

## WILLIAM (BILL) DIAZ

PRESIDENT, CLIENT TECHNOLOGIES

CS STARS



## GOING GAGA OVER GOGGLES

Bill Diaz sees clearly into the future of CS STARS

Risk managers with finely tuned technological antennae had for the last couple of years sensed some drift, a dulling of the lenses, over at CS STARS, Marsh's ground-breaking risk management information systems (RMIS) platform. Was CS STARS losing its twinkle in the face of aggressive competition?

Not if William (Bill) Diaz, a veteran of the Marsh and CS STARS organizations, had anything to do about it. Promoted last year to the top spot at CS STARS, it was high time to adjust the team's lens barrel and focus with laser-like intensity on the marketplace.

First off, Diaz slapped a pair of goggles on the system's massive database, a tool aptly

named "Risk Goggles." The tool allows risk managers to access, view and interpret risk data and intelligence in the context of geography, similar to Google's popular mapping technology.

"We leverage Google Earth and are kind of doing it in a format that's visually impactful," he said.

With Marsh's purchase of Corporate Systems in 1968, CS STARS has more policy, claims and exposure data than any other risk management information in the world, just waiting to be mapped and presented in a visually attractive way that risk managers can understand.

That's Risk Goggles.

When the buzz started building about the

improvements, clear-eyed risk managers had their doubts about how fast CS STARS could put a real, meaty tool into production. So, when Diaz and his team unveiled a prototype of the tool last March, some 400 starry-eyed users were stunned, responding with "Oooooohs," and "Ahhhhhs."

"Speed to market is most important and I saw the power of what it could help us do," said Brent Pickens, assistant corporate risk manager of Mars Inc. "Bill was the reason behind that."

Diaz is also behind much of what's to come: big improvements to the software as the definition of risk, like an ever-expanding universe, continues to broaden.

"We have a bright future," he said. "There's a sense of energy again. Some of these clients were blown away, and by how quickly we intend to move forward."

Risk managers are clamoring for tools that can help them make sense of all the data. As far as Diaz is concerned, there's no reason for CS STARS not to move at the speed of light. As the No. 1 risk management information system, with about 1,000 clients and "tens of thousands" of users, delays are unacceptable, not when you're in charge of the STARS ship.

Three times larger than the next closest competitor, "we should move three times faster," said Diaz.

The Goggles tool is delivered through the STARS Enterprise risk management technology platform, according to Diaz's application materials received

for this nomination process.

To extend the capabilities of the platform, Diaz has also finished the integration of a suite of audit capabilities to support enterprise risk management (ERM), for which all associated data is accessible through Risk Goggles.

It looks like Diaz, appointed last September, is just getting warmed up. There are plenty of the other software overlays coming to STARS' massive data warehouse.

If nothing else, the buzz is back at CS STARS where Diaz has put the staff on notice that they're in for a challenge. "He's challenging them so that the next release is not just cosmetic," said Pickens. "New versions I would expect will include something new and valuable from a business perspective so that clients are anticipating the next thing."

Companies that *are* market leaders need to act like leaders, and that means innovations need to be put to use in the service of clients, Diaz said.

Brilliant ideas wasting away on library shelves, whiz-bang applications too complex to use, market-leading platforms eroded by complacency, Diaz said he has seen it all before, but that such stumbles are not going to happen on his watch. He's wearing his goggles.

"When you're the market leader it should mean something," he said. "It should mean that you get more innovation, more service and more choice, and we intend to deliver on that."

—By Cyril Tuohy

## About Risk Innovator:

The Risk & Insurance® Risk Innovator™ Award recognizes winners in 14 different industries who have, in the past year, demonstrated innovation and excellence in risk management. These key individuals see risk differently and have resolved risk-related problems in a unique or innovative way. They view risk not only as a threat, but also as an opportunity for their organizations. In 2009, 55 individuals received the Risk Innovator Award.

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