Willis Towers Watson unlocks potential with Connected Broking Platform

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Summary: Willis Towers Watson (NASDAQ: WLTW) is a leading global advisory, broking and solutions company that helps companies and institutions around the world turn risk into a path for growth. Willis Towers Watson embarked on an initiative to evolve their global broking software platform, called Connected Broking. They selected Sparkling Logic SMARTS as the decision engine to support the new platform.

Problem: Willis Towers Watson identified that their existing global broking platform suffered from disparate and disconnected silos of data, manual processes, and custom applications. A key goal for the new platform was to bring people, processes, and systems together to help the company make more informed, data-driven decisions and to collectively enable their community of broking experts to drive the best results for their customers.

Solution: Willis Towers Watson selected, built, and deployed the new Connected Broking platform using Sparkling Logic SMARTS as the decision engine.

Benefits: With the implementation of SMARTS in the new Connected Broking platform, Willis Towers Watson was able to:

- Increase their agility by allowing rules changes to be developed, tested and deployed without a significant code release
- Reduce their time to implement and deploy new rules that could be created and driven by business analysts
- Execute processes and decisions that were more precise and accurate since they are now driven by data
- Increase their learning by enabling business-driven simulations and analysis before implementing new decisions or business models

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Willis Towers Watson

(NASDAQ: WLTW) is a leading global advisory, broking and solutions company that helps companies and institutions around the world turn risk into a path for growth. With a global team of 40,000 employees serving more than 140 countries, and 50,000 clients, Willis Towers Watson is one of only three major risk management and insurance intermediaries to operate on a global scale.

KEY TERMS

Placement/Broking: The core activity of all insurance brokers is called placements or 'broking', which means creating and executing contracts with insurers .

Panel: A panel is an arrangement with a preselected group of insurers who compete on price and additional terms for a class of business.

With roots dating back more than 150 years, Willis Towers Watson has navigated through its share of transformational change and recognizes the importance of adapting to stay ahead. Over the course of this time, Willis Towers Watson has become a leading global insurance broker offering professional insurance, reinsurance, risk management, consulting and actuarial services to companies and organizations around the world. Their global advisory and broking solutions place them in the top tier of risk management and insurance intermediaries globally.

The core activity of all insurance brokers is called placement or 'broking' which means creating, and executing contracts with insurers that best meet the needs of their clients. Willis Towers Watson has thousands of brokers around the world who do this work every day and must make decisions about how to match a specific client's risk profile to the right channel and the right offering to best serve the client's needs.

As Willis Towers Watson has grown internationally, it has become important to bring together their broker community, their business processes, and their data in order to better serve their customers and drive their future growth. To achieve these goals, the company embarked on an initiative in 2015 to launch "Connected Broking" – a global placement platform. This new platform would replace an existing system that the company launched in 2012, had over six thousand users and covered 90% of the company's commercial property and casualty (P&C) business. They had a mission to launch a modern platform that would be **a differentiator in their business by positioning them as the most analytic broker in the market.**

A FOCUS ON AGILITY

The top-level requirements for the Connected Broking platform were to:

Enable data-sharing where data used by brokers had traditionally been siloed: stored in spreadsheets, bits of paper, or isolated databases.

Harness this shared data to make more informed decisions, such as which marketplace was the most advantageous place to channel a risk.

Bring the company's global broker community together with common business process and workflows across regions as well as enabling more flexibility to quickly engage the right experts in the right ways to drive the best result for clients.

Determine insurance panel eligibility based on unique requirements. Panels are a set of insurers who come together to address a market such as property insurance or casualty insurance. Each panel has a different set of requirements governing customer eligibility. An agile business rules engine was required to test and automate eligibility decisions across these different requirements.

Enable Dynamic Data Capture. The ability to apply business logic and rules to dynamically determine what data needs to be captured (and to validate that data) from the end customer to make appropriate decisions on the products and services that will best meet their needs.

As the Connected Broking platform was developed, the initiative team identified that a **high priority requirement was for a rules engine** to assess insurance panel eligibility. As Willis Towers Watson looked for rules engine solutions that would serve as an enabler of the Connected Broking platform, they created a list of over twenty specific requirements for how business rules would be authored to set the decision criteria for panel eligibility. The rules needed to be easy to create, execute, test, maintain, and update. In addition, they outlined business requirements related to their need to do benchmarking analysis, and to handle large batch loads of data to manage core business processes such as placement renewals.

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A MODERN PLATFORM AND A TRUSTED PARTNER

To achieve their goals, Willis Towers Watson evaluated multiple options and **selected Sparkling Logic SMARTS to power the business rules engine at the heart of their Connected Broking Platform.**

The first implementation of SMARTS was for panel eligibility. Willis Towers Watson is now able to use SMARTS to select business that are suitable for a variety of panels based on a set of criteria that determines the best 'fit' for each client. By executing on their goal to be the most analytic broker in the market place, they are driving more value to their clients with these data-driven recommendations.

Since the initial implementation for panel eligibility, the team has also extended the use of SMARTS in their environment to new scenarios and are driving more value from their investment. One example is their use of SMARTS to enable dynamic data capture. This provides them the ability to apply business logic and rules to dynamically determine what data needs to be captured (and to validate that data) from the end customer to make appropriate decisions on the products and services that will best meet their needs.

The program management team at Willis Towers Watson highlighted many capabilities of SMARTS that contributed to their overall success:

1

Easy to Use Rules Authoring and Decision Management Tools
The team noted the "good, strong and robust authoring tools" in the SMARTS Decision Manager web environment that were easy to implement by business analysts and significantly reduced the developer resources required to build and maintain the application. This freed developers to focus on the more technical tasks of building the surrounding framework and integrations. "Technical business analysts can author the business rules. You don't need a developer to write them."

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2

Testing a Rule Set
Time and again, Willis Towers Watson highlighted the impact of being able to test a rule set effectively. "Testing is so simple. You write a rule, the rule runs, you see it working." The ability to visualize the outcome of testing and simulation in the SMARTS Dashboard, coupled with the ability to adjust the rules accordingly is a powerful capability for Willis Towers Watson.

3

Performance
Performance and scalability were critical and the architecture of SMARTS gives the team the ability to manage large batch processes. "It's just really quick", said the program manager.

4

Easy to Implement and Maintain
Willis Towers Watson saw significant benefit in being able to configure SMARTS to drive business impact without being tied to the next release of the product to implement their new requirements. "It's easy to maintain. We can achieve our requirements with a framework that includes how you manage, deploy, and test rules outside of the code base. Then, we can use our KPI's and metrics reflected in the SMARTS Dashboard reports to maintain those rules.."

5

Access to decision management experts
Willis Towers Watson referenced their ability to quickly access the expert team at Sparkling Logic and their deep technical experience.

6

Flexibility to extend SMARTS
A common experience for SMARTS customers that Willis Towers Watson also took advantage of was the flexibility and ease to extend SMARTS to secondary use cases beyond the standard rules engine services. Specifically, at Willis Towers Watson, they discovered that SMARTS was a great solution for enabling dynamic data capture and they integrated the software with a web form and put that solution into production. In the future, they "envision the ability for brokers to review their book of business to review and test scenarios; to play with rules and trends if they are strong Excel users."

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"Our Connected Broking platform using SMARTS enables much better learning. Processes that are decision-based are now being driven by data."

~Craig Price, Program Manager, Willis Towers Watson

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Building on the success of the global rollout of the Connected Broking platform, Willis Towers Watson knows that driving more integration and additional platform features will be key to realizing future business goals. The team currently has plans to use SMARTS in an orchestration capacity with their task management application. As new tasks or activities are created, SMARTS will be used to automate the decisions to ensure that the right task is assigned to the right person within the right application. This will enable the brokers to respond more quickly and effectively to customer and business requests.

Willis Towers Watson is looking to continue to harness the value of SMARTS with each new use case. **SMARTS is a key technology enabler in their technology stack.**

In summary, as a result of choosing SMARTS, Willis Towers Watson now has a modern, agile platform to support their strategy of being the 'Analytic Broker'. Sparkling Logic's SMARTS was used to support core business requirements in the Connected Broking Platform and its use is expanding as more opportunities to use SMARTS are discovered. SMARTS enables Willis Towers Watson to use technology to better serve its clients and insurance underwriters as they extend their position as a market leader.

SMARTS can streamline your processes, improve the quality of your automated decisions, and shorten the time it takes to adjust to new insights gained from market, customer, and competitor changes.

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