What is ftwLink/API?

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ftwLink is a web service that accepts XML documents submitted by user systems via a standard HTTPS POST request. The ftwLink service processes the supplied XML document and returns an XML document to the user system with either the requested information and/or a status message. The ftwLink service provides users with a means of adding, updating and deleting information related to companies, plans and DOL Form 5500 documents. Additionally the application server can generate plan documents/forms and 5500 filing documents and return the requested document to the user.

Nearly all of the features available to users of ftwilliam.com through the standard human interface are available through ftwLink. Registered users of ftwilliam.com may request access to ftwLink through the use of unique access keys (KeyID) provided by ftwilliam.com. More than one key with differing access rights may be requested.

ftwilliam.com expects that ftwLink will be utilized by sophisticated users who already maintain a front-end data collection or proposal system. It is expected that a user's existing system is capable of capturing some or all of the plan and form information. Data captured on the user's front end system may be transmitted to the ftwilliam.com system using the XML document standard and the standard HTTPS POST method. After the user confirms that all data was transmitted properly, all plan documents and forms may be generated at the ftwilliam.com website or through the ftwLink interface.

ftwilliam.com has chosen to make ftwLink available using the HTTPS protocol. The HTTPS protocol was chosen because it encrypts the data while in transit to/from the user's system. HTTPS is the same protocol used by banks and other on-line vendors who need to provide privacy and data security. The user system must have the ability to generate/parse valid XML messages and to submit and receive XML messages via the HTTPS POST protocol

User data may be transmitted to ftwLink using one of several available XML implementations. The application server has been tested using both .NET tools and XML libraries as well as several other mainstream libraries and XML/HTTPS processors.

The following summarizes the parameters necessary to transmit data to ftwLink:

Server URI   https://www.ftwilliam.com/
Script Proxy Address (HTTPS) https://www.ftwilliam.com/cgi-bin/xxx/ftwLink/ftwLink.cgi

The 'xxx' path is provided at the time the KeyID is provided.

The ftwLink application server requires a well-formed XML document to be presented; however, we have also designed the application server to allow the greatest amount of flexibility and versatility. The order in which tags appear does not matter (although proper nesting is enforced) and null tags may be present.