



Change: It Can Be a Good Thing

Top 5 Tips for a Successful BMS Conversion

Conversion and implementation is a term that strikes fear in the hearts of many brokers considering a BMS change. It is a fact that migrating to a new system will cause a disruption to the workflows of a brokerage, but what disruption should be expected and more importantly, what disruption is acceptable in the pursuit of improvement? The movement of data from one broker management system to another is a huge undertaking. The task of up-rooting all of your client and policy data and placing it into a new database takes planning, co-ordination and expertise. But, how do you validate if your new software partner is up to the task?

The average broker will spend at least 20-25 years on their chosen system. This isn't a decision you make every day, so it's understandable that few brokers know exactly where to start and what questions to ask when evaluating a conversion partner. Here are our top 5 tips to confirm your new partner has what it takes:

1. What information gets converted?

For example, client details, risk & billing information, conversation history, abeyances/follow ups, documents. Ask your new partner for a document outlining what gets converted. A successful conversion will start you in your new system with all of your needed data from day one. The unattractive alternative is to start fresh (or with only partial data) in a new BMS and keep a copy of your old software on a look up basis. This is not only hugely expensive and inefficient, but opens your brokerage up to needless E&O exposures.

2. What prep-work/data clean-up is required on your part prior to conversion?

Conversion is a great opportunity to do some data clean up. Your BMS partner should do the heavy lifting on this job. Your role is to validate and advise. If a significant amount of your time is needed manually prep/clean up data during the conversion process, your partner is not doing the heavy lifting.

3. How will your new partner plan and co-ordinate your conversion and overall implementation?

Communication and an almost military precision is needed. At Keal, our implementation and conversion team has this process down to a science. We craft and religiously follow a customized project plan designed to detail what needs to be done, when and by whom. We meet weekly with you to keep everybody on task and on time. We know this is a big and scary undertaking for any broker, and we go on this journey with you every step of the way.

4. Is your partner experienced at converting from your BMS to theirs?

This is your livelihood. Unless you're comfortable being a guinea pig, you shouldn't trust this project to amateurs.

5. References – call them and visit them!

Get names from your new partner of their most recent successful conversions from your BMS. Don't stop there. Use your network to find other brokers that have recently converted. Call them too! Did data convert correctly? How was the partner to work with? What do they know now that they wished they knew before they converted?

Perfection might be unrealistic, but excellence is not. With the right tools, the right processes and the right partner, you can minimize unexpected headaches and set your team up for success in your new system.

About Keal Technology

Keal Technology is the expert in Canadian broker innovation and a leader in the BMS (Broker Management Systems) and CMS (Commercial Management Systems) marketplace for insurance and financial services brokers. They offer an integrated suite of products designed to increase revenue through efficient use of technology. For more information, visit www.keal.com.

Hollie Fitzgerald
Director of Communications
800.268.5325 x 4886
hollie.fitzgerald@keal.com

