



# Interface

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## Foreword From Chris Guillaume



In what has been an eventful time in the industry, with further consolidation, we continue to focus on our brokers – the heart of our business.

Our product development is customer led through feedback from Product Clinics and the Open User Group, and is targeted at improving your overall profitability. This quarter we have not only launched a number of products designed to streamline your business processes, we have also further improved your 'Core' operating system.

The evolution of the BROOMS system to 'Core' was a big decision for Open GI as BROOMS has been in use for nearly 30 years. However, we believe 'Core' is a more appropriate term for technology which sits at the heart of brokers' businesses. The latest release of Core13 is free of charge and the enhancements are extremely beneficial.

Our eTraining proposition is also a new development in online learning and will change the way our customers train their staff. Convenience is key and with eTraining you can gain valuable knowledge of our products direct from your desktop. This is just one of a number of exciting developments we have recently launched thanks to our investment of over €5 million in research and development each year.

Looking ahead, there are many of exciting opportunities in the market, and we have the financial strength to be able to maximise these for your benefit.

Chris Guillaume, Managing Director



## Two New Products From Wrightway Now Available

Wrightway Underwriting Ltd in conjunction with Open GI has launched a new motor product called Non Standard, and re-launched their Light Commercial Vehicle rates (Vanplan Exclusive) on the Open GI system. These new rates will be available shortly on the TruckWriter quote engine.

This Commercial Vehicle product, available from 1st July 2008, is the only Full Cycle EDI product using the MotorWriter quote engine.

As well as very competitive rates the standard benefits include:

- Replacement of locks cover
- Fire Brigade charges
- Unlimited windscreen cover with an approved repairer
- Accessories cover
- 24 hr emergency helpline

On 10th May 2008 Wrightway Non Standard was launched to the broker market. This product, available via Full Cycle EDI, offers very competitive rates for private motor risks with convictions and gives the Open GI broker another facility to place non standard business.

Established in 1999 Wrightway, Ireland's largest underwriting agency, has been working with Open GI for over 10 years. Wrightway products available via your Open GI System include Private Motor, Commercial Van, Household and Haulage.

If you require any further information any of Wrightway's products please contact Wrightway.

Tel: 01 916 7100 email: [info@wrightway.ie](mailto:info@wrightway.ie) Web: [www.wrightway.ie](http://www.wrightway.ie)



## BROOMS has evolved.....

Open GI's programme of investment continues with the release of Core13.

A number of software components including BROOMS and APM sit at the heart of the Open system – these are now referred to as 'Core'.

The Open GI Core Back-Office is the most functionally rich and reliable system available, providing complete office administration to insurance brokers. The whole system is designed to save brokers time and money by improving the speed and accuracy of broking business processes.

Core13 has been developed by Open GI's experts with you, the user in mind. We have listened to feedback from you about the system and now it is more intuitive and more powerful than before.

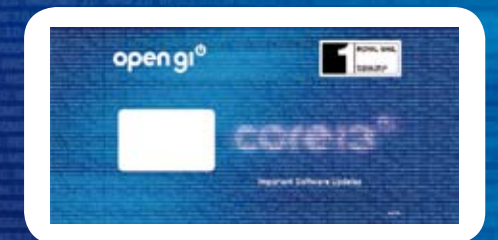
Enhancements to the core system have been made in the following areas:

- Comprehensive Client & Prospect Fact Finds
- Security Enhancements
- BROOMS & APM Documentation
- Free Form Search
- Operator and Audit Trail
- BROOMS Accounting Functionality



You will receive your Core13 software release over the coming months. The new CD packaging has been designed so you clearly know it is Core13 (see image below). To load it to your Open GI system visit [www.opengi.ie/core13](http://www.opengi.ie/core13) and follow the loading instructions.

If you have any queries regarding the loading of this software contact the Support Centre on 01 676 8013.



## Broker Downtime Minimised By Open GI

A team of engineers from Open GI recently helped leading broker, Stuart Insurances Ltd, to resume trading after a major power surge destroyed their existing IT system.

The broker, who has been an Open GI customer for over 10 years, realised the harsh reality of business downtime after a power surge left four sites in Dublin, Wexford, Kilkenny and Tipperary with no means of placing business electronically.

Open GI reacted quickly in order to ensure that Stuart Insurances could resume trading as normal within less than 48 hours.

Mark Pringle, Director, Stuart Insurances Ltd, said; "If it wasn't for the good relationship we have with Open GI the power surge could have had a major impact on our business. They were able to despatch and install a new MLS server within 48 hours - helping to maintain business continuity.

"The experience has made us realise the benefits that can be gained from having a guaranteed business continuity service, a service which highlights Open GI's continued commitment to offer market-leading solutions that would be hard to match and which shouldn't be overlooked."

Helen Barker, Operations Director, Open GI, said; "Open GI has always offered bespoke business continuity support. The situation at Stuart Insurances adds weight to the argument that such products should not be ignored. The service we provide not only guarantees the arrival of a replacement system within 72 hours but provides support from a dedicated team of employees that ensure brokers can continue to trade using Open GI system data."





## Grow Your Business Via The Web With eBroker For Schemes

eBroker for Schemes is an enhanced version of eBroker that enables you to quote online for schemes that sit outside of our standard quotation engines (Motor, Truck and Home).

It is your gateway to selling insurance online. Complete and comprehensive website integration takes data from the website through the quotation engine, to your back-office, client and prospect management tools.

eBroker for schemes gives you the option to link your website to an existing scheme you have or our experts can develop a brand new scheme for you. Sample products that can be traded via your website include Travel, Pet Insurance, Overseas Property, Personal Accident and Public Liability.

Seamlessly integrated with your Core Back-Office, eBroker for schemes ensures direct data capture – removing the need for re-keying. This not only saves you time but increases your contact base for future marketing activity.

Trading business via the internet opens up new distribution channels for you, exposing you to a wider audience. It creates awareness for your brand and will increase the number of enquiries you receive.

For more information about eBroker for schemes and Open GI's other eCommerce solutions contact your Account Manager or the Sales Department.

## Join the Irish Brokers Association



The Irish Brokers Association (IBA) is the premier professional body of Insurance Brokers in Ireland and represents over 700 insurance intermediary offices which are authorised and regulated by the Financial Regulator.

One of the main aims of the Irish Brokers Association is to highlight the professionalism of its members who strive to uphold the highest standards possible. The IBA insists – through the ruling of IBA Council – that members observe the highest standards of competence, education, and consumer protection. The IBA represents members interests' to the Financial Regulator, the Government, Legislators, the industry, other representative bodies, consumers and last, but by no means least, the media.

IBA membership is comprised of international firms, as well as large, medium and small national businesses, which employ over 5,500 people throughout Ireland. They provide Independence and choice to the consumer in relation to a wide variety of financial services products.

By joining the IBA you become recognised as a member of the leading professional body for insurance in Ireland. There are many additional benefits for IBA members, some of these are detailed below.

- Regulatory assistance – The IBA deal with member queries and work closely with the Financial Regulator.
- Education - The IBA recently launched a CPD online programme, this enables CIP diploma holders to obtain CPD hours via an online solution.
- The IBA communicates regularly with members to ensure they are kept up-to-date on topical issues and the latest industry developments. The IBA also holds regular seminars and regional meetings to ensure members can express their opinions.
- The IBA has its own compensation fund to which all members contribute. This provides compensation of €250,000 per member (€100,000 maximum per claim) and is over and above the compensation limit of the Investor Compensation Company Ltd (€20,000).

To join the IBA or for more information on membership please call the IBA on 01 661 3067 or email [elaine@iba.ie](mailto:elaine@iba.ie).

## New Software Development Director Appointed

Open GI has appointed Steve Dowle to the role of Software Development Director as part of the company's continuous drive to provide market-leading broker solutions.

Steve is responsible for the 100-strong Open GI development team, overseeing the whole product development process from initial concept through to delivery.

After beginning his career at IBM Steve held a number of senior and director roles at companies including UCAS, Mitsubishi PC, Egg and Charles Schwab Europe.

Commenting on the challenges that lie ahead in his new role, Steve Dowle, Software Development Director, Open GI, said; "In our development strategy it is important we build on the solid relationship we have with our clients and maintain a strong customer focus. The customer is at the heart of everything we do and we have to fully understand their needs in order to develop products that will improve their business processes.

"My philosophy is 'there must be a better way, let's find it,' we can always improve on what we do. My team of developers are experts in their field and by working closely with other departments we can strengthen our current offering to the benefit of our customers."

Commenting on the appointment, Chris Guillaume, Managing Director, Open International, said; "Steve is a welcome addition to the Open GI board. His strong IT background and vast level of experience at a senior level will ensure that the €5m plus we spend on research and development each year will continue to drive the business forward. The delivery of new and enhanced software continues to be a priority and Steve will play a vital role within that."



Steve Dowle,  
Software Development Director,  
Open GI

For all your Open GI support needs visit:

# [www.opengi.ie/support](http://www.opengi.ie/support)

Open GI customers - you can register now using your Broker Reference number.

You can gain access to resources including:

- Online Guides
- Release Packs
- How to guides for Key products
- Troubleshooting Documents
- Installation Instructions
- Support Requests

Opening hours: 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday (except public holidays)

E: [support@opengi.ie](mailto:support@opengi.ie) T: 01 676 8013



## The Growth of Online Training

by Martin Friel

**We've all been there. You get sent on a training course to some far-flung part of the country where you are expected to gather with strangers in a classroom and listen to the tutor try to impart as much knowledge as quickly as possible.**

This has been the tried and tested method of training in the insurance industry for decades but there are certain inherent inefficiencies that have never really been addressed. The main problem is that tutors are given a set amount of time to try and teach a classroom of people as much as they can. The old adage that if you finish the day having learned something new then it was all worthwhile simply does not hold up in today's efficiency-focussed insurance market. It's not good enough to send employees on generic courses hoping that within the onslaught of information, they will pick up something of use.

Ideally, each 'student' would be able to attend a course that was tailored to their needs and designed to fill their particular knowledge gaps but the cost of doing this in the traditional face-to-face method makes it impossible. This is where e-learning comes into its own.

Having only been used within the insurance industry for around ten years, e-learning could be said to be in its infancy but it has certainly come a long way in that short period of time.

As Simon Graham, head of learning at the Chartered Insurance Institute which runs the Broker Assess courses, explains: "The earliest courses consisted of a series of screens of text which the student would answer before moving on to the next screen. Nowadays, there are a lot more questions, more tracking of results and many courses are a lot more media rich with video and audio elements."

But he warns that just because some courses have embraced the recent advances in technology does not mean that all e-learning courses have followed suit. "There is still a lot of rubbish out there and some of the courses are not far away from the power-point stuff of ten years ago. At its worst, it is an online book."

So what do the better systems actually provide and how do they go about imparting knowledge in a more efficient and durable way? Classroom-based learning is by its very nature forced to appeal to the lowest common denominator to try and make sure that all participants get at least something out of it. With e-learning, the training can be targeted to the user's specific needs thereby providing information and knowledge in a much more useful way.

Ian Jerrum, MD of Searchlight Insurance Training is not one to run down the benefits of face-to-face training but he is also a very strong advocate of the real benefits that can be gained from training staff online. Searchlight's courses cover everything from the principles of insurance and policy construction to more advanced areas such as D&O liability and marine cargo cover.

"We have over 200 technical insurance services on our system and users can pick and choose which ones they require. The system uses training needs analysis where users can rate how useful each course would be to them. From that information, the system will then select the appropriate courses," he explains.

This ability to tailor the training to a user's particular needs is one of the core strengths of this style of learning and this is married to an intrinsic flexibility. With face-to-face learning, days out of the office will be lost not to mention the costs involved in travel and accommodation. However, with recent advances in both software and hardware, it is possible for people to take their chosen course whenever and wherever they choose.

"One of the benefits is that the courses can be undertaken while out of the office, at home or even on a phone," says Mr Jerrum adding, "Podcasts may be the next step which could incorporate both audio and visual elements."

But this accessibility is not limited to freedom of location – it also applies to the amount of time that the training takes up. It can be delivered in bite-sized chunks of say, 30 minutes, which makes it much more manageable. The user can go over the necessary information as many times as they require whereas in the classroom environment, there's one shot at it.

Having said all this, e-learning is not a panacea – it too has its limitations. As Mr Jerrum points out: "The companies that get the best out of this type of learning monitor the use of the system. The owner needs to be the champion of the system – there's no point buying it in and expecting staff to get on with it."

It may not be that managers have to continually look over the shoulders of their staff to check what they are doing but the training and its outcomes should be built into appraisals and training targets.

But ultimately, e-learning can only go so far. One area where it falls short and face-to-face teaching excels is in the provision of skills. It just isn't capable of giving the hands-on training required but this does not mean that it is a flash in the pan.

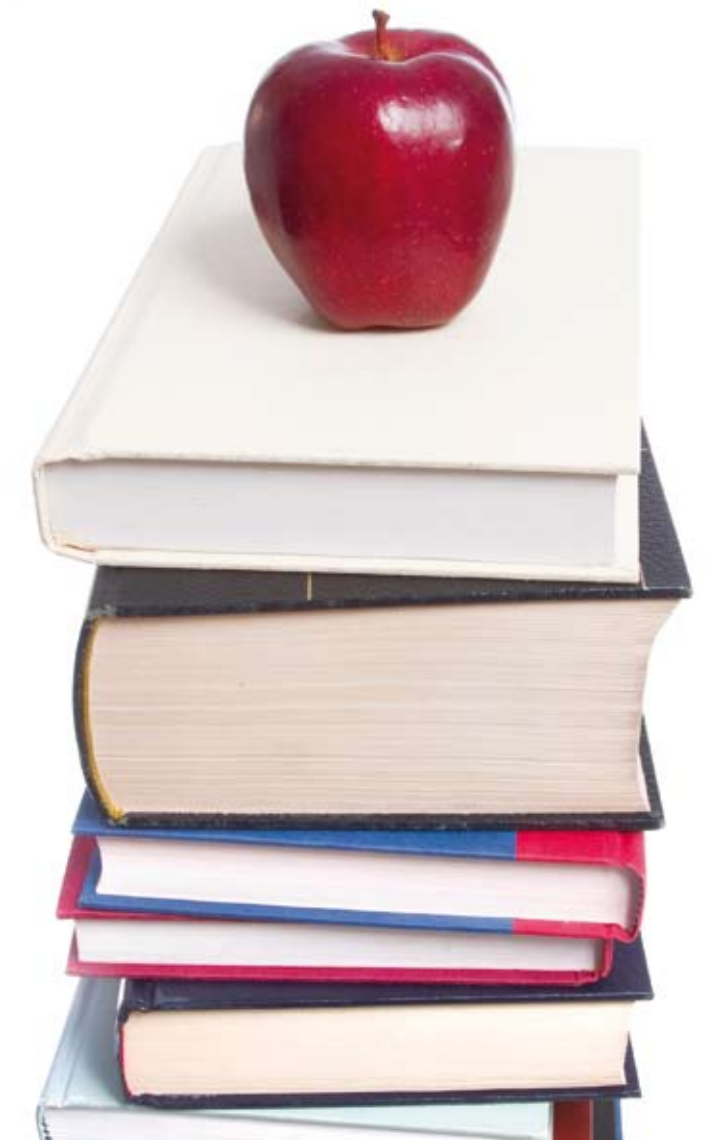
Paul Burton, national sales development manager at AXA believes that there is room for both methods.

"One of its main limitations is that it is solely knowledge-based learning – there is no role playing or skill development. As a tutor in a classroom, you can sense whether people are picking it up or not," he says.

He is however, convinced that the days of teaching technical knowledge in a classroom are gone: "In terms of delivering knowledge, face-to-face just does not work – it is inefficient with no return on investment."

So although online training is no cure-all for the problems of training staff, there are certain elements inherent in the way it is delivered that makes it a much more efficient way of delivering technical knowledge.

Users can tailor the courses to their specific needs; it significantly reduces the costs in terms of both time and finance; and it can be used over and over again until the user is comfortable that they have grasped the issues. However, it is clear that face-to-face still has an important role to play but if e-learning is utilised correctly, it could even make traditional methods of learning more efficient and forever banish those dreary training days in the back of beyond.



## Communications Just Got Greener



As part of an ongoing review of how we communicate to our customers we will be increasingly sending communications electronically.

This not only reduces our carbon footprint, it allows us to send you up to the minute information direct to your inbox.

In order to help us reduce the amount of communications we send on paper we need you to update your contact details.

Simply email the following information:

- Broker Name
- Contact Name
- Office Address
- email address and job title of each key contact

To [marketing@opengi.ie](mailto:marketing@opengi.ie) with contacts as the subject and you will be entered into a draw to win one of two €70 One4all® vouchers, redeemable at over 4,000 outlets.

If at any time you want to stop receiving email communications from us you select unsubscribe on any email you receive. We will not pass your email addresses to any third party without obtaining your consent first.

If you have any questions please contact the Marketing Department on 01 676 8466.

## consumables



Whilst providing you with proven broker solutions Open GI can cater for all your consumable needs. Whether wishing to replace printer supplies and back-up tapes or renew computer peripherals and corporate stationery, Open GI can source supplies that meet any of your business requirements.

For consumable sales please contact Hellen Webb on +44(0)1905 857088 or email [consumables.sales@opengi.ie](mailto:consumables.sales@opengi.ie)



## eTraining

Want all the expertise of Open GI's trainers direct to your desktop at a time to suit you?

Online training from Open GI offers you just that. Our courses are presented live via the internet using hosted applications, enabling you to grow your knowledge of the Open GI system and get to the heart of your training needs.

A range of sessions are available from as little as thirty minutes to two hours, making the overall learning experience as manageable as possible for delegates.

eTraining complements Open GI's existing in-house and on-site training proposition and is powered by interactive web technology meaning Trainers can answer questions immediately online and offer one-on-one support.

All you need is a PC with access to the internet and a telephone with a headset.

Benefits of eTraining:

- Web-based and accessible from any location
- Dynamic content tailored to specific course requirements
- Courses are fully interactive, ensuring maximum delegate participation
- Saves time and money on essential system and "top-up" training
- Results are measurable online
- Fits around the working day, ensuring best use of your time
- Cuts our travel time to and from training venues

The courses that are currently available include Open-i, Open Word and CreditLine with more added over the next few months.

For more information or to book a course contact your Account Manager.

## Meet Chris Guillaume, Managing Director



Chris Guillaume, Managing Director, Open International

Chris Guillaume, Open International's new Managing Director, outlines his thoughts on the business and its future direction, having taken on the role in March of this year.

What are your objectives for the business?

My main objective is to continue to drive the business forward and maintain the momentum that's been achieved under Phillip's leadership. It's been a great couple of years for Open International. The business has grown from strength to strength and finds itself leading its market and operating at the forefront of innovation. Broker sales have exceeded our expectations, as has the volume of product development and new contracts. We are introducing more and more new technology to make brokers' lives easier and that's set to continue.

Can you outline the strategic direction for the coming twelve months?

The strategic direction for the business falls into three key areas – the electronic trading of commercial lines, further developments to the core platform, and expansion of our

e-commerce proposition. This will allow us to provide a cohesive end-to-end product for our core market – brokers.

Personally, what are you looking to achieve in the new role?

I'm looking forward to the challenge that the new role provides but more importantly the opportunities that lie ahead. As Research and Development Director for the past three years and a member of the Board for over five years, I have been close to some of the most significant developments the business has seen including two major acquisitions and a rebrand. I have no doubt that there will be further changes, but I am confident I have a wealth of experience to draw on.

Where do you see the business heading in the next five years?

With a good senior team in place and a solid business strategy, we can only continue to lead the market and deliver the best value for our broker clients and insurer partners. It's an exciting time for the industry and Open International is ideally placed at the centre of this.



## Training

The Open User Group will be holding training sessions throughout the year aimed at improving members' knowledge of Open GI products.

The training will cover two topics: Document Maintenance and Frames Maintenance - led by Open GI trainers.

The date for the Open User Group training day in Ireland is:

Date	City / Town
26th November	Dublin

\*Event locations and dates are subject to change but are correct at time of publication

For more information on these training days contact the User Group on  
Tel: +44 (0)1902 426363 or email: [members@openusergroup.org](mailto:members@openusergroup.org)

Whatever your business reaches out for



We Have Your Broking Solution

You can streamline all of your workflow and schemes processing with Open GI. Contact our business development team on 01 676 8466 or [sales@opengi.ie](mailto:sales@opengi.ie) quoting reference AD-124 and arrange for our experts to talk to you about your niche business needs.



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# Interface

## Dear Non-Members

I may as well address this one to you.

Do you realise how much you could benefit by being a member of the User Group?

I have every confidence that, in accordance with regulatory requirements, you ensure that all your staff are fully trained on all the software within the Open Core Product. You no doubt arrange training sessions on a regular basis and book a trainer to come and visit you.

Just think, as members of the User Group, you could save 20% off the cost. Not only that but we are organising training sessions in Ireland for no more than the cost of your lunch (see page 10).

You may have heard about the latest upgrades to the Core Products. Personally, I think Open were very brave calling it "13" but were you aware that the User Group contributed a considerable number of the enhancements? Not only 13 but many of the previous upgrades came from our members. We have already started talking about 14.

The point of all this is that we are only as strong as our membership base. The more members we have the more authority we have when discussing the further improvement of the system. We are recognised within the industry as being the strongest of all the software User Groups. With your membership we could achieve even more.

Why not come on board and help us do that?

John F Regan  
National Chairman, Open User Group  
+44 (0) 1902 426363



## Employee's Loss is St Richard's Gain



St. Richard's  
Hospice  
CARING FOR LIFE

**Andy Fenwick, a software developer at IT Firm, Open GI, (part of Open International) has kick started the company's fundraising for St Richard's Hospice with a weight loss programme.**

After a gruelling few weeks training at Cannons Health Club and a stringent diet, Andy lost 22lbs and raised a total of €610 for the charity.

St Richard's Hospice is Open International's staff-nominated charity for 2008. The money will contribute to the company's staff pledge to raise at least €4,450 by the end of the year. If successful, its Board of Directors will add a further €4,450.

This is the second year Andy has embarked on charity fundraising activity having raised over €500 for Acorns Children's Hospice last year.

Andy (pictured above) said; "I was looking to shed a few excess pounds so I thought why not raise money for St Richard's at the same time. They're a great local charity and need our support. I'm happy with the results as I've trimmed down and feel fitter whilst providing funding for a worthwhile cause."

Chris Guillaume, Managing Director, Open International, said; "Andy's weight loss is a great effort and gives us an excellent start to our fundraising for St Richard's. The proactive approach from staff is very encouraging and I am pleased that we are able to get involved in supporting the local community."

With further events currently being organised, the company is on course to reach its charity target. Four daring employees are even taking part in a skydive during the summer.

For more information about St Richard's Hospice visit: [www.strichards.org.uk](http://www.strichards.org.uk)