

Making Annuities Easier to Understand, Transact, And Manage

Modernizing the Annuity Industry Through IRI's Digital First for Annuities Initiative

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, January 12, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Insured Retirement Institute](#) (IRI) touted significant progress in its Digital First for Annuities (DFA) initiative, highlighting a year of transformative industry impact, rapid modernization, and accelerated adoption of new standards designed to make annuities easier to understand, transact, and manage.



“

These results show that Digital First for Annuities is not just a vision. It is a fully mobilized modernization effort reshaping how the annuity ecosystem operates.”

Wayne Chopus, President & CEO

Over the past year, IRI and its members have delivered measurable results driven by several DFA standards and best practices now in use across the industry. These advancements are modernizing decades-old processes and improving the experience for financial professionals and consumers.

Quantifiable Industry Impact

Two DFA-enabled improvements dramatically streamlined annuity operations in 2025. Companies that adopted the Paperless Replacement standard for annuity exchanges experienced a 94 percent decrease in cycle time – from 18

days to as short as 24 hours. More than 17,000 paperless annuity exchanges have been processed to date.

DFA standards are also helping reduce call center volumes by 80 percent by requiring fewer manual interventions. The Activity/Application Status standard provides transparency that speeds up NIGO resolution by 2 days.

Additionally, IRI's Baseline Values are enabling annuities to be modeled generically alongside traditional investment asset classes. Today, two of the top three financial planning platforms and

one tier-one distribution firm have incorporated IRI's Baseline Values for annuity categories of income and growth-with-protection to be represented alongside other asset classes.

"These results show that Digital First for Annuities is not just a vision. It is a fully mobilized modernization effort reshaping how the annuity ecosystem operates," said Wayne Chopus, President and CEO, IRI. "DFA has become the talk of the industry, and momentum is accelerating because the impact is real, measurable, and improving the retirement experience for consumers and financial professionals."

Operationalizing Innovation at Scale

A cornerstone of the year's success was the launch of the IRI Standard Hosting Platform, which moved from proposal to proof of concept to full execution in just five months. The platform is open-sourced and available to all stakeholders to access DFA standards.

IRI also delivered the first industry-wide hackathon, bringing together carriers, distributors, solution providers, and innovators to explore digital solutions that reimagine how individual annuity products are marketed, sold, and serviced. The hackathon resulted in one concept moving into production at the end of 2025, with two more moving into production in the first half of 2026. A second hackathon is planned for February 2026.

Accelerated Adoption and Ecosystem Growth

The pace of adoption for DFA standards is outpacing all prior industry modernization efforts. Ten firms have implemented the Paperless Replacements standard, the most transformative to date.

"Our goal was to modernize the annuity infrastructure, and we are proving that a unified, digital-first approach accelerates both innovation and adoption," said Katherine Dease, Chief Technology and Innovation Officer. "The progress made this year validates the model: standards, technology, and collaboration working together to deliver real operational value and a better financial professional and consumer experience."

Positioned for Continued Success in 2026

With substantial progress behind it, DFA is poised for continued momentum. In 2026, IRI will complete several standards, expand adoption metrics, deepen collaboration across the industry, and begin work on automation and AI-enabled efficiencies.

"DFA is building the future of the annuity industry," Chopus added. "2025 was a breakthrough year, and 2026 will be even more transformative."

The Insured Retirement Institute (IRI) is the leading association for the entire supply chain of insured retirement strategies, including life insurers, asset managers, broker-dealers, banks,

marketing organizations, law firms, and solution providers. IRI members account for 90 percent of annuity assets in the U.S., include the foremost distributors of protected lifetime income solutions, and are represented by financial professionals serving millions of Americans. IRI champions retirement security for all through leadership in advocacy, awareness, research, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and the advancement of digital solutions within a collaborative industry community. www.irionline.org.

Email communications@irionline.org to opt out of future news releases.

Daniel Zielinski
Insured Retirement Institute
202-469-3000 ext.
[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/882527655>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.