White Paper

Mobile Banking Adoption:
Your Frontline Staff Holds the Key to Growth
Opportunity exists for financial institutions to boost mobile banking adoption rates by leveraging the referral power of the consumer-facing/frontline staff in branches and at the call centers. Since they are viewed as professional experts by banking customers, recommendations from frontline associates can result in increased mobile banking adoption. By equipping frontline staff with the right tools and resources, and incenting them to promote mobile services, financial institutions are actively driving adoption, usage and satisfaction among customers. Higher mobile banking adoption equates to higher value for financial institutions, providing a compelling reason for financial institutions to leverage frontline staff to effectively promote mobile banking use in order to effectively exceed average adoption rates.

The Mobile Banking Adoption Glass Ceiling

For most financial institutions, mobile banking adoption typically hits a glass ceiling of 15 to 20 percent of online banking customers (see Figure 1). This may be due in part to the fact that financial institutions are not effectively using frontline staff to promote mobile banking. “Mystery shopper” visits reveal that many financial institutions are neglecting to support their mobile banking services through collateral or staff recommendations. This lack of sustained promotion may be the reason why financial institutions are not experiencing higher mobile banking adoption rates. Fiserv research has shown that financial institutions have a significant opportunity to achieve adoption rates two to three times higher than the standard rate by taking a more proactive approach and increasing their level of engagement with customers.

Figure 1: Mobile Banking Adoption Curve

Source: Fiserv, Inc.

Overcoming Security Concerns with Frontline Reassurance

Consumers who use mobile banking appreciate the value that it provides, but the majority of consumers still lack knowledge about what mobile banking is and the benefits it offers. Along with a lack of awareness,
some consumers have inordinate concerns about security that continue to be a major deterrent. The 2012 Fiserv Consumer Trends Survey found that 41 percent of consumers who are not using mobile banking state concern about the security of their financial information as a primary reason why they are hesitant to use mobile banking (see Figure 2). According to Javelin Research, it is imperative for financial institutions to reassure customers that mobile security is a top priority and that there are safeguards in place to protect consumers and data. Frontline staff is in the best position to achieve this objective.

### Figure 2: “What is Your Main Concern with Mobile Banking?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concerned about the security of financial information</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to use computer</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worried about losing cell phone</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afraid bank will charge too much</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell phone screen too small</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know enough about how it works</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find the mobile experience cumbersome for apps like this</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t see the need</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t have any concerns</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Fiserv Executive Briefing Paper, Breaking the Mobile Banking Glass Ceiling: Five Factors Will Drive Consumer Adoption, counts helping customers overcome their security concerns among the top five factors that financial institutions must address if they aspire to increase mobile adoption rates. Fortunately, financial institutions have a powerful resource at their disposal to not only convey the consumer benefits of mobile banking but also to assuage security concerns – frontline staff. Positive reassurance about mobile banking security from branch and call center employees can help non-users discover the benefits of mobile banking and help those concerned about security overcome their fears. Staff can take a proactive position by providing customers with the assurance that their privacy and transactions are safeguarded.

### Higher Mobile Banking Adoption Leads to Greater Profitability

Being content with a mobile adoption rate of just 20 percent and failing to promote the service can have consequences that financial institutions may have not fully considered:

- Driving more customers to the mobile channel can help financial institutions lower their cost to serve; on the flip side, low mobile adoption means a higher cost to serve, creating a competitive disadvantage
- Financial institutions run the risk of losing customers who are interested in mobile banking but may perceive it is not available if their bank or credit union is not actively promoting the offering; as a result, these customers may go elsewhere

Financial institutions that take an active role in promoting and driving mobile banking adoption through their customer-facing staff can avoid the negative impact of low adoption and even more importantly, increase and maximize profitability. The Fiserv white paper, Next Generation Mobile Banking: Transactions Increase Potential Return on Investment, explains
that by broadening mobile banking offerings, financial institutions will be positioned to increase mobile transactions, shift transactions away from higher-cost channels, and retain and attract more customers, resulting in greater ROI.

**Using Face-to-Face to Thwart Digital Competitors**

What makes associates working in the branches and call centers an instrumental part of a financial institution’s mobile adoption growth strategy is not just the direct connection they have to customers or their role as professional experts. It is the fact that having frontline staff is unique to financial institutions. Non-traditional competitors like Google and PayPal that are disrupting the financial services landscape have the payment solutions but they do not have consumer-facing staff. Financial institutions that recognize frontline staff as a source of competitive differentiation and make the most of this advantage can experience higher mobile adoption and increased ROI.

**Focused Engagement is Critical to Driving Mobile Banking Adoption**

Independent research conducted by Fiserv reveals varying levels of success when it comes to mobile adoption. The difference between financial institutions that achieve standard mobile adoption rates and those that reach higher adoption rates is the level of involvement a financial institution engages in to promote mobile banking.

In Figure 3, the gray line represents the average adoption rate of 15 to 20 percent that the majority of financial institutions achieve with minimal to no involvement. The blue line represents the increased adoption financial institutions can experience with some intervention, typically 10 percent higher than the standard rates. The orange line represents the incremental adoption financial institutions known to actively promote and recommend their mobile channel can achieve, especially when effectively using their frontline staff. Financial institutions that have a program in place for branch and call center staff to educate and engage customers are achieving mobile banking adoption rates of 30 percent or higher.

**Figure 3: Mobile Banking Adoption Curve**

![Figure 3: Mobile Banking Adoption Curve](Source: Fiserv, Inc.)

**Word of Mouth Advice Comes From the Frontline**

To effectively leverage frontline staff, it is important to understand the power word-of-mouth marketing can have on consumer adoption of new products and services. According to Nielsen’s 2012 Global Survey of New Product Purchase Sentiment, consumers are more likely to try or purchase a new product/service they learned about through the following methods: traditional advertising, word-of-mouth communications, internet communications and mobile.

Within word-of-mouth communications, friends and family have the greatest influence on consumers, followed by professional experts (see Figure 4). In
financial services, branch and call center associates are considered to be professional experts in their field, putting them in a position of greater influence than financial institutions may realize.

**Figure 4: Word-of-Mouth Communications: Global Percent Much/Somewhat More Likely to Buy a New Product When Learned Through These Methods**

| Source: Nielsen Global survey of New Product Purchase Sentiment, Q3 2012 |

**Helping Frontline Staff Become Mobile Banking Experts**

Even the most experienced professional experts in their field need the right strategies, tools and resources to help them achieve success. Financial institutions that embrace frontline staff as the conduit to higher mobile adoption should also develop a comprehensive “Strategies for Success” program that incorporates: employee training, employee incentives, consumer marketing and promotional materials, metrics to evaluate success and impact, and ongoing engagement with users (see Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Strategies for Frontline Success**

![Diagram](image)

**Start With Employee Training**

Financial institutions that create a complete training program can provide their staff with the education and knowledge necessary to produce results quickly. Training should:

- Educate customer-facing staff on the value of mobile banking so they can actively promote that value to new and existing customers
- Teach how to enroll new customers or members into mobile banking as part of the account opening procedure as well as to encourage enrollment for existing customers
- Explain how to enroll the mobile devices of online banking customers via the mobile enrollment section on the website
To motivate and excite staff to participate in the training, financial institutions should consider:

- Offering convenient and self-directed training options such as e-Learning modules and training demos
- Issuing phones to the frontline staff so they can experience first-hand how mobile banking works
- Designating team members as “mobile banking experts” to serve within each branch and call center location

Provide Incentive Options for Staff

As Vince Lombardi once said, “If winning isn’t everything, why do they keep score?” Incentives are a tried and true strategy used in virtually every industry to motivate and push individuals and teams to attain and surpass their goals. Financial institutions can increase the level of engagement from branch and call center staff by providing incentives for promoting and enrolling customers into mobile banking. Some incentives that have proven successful include:

- Providing incentives for training class participation – for example, when an employee registers for an eLearning module, they are entered into a drawing for a prize
- Enter employees who enroll in mobile banking into a drawing for a prize; personal use of mobile banking provides more in depth product knowledge that can be shared with customers
- Reward the staff member or team for enrolling the most customers (new and existing) in mobile banking
- Hold contests at branch level and award the branch with the highest customer mobile enrollment with a party

Create Impactful Marketing and Promotional Materials

Another key element of a successful adoption marketing strategy is to provide frontline staff with tools and resources to effectively aid in the promotion of mobile banking. Marketing and promotional materials used to support frontline staff include:

- Staff talking points
- Consumer takeaways such as tri-folds, pamphlets and wallet cards (see Figure 6)
- In-branch collateral such as posters, promotional displays and counter cards (Figure 7)

Evaluate Success and Impact

An extremely vital step to a successful frontline staff mobile banking campaign is to establish metrics and processes to measure success and the impact of mobile. One recommendation is to develop a mobile channel dashboard that monitors key performance measures, such as: percent of active users, percent of
Encourage Ongoing Engagement With Mobile Banking Customers

To maintain a high level of satisfaction among mobile banking users, it is important for frontline staff to remain actively engaged with these customers by continuing to remind them of the benefits and value of mobile banking. This ongoing engagement and promotion can have a positive effect on mobile banking usage by keeping the service top of mind among users. It is also important to obtain feedback from mobile banking customers on the service, their level of satisfaction with mobile banking and how much the mobile offering influences their overall satisfaction with the bank or credit union.

Figure 7: Mobile Counter Card Example

Mobile banking users in relation to online banking users and mobile transaction volumes. By monitoring these metrics over time, financial institutions can note growth and where adoption and use are lagging in order to best focus mobile adoption marketing campaigns on specific consumer segments.

Other ways to measure program effectiveness include:

- Trust but verify – send mystery shoppers into branches to make sure frontline staff are consistently executing
- Solicit frontline input – invite branch and call center staff into product planning processes to share insights from customer conversations and experiences
- Benchmark – compare adoption and usage data to other financial institutions

Engage Your Team and Generate Higher ROI

Mobile banking adoption equates to ROI value. Frontline staff – with guidance, assistance and motivation – have the ability to actively drive adoption and continue engagement with customers, ensuring higher mobile banking adoption rates, continued usage and satisfaction. Branch and call center professional are the experts that customers trust and will respond to when engaged in one-to-one conversations about mobile banking. By unlocking the potential of frontline staff to promote adoption, financial institutions will generate mobile banking adoption rates that rise far above the average and generate greater ROI in the process.
About Fiserv

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