



**SOMERSET BRIDGE**  
INSURANCE SERVICES LTD



**SYNECTICS  
SOLUTIONS**

# **FIGHTING INSURANCE FRAUD - WHAT YOU KNOW IS HOW YOU GROW**

**An interview with Nicky Douglas,  
Head of Fraud - Somerset Bridge Insurance**

The Insurance Fraud Enforcement Department (IFED) recently announced it has seen a **61% year-on-year increase** in opportunistic insurance fraud. The warning is not an isolated one, with many insurance industry bodies concerned about growing incident rates linked to the economic downturn, advances in technology such as AI, and of course the industry's migration to more online-focussed business practices.

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A robust fraud prevention strategy has never been more important. Here, we caught up with Nicky Douglas from Somerset Bridge Insurance, to ask her about their approach to tackling the issue, and to share her views on working with the Synectics Solutions team.

## TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR APPROACH TO FRAUD PREVENTION AT SOMERSET BRIDGE?

Like many across the industry, when it comes to fraud – we value the insights (and warning flares!) that can only be unearthed through data. It's one of the key reasons we first adopted National SIRA almost 10 years ago.

And not just from a loss prevention standpoint. From a customer service perspective. The more accurately you can spot potential fraud and focus investigative efforts where needed, the faster you can on-board, settle claims, and serve 'good customers' – which in turn has positive implications for retention, recommendation, and growth. When it comes to fraud data, improving what you know is how you grow.

Of course, it's also important that we have solutions that are agile and adaptable enough to detect emerging fraud trends. Bent metal fraud is a big area for us right now, as are so-called 'shallowfake' incidents. We need to always be ready to focus in on what's happening industry-wide and in relation to our specific business.

## HOW DO YOU CURRENTLY USE NATIONAL SIRA?

We use the SIRA Real Time Quote (RTQ) solution to speed up and de-risk our quotation process – essential for aggregator sites – and for fraud screening policy applications, mid-term adjustments and claims across the group. Which gives us a valuable holistic perspective of fraud exposure from policy to claim.

The insights we get are also useful in terms of business strategy. For instance, we can assess fraud at broker level and get breakdowns via aggregator sites so we can see which brokers/aggregators might be being targeted. It reveals our route to market for fraud prevention.

What's perhaps most important and useful for us, however, is the 'under-one-roof' aspect that allows us to tailor the platform to suit our needs and dramatically streamline processes that would previously have taken huge amounts of time to check manually.

For instance, through SIRA, we're able to match policy and claims batch data against the Generic Data Feed (GDF) from the IFB, integrate Dow Jones Sanctions List screening, and run searches on data points such as phone numbers and email addresses against social media accounts by utilising the Profile Finder+ integration.

The value of this is quite significant. As well as being more process efficient, having the ability to consolidate specific risk detection and management workflows means we are also able to spot things that may previously have fallen through the cracks.

## CAN YOU GIVE AN EXAMPLE?

Yes, in fact a relatively recent one involving the Profile Finder + Integration I just mentioned.

With this capability integrated into our SIRA solution, we were able to detect a fraudulent third-party claim that I think we may have missed otherwise, it established links that would have taken hours of resource from an Intel Researcher to find. And it wasn't a one off. With additional support from Synectics' Special Investigations Unit (SIU) we uncovered a much wider fraud ring.

## HOW DO YOU TEND TO WORK WITH SYNECTICS' SPECIAL INVESTIGATION UNIT?

As and when we need to draw on extra investigative resource or when we hit a bit of a wall looking into something, we call on the SIU and use them as an extension of our own team. Which is great. We're able to collaborate very closely and turn to them as fraud data experts.

I should also add that we get great support from our core account team at Synectics, especially in relation to fine-tuning our solution to get the most accurate picture of incidents at any given time.

They ensure our rules are set-up to minimise things like false positives. And, by looking at data trends they can...and do... suggest possible adjustments needed in our processes. They helped us in this way quite recently actually. We had cases tagged as under investigation that were not – it turns out because we weren't closing the loop. Synectics spotted this from the data, which has subsequently helped us 'remove unnecessary noise' that was preventing the fraud team from being more efficient.

## AND FINALLY, WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE FUTURE OF FRAUD DETECTION AND PREVENTION IN THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY?

I think the future is all linked to partnerships and collaboration. The challenge ahead isn't one really suited to 'going it alone'. It's the ethos behind National SIRA of course – syndicated data used for the greater good.

The trends will change, naturally. As the adoption of digital identities goes more mainstream and we head deeper into service digitalisation we will see new fraud types and technologies emerge. But the principal behind combatting this is pretty solid. The right data, used in the right way, helps businesses like ours detect fraud and improve services. So really, the future is about making sure you have the right partners to facilitate that.

Get in touch and let's see where collaboration could take us.  
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