



NACUSO Quarterly Review

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Managing Moments of Truth: The Member Experience

By Benjamin Rothenberg,
Marketing Program Manager for Buzz Points, Inc.



Presence, Patience, and Empowerment – How SIU Credit Union Wins Moments of Truth

Ever since the credit union movement hit the United States in the early 20th Century, every innovation and evolution in the space has been built on a single focus: the member experience. Credit unions are owned by their members and exist to serve their members. It is for this reason that above all else, a credit union's staff must operate with a member-first mentality.

In providing exemplary service to members, employees of all levels, from front-line Service Representatives to the CEO, are routinely faced with moments of opportunity. All member service issues, from the seemingly mundane to the operation changing, are chances to make a positive impression. They are chances to earn lifetime loyalty. These difference-making moments are Moments of Truth, and this is the story of one Illinois credit union that lives to win them.

If you drive southeast from St. Louis for about two hours and exit Route 13, you'll find yourself in Carbondale, IL. Home of the Southern Illinois University flagship campus and over 26,000 residents, the city is also home to SIU Credit Union. Fresh off celebrating their 80th anniversary, SIU Credit Union has always stuck to their mission statement: "We're Working for You."

"The most important part of a positive member experience at SIU Credit Union is to be available to your members," says Mark Dynis, VP of Marketing. "You need to truly listen and react to the situation with the best possible solution for each member, quickly and respectfully. In our most basic core functionality, we're simply People helping People."

Setting Members Up for Success

SIU Credit Union (SIUCU) serves over 40,000 members in the greater Carbondale-Herrin-Marion area. This cross-section of collegiate on-the-go digital natives and traditional face-to-face branch frequenters creates some unique opportunities for the SIUCU staff. One story, Dynis recalls, embodies the important intersection between technology and the ability to empower members to use it.

“We have a long-standing member at one of our smaller branches who was growing frustrated with this branch not being open after business hours or on Saturdays. He was feeling inconvenienced and considering moving his accounts elsewhere.”

SIUCU's Member Services team didn't just have a technology solution available, but a plan to help the member embrace it.

“One of our tellers, Janet Bundren, made it her mission to walk him through the different services available to him – after-hour ATM, mobile check deposits, all of the features available to him whenever and wherever he needed them.”

Not only did Janet's dedication to serving this member create a positive result, says Dynis, it also created a brand evangelist. “He shares his story with anyone who asks!”

Using Every Resource Available

SIU Credit Union also values using its numerous resources, both personnel and technological. “Our goal is to make members want to keep coming back, and to make sure their every financial need is met.” says Dynis. SIUCU's staff makes sure that their members are heard, through formal member surveys and casual conversations at the branches.

Dynis elaborates, “We have to know the needs of our communities, as we are a part of it ourselves.” SIUCU also promotes a product mix that can accommodate most any situation that is presented, including after hours deposits at ATMs, a robust mobile app that allows mobile deposits, no fees for everyday activities, and Buzz Points, a rewards program implemented in the last year that has been a huge hit with members.

A More Rewarding Experience

While rewards had always been an important piece of their cardholder portfolio, a core transition to Corelation fueled the search for a more holistic rewards program. “Our previous program was fine, but it didn't have great engagement and a lot of members didn't even know they had it!” says Dynis. “You have to be relevant, and today's consumers expect rewards. It would put us a step behind the competition if we didn't have them.”

Strong vendor support from Buzz Points made the transition seamless. “Buzz Points worked with us to make the conversion from the old program smooth and painless, and we took advantage of a number of promotions offered to entice members who were on the fence about the change.” The transition even created some great press for the credit union. “One of the promotions was a nationwide sweepstakes for an all-expenses paid trip to a Florida theme park, and one of our members won it! We loved sharing their travels on our social media and newsletters, which provided another great incentive to enroll!”

Alignment with the shared values of the credit union and their members was key as well. “We had an excellent conversion rate and have seen continued growth and positive feedback on the program. The shop-local portion is a win-win and the rise in interchange revenue has been very nice as well!”

Never Stop Listening

SIU Credit Union’s success in winning moments of truth is a testament to their dedication and technology, but Dynis wants other credit unions to know that it’s not impossible to replicate.

“Take every advantage of every situation to listen and learn from your members and look for the underlying needs as well.” Along with being present, provide tools for success. “Have the tools to offer the right product or service when your members need it. “

Moments of Truth present themselves all the time. With the right attitude, the right education, and the right resources, any credit union is capable of rising to the challenge, and winning members for life.



About the Author:

Benjamin Rothenberg, Marketing Program Manager for Buzz Points, Inc. has nearly a decade of experience driving profitable behaviors for community banks and credit unions through exciting and engaging marketing campaigns. A graduate of the University of Texas, Benjamin loves Longhorns football and playing with his two dogs.



**Are your members successful and happy
with your products and services?**

**Are they telling their friends and business partners
to buy from you?**

**If they have a concern, are you making
meaningful change to address it?**

These are questions that all businesses need to ask themselves to ensure everything is being done to create member delight. Happy members are not only retained but they also help create more happy members. Having solid answers to these questions helps drive a smooth member experience throughout your sales cycle, the delivery, use or implementation of your product, and through any ongoing post-sale interactions.

To realize these goals a company needs to ensure their practices **delight members at every stage**. And as the saying goes: “You cannot change what you cannot measure”.

Measuring and Acting

“Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning.”

BILL GATES

When companies sell a product or service, they are selling the value that it provides and the experiences the buyer has with it. Not only must your product perform as expected, but the member must realize value through a positive experience both with the product itself and through all points of contact with your business. Achieving these outcomes is not immediately intuitive. Therefore, companies need metrics to understand what success means.

Often, departments within a business focus on a few key performance indicators to help judge how they are doing. Ultimately, each department's metrics are essential to their roles, however, the member's success is the responsibility of the business as a whole, not one specific team. For example, a sales department may focus on a revenue metric to show success; if sales targets are met or growing, then business is going well. However, this metric focuses solely on your sales team's outcomes and does not adequately factor in member outcomes. Over time, if existing members are not successful, sales growth will stall. **Repeat business and word-of-mouth promotion by delighted members are vital to the long-term success of a business.**

The Value of Measuring Member Delight

Another crucial touchpoint is when a concern or problem arises through a member service or success team. No business wants their product or process to break down or otherwise not meet their members' expectations. But, inevitably when the unexpected occurs, there must be a process through which to understand the problem and do something with that information. The only thing worse than not collecting member feedback is not actioning it when you do. Listening to and engaging with the voice of the member is vital to a business' ability to help members be successful. Driving a positive experience, even when things go wrong, helps improve the loyalty and satisfaction of your members.

We often see mistakes where credit unions measure NPS holistically. While there is nothing wrong with this, it often doesn't tell the full story of where a credit union should focus to improve their member experience. We call these Micro and Macro journeys. These are unique member journeys that are deeper than the overall journey. For example, measuring the journey of a loan application, or opening a checking or savings account. You have an offline journey and possibly an online journey for each of those. Each one of those have unique touchpoints that impact the NPS overall and the NPS of each journey individually. Tracking these metrics at deeper levels allows a credit union to identify key areas of focus where it's directly impacting their NPS score. Ultimately giving the credit union the power to act on data quicker through pre-built recommendations.

Measuring these various metrics with multiple tools, or between separated departments can lead to a lack of focus on the touchpoints that need improvement and to a weak feedback loop through the organization. Capturing feedback at each step of the member journey and aggregating that data to build a view into how delighted members are, helps to make solid data-driven decisions on where to improve the member experience.

Member Experience Metrics

"The key is when a customer walks away, thinking 'Wow, I love doing business with them, and I want to tell others about the experience.'"

SHEP HYKEN

Member Experience is a differentiator. PwC found that "73% [of buyers] point to experience as an important factor in their purchasing decisions." It is imperative to ensure the member experience is measured accurately. Within member experience, there are 2 measures typically used by companies. Briefly, these are:

Net Promoter Score (NPS)

Net Promoter Score is a measure of member loyalty to a company. It is measured by asking the question: "On a scale of 0-10, how likely are you to recommend our product to your friends and colleagues?" Once the data is collected, the score is formed by subtracting the percentage of detractors (0-6 ratings) from the percentage of promoters (9 and 10 ratings).

Customer Satisfaction (CSAT)

CSAT is about meeting expectations and usually revolves around one element of the member experience.

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e.g. “Are you happy with the product?” or “Was your support issue solved quickly?” It is usually a Yes/No or 5-point scale and is presented as an average of all responses.

Member Delight Score

Member Delight Score is a superset of these, and other departmental metrics, which helps your business understand what is going right and what needs change. Member Delight goes beyond satisfaction and loyalty as individual ratings and helps focus on the reasons that lead to them. By combining a holistic view of a given member’s NPS, CSAT and other sentiments throughout your member journey, your business can track actions against real member concerns at all touchpoints and consistently delight members with the value and experiences they want.

Why Measure Member Delight?

“Just having satisfied customers isn’t good enough anymore. If you really want a booming business, you have to create raving fans.”

KEN BLANCHARD

Delighted members are created by going above and beyond their expectations and making them feel special. This feeling is achieved by finding out the motivation behind your member’s survey answers and learning what they want from your business at each step of your member journey. Member Delight Score is a metric that helps your business know if you are genuinely making members happy. It is calculated by measuring your member sentiment at touchpoints, including NPS and CSAT surveys, support channels, sales process and any other milestones. Using a Member Experience Management Platform, you can combine and track actionable member feedback effectively to deliver better experiences.

Surveying members at various times during the member journey helps your business gain valuable insight by comparing written and numerical feedback with sentiment analysis tied to a specific interaction and member. With this data, you can drill down to learn what meaningful steps are necessary within your business to improve your product, service or process, with a goal to increase retention, and delight more members more frequently. Using Member Delight Score will help you listen to and action your members’ concerns and will create successful experiences, more value and lead to longer-term loyalty, higher retention and increased word-of-mouth advertising.

“Net Promoter, NPS, and the NPS-related emoticons are registered service marks, and Net Promoter Score and Net Promoter System are service marks, of Bain & Company, Inc., Satmetrix Systems, Inc. and Fred Reichheld”



About the Author:

Our Customer Experience Management software helps global enterprises improve customer experience, track customer journeys and boost profitability.

For more information contact us at <https://cloudcherry.com>

Data & The Member Experience

By Bill Lehman,

SVP of Managed Services, Trellance



Credit card reward programs are necessary to maintain competitiveness. But they should be folded into something bigger..

Credit card reward programs have been around for 30 years. Getting points for each dollar spent, with some bonus points for specific merchant categories, has become the norm. And although these programs are sometimes referred to as loyalty programs, the fact is they do not engender loyalty. Reward cards drive top-of-wallet, but only temporarily, until a better reward card comes along. That's not to say that reward cards should be abandoned. On the contrary, they are necessary to maintain competitiveness. But they should be folded into something bigger – a rewards program that is based on data.

Most Valuable Member Programs

Most Valuable Member (MVM) programs are rewards programs that use data to identify, engage, and reward a credit union's most valuable (a.k.a. profitable) members; while converting other existing members and attracting new members to become a part of the program.

What defines an MVM?

This definition varies by credit union based on their most profitable business lines or combination of products. Data plays an integral role in this decision. For credit unions that are focused on growing deposits, which is increasingly important to be able to fund loan activity, they may specify a pre-determined threshold that members must attain in checking, savings, and money market deposits to be considered an MVM. In this case, the credit union would identify the members who meet the criteria to engage them.

*"We recognize you as one of our most valuable members."
and reward them...*

"Because we value you as a member, we're giving you an extra half point on your savings rates."

At the same time, they would also use data to identify members who don't meet the criteria but could if they increased their deposits. Other credit unions that have profitable credit card portfolios may add the use of their credit union branded card to the criteria to determine their MVMs.

The Trellance clients that have implemented MVM programs used a combination of factors to determine who their most valuable members are. One credit union used data to identify members based on three profitable factors: direct deposit and minimum balance in their checking account, having a loan product, and maintaining a pre-determined minimum deposit across savings and money market accounts. They did not include CDs as they were already paying above market rates for CD interest and rewarding on top of that would not be in the best interest of the total member base. Their MVMs were rewarded with dividends at the end of the year, and based on feedback; the credit union added credit card usage as a fourth criterion the following year.

There are many ways credit unions can use data to create a unique member experience. Defining and creating a most valuable member program is just one. What's important is that the credit union starts its journey toward collecting data about its members from its many data sources (core, credit processor, debit processor, loans, ACH and bill pay, CRM, credit bureaus and so on) to create a single 360-degree view of each member. With that in place and a clear strategy to use the data, the possibilities of creating delightful member experiences are limitless.



About the Author:

Bill Lehman With over 20 years of progressive executive leadership in the electronic payments industry within the credit union industry, Bill now serves as the SVP of Managed Services for Trellance.

In this role, he and his team of Sr. Portfolio Consultants are responsible for assisting member credit unions in analyzing their card portfolios and proactively identifying opportunities to increase penetration, activation, usage and retention, ultimately increasing card program performance and profitability.

Prior to joining Trellance, Bill worked for FIS in St. Petersburg, Florida as a Client Relations Executive responsible for developing and nurturing strong partner relationships at the executive level. He also has experience working for Capital Communications Federal Credit Union (CCFCU) in Albany, New York in various leadership roles including Credit Risk Manager, Lending Manager, Call Center Manager, and Card Services Manager. His tenure at CCFCU provided him experience in the development and implementation of new products, a comprehensive understanding of the features and benefits of all card programs and an effective approach to maximize the usage and penetration of card products.

Bill is a graduate of LeMoyne College where he received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Operations Management.

What it Takes to Improve Member Experience

By Paroon Chadha,
Co-founder and CEO, Passageways



Providing a memorable member experience means delighting, solving real problems, and anticipating needs.

The American Express Global Member Service Barometer found that members who are receiving an excellent experience tell an average of nine other people. Word of mouth is powerful. Not only does it bring your products or services to a new audience, but it's the foundation of your reputation within the market.

Taking active steps to master your member experience bares fruit. Your members will become more engaged, discover additional value in your services, and often an amazing experience reduces churn and creates a more predictable revenue stream.

That's why delighting your members provides an edge – a clear-cut differentiator over competitors. To bolster your member experience, here are few concrete steps we've implemented at Passageways (Often after observing them ourselves after working with financial institutions for nearly 20 years)

1. Embrace all member reviews, not just the nice ones.

Seeking reviews and feedback from members can lead to some incredible findings, especially those who are downbeat about your products. Actively seeking out those who have an issue can often transform the relationship by demonstrating how much you care. What's more, problems are rarely isolated. If one member is experiencing frustration, it's more than an opportunity to mend that relationship, it's the chance to improve your product or processes that led to that frustration in the first place. Look at every complaint as an opportunity to improve your member experience. And take the good reviews as motivation to continue doing incredible work.

2. Stop apologizing. Make it better.

According to a Zendesk Benchmark study, the word "sorry" being said during a member experience conversation actually lowers member satisfaction because it's "indicative of poor member service". Maintaining composure when speaking with members, instead of overly apologizing, it's your one chance to be the hero your member needs and provide a solution to their problem. If you can quickly solve their problems and confidently assure them it is resolved, it will increase trust and eliminate any sense that a

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future problem is likely to occur. In the end, the member will end up not remembering the problem, but the solution and great member service you provided.

3. Focus on your pipeline.

Member experience improvement should be worked on throughout the whole member journey. Often, companies only look to their wins to try and find the keys to success. However, the keys can frequently be found in your losses. By watching where in the process the breakdown occurred or why the prospect didn't convert and finding the why, your company can take a proactive approach to fix the gaps that keep your prospects from turning into members.

It's all about switching up your mindset and thinking of the relationship you have with your member as a partnership. Success will then be dependent on switching up your focus from acquisition to retention and adjusting your operation to see the entire member lifetime—not just for lead handovers, upselling, or membership renewals. Members must be actively and frequently shown how to understand and love your product, so they are motivated to keep coming back. Signing a new member is a wonderful thing but retaining them for the long haul is ultimately better. And ultimately, keeping them as a member is more valuable than finding a replacement.



About the Author:

Paroon Chadha co-founded Passageways in 2003 and continues to lead its business strategy, as CEO. He serves on Boards at Passageways, Big Brother Big Sister of Greater Lafayette, Indiana University, Simon Cancer Center, and TechPoint. He was a founding member of Youwecan.org and is an angel investor in several technology companies. Paroon is a frequent speaker at conferences and has been widely published in several magazines. He led Passageway's sales team to be named in the Inc. 500 list of fastest growing businesses in America, in 2008. He was named one of the top 10 Young Professionals Under 40 by Tippy Connect, Indiana. He was named in the Hall of Fame at Purdue University as a Purdue Innovator, in 2013.

Members and Service: Building Trust in a Digital-First World

By Dr. Kathy Snider, CO-OP Financial Services



Today, the quality of your service and support – more than any other factor – impacts how members feel about your credit union.

Consider the “2017 State of Global Customer Service Report,” a study by Microsoft. The study found that 96 percent of consumers say customer service is an important factor in their loyalty to a brand. At the same time, one-third of consumers surveyed by American Express, as reported in their news release of December 15, 2017, said they would consider walking away after just one bad customer service experience.

In today’s digital-first economy, providing good customer service is becoming increasingly challenging. According to a customer service study by Salesforce, relayed on their blog of April 15, 2019, the definition of good service continues to evolve, with consumer expectations ever increasing.

As the Salesforce study confirmed, good service today is fast; consumers expect a response to an inquiry in real time.

Good service is also personalized. As the Salesforce blog (“What Is Good Customer Service?”) stated:

“Customers expect engagement that’s uniquely personalized. This isn’t an expectation of consumers alone. Seventy-two percent of business buyers expect vendors to personalize engagement to their needs.”

Finally, consumers also expect service experiences to be connected – which means that, from portal to chatbot to agent and back, data on why the consumer requires service is synchronized, accessible and actionable. In short, the left hand always knows what the right hand is doing.

Salesforce research also reveals that good service experiences are proactive – with resolutions presented before an issue or disruption even occurs.

Meeting consumer service expectations today is a tall order for any organization. For credit unions, the reality is that members are no longer satisfied with 9-to-5 support access, next day call backs or long wait times on hold. With smartphone in hand, they have come to expect service delivered immediately, exactly when, how and where they want it.

And while logistics are important, there is another defining factor in every service touchpoint: how the member feels about the experience. Do they walk away feeling valued – or not?

Transforming Member Service in the Digital Age

Meeting members' service expectations can often feel like a conundrum: how can we make our operations faster, cheaper and more digital, yet also more human?

Delivering great service via channel of choice is important; but equally important is the way in which you engage with members. Self-service channels are essential for answering the routine questions members may have. But service is more about building connections than answering simple questions. And when it comes to more complex issues like transaction fraud or support with lending and card services, a more involved, empathetic approach is required.

The solution, therefore, is to blend self-service options with dedicated, knowledgeable service agents that provide a seamless and consistent member experience every time.

And, one answer to the service conundrum is the CO-OP Contact Center (www.co-opfs.org). Perhaps the most important distinguishing feature of CO-OP Contact Center is the coaching we provide to our service agents to address our member needs with patience and empathy. As a result, member interactions are handled in an unscripted, personalized manner, leaving members feeling like an individual – not a case number – and instilling their confidence in your credit union brand.

As digital continues to shift member expectations around service, it is this human element of the service experience that will be a key differentiator for credit unions.



About the Author:

Dr. Kathy Snider is Group Owner, Engage Products, for CO-OP Financial Services (www.co-opfs.org), a provider of payments and financial technology to credit unions.

Weathering the Storm: The Importance of Trusted Partnerships

By Dean Young,
EVP, Chief Experience Officer, PSCU



Natural disasters like hurricanes, wildfires, floods, tornadoes and more can strike at any time, anywhere and without warning...

...making business continuity planning a crucial part of any credit union's operations. Whether it is increased demand for cash or the distribution of supportive messaging, it is imperative that credit unions have well-practiced plans for weathering natural disasters.

The unknowns and things we cannot control following a natural disaster – severity of impact, access to power, availability of fuel and household goods, necessity of travel and medical attention, just to name a few – can impact even the best-prepared credit unions. Building relationships with trusted partners and key resources to leverage not only during the course of normal business, but also in your credit union's time of need can help your organization weather any storm.

A credit union service organization (CUSO) is a true cooperative partner that adds value to enable the success of both the CUSO and its credit union owners. A CUSO delivers incremental benefits to its owners through scale in buying power, partnerships with industry leaders and direct access to the services credit unions need to compete with banks and other financial services providers in today's marketplace. Partnerships with CUSOs empower credit unions everywhere to offer competitively priced and innovative products and services that make a real difference in members' lives and at life's critical moments when their members' need for help is the greatest.

PSCU, the nation's premier payments CUSO, makes it a priority to put the member experience first in everything it does for its Owner credit unions.

This not only includes providing payments-related products and services on a daily basis, but it also means jumping in to help support its Owners when they are in need of assistance to keep their businesses up and running – like providing extensions on card payments and advice – in the aftermath of a natural disaster. All year long, PSCU's 2,200 employees in locations around the country serve as an extension of their credit unions' resources, making it possible for them to deliver seamless experiences for members 24/7/365.

Over the last two years, PSCU has assisted over 75 credit unions in more than 300 different, unforeseen events, including seven hurricanes, three major wildfires, two earthquakes and numerous other events, including blizzards, power outages, floods and tornadoes. PSCU prides itself on working closely with its Owner credit unions before, during and after natural disasters, as well as throughout the year, to prepare for these types of events.

The relationships between a credit union and its CUSO show that the real value of the CUSO goes beyond dollars and cents.

In times of the greatest need and uncertainty, a credit union can be seen as more than the financial foundation of the community – it can be a reassuring sign that things will soon return to normal. Preparing for natural disasters, building key relationships with trusted partners and resources and ensuring your members are able to receive the services they need without interruption will ensure your credit union is at its best, even in the worst of times.



About the Author:

Dean Young leads PSCU's cross-company collaboration efforts to create the strategy, design, engagement and execution of the CUSO's member experience, providing an added focus on service excellence and improvement initiatives for all stakeholders. Dean is a board member of the National Association of Credit Union Service Organizations.

Creating Wow Experiences

One Breakdown at a Time

By Dan Daggett,

CEO, Credit Union Lending Alliance of New England



Do you sometimes get annoyed when you are asked to buy an “extended warranty” for a brand new product you are purchasing?

I mean, it's brand new, should I expect something to go wrong in the next three years? You hope not. What you're really buying is peace of mind, and it's usually a pretty good deal if you do the math on it.

Many believe purchasing a good used car is always smarter than a brand new car because of the depreciation. Others will buy nothing but new so that “peace of mind” is baked in with a warranty. Either way, auto loans are a credit union's “bread and butter” and research shows that a member with a savings, active checking and an auto loan are very profitable relationships. The ultimate goal then is to have a profitable member that is also a promoter. One way to make sure the experience is a great one from that first payment until their last, is recommending a vehicle service contract (VSC).

The beautiful thing about the CUSO model is that we have the ability to compete with many for-profit companies with a product that is centered around the member first, profit second. We took control back from the insurance companies and administrators to offer a best in class service contract for members while giving back the leftover money after all claims have been paid to the participating “member owned financial cooperative.”

But the best part about this program? The member experience when the unthinkable happens. Never is it a good time for your car to breakdown. And filing an insurance claim can be a nail biter because you never know if you'll be covered or how much your insurance premiums may go up.

Here are three stories of exceptional member service from the team at GU Certified:

I just had to share a story about a member who just called me that I sold a CU Certified vehicle service contract to in January.

Initially, he was hesitant to buy it, but his wife's car being a rather expensive 2012 Lincoln MKX, he decided to buy it. He recently had to take it into Wiscasset Ford as the master brake cylinder was stuck. While at Wiscasset Ford, he thought he would have the broken

sunroof seal repaired and the issue with the power seat fixed.

He said the service manager at Wiscasset Ford gave him some slack and said, “No aftermarket service contract will cover any of this.” But the service manager had to eat her own words when in the end it was all covered, including the rental car since the Lincoln was in the shop for three days. He paid absolutely nothing out of pocket for the repairs.

He was wicked excited and said his next car purchase will definitely be financed with us, and he will for sure always carry one of our CU Certified vehicle service contracts!

Two years ago I sold a CU Certified vehicle service contract to a member for his Lincoln SUV. I remember it well because he was skeptical buying it to begin with as he was a “non-believer” in that sort of thing. Well, apparently not paying out of pocket for a transmission and electrical trouble since that time has changed his opinion.

He called me this week and was looking to buy a 2019 Dodge Challenger SRT8. His first question wasn't the usual, like what would the rate, term and payment be. Instead he asked, “Can I buy a VSC on this, and if so, what's the price of the service contract?” I took the VIN and priced it, and given the car it was rather expensive. Admittedly I had doubts he would buy it when I told him the 4/48 comprehensive plan was just a little under \$4,000.00; especially since I don't usually quote prices, but generally include the cost in the monthly payment. I was surprised when he never skipped a beat and said “Great! I want that added.”

Not only did his past experience with CU Certified sell another service contract, but it sold the Downeast Credit Union Financing as well! Kudos to all involved in developing such a program that gives our members faith in us and the sales aspect easy!

A member has been struggling financially since his wife was tragically killed in a car accident. He needed to have a safe and reliable car for himself and his two young daughters. He works extremely hard to keep their life as stable as possible.

Together we searched over two weeks and eventually found a 2015 Dodge Journey. We included CU Certified VSC & GAP, and Debt Protection as we knew he couldn't afford a breakdown, which is why the CU Certified was a critical part of his purchase.

Last week, he reached out to us about his new vehicle not sounding right. We explained this is why you have CU Certified and suggested he take it to the garage. Murphy's Law, it

was a plugged hose that would cost \$728.07 to fix, and the service wasn't covered. If the hose was broken the part and service would have been covered.

We reached out to Etta at Century and explained the situation. Without hesitation, Century paid the claim from the Gray Area Fund. Downeast CU and CU Certified was there for our member when he needed us the most.



About the Author:

Dan Daggett is the current CEO of Credit Union Lending Alliance of New England (Culane, LLC) a Maine based Indirect Lending CUSO owned by Down East CU & CUAC, LLC of Houston. During Dan's 26-year career, he spent the first 14 years as the CEO of Bowdoinham FCU and in the later 12 he has served as the CEO of three CUSO's. It was as the CEO of Bowdoinham FCU that Dan developed his passion for the Credit Union industry. Having a true entrepreneurial mind, he along with his colleague, Melanie Munsey saw the need for a better mouse-trap and partnered with Mark Giguere to be the Architects behind CU Certified

Customer Success Story

Auto-Owners Associates Credit Union

By eDOC Innovations and CU*Answers



Small Can Be Big

A Small Credit Union Making Big Differences

“Every employee and member was on board with our desire to go digital. When we made the switch, internal adoption was easy because everyone was able to visualize the benefit this would have in our daily operations, as well as for our members.”

Patty Fox, General Manager, Auto-Owners Associates CU

Transformation

With a member base of just over 3,000, Auto-Owners Associates Credit Union (AOACU) is one of many small CU's nationwide navigating the daily labyrinth of membership and loan growth, budgeting, compliance, and all the other variables that come with operating a small business in today's world. Matching the profile of other credit unions nationwide with fewer than 5,000 members, AOACU has disrupted the “small credit union” mold by making some big changes in the way they serve their members.

Based out of Lansing, Michigan, AOACU serves associates of Auto-Owners Insurance Company. Given the geographic landscape of their customer owners, AOACU closes loans across 26 different states. Historically, AOACU has mailed loan documents to their members, incurring significant mailing costs, as well as increased time to closure waiting for documents to be shipped and returned. Now, the narrative has changed.

Under the direction of enterprising leadership, AOACU recognized the need to not only mitigate mailing expenses and time to closure in the short-term, but the need to prepare for the technology-centered mentality of younger generations now entering the workforce. “We were using a signature pad to close loans for in branch signing, which was only convenient for local members. We knew that we had to be forward-thinking in our efforts to accommodate all members and prepare for the future generation,” stated Patty Fox, General Manager at AOACU.

In June 2016, changes began to occur when AOACU decided to adopt eDOCSignature®, eDOC Innovations' automated solution for managing all paper-based business processes from form creation to sending documents for eSignatures. Coupled with the adoption of It's Me 247 online banking with CU*Answers, AOACU positioned themselves to reach their members in a more convenient, mobile environment.

Tactics

Technological advancements in the workplace do not come without logistical preparation and an organizational culture willing to put the advancements to good use. AOACU's story is no different. Aside from the strategy to implement an eSignature solution alongside online banking capabilities, it was the credit union's culture and member relationship that made all the difference.

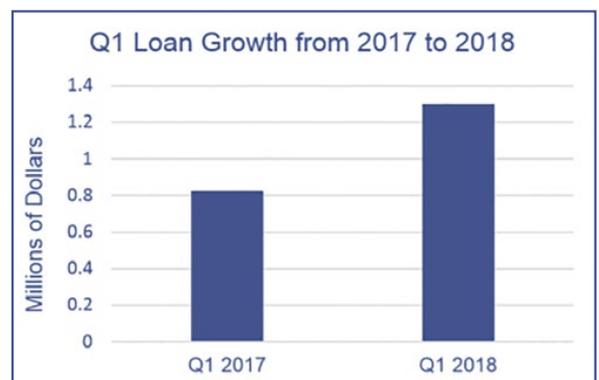
"Every employee and member was on board with our desire to go digital. When we made the switch, internal adoption was easy because everyone was able to visualize the benefit this would have in our daily operations, as well as for our members," explained Fox. AOACU prides themselves on the relationship they have with their members. The ability to work closely and interact individually has led to precisely targeted feedback. "Because we are so small, the members told us very specifically, 'we want these capabilities,'" commented Fox.

The commitment to a digital environment became a reality, and by March of 2017, 100% of loan closings for AOACU were done electronically. AOACU's new user interface not only eliminates the need to print and mail physical copies of loan forms, but it also makes these forms readily available to members who decide to apply for a loan. Through the online banking platform, credit union members find links to digital versions of the loan application for which they would like to apply. Upon opening the application form in the digital environment, the interface takes the member through the process of filling out and eSigning the form on their computer or mobile device, which is then immediately forwarded to the credit union. By simplifying the application process, significant time was saved for the credit union and its members.

Compliance Considerations

Due to the nature of small credit unions, compliance can become a substantial pain point when significant change is considered. With less than 10 employees each wearing multiple hats within an organization that must adhere to the same rules and regulations as the Navy Federal Credit Unions of the world, AOACU found the potential auditing nightmares that digital solutions could bring to be very real. "For a credit union our size, we are concerned about being compliant. Switching to an electronic environment raised a lot of questions for us as we sifted through the idea of going digital," explained Fox.

After working closely with eDOC Innovations and CU*Answers on the implementation of their new digital solutions, those concerns were completely alleviated. "Compliance efforts with eDOC and CU*Answers were absolutely seamless. Their level of regulatory preparation on our behalf eased the burden we felt," related Fox. Compliant with AICPA and FFIEC, the eSigning and mobile banking solutions provided by eDOC and CU*Answers proved to be the exceptional choice for AOACU and its members.



Sustainable Benefits

Aside from the goodwill that has been garnered within the member based through a results-driven response to feedback, AOACU has seen total loan closings increase significantly in just one year's time. In Q1 of 2018, AOACU closed \$1.3 million in loans, an uptick of more than \$475,000 closed in Q1 of 2017. This translates to a 58% increase in loans closed during Q1 of 2018.

Regarding total membership, AOACU had seen a 2.5% decrease in total shares per year over the last three years. By the end of 2017, just nine months after fully implementing the digital environment, the credit union was able to see maintained membership. "We are happy with this, as previous years, we have been seeing a decline in our member base," stated Fox. "I feel that the new products introduced last year helped to maintain membership."

The effort exerted in member relations as well as a willingness to invest in the future has lead to immediate benefits. AOACU may be small, but they have proved to the credit union industry that size does not have to limit big change, and even bigger positive outcomes.

About the Authors:



eDOC Innovations, headquartered in Middlebury, Vermont, is an ecommerce software development company specializing in mobile enterprise digital transaction management (mDTM®) solutions, servicing small and mid-size credit unions. eDOCSignature (mDTM®) automates and manages all paper-based business processes from form creation to sending documents for eSignatures, anytime, anywhere on any mobile device.



CU*Answers, headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan, provides services to more than 176 credit unions in 21 states plus Washington, D.C. representing over 1.9 million credit union members. It's Me 247 Online Banking is CU*Answers' full-featured online banking solution. Coupled with new features and an added security layer, Personal Internet Branch (PIB), your member's online banking experience is taken to a whole new level.

