Experian
Data Quality

Umpqua Bank reduces costs and improves customer service

ABOUT

Umpqua Bank prides itself on customer service and with 150 stores in Oregon, Washington and California and the vision of being "The World's Greatest Bank," this is no small task. While the Oregon-based bank considers its unique service culture and delivery its best asset, maintaining accurate customer data is also an important step in providing over 225,000 personal and commercial customers with the service they deserve.

OBJECTIVE

In 2004, when migrating to a new FiServ application, Umpqua Bank sought to put processes in place to ensure that all new and existing customer addresses were verified and accurate. "Our previous banking application was able to append ZIP+4 information," explained Ricky Silvas, Systems Analyst at Umpqua Bank, "but our new application didn't have anything built in, so we needed to make sure we put something in place." While having a ZIP+4 is an important element to capturing a full address, it's only one step of the process. With an eye to finding a complete solution, Umpqua Bank began researching and evaluating available products.

SOLUTION

After completing research on address verification software, Umpqua Bank ultimately narrowed the search down to two different products. "We did a thorough review of the two products and decided on QAS Pro," said Silvas. "We chose Experian Data Quality because it's able to verify customer addresses down to the apartment level and it has a slick interface with a type-down methodology that saves our employees time." QAS Pro's type-down methodology takes an address by starting with the ZIP CodeTM first and then continues to the street and premise number to reduce the number of keystrokes and time required to enter an address.

Once the decision was made to go with QAS Pro, it was time to begin the next phase of the project: installation and implementation. Umpqua Bank wanted to ensure that anywhere an address could be captured, it would be verified. This requirement meant QAS Pro needed to be rolled out to all stores, the customer contact center and back-office processing locations. "The installation process was pretty quick and painless," commented Silvas. "We had two people from Experian Data Quality on-site for two to four hours and the installation and setup was complete." By installing QAS Pro at the central data center, in its core system, as well as within its banking application, FiServ Expedite, Umpqua Bank was able to easily roll out address verification enterprise-wide.

RESULTS

Umpqua Bank first realized the benefits of verifying addresses in real-time with QAS Pro at its stores. When setting up new customer accounts, customers are required to provide a government ID but there is no guarantee that the address on that ID is correct. The address may be misspelled or missing an address element such as an apartment number or street directional that will make it undeliverable. Verifying the address during account setup allows employees to correct the address while the customer is still engaged to ensure that new account information, statements and bank cards will be delivered in a timely fashion.

Umpqua Bank's customer service and back-office processes have also benefited from verifying addresses with QAS Pro. "Our call centers have definitely seen time savings by using QAS Pro," said Silvas. "The type-down functionality cuts the time required to take an address in half, from 45-60 seconds down to 25-30 seconds." Additionally, since QAS Pro passes the address directly into the address fields of the banking application the chance of an employee mistyping or "fat-fingering" an address is completely eliminated. "With 150 new customer setups and 200 address changes per day, we're saving roughly three hours per day and that doesn't factor in savings from reducing spelling mistakes and return mail processing."

Address verification has also helped Umpqua Bank's compliance and fraud efforts. Verifying customer addresses as they are entered during account setup strengthens customer identification programs as required by the Patriot Act and helps keep customer documents from being delivered to the wrong location. When a customer address change is requested, verifying that address in real time allows Umpqua Bank to ensure that the address is being changed to a current and accurate mailing address to help avoid fraudulent activity.

Implementing real-time address verification has been a big win for Umpqua Bank. "In total we're saving roughly $200,000 annually resulting from employee efficiency, returned mail reduction and postal discounts eligibility," states Silvas, "but equally as important is the higher level of customer service we can now provide. At Umpqua Bank our vision is to be 'The Worlds Greatest Bank;' it's in our stores and its how we answer our phones. Experian Data Quality helps us reach that goal by allowing us to achieve the high level of customer data quality that supports our strategic initiatives."

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