model as defined and extend it. In this case, an ACORD standard is chosen and when the data elements and structures are defined within the standard, they are used. In cases where you have data requirements that are not defined within ACORD, the standard is simply extended with those additional elements or objects.

This approach bodes well when there is a large need to communicate with external trading partners or utilize vendor based systems that are already ACORD based. The focus of integration would be limited to learning ACORD and mapping systems to and from the standard.
Companies however, do not always want to go this route because they find it inflexible. Assumptions and concepts that are represented one way in a company may be done very differently in ACORD requiring a lot of extra work to change it to the ACORD structure.

An different slant to this approach is to use ACORD when not prohibitive. This is perhaps the most popular approach and addresses the criticisms identified above.

For instance, a system may have a single data element that actually gets mapped to 2 or 3 different concepts in ACORD. Companies can choose, on a case by case basis, whether they will split the concept apart as ACORD has defined or simply keep together and put as an extension.

Example:

Company's Underwriting Class includes:

Standard Smoker
Standard NonSmoker
Preferred Smoker
Preferred NonSmoker

ACORD contains two fields:

UnderwritingClass:
Standard
Preferred

TobaccoPremiumBasis:
Smoker
NonSmoker

A criterion in the decision process of when to deviate from ACORD involves the expectations of the trading partners. If they rely on ACORD values, then the inflexibility within ACORD is necessary. But if the trading partners have built in flexibility for deviations, or the main concern is internal integration, then companies can make decisions on a case by case basis.
Internal Factors

If a company has not achieved any level of real enterprise data standards to date, falling back on a more direct ACORD strategy, like those used for external trading purposes, is appealing. This is in many cases a time saving measure. There’s no point to build an internal standard from the ground up but instead a company might as well reuse what someone else has already done.

However, since insurance companies are not starting integration from nothing, it is possible that they have successfully implemented some level of standardization within the enterprise already. If that’s the case, these other standards shouldn’t be ignored but considered alongside ACORD. How well adopted are they? How close do they already align to ACORD? Can they be reused?

Combining Standards

If integration standards that include data models and naming conventions have been developed or have been adopted from another source, then a strategy that combines those standards with ACORD for additional integration purposes is worth considering. This is also a viable approach for companies dealing with multiple lines of business beyond those supported by a single ACORD standard.

Perhaps a company does a lot of health care business and has a basis for HL7, or their group insurance department has invested in HR-XML. Maybe the company already has incorporated IBM’s IAA (Insurance Application Architecture) in a variety of places. Possibly an internal XML standard developed for web application integration has strong support in the enterprise.

In these cases, the mixed approach works best because it allows the companies to capitalize on investments already made while still building out a model that supports their cross enterprise integration needs.

This is a similar consideration for companies that are dealing with multiple lines of business such as life and P&C insurance. Since ACORD has different standards per line of business, each solving different business problems, no one standard may be sufficient for a company’s business needs.

One apparent issue for the industry is how to utilize one integration model for both Life and P&C when the standards themselves are so different. For instance, if life insurance is your primary business, you may want to consider utilizing the ACORD Life standard as the basis and adding in the appropriate P&C lines of businesses as extensions to the life model.

Example adding ACORD P&C Lines of Business to the ACORD Life Standard
Another consideration is to look at concepts within one standard and apply the concepts elsewhere. For example, the ACORD P&C standard does not have a household concept but there is one in the life standard. So you can take the concept from the life standard and apply it to the P&C standard and even go so far as utilizing P&C naming and design principles so that it works cohesively with the other parts.

Reusing Existing Data Efforts
If a company has a data dictionary that people utilize but doesn’t have a data model, then one alternative is to reuse the ACORD model structure but use the attributes already in place within the company. The ACORD model can be adopted focusing just on the structure and how to relate the various pieces together. Then that model can be populated with data dictionary names already familiar to the company.

Example combining ACORD Life Principles with the P&C standard

Example snippet of ACORD Life Model with company attributes

Example of Company Data Model with ACORD P&C Attributes
By using a standard data dictionary, companies can head off the debates on what names to use for their data elements. Furthermore, by adopting ACORD’s syntax rules and semantic meaning to those elements, a significant hurdle of achieving integration can be accomplished even without using the ACORD model since ultimately it is the individual data elements that must be understood when integrating.

Forgoing ACORD Altogether

Hopefully, after reading the various interpretations of what it means to use ACORD as part of an integration strategy, a company will explore other alternatives that may better serve them. However, there are times when forgoing ACORD is the best approach. For instance, one company that chose this approach had a captive field force, did not do much at all with external trading partners, and most important, had a strong data group that had built an internal data model that had received acceptance by most of the divisions within the enterprise. The most cost effective approach for them was to simply support the data model already in place as a key component to their integration strategy. Go it alone was the optimal solution for them. But this is the exception rather than the norm.

Making the Right Choice

There’s no single solution that works for everyone. The decision depends on your true business requirements and what is already utilized in your organization.

Preparing Your Information for any Integration Project

Regardless of the chosen approach, a necessary step of any integration effort is to understand the state of the actual data captured in the systems to be integrated. Some systems’ data will be able to map to a new, standards based, normalized model, easier than other systems. A statistic often bantered about is that for all systems projects 90% of the work is for that last 10% of effort dealing with anomalies. This can’t be truer when it comes to integration projects. A huge issue that every company faces is the quality of the data. Millions of dollars have been spent on trying to clean up names entered with typos or inconsistent formats of addresses. When trying to integrate information across systems, this problem becomes exponentially larger. Issues are no longer limited within one system but are now across many. The first step is to be able to look at the data. We call this ‘profiling information’. With a profiling facility, like that provided by Informatica, one can simply look and find out the real combination of values. This saves a lot of time and leads to more educated solutions when making decisions regarding treatment of specific data elements. Once the current state of the data is known, it needs to be scrubbed and cleansed so that it can be shared consistently. An easy example is that of US Social Security Number. Everyone in the USA knows it is 9 digits. But some systems put in hyphens while others don’t. When integrating that information, it becomes problematic because it is formatted differently. So this needs to be cleaned up. In most cases, touching the source data directly is not feasible. If the source system needs hyphens for its processing, they need to stay there. Alternatively, if the system isn’t expecting hyphens, they can’t be added. The best place for this type of problem to be handled is at the point of data transformation. This allows the hyphens to be stripped out or added back in as needed.
If done at that point, it also allows a company to centralize the management of the rules for supporting data quality. This alleviates the redundancy of embedding the rules into each and every source system as well as minimize the risk of these rules being lost or forgotten.

In addition, by addressing data quality issues at runtime - at the time of data transformation - exceptions and problems can be fixed at point of entry, not after they have been stored in the system and discovered later.

**How to Manage**

It seems obvious; but ensuring the organizational structure and appropriate tools necessary to manage an integration strategy is too often an after-thought. Since an integration effort will be phased in over many projects and business units, a shared organizational function will ensure the integration strategy is supported consistently as projects are rolled out. This function, dubbed an Integration Competency Center, is used to establish best practices, define and support standards, as well as ensure the availability of a pool of skilled integration specialists. It also serves as an advocacy function to promote reuse and collaboration across projects.

A successful Integration Competency Center is also responsible for establishing and maintaining a standards-based strategy for the necessary data modeling aspects. Decisions regarding the utilization of ACORD standards should be managed by this function.

In addition, the role an organization plays in industry standards bodies must be determined. Participation within those bodies should be maintained from within this group, since this will be a centralized resource that understands the company’s direction and usage of these standards the greatest.

Lastly, a governance process must be established. Some companies set up an internal standards body, while others may have a single person responsible for making decisions. Regardless of the strategy chosen, a process is needed that ensures that the strategy is maintained. For instance, even the most ACORD-like strategy requires extensions for those elements that do not fit ACORD. These elements need to follow standard naming and design rules as well as be maintained so that they can be reused across projects.

Even the use of ACORD elements needs to be agreed upon and documented so that a company has an understanding of their usage. To be able to fully integrate information, understanding what ACORD elements are being used by which systems is key.

Maintaining extensions and documenting usage of standard data elements is a difficult challenge for most organizations. The necessity is often overlooked and only after several integration deployments is it recognized that a critical component was missed.

For integration to truly be successful, a company must consider the role of metadata management tools within the organization. Metadata is used to facilitate the understanding, use and management of data. By not only understanding the data element definitions but capturing where they are used, relationships between systems can be discovered and misalignments fixed that would not have been known otherwise.

**Selecting an Appropriate Integration Platform**

While your enterprise may contain many isolated, disparate systems, your integration platform need not follow the same paradigm.

Using a single, integrated data integration platform enables financial institutions to perform the necessary integration tasks consistently across the enterprise, with the appropriate controls and documentation. An integrated platform also ensures that logic can be reused across multiple projects, ensuring consistency and eliminating redundancy.
The architecture of the data integration platform is critical. Financial institutions need to easily reuse logic and processes across multiple development cycles or multiple projects to eliminate the need to reinvent the wheel for every initiative. A data integration platform built using a service oriented architecture, which delivers logic, processes and data as shared services, enables that reuse.

Such a data integration platform must be architected for shared services from the ground up. With such a service-oriented architecture, the logic and processes for dealing with data are abstracted into a service and stored as metadata, separate from the physical implementation, which is managed by a run-time engine. The platform can then treat the data logic and processes as a set of services and components that different users and projects can leverage in a consistent manner, without concern for changes in the underlying technical implementation.

In addition, an enterprise data integration platform must capture metadata during each step of every process, and it must allow users to easily view, manage, and report on this metadata. A metadata-driven, service-oriented architecture automatically documents the lineage of data as it is accessed, changed or moved, ensuring end-to-end data integrity throughout the project life cycle, and providing insight into how to best leverage the data.

The core of an integration platform relies on the ability of the company to be able to actually normalize their information. Without this fundamental step, integration cannot be achieved. Any model works within the platform, whether it is ACORD based or a custom model. Once a company does their part and figures out how to consistently model their business requirements, a good integration platform manages the rest of the complexities.

Summary

Companies must embark on a complex integrated strategy in order to sustain themselves against the competition and satisfy regulatory demands. The keys to any successful integration strategy include:

1) A multi-phased approach to integration, achieved over time, driving by business demands.
2) A centralized management function in place to oversee integration efforts and ensure that company's standards and best practices are shared while also ensuring a pool of available resources to help expedite integration efforts at a project level.
3) A sustainable approach to developing a data model for integration purposes that allows data to be cleansed and normalized on a project by project while maximizing reuse and minimizing the risk of redoing development.

ACORD’s data standards can help any integration effort by providing a model that can be molded and massaged until it meets the needs for an integration model to aid in normalization. There are many ways to model a party just as there are many ways to reuse IP. Companies must first understand their business and learn detailed aspects of what the ACORD standards can and cannot support. Only then can a company choose from many different approaches that capitalizes on ACORD in a way that makes the most sense for the company while also saving time, resources, and money by not starting from scratch.

By capitalizing on ACORD for creating a single, unified integration model for data normalization purposes, and utilizing a single integrated platform for handling integration issues from transformation through metadata management, data integration can move from the unachievable ideal to a reliable foundation within the enterprise.
About Tana Sabatino
Tana is the founder of Vallue Consulting Inc. (www.vallue.com) which provides technology consulting for the insurance industry. Vallue Consulting specializes in data modeling, the application of XML and ACORD’s insurance standards. She formerly led the insurance industry standards efforts at ACORD. Here, Tana was instrumental in ACORD’s success in meeting the challenges of a continuously changing industry. During her tenure, she introduced and developed ACORD’s life standards program, and steered the development efforts of ACORD’s XML standards. Tana is known industry wide as an expert for insurance XML.

About ACORD
Based in New York, ACORD (Association for Cooperative Operations Research and Development) is a global, nonprofit insurance association whose mission is to facilitate the development and use of standards for the insurance, reinsurance and related financial services industries. With offices in London as well, ACORD accomplishes its mission by remaining an objective, independent advocate for sharing information among diverse platforms. ACORD Standards and services improve efficiency and expand market reach. Affiliated with ACORD are hundreds of insurance and reinsurance companies, and thousands of agents and brokers, related financial services organizations, software providers, and industry organizations worldwide.

About Informatica
Informatica Corporation is a leading provider of enterprise data integration software. Using Informatica products, companies can access, integrate, migrate, and consolidate enterprise data across systems, processes, and people to reduce complexity, ensure consistency, and empower the business. More than 2,100 companies worldwide rely on Informatica for their end-to-end enterprise data integration needs, including 83 of the Fortune 100 companies. 22 of the Top 27 Global Fortune 500 financial services/banking organizations, and 10 out of the 10 largest global banks are Informatica customers.