



BRANCHING OUT

Transforming retail banking branches with
an omni-channel customer experience



RETAIL BANKING

MEETING CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS IN A DIGITAL AGE

In the branch or on a phone. Face-to-face or digital. 11 am or 11 pm. Regardless of when, how or why customers decide to access their banking services, the experience needs to be immediate, seamless and personalised.

Heightened consumer expectations and agile new entrants in the financial services sector are keeping traditional retail banks on their toes when it comes to customer service.

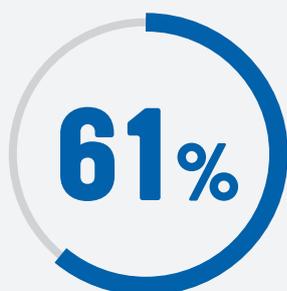
Putting the customer and their preferences first is crucial for retail banks to survive in the current competitive climate. But making the transition to a customer-centric world is proving elusive for many traditional banks and building societies as they struggle to blend existing service channels with emerging engagement platforms.

A survey by PwC revealed that although 61% of bankers believe a customer-centric business model is very important, only 17% are very prepared for it*.

Seizing the omni-channel opportunity

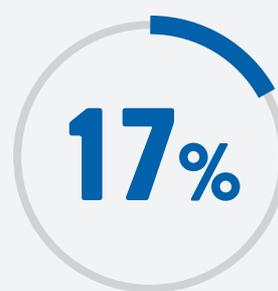
To ensure they can retain existing customers and attract new ones, retail banks and building societies need to be smart and strategic about how they combine physical and digital channel.

Despite the growing popularity of online and mobile banking, not all customers want to manage all their personal finances via an app or a web page. With branch closures increasing due to cost reduction measures, delivering an omni-channel service is getting harder. But by investing in smarter technologies and establishing sharper processes, banks and building societies will be able to maximise their resources and enrich customer engagement in their remaining branches.



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INVESTING IN THE BRANCH OF THE FUTURE

To optimise the omni-channel opportunity and safeguard customer satisfaction, banks and building societies need to rethink the branch environment – from the layout and furniture to the staff systems and ATMs.

This often means embarking on a major change programme, as many retail bank branches are still reliant on legacy IT infrastructures and traditional layouts. Both of these factors make it harder for established players to compete with disruptive newcomers.

Such radical change, however, can put customer service at risk if not implemented correctly. While innovation is considered to be important by 87% of bankers, only 11% think their organisation is very prepared for it.*

Safeguarding the customer experience

To ensure they're prepared for change, banks need to look beyond the sophisticated features of the latest technologies and consider potential integration, adoption and ongoing management challenges.

Safeguarding availability is particularly important as this shapes the customer experience. Patchy services or systems can impact customer satisfaction, which are both already suffering. However, by putting the customer experience first – which includes ensuring new technologies perform well – banks can regain customer trust.



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TRANSFORMING THE BRANCH ENVIRONMENT

To maximise customer satisfaction while minimising their physical footprint, retail banks and building societies are embracing a range of new approaches and technologies. Some top trends to look for are:

LEVERAGING AUTOMATION, SELF-SERVICE AND CUSTOMER ANALYTICS



With self-service ATMs offering a wider variety of services, such as PIN changes and money transfers as well as pay-in and withdrawal facilities, banks can reduce dependency. The data from these machines is vital to providing relevant services at different branches, with analytics revealing insights into the most commonly-used functions and reasons for customer visits. Using this data, banks can optimise the layout of individual branches to make the most of their floorspace and a seamless customer experience.

CREATING A LOUNGE-STYLE BRANCH



With customers now able to perform the majority of transactions remotely, the role of the branch is changing. As a result, banks are updating designs, layouts and technologies to reflect a more experience-centred approach. The branch of the future is more open, with a focus on collaboration and communal spaces where customers can drink a coffee or read a book while they wait to talk to an advisor. It's also heavily reliant on technology. From digital signage and mobile apps to remote advisors and mini theatres, the new branch blends the digital with the physical to maximise staff productivity and service quality.

TAKING THE BRANCH TO THE PEOPLE



As branches close in smaller locations, banks must ensure that the needs of local communities are still met, particularly for less mobile and less digitally-minded customers. In recent years, the mobile branch has increased in popularity. These 'branches in a van' use satellite technology to connect customers to banking systems and services within their community. Travelling branches help banks retain customers by enabling them to engage on a personal basis when a digital approach is not enough.

GETTING MORE PERSONAL



While an increase in self-service reduces staff headcount and customer wait times, it can take away the personal touch. Banks are now taking steps to re-introduce personalisation in the branch via other channels. For example, using analytics, banks can identify the most popular banking actions on an individual basis, including the customer's preferred channel for those actions. Based on this information, banks can not only personalise greetings, but also tailor digital menus, for example at the ATM, depending on the customer's most commonly-performed actions.

BALANCE INNOVATION WITH PRAGMATISM

Regardless of the approaches a bank chooses to engage with their customers, there are several considerations that organisations need to bear in mind to ensure their branch transformations and investments in new technologies are a success.

SECURITY

From video-conferencing to mobile apps, the use of any new technology in a branch setting can create new risks if not fully secured. Both customers and staff need to feel comfortable that data remains protected otherwise banks risk adoption issues. A security breach will not only result in the loss of reputation and customers but also incur financial penalties.

LEGACY INFRASTRUCTURE

Any new technologies need to be compatible with existing banking systems, such as legacy mainframe platforms. Seamless integration between the new and the old is vital to ensuring data remains accurate across different customer engagement channels. This integration layer is particularly important as more customers adopt an omni-channel approach to accessing banking services.

CONNECTIVITY

To support mobile apps and other in-branch technologies, banks need to provide high-capacity and secure wireless networks. Poor connectivity will leave staff and customers reliant on the traditional channels to complete their tasks, impacting productivity and satisfaction.

ADOPTION

If customers can't or don't want to use the self-service technologies provided, banks risk losing them completely, as well as wasting their investment. Education sessions tailored to different audiences can ensure that customers from every demographic understand how to maximise the services on offer. Some banks have even installed mini theatres in their branches to provide training to large groups.

COMPUTACENTER'S RETAIL BANKING CREDENTIALS

- Computacenter has 30 years' experience of helping banks and building societies source, implement and manage branch IT
 - We provide services to digital teams, campuses, datacenters and more than 65% of UK branches
 - We've worked with the majority of the UK's retail banks and building societies, including Nationwide and Yorkshire Building Society
 - We offer a wide range of services on a pan-European basis and have global capabilities
 - We work with both established and emerging vendors to provide our customers with a wide choice of best-of-breed products and help them blend old and new branch technologies
 - From sourcing and integrating in-branch technologies to maximising adoption and supporting staff, we help banks maximise the return from their investments
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PUTTING THE CUSTOMER AT THE CENTRE OF THE BRANCH

The choice of new technologies and engagement channels can be overwhelming. By taking a more customer-centric in how they select, implement and manage new in-branch investments, banks will be able to unlock greater value.

Evolving the branch environment and providing omni-channel services is key to retail banks retaining their customers in the digital age. By getting the balance right, retail banks will be able to increase customer footfall, satisfaction and competitive advantage.

TECHNOLOGY FOCUS: TOOLS FOR TODAY'S BRANCHES

AI ASSISTANTS

Use case: Deployed with varying success across Europe, on-screen avatars can talk to customers to help them resolve common problems or complete transactions. Using AI, these 'chatbots' can respond to frequently asked questions and help customer complete more complex banking tasks.

Benefits: Reduces reliance on in-branch staff.

DIGITAL SIGNAGE

Use case: Screens can be located around the branch to display localised content about community events, weather and travel services to help reduce perceived wait times. With intelligent content management, banks can adjust the information to map to the interest areas of the customers visiting the branch. For example, if several meetings are booked with mortgage advisors, content could be adapted to focus on mortgage offers and advice.

Benefits: Informs and entertains a captive audience.

BEACON TECHNOLOGY

Use case: With beacon technology, banks can provide location-based information and services direct to the customer's mobile device, bridging the gap between the physical and the digital to create a truly omni-channel experience.

Benefits: Enables greater personalisation.

INNOVATION/BUSINESS CENTRE

Use case: A hi-tech innovation centre for small business owners to explore and interact with new technologies helps entrepreneurs build their businesses, and increases footfall and engagement.

Benefits: Attracts new customers.

MINI IN-BRANCH THEATRE

Use case: With theatre facilities, banks can hold education and training sessions for both staff and customers to keep them up to date on the latest technologies. This can be used to encourage the adoption of new solutions and channels, which in turn helps to boost satisfaction and efficiency.

Benefits: Improves engagement.

MOBILE APPS AND TABLETS

Use case: Equipped with mobile devices, staff can approach and assist customers as they enter the branch. As well as ensuring the right services and apps are available on the device, banks also need to ensure that busy staff have access to the basics, such as charging points and IT support.

Benefits: Reduces queues and improves staff and customer satisfaction.

REMOTE ADVISORS

Use case: Banks can provide access to remote experts for mortgage, pensions or savings advice via in-branch video-conferencing systems, enabling fewer experts to cater for a wider area. This reduces the time and cost associated with travel between branches and frees up staff to attend more customer meetings.

Benefits: Reduces need for dedicated in-branch resources.

GET IN TOUCH

To understand more about how Computacenter can help transform, manage and support your retail bank branch environment please contact your Computacenter Account Manager or call **01707 631600**.

www.computacenter.com

Enabling users and their business

Computacenter is a leading independent provider of IT infrastructure services, enabling users and their business. We advise organisations on IT strategy, implement the most appropriate technology, optimise its performance, and manage our customers' infrastructures. In doing this we help CIOs and IT departments in enterprise and corporate organisations maximise productivity and the business value of IT for internal and external users.



Computacenter (UK) Ltd
Hatfield Avenue, Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL10 9TW, United Kingdom
computacenter.com
+44 (0)1707 631000