
User Profile: Futures Industry Association



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In May of 1995 the Futures Industry Association (FIA) reached a turning point. Their membership database needed a major overhaul and was quickly becoming obsolete. "We had all kinds of outdated information and duplicate records and no confidence that the information was accurate," said Adoncia Boykins, Database Manager for FIA.

Accuracy of their membership database is crucial to FIA, an association devoted to supporting and promoting the futures industry. Corporate members count on receiving weekly, monthly, and bimonthly publications that provide a constant flow of information on world futures and options. Individuals receive *Futures Industry*, a bi-monthly publication that keeps readers informed on current trends in the industry.

The membership database is also used to send mass mailings about FIA's six conferences, to track registrations, to keep committee lists, and to monitor sales of other materials to members. "This database is our organization's most important tool," said Boykins.

FIA decided that *iMIS* was the association software package that best met their needs and began implementation in 1995. "We started working with another reseller, but after a while we saw that we weren't receiving the level of service we had hoped for," said Boykins. "Fortunately, during a technical support call to ASI [Advanced Solutions International, the developers of *iMIS*], someone mentioned ISG Solutions. We called them up and [Account Executive] Terrie Noonan came out and talked to us. We realized quickly how knowledgeable they were about *iMIS* and decided to give them a try. We've been with them ever since."

ISG's first task was to clean up FIA's database. "Their database really needed a lot of work," said Susie Martin-Cooper, head of the ISG consulting team assigned to FIA. "Their main concern was a huge loss of data that occurred during their conversion. We had to start from scratch, retrieving the data for them. Then we spent a lot of time cleaning out duplicate records and rebuilding the database. It took some late nights to get everything right, but the results were worth it."

FIA credits ISG Solutions' in-depth knowledge of *iMIS* as the main reason for the success of the conversion. Martin-Cooper knew exactly how the *iMIS* database functioned and was able to figure out what had previously gone wrong and to reconfigure the *iMIS* database correctly. "It's like Susie was born into the job," said Boykins. "It's just unbelievable. She thinks like a computer! I'm really impressed with her and the other ISG consultants."

Once the data was clean, Boykins used the FIA membership database for the BPA audit performed on *Futures Industry*. "Unlike many publications who need the BPA audit for their advertisers, we use it more to confirm the quality of our membership database," explained Boykins. The BPA International audit would confirm that the subscribers were qualified to receive the publication and would check to make sure that the information FIA had about the subscribers was correct. If these criteria were met,

then *Futures Industry* would receive BPA's stamp of approval.

FIA needed to provide the auditors with a specially-formatted subscriber list from their database. Although *iMIS* comes with over 350 reports, reports for BPA audits are not a standard feature; therefore, customized reports were required. "We had previously been told that reports to streamline the auditing process could not be done," said Boykins. "But ISG told us there would be no problem."

"All the information they needed was in their database," said Terrie Noonan, Account Executive for ISG Solutions. "We were able to create a complete series of reports so they could quickly and easily pull out what they needed."

FIA has had the BPA audit performed several times. "It gives us just that extra bit of confidence that our database is of the highest quality," said Boykins.

Having accurate data has made a world of difference for FIA. "Once the data was clean, people began to see that they could trust the database's validity," said Noonan.

"When I first came on board, just three people used our database for general look ups," said Boykins. "Now, on any given day, everybody has *iMIS* open. There are times when I have to ask people to log off *iMIS* so someone else can log on. Everybody uses it because they know they can rely on the data."

The whole association revolves around the information in the database: letters go out daily, mass mailings promote upcoming conferences, and sales are tracked.

"We didn't see ourselves using *iMIS* like we have," said Boykins. "It's unbelievable what we are able to do now. We are very impressed with the work ISG has done for us. I have complete confidence in them."



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