

Press release

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Insurers invest heavily in digital sales, yet consumers want user-friendly digital servicing

Deloitte Belgium's Digital Insurance Maturity Assessment provides key insights into the current digital insurance landscape, and what Belgian consumers expect in terms of online services and functionalities.

Brussels, 30 August 2022 – Deloitte Belgium assessed the digital functionalities offered by 13 Belgian insurers and how they match customer needs, and conducted a user experience audit of insurers' customer acquisition channels. While insurers have focused most of their digital investments on their sales platforms, respondents said that online servicing functionalities (84%), such as being able to manage their contract or file a claim online, were more important to them than buying new insurance online (71%). In addition, while investments in digital features are necessary, 70% of customers surveyed prefer to interact with an advisor for a range of insurance tasks, such as contracting a new insurance policy.

Kasper Peters, Financial Services Industry Leader at Deloitte Belgium: *"We found that online quoting and contracting is becoming the norm in Belgium. Insurers have concentrated their digital investments on acquiring new clients, rather than improving the digital servicing of existing clients."*

The survey revealed that the biggest self-servicing opportunities include managing insurance documents (86%) and billing online (85%). Beyond filing a claim (84%), customers want to be able to follow up on a claim's progress (88%), as well as find the right assistance and repair services for the damages (87%).

Bancassurance, leaders in digital maturity

Overall, the assessment reveals that Belgian direct and indirect insurers are lagging behind bancassurance players when it comes to digital maturity, with bancassurance achieving an average functionality score of nearly 70%.

"Bancassurance is leading the way as banks migrated earlier to digital apps and online servicing, and they already have the platforms available to service customers digitally," said Barbara Vanhauter, Director Deloitte Digital. *"However, because customers are used to dealing with their banks through digital tools, they also have higher expectations of the quality of service, so the high scores in this area are notable."*

Digital good, human better

While Belgian consumers expect digital features, about 70% of them still prefer to interact with an advisor for a range of tasks. This is especially true when contracting a new insurance policy. The report concludes that while insurers need to digitise, they should not do this at the cost of human interaction.

"Insurance can be a complicated matter for many clients, and often involves a longer term commitment, so it's understandable that a lot of people still insist on speaking to a human being who they trust can give them personalised information," Kasper Peters commented.

The Deloitte report stresses the importance of a hybrid model, where insurers that are digitalising always give the possibility to reach out to a person. Another recommendation is to invest in good call centres, as phone calls rated the highest in terms of channel preference for contacting support.

Great user experience is the standard, not a differentiator

Customers expect to have a great user experience when interacting with online platforms, and most insurance players achieved an overall UX score of 85%* or above on their customer channels. Investing in a great UX is now an expected standard for the industry, rather than a true competitive advantage.

"With relatively similar scores, we believe that insurance players will have to differentiate on other criteria such as functionalities, products, and services," Barbara Vanhauter added.

Although UX scores are generally high, the report revealed some areas of improvement: online forms were one of the most frustrating interactions, with inconsistent approaches causing confusion when dealing with an established format that should be consistent. Mobile responsiveness also remains an issue for insurers that have not adapted their content to be readable on mobile platforms.

"Our survey also revealed that accessibility could be significantly improved, with accessibility violations being recorded in all of the channels we audited," Barbara Vanhauter remarked. "Today, government websites must ensure a minimum level of accessibility. This is not common practice yet for a private website, but we expect this to change over time, especially for players committed to making a positive social impact."

About this research

For its first Digital Insurance Maturity Assessment, Deloitte Belgium assessed the digital functionalities offered by 13 Belgian insurers: Argenta, Belfius, BNP, ING, KBC, Corona, Ethias, Yuzzu, Allianz, Axa, Baloise, Federale, and P&V. In addition, 1,000 Belgian consumers were surveyed on the importance of digital features and their preferences in terms of channels. A "Mystery Shopper" approach was used to check the availability of more than 160 functionalities along the end-to-end customer journey, while usability experts audited online customer acquisition channels (mobile and desktop) based on renowned UX guidelines*. The whole assessment was performed over the course of January to May 2022.

* The UX score was defined by assessing eight UX categories: first impressions, site navigation, content, trust and persuasion, interactions, forms, responsiveness and accessibility, which were scored following a framework inspired by leading UX research institutes.

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