GOING TECH: The New York Life Building's neo-Gothic design is a distinctive piece of the New York City skyline. New York Life, while steeped in history, is looking to stay modern by developing ways of using artificial intelligence that executives believe will benefit the mutual life insurer.

New York Life Moves Ahead With Artificial Intelligence Integration

New York Life has begun using AI in many roles and is looking to a wide rollout, said Alain Karaoglan, executive vice president and head of the company's strategic businesses.

by Terrence Dopp

New York Life Insurance Co. traces its roots to 1845. Yet, in 2026 it finds itself in the position of formulating how it implements artificial intelligence across one of the largest mutual life insurers in the United States.

Alain Karaoglan, executive vice president and head of New York Life's strategic businesses, said the company has begun using AI in many roles and is looking to a wide rollout to help avoid pitfalls.

"It's hype and not hype," he said. "It has a lot of potential, and the improvement in AI has been significant. So, what we did up front is we gave enterprise ChatGPT to every employee at New York Life and every agent at New York Life. This way you get 12,500 innovators and experimenters learning about it."

At the same time, Karaoglan said New York Life developed use cases based on those areas in which the carrier stands to "really benefit" from AI, he said. The result is a more focused implementation that goes beyond individual productivity gains.

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Saving Time

As an example, he said the company has used AI in writing claims rejection letters. The letters are extensive and document all medical factors, circumstances and technical rationale behind the decision. Those took on

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> New York Life

average four hours to write, with outliers using as much as seven hours of employee time to draft.

Using the ClaimGenie language model to synthesize and start a draft, Karaoglan said the company has been able to shave as much as two-thirds off that time.

The goal is to "step back" and find ways to reimagine whole segments. One example he cited was in group benefits: New York Life is thinking about it from presales uses to how it can be implemented after that initial sale. Because group benefits involve employers with many workers, companies send New York Life reams of data, which can create room for human error.

"How can we change that whole process?" he said. "That's part of the process. So, how can we sort of deal with that, in a way?"

New York Life is the second-largest U.S. life insurer by admitted assets with $480.8 billion in admitted assets at the close of 2025, up by 7.3% to just beat the industry's total growth rate, according to Best's Rankings data.

The carrier said it closed last year with sales up across the board and $892 billion in assets under management, according to a year-end financial report. New York Life's net income for 2025 fell to $329 million from $470 million the prior year, according to the report.

The company reported a higher surplus of $34.7 billion, compared with $33.3 billion in 2024, and operating earnings that increased 4% to $3.6 billion. New York Life also paid $18.1 billion in policy owner benefits and dividends, according to a company statement.

Earlier this year, the insurer said it had launched a unified global asset management brand that plans to bring together all of its asset management businesses across public and private businesses. The company said New York Life Investment Management has assets under management of $807.7 billion and represents one of the largest active asset managers in the world.

The carrier divides itself into two types of businesses: those deemed foundational, and others deemed strategic.

Foundational businesses revolve around protection-first advice and guidance to customers through 12,000 agents and advisers throughout the United States. The strategic category involves businesses that support the former through such things as investment management, group benefit solutions, institutionally owned life insurance and annuities and direct-to-consumer insurance sales.

Improving Efficiency

Karaoglan said the strategic businesses account for about half of its revenue. It's eyeing a mix of organic growth in areas such as voluntary benefits and potentially growing the asset management business through acquisitions. He also pointed to the company's mutual structure as a strength and said it's continuously looking to become more efficient.

One of the biggest challenges with AI is basing its implementation around a desired outcome, the executive said. New York Life has remained disciplined in that, which he said is different than just spending $50 million or $100 million on the vague category of AI without a plan.

Any adoption also needs to involve an AI use that can be altered or added to as needed, Karaoglan said.

"What you can do today versus six months ago is drastically different," he said. "If you get married to one thing very, very narrowly, you're going to miss the boat or the improvement. So, you have to do things on a modular basis."

He added: "You have to come back and say whether it didn't work, or it worked and this is how we can tweak it and use it across New York Life. What are the sales capabilities? Any area that has sales should take some part of what we build and reuse it in their own area, adapt it." BR