

Reducing the Risk and Cost of Using Spreadsheets

Amlin is a leading independent insurer operating in the Lloyd's, UK, Europe and Bermudian markets. Amlin provides insurance cover to commercial enterprises and reinsurance protection to other insurance companies around the world.

"Applying EASA has brought us significant savings in time through massive reduction in manual intervention, and greater accuracy of captured data."

David Ford
Catastrophe Risk Manager
Risk Assessment & Monitoring
Amlin Plc.

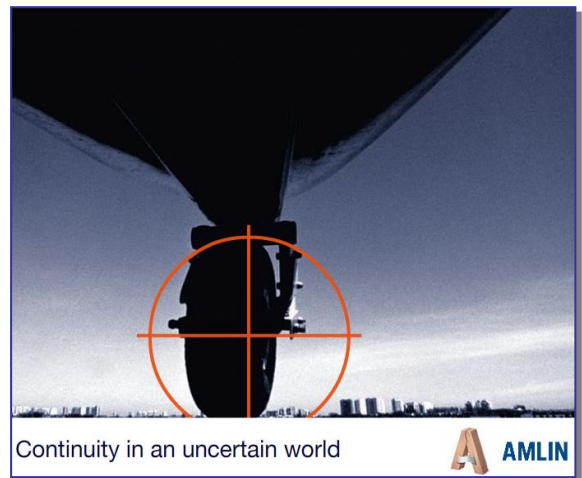
The high risk of errors and high cost of spreadsheet-based processes

As in any organization, many key processes at Amlin are under-pinned by spreadsheets, largely because spreadsheets are easy to create, familiar to users, and flexible. However, lack of control means that the risk of mistakes and the cost of executing the process are unacceptably high.

Staff at Amlin identified one process particularly in need of better control – RDS, or Realistic Disaster Scenario.

RDS requires every agent to submit a six monthly report to Lloyd's, showing exposure against scenario and by insurance risk code. In AMLIN's case, this means some 20 underwriters around the world must each submit reports.

Historically, this process has been spreadsheet-based; AMLIN underwriters complete and submit a spreadsheet cloned from a template.



Complicating this process is the fact that the data required by Lloyd's changes on a regular basis. Hence a new template must be created, tested and distributed each time there is a change.

The issues which arise include:

- Users change the spreadsheet to suit local requirements before completing and submitting, which results in aggregation errors down-stream.
- The spreadsheet must serve every user, and is therefore more complex than any one user needs – and most users have access to much more of the spreadsheet than is necessary.
- Any change requires that the new spreadsheet is distributed to every user – with instructions to remove the out-dated version. There is no mechanism to ensure the correct version is being used.
- Aggregation is carried out using a series of linked spreadsheets. Links have to be constantly updated, and many layers of spreadsheet refreshed.
- The data exists in many spreadsheets and not in a database, so historical comparison is time-consuming and expensive.

