

CommercePayments™

Claims payments, your way.

SHELTER INSURANCE | COLUMBIA, MISSOURI

After catastrophe strikes, the wait for an insurance check to arrive in the mail can seem interminable.

Payments for some Shelter Insurance claimants, however, are now hitting their debit cards as soon as 30 minutes after approval, thanks to an innovative claims payment solution Commerce developed with the insurance company's help.

"We want to be able to pay claims in a timely manner and in ways our customers want to be paid," says James Heavin, Shelter's accounting systems and reporting manager.

That's harder than it sounds. Insurance claims often involve multiple parties – the insured, body shops, attorneys, lien holders and more. Shelter wanted a solution that could make payments to multiple parties on the same claim.

"There are also security risks associated with collecting a claimant's account information for a one-time electronic payment," he explains.

After exploring available alternatives and coming up empty-handed, Shelter considered developing a product in-house. It also opened a dialogue with its long-time bankers at Commerce. "Commerce had a partial solution, but not quite what we needed," said James.

The bank had something else, however, that appealed to Shelter: a desire to learn more. "Commerce expressed an interest in developing a claims payment solution that met our needs," says Lisa Windett, home office claims manager.

In December 2016, Shelter joined a handful of insurance companies on a Claims advisory council formed by Commerce to guide the new product's development. A year later, it became the first insurer to use the product, which it branded as Customer Choice, with a small group of users. A full roll-out for single-party claims came six months later.

Today, Customer Choice users are directed to a web portal, where they choose from check, ACH or direct-to-debit card

payment options. No personal or account information they share for the one-time transaction is saved. With the direct-to-debit option, payment arrives about 30 minutes later.

The response? "Our customers love it," says Lisa. "Commerce has been really good to work with. They have been quick, responsive and open-minded. If adjustments we suggested weren't working, they listened and developed a better way."

Plans are underway in 2019 to implement the multi-party payment system Shelter originally envisioned. Says Lisa, "Step by step, Commerce is helping us improve our customer experience."



An innovative claims management solution from Commerce makes it possible for Shelter Insurance claimants to receive payment as soon as 30 minutes after their claims are approved. From left, Shelter Insurance employees **Lyn Scrivner**, regional claims director; **Shawn Knauts**, vice president, Claims; **Lisa Windett**, home office claims manager; and **James Heavin**, accounting systems and reporting manager.

