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JUNE 2021 • IN-DEPTH INFORMATION FOR CREDIT UNION LEADERS

FINTECH
What's Hype? What's Not?

Financial technology companies can lead CUs forward—but just how far?

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Contents

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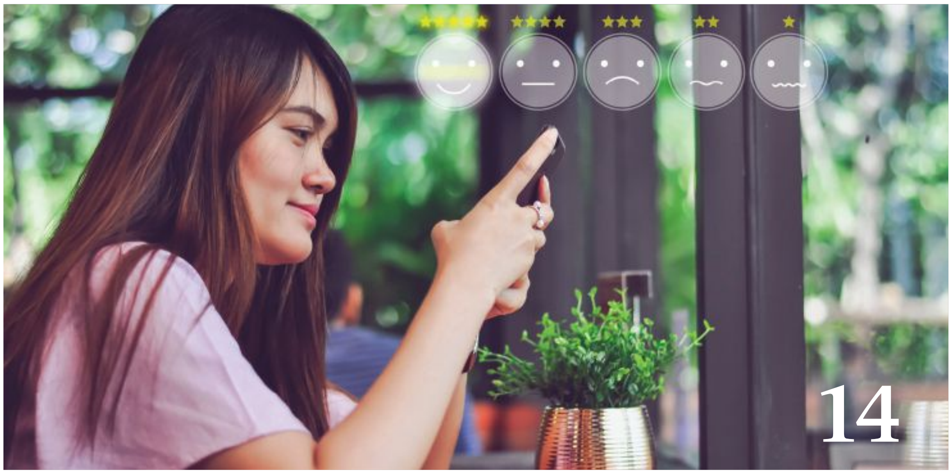

FEATURES

Contents

ARTICLES

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CUES Video

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Online-Only Column

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Push past the discomfort and redesign your relationships with co-workers right away to instill accountability while still being approachable and supportive.

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Fraud Prevention Is a Member Service

Andy Shank, VP/fraud and risk management for CUES Supplier member Harland Clarke, discusses things credit unions need to keep in mind when it comes to preventing and mitigating fraud.

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LET'S CONNECT

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YOUR THOUGHTS

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN THIS MONTH?

>> Email your answer to **theresa@cues.org**.

Take Time *to Learn*

What have you done for your professional or personal development lately?

I have been studying Google Analytics but I know there is more I could be doing for my development. My goal (set last year) to block time on my calendar (*cumanagement.com/1120develop*) and spend at least two hours per month on my development fell by the wayside, I regret to admit. But I am not giving up. It was a good goal, but my implementation ideas were, perhaps, not the most practical. I'm working on it!

If you need inspiration for taking the time to learn, this issue has got you covered.

For example, I am inspired by CUES member LeJuan George, CUBDP, senior business development officer at $6.5 billion Redstone Federal Credit Union (*redfcu.org*), Huntsville, Alabama.

"While my current role has a fair number of managerial duties, my career aspirations are to transition completely into a management role. That's because my passion is bringing out the best in people—something that managers and leaders need to know how to do well," he writes on p. 8. "In December 2020, I started using Harvard ManageMentor, a benefit of my CUES Unlimited+ membership. I knew right away that this was how I wanted to continue learning the 'human' skills of management and leadership."

Inspired by George, I want to select one or two courses to complete each month going forward. With more than 40 great options (everything from budgeting and decision-making to leading people, managing your boss, stress management, writing skills and so much more!), deciding where to start is tough. But I *will* complete at least one course in June. Who is with me?

After reading George's story, turn to p. 18 to read about the inaugural offering of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Cornell Certificate Program (*cues.org/ecornell-dei*). We invited attendees to share their top takeaways from the online course that ran from February through April. Here are a few:

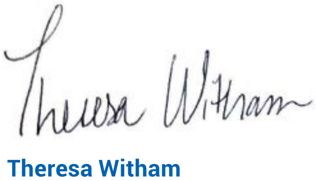
"One of my top takeaways is how important it is to ensure that we create a climate for team members to get to know each other and acknowledge the differences among us. It is also important to create opportunities for each team member to provide their opinions, insights and ideas to develop and maintain an environment of inclusion and belonging," says CUES member Jeanne Gervin, MBA, SPHR, VP/human resources at University Credit Union, Los Angeles.

"The eCornell program was relevant and insightful, answering questions that I had not even thought of in this space," says CUES member Dale Morris, branch/regional manager at Seattle Credit Union. "Being made aware of the perceptions, and their various impacts on an organization, really allowed for me to look more intentionally at how I interact with our team."

"My greatest takeaway was regarding inclusion and all of the different situations that people can potentially feel excluded in the workplace. I took away action plans that can immediately make a difference in diversity and inclusion in our organization," says Tonja Wheatley, VP/CU solutions/membership at the California/Nevada CU League, Ontario, California.

"I took away a great number of things from the eCornell DEI course experience. It helped me increase and expand my self-awareness and taught me a number of ways to promote inclusive behaviors in group settings," says CUES member Samantha Amburgey, CIO at Michigan State University Federal Credit Union, East Lansing, Michigan. "With the number of video conference meetings we have currently, this has been very beneficial to support and maintain the health of our interpersonal relationships."

Read more in "Inclusive Climates Rely on Psychological Safety" on p. 18.



Theresa Witham
Managing Editor/Publisher

P.S. The online Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Cornell Certificate Program will return in August. Register at *cues.org/ecornell-dei*.

Aspiring Manager Aided *by Harvard ManageMentor*

BY LEJUAN GEORGE, CUBDP

As senior business development officer at $6.5 billion Redstone Federal Credit Union, Huntsville, Alabama, my daily work entails overseeing the marketing and maintenance of relationships of nine affinity debit card program partnerships. I also work to expand our field of membership by adding new select employee groups. In addition, I use an online marketing platform to promote businesses within our footprint to our members and to advertise ways members can save by using these businesses' products and services.

While my current role has a fair number of managerial duties, my career aspirations are to transition completely into a management role. That's because my passion is bringing out the best in people—something that managers and leaders need to know how to do well.

To move along this pathway, I first took a leadership course at a local college. But in December 2020, I started using Harvard ManageMentor, a benefit of my CUES Unlimited+ membership. I knew right away that this was how I wanted to continue learning the "human" skills of management and leadership.

With 42 Harvard ManageMentor courses included in my membership, the program prepares me for more managerial responsibility by giving me all the necessary information, content, videos and tools relevant to my pursuits in an easy-to-access method. Having such a wealth of knowledge at my fingertips takes the guess work out of where to go to gain knowledge.

Harvard ManageMentor has aligned its curriculum with top-notch, seasoned professionals who have not only walked the walk, but elaborate on the walk from their experiences. CUES members who take these courses get first-hand guidance from people who went above and beyond for themselves and their employees in day-to-day operations at small businesses and Fortune 500 companies.

To complete a course, CUES members must finish all associated lessons. Building out the on-the-job plan is optional. After members pass the course assessment, they receive a certificate of completion.

I've been spending some time each week working on a Harvard ManageMentor course focused on leading others. And I have already been able to apply in my work at the credit union what I'm learning about adapting to individual work personalities.

Next, I plan to take Harvard ManageMentor courses in employee development, team management and diversity. I hope to learn more efficient ways to bring out the best in others regardless of their mindsets, backgrounds and experiences. As the world is constantly changing, it's my duty as an aspiring manager to stay abreast of things and be able to lead a team as the workplace and the world become more and more diverse.

Knowledge is powerful and can help you grow your career. I encourage all leaders to find and use learning programs like Harvard ManageMentor that help to sharpen their minds and deepen their abilities to be better able to support others in bringing their best selves to work.

CUES member **LeJuan George, CUBDP**, *is senior business development officer at $6.5 billion Redstone Federal Credit Union* (redfcu.org), *Huntsville, Alabama.*

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What's Hype *and What's Not?*

FINANCIAL TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES CAN LEAD CREDIT UNIONS FORWARD—BUT JUST HOW FAR?

BY CELIA SHATZMAN

No matter the industry, businesses and consumers alike look to technology to simplify their lives. Of course, that's also the case at credit unions, particularly when it comes to fintechs, aka financial technology companies.

As consumers evolve in their expectations—especially so over the last life-changing year—they expect services to meet their needs more effectively all the time. This can range from how they apply for a loan to how they make person-to-person payments after a virtual game of cards. When credit unions look for solutions to meet members' latest demands, fintechs often have the answers.

By helping credit unions deliver innovative technology, they help credit unions stay competitive. That's one of the many ways that fintechs are creating value for and with credit unions right now.

"Fintech companies are increasingly focused on competing with legacy technology vendors to better serve credit unions," says Alex Johnson, director of fintech research at CUES Supplier member and strategic partner Cornerstone Advisors (*crnrstone.com*), based in Scottsdale, Arizona. "This is giving credit unions more choices when it comes to modernizing key technology areas like core banking and digital account opening. This trend is also creating a bigger pipeline of potential acquisition targets for the big legacy tech vendors, which will eventually trickle down as innovative new features for their credit union clients."

Another major asset of fintechs is speed. The shortened time it typically takes these companies to get a solution to market is an undeniable advantage.

"Given that a fintech's product often solves for a singular problem or functionality gap, their lightweight technology stack can be a key advantage when it comes to launching a solution quickly—sometimes within weeks," explains Scott Young, VP/innovation at CUESolutions provider PSCU (*pscu.com*), St. Petersburg, Florida.

Time is money, and speeding up the process is just one way fintechs can reduce operational costs.

"Leveraging fintech services enables credit unions to be nimble and implement new offerings faster and at a lower cost than if they were to do it themselves," says Jennifer Addabbo, CEO of CU Engage (*cuengage.com*), a team of credit union advisors based in St. Petersburg, Florida. "Delays with some of the legacy systems have created opportunities for credit unions to consider adding services that are available through fintechs without having to wait on development."

"If the introduction of new products or member experiences is a priority, I would strongly recommend direct partnerships with fintech startups. They are challenging, but there's no quicker path to product innovation available for small and mid-size credit unions."

— Alex Johnson

Ultimately, credit unions often engage with fintechs to improve the member experience they offer. That was the case for $340 million West Community Credit Union (*westcommunitycu.org*) in the greater St. Louis area of Missouri, where CUES member Koren Greubel is VP/marketing. West Community CU tapped fintechs to gather more meaningful data and leveraged that for improvements with operational efficiencies through artificial intelligence, automating some of their routine processes, for example, Greubel says.

Fintechs really shine when it comes to enhancing the digital banking member experience, such as online account opening, card management alerts and controls, personal financial management tools, member authentication, and conversational AI chatbots, to name a few.

Mickey Goldwasser sees the other side of it as the VP/marketing and chief of staff at CUES Supplier member PayRailz (*payrailz.com*), Glastonbury, Connecticut, a digital payments company.

"I get an interesting perspective, both as a vendor, but also I serve on the supervisory board of a small credit union," he says. Goldwasser believes that innovation is the true driver of success. Initially, and for a long time in the financial services industry, credit unions and banks were the leaders. Then there was a slowdown in that leadership, and many nontraditional fintechs, such as PayPal (*paypal.com*), were born outside of the banking industry.

Most recently, COVID-19 accelerated the need for everything to go digital, and fintechs can excel at helping to improve digital relationships in a digital world, Goldwasser says. "Fintechs, especially those that look to work with financial institutions, can offer better experiences to manage your money, better experiences to pay for things and better experiences to plan for the future. The beauty of fintechs is there's a lot of people saying, 'How do we make this experience better?' To succeed, they have to think beyond that it's just a transaction—it's really an experience."

HOPE VERSUS HYPE

Fintechs are getting a lot of attention these days for advancing the industry, but sometimes it's hard to see where there is real, actual progress when headlines are just hype.

"There's noticeable discussion surrounding the weight of legacy infrastructure on credit unions, and efforts to rearchitect to be more lightweight, resilient and nimble," says CUES member and President of TDECU Holdings Casey Wilcox, who oversees wealth advisory and insurance services, fintech investments and partnerships, and all interests of CUSO activity for $4 billion-plus TDECU (*tdecu.org*), Houston. "The hype is trending around several areas, with a particular focus on reimagining payments and digital strategy. To date, I haven't seen anything overly compelling around an organization's ability to take their payments infrastructure and do a solid lift out to provide a strong, nimble and open technology platform across multiple payment types, especially as we move to real-time payments.

"There are large infrastructure changes many in the financial and credit union industry are contemplating, but the win for credit unions and fintech is in the ability to add functionality into 'heavy' technology stacks while at the same time being able to understand and visualize the long-term roadmap for organizational technology," Wilcox continues. "As credit unions and fintech continue to collaborate to successfully improve, disrupt and position a best-in-class member experience, we'll see the industry develop and deliver a meaningful difference."

While fintechs are known for introducing fresh concepts, being able to implement them is another matter. "The fintechs offer us alternatives that are often turnkey, but we still have to put resources and marketing dollars toward them," Greubel says, noting that some fintech partnerships have required more marketing dollars (and resources) to fulfill their potential than initially anticipated.

Much of the hype surrounding fintech can be blamed on timing since wider acceptance of a new technology often happens much more slowly than tech enthusiasts and early adopters anticipate.

Goldwasser points to a cashless society as an example. Many industry observers predicted that cash would have gone away by now. And, while we see society continuing to evolve toward that day, it isn't a reality yet.

"We've been saying that checks were going away for a while, and we're not there yet—people still write checks," he says.

If you're wondering whether a fintech is more hype than not, Goldwasser suggests asking yourself a few questions. Is it solving a real business problem? Is it attracting attention in the marketplace? Is it a mainstream item yet? If it's not, will it be—and

Questions to Ask *to Gauge the Fintech Hype*

To decide if a fintech you're considering is hype or closer to reality, try asking yourself these questions, suggests Mickey Goldwasser, VP/marketing and chief of staff at CUES Supplier member PayRailz (*payrailz.com*), Glastonbury, Connecticut.

- Is it solving a real business problem?
- Is it attracting attention in the marketplace?
- Is it a mainstream item yet? If it's not, will it be—and when?

> **"A core or CUSO can reduce the risk of 'going it alone' by vetting and scaling a fintech solution for the members or owners—think strength in numbers."**
>
> — Scott Young

when? Will it be accepted? These questions will help you determine if something is actually in the innovation stage or just in the enthusiastic stage.

It takes a lot of time for credit unions to do due diligence on the fintechs they're considering partnering with. That's where Bankable Fintech (*bankablefintech.com*) comes in. According to CEO Kim Fraser, the company has considerable data on the offerings, performance and core data system integration capabilities of more than 16,000 national and international fintechs, including some that are proprietary. Credit unions leveraging this data won't have to wonder if they are choosing the best option. As a bonus, the company's data is free to credit unions since fintechs that get a contract through Bankable Fintech pay a universal revenue share to Bankable Fintech.

A few other areas have been pinpointed as hype. Take embedded fintech, for instance, the integration and offering of financial services together with the offer of any other service of a commercial nature.

"It's the most popular fintech trend on Twitter and in various fintech newsletters, but real-world examples are still fairly rare," Johnson says. "The theory is that companies from virtually every industry will embed financial services in their products and experiences in order to increase ARPU (average revenue per user) and make their offerings stickier, but apart from payments and a bit of lending (buy now, pay later), we haven't really seen this theory manifest itself in significant ways yet."

Another instance is just how good fintech can make the user experience. "Many organizations have experienced member priorities shift amidst the pandemic, and their strategies are to become even more member-centric—providing competitive rates and exceptional services—however, the user experience is sometimes left out of that equation," Addabbo says. "Simplicity and effortlessness are a member *demand*, not a nice-to-have, if financial institutions are to attain and retain their membership.

"How easy is it to join your credit union?" she continues. "How easy is it to find your services and understand the unique value proposition over your competitors? If someone is searching for the services you offer and has your credit union pulled up on one tab—and major players on another tab—are they convinced your offering is the *easiest*? That is what's winning members today. With so many competing services and all vying for your membership, it is critical to be focused on usability and seamless experience in order to win."

BREAKING NEW GROUND

Credit unions are finding new ways to work with fintechs right now. According to Young, there are three main ways:

- as a vendor, where a credit union buys/contracts with a solution;
- as a referral partner, where a credit union is paid by a fintech for marketing access to its membership; and
- as a partner, which includes deep technical integration, custom builds, co-creation and "powered by" scenarios, where a credit union resells a fintech solution to its membership or to other credit unions through a CUSO.

"Credit unions are partnering with fintechs to provide best-in-class services to their members, especially in the online banking space where member demand is shifting financial institutions into a digital-first environment," Addabbo says. "Behind the authentication of online banking, we are seeing fintechs providing specific add-on services unique to the needs of members in areas of financial literacy, P2P (person-to-person payments) and overall payment services."

Currently, the most common way credit unions are working with fintechs is by buying their products. "This model of collaboration is easy because it fits neatly into credit unions' existing procurement processes," Johnson says. "No one needs to change anything."

Plus, the options from fintechs available on the market now are plentiful. "I think a lot of financial institutions are going outside of their core providers because it's easier to use a fintech," Greubel says. However, she notes that when credit unions do so, they lose some integration, which is something she has experienced. "I'd say that credit unions are also partnering with fintechs to leverage the data that's out there and gather data that we didn't even know was a possibility," she adds.

JOINING FORCES

In certain cases, it can be most beneficial for credit unions to work with fintechs directly. "Organizations can benefit from fintechs when they do not have the resources to build on their own. But just like in any vendor partnership, there needs to be collaboration and ownership in order for it to be a successful partnership," Addabbo says.

Before a credit union decides to work directly with a fintech, Young recommends asking a few questions. One, is there a specific problem to solve or job to be done that a fintech solution can quickly address? Two, does the credit union have the prioritization, funding and talent to work with a fast-moving, nimble fintech? Three, does the credit union own or have influence on its tech infrastructure to independently select the best fintech solution and prioritize integration?

The answers can help determine if these partnerships can be structured to make the situation a win-win. When speed is of the essence, that tends to be the case.

"A benefit in working directly with fintech startups is that they can move extraordinarily quickly when they are pursuing an opportunity that is a high priority, and building new distribution channels is *always* a high priority for fintech startups," Johnson says. "If the introduction of new products or member experiences is a priority, I would strongly recommend direct partnerships with fintech startups. They are challenging, but there's no quicker path to product innovation available for small and mid-size credit unions."

Another crucial point to consider is whether the fintech is financially viable, cautions Greubel. West Community CU uses its established vendor management process, which also examines the fintech's ability to manage information and security.

"And always look at the inefficiencies that are not built into integration with the code," she adds. "What that means is your core may not be friendly working with a fintech, so you want to make sure that that integration is in place prior to working with them directly."

FINDING A DIFFERENT ROUTE

When integration between a fintech and credit union proves challenging, it's typically better for the CU to connect through one of its vendors, such as a core processor or a credit union service organization.

"In some cases, when ... credit unions do not have the resources to commit to the development or collaboration in working with a fintech, going through a third party can be beneficial," Addabbo says. "However, keep in mind that the way the CUSO or vendor utilizes that fintech's platform may be limited in comparison to going directly to them."

Ultimately, connecting with a fintech through a vendor typically reduces the credit union's risk.

"Traditionally, credit unions have relied heavily on their core providers or CUSO tech partners for products and services, and that's often because these partners have already performed the heavy lifting to vet, integrate and scale a solution," Young says. "While some product customization may be limited in order to scale, the credit union gains valuable speed to market for a solution that is already integrated into their core or payment processing tech partner. Additionally, a core or CUSO can reduce the risk of 'going it alone' by vetting and scaling a fintech solution for the members or owners—think strength in numbers."

Johnson observes that actual partnerships, in which a CU and fintech startup team up to take a joint product to market, are much less common.

"They are riskier and require more creativity in terms of go-to-market strategy and contracting," he says. "In Cornerstone Advisors' annual survey of credit union executives, the percentage of respondents who said that fintech partnerships are very important to their 2021 strategies actually went down, from 30% for 2020 to 22% for 2021. I think this reflects credit unions' evolving understanding of how challenging these partnerships are."

With TDECU as an early investor, Wilcox has a front-row seat to the launch of Curql (*curql.com*), an incubator and accelerator that includes a fintech fund and collective to cultivate potential partnerships, vendor relationships and acquisition targets for the credit union industry. The Curql ecosystem is designed to benefit fintech and generate a collaborative place for credit unions to identify, assess, partner with and invest in financial technology companies.

The reason that engaging with fintechs has become so timely is because they are giving credit unions of all sizes the capability to compete with the larger banks.

"In some instances, fintechs have undoubtedly leveled the playing field for credit unions to compete more easily against products and experiences built and offered by larger banks and tech companies," Young says.

"Determining whether or not to partner with a fintech can—and should be—a delicate balance," he continues. "Partnering with a fintech for a specific financial service that solves a problem or fills a technology gap can be a good thing. However, partnering with a fintech where you relinquish control of the overall user experience and thus, potentially the member relationship, may be a slippery slope to member attrition down the road. As an industry, credit unions are great at building and maintaining personal member relationships—I wouldn't give up control of that advantage so easily."

Celia Shatzman *is a Brooklyn-based writer who has penned stories on topics ranging from beauty to fashion, finance, travel, celebrities, health and entertainment.*

MORE ON FINTECH

How Credit Unions Can Innovate Like Start-Ups (*cumanagement.com/022421innovate*)

Five Problems Fintechs Help Solve (*cumanagement.com/1020fintech*)

Fintech: From Disruptors to Partners (*cumanagement.com/1019fintech*)

Questions to Ask Before Partnering *With a Fintech Company*

To judge whether a fintech partnership can be structured to be a win-win, ask yourself these questions, says Alex Johnson, director of fintech research at CUES Supplier member and strategic provider Cornerstone Advisors (*crnrstone.com*), based in Scottsdale, Arizona:

1. Is there a specific problem to solve or job to be done that a fintech solution can quickly address?
2. Does the credit union have the prioritization, funding and talent to work with a fast-moving, nimble fintech?
3. Does the credit union own or have influence on its tech infrastructure to independently select the best fintech solution and prioritize integration?

Closing the *Satisfaction Gap*

INVESTING IN PERSONALIZED DIGITAL SERVICE DELIVERY IS THE CLEAR PATH FORWARD TO REGAIN A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OVER BANKS.

BY STEPHANIE SCHWENN SEBRING

After years of being on top, U.S. credit unions have, for two consecutive years, fallen behind banks in customer satisfaction in the American Customer Satisfaction Index Survey (*tinyurl.com/asci-fs2020*).

Large banks continue to make enormous investments in technology, and as COVID-19 escalated and branches closed last year, the demand for technology increased among all population segments.

"Credit unions have always excelled at the personal touch," reflects Heidi Kassab, president/CEO of $355 million Cornerstone Community Financial Credit Union (*ccfinancial.com*), Auburn Hills, Michigan. "But today, we're at a crossroads, needing to bridge the satisfaction gap between positive in-person [branch] experiences and those driven by technology."

How can credit unions adjust? It can begin with a new mindset. "Credit unions like to hang their hat on their latest digital advancement—a new app feature, video or a remodeled website," says Kassab. "While those are great, credit unions need to keep moving forward to the next new digital frontier.

"It's no longer a badge of honor to offer the latest mobile feature—it's simply an expectation," she adds. "Instead, an onward-and-upward digital mindset must pervade staff training, member service and culture as a whole."

COMPETING WITH BANKS AND TECHNOLOGY

Consider JPMorgan Chase, with 700 employees in its Manhattan Digital Innovation Hub and a $1.75 billion annual tech budget. "Because their technology hits the market sooner, every credit union executive should have an account at a major bank, like Chase, to witness the difference," suggests Jill Homan, president of DeepTarget (*deeptarget.com*), a digital marketing company in Madison, Alabama.

"It's also important to note that customer satisfaction with financial services—including banks, credit unions, insurers and investment advisors—fell across the board in 2020."

Homan says one conclusion is that with physical locations closing, customer service quality fell overall. "And since credit unions typically provide a higher quality in-person experience, scores declined even more sharply this year."

However, that doesn't explain the two-year decline, which Homan believes is a lag in the digital (mobile and online) investment at credit unions relative to banks, particularly in technologies that personalize a member's experience. While most credit unions can't replicate Chase's development budget, she says they can focus on innovations that emphasize connections to their members and community.

Homan highlights two examples of credit unions using DeepTarget's technology to better connect with members in 2020.

$100 million First Eagle Federal Credit Union (*firsteaglefcu.com*), Schaumburg, Illinois, used DeepTarget's Digital Experience Platform to open 583 new accounts, totaling more than $7.7 million.

"That's a sizeable increase over 2019," notes Evelena Anderson-Eley, compliance officer for the credit union. "The platform syncs with our core system, giving us access to our member database. We then use that data to create personalized, targeted offers for individual members. This year, as we look to increase member engagement and loyalty, we'll drill down further to create personalized offers based on the propensity to open a specific account. These targeting techniques were previously available only to larger financial institutions."

$400 million Jolt Credit Union (*joltcu.com*), Saginaw, Michigan, used the platform to reconnect with members by providing community COVID-19 information. "Not just generic links to the CDC or other official sites, but local information they could use immediately, and that was difficult to find," explains Homan.

But it's not just about personalization. Ultimately, members want high-quality and consistent service delivery no matter where they are.

"The experience needs to be the same regardless of channel so members can switch channels on a whim," continues Homan. "For example, a member might prefer to start a mortgage application online but will need help finishing it in a branch. Credit unions should be ready to meet this need."

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY

Credit union CEOs stare both opportunity and risk in the face with this accelerated customer preference shift to digital, notes Todd Robertson, SVP/business development for ARGO (*argodata.com*), Richardson, Texas. "Customer preferences have been clearly stated, so we know what the end goal looks like."

After surveying hundreds of bankers on their delivery strategies, Robertson shares the top areas of focus for increasing loyalty and enabling institutions to operate profitably in the digital space: "Personalize the experience with recommendations based on the consumer's life stage—with the ability to start a request in one channel and finish in another. Instant decisions on loan requests are also essential, knowing that consumers are willing to pay a premium for quicker decisions. And finally, provide financial planning tools to help customers set and reach financial goals.

"Since consumers feel more empowered in today's digital environment, it's important to capitalize on the opportunities for personal interaction and understand consumer needs and intentions," Robertson continues. "True customer-centricity requires quantifiable confirmation of customer satisfaction through metrics and data analysis."

Also consider the traditional member interaction: in-person discussions, written correspondence and telephone-based conversations, which are often reactive on the part of the credit union. But in an expanded digital world, Robertson says software-based engagement methods (e.g., ARGO *Connects*, an analytics-based omnichannel delivery, risk management and customer engagement platform, *tinyurl.com/argoconnects*) can offer a more proactive approach with the ability to capture additional opportunities across member journey stages.

"Nurturing and intelligently directing the customer through relevant messaging improves their experience and drives value," adds Robertson. A member-centric delivery strategy will also need to forecast and combat attrition, which is difficult to manage in a digital world where face-to-face engagements are reduced.

"Predictive analytics listen, detect and measure events, both positive and negative, to quantify the probability of customer attrition," notes Robertson. "Using these analytics, alerts can be sent to appropriate personnel with insight into products, servicing and pricing, so the causes of attrition can be corrected and reduced over time."

ADVANCING THE MEMBER EXPERIENCE

CUES member Steven Stapp, president/CEO for $1.5 billion Unitus Community Credit Union (*unitusccu.com*), Portland, Oregon, notes that the financial services industry has been disrupted by evolving consumer expectations. "For many, 'banking' is no longer something we do; it's become integrated into our daily lives, creating retention and growth challenges."

For retention, Char Sears, the credit union's AVP/remote experience, says that it is essential to capture your member's voice digitally and create opportunities that reduce friction at the point of service in their preferred channels. "And it's just as important to monitor the evolving expectations and desires of nonmembers in the communities you serve.

"Consumer behaviors and demands are always evolving and will continue to grow beyond this generation," adds Sears. "And undoubtedly, millennials [and Gen Z] are helping speed up the change. But the real issue is a failure to acknowledge these trends and advance your strategies and delivery channels. Additionally, when we do acknowledge disruption in our space, we often fail to recognize the scope of the change."

Sears notes that new technologies, such as the Glia digital customer service platform (*glia.com/credit-unions*), have completely changed how Unitus Community CU connects with its members. "Though we often hear about millennials and Generation Z, *all* generations today demand more self-service solutions," she adds. "But realize that even in a mobile-first world, there remains a need for the human touch."

A virtual branch (*unitusccu.com/branches-and-atms*) has enabled the credit union to leverage the human touch within its online and mobile banking infrastructure, providing on-demand access to consultations, sales interactions and other services via personal video banking—available wherever the member prefers, using nothing but their mobile device.

The CU also provides a consistent banking experience among all channels. "Members expect to speak directly to a person in any medium, and video banking allows this face-to-face interaction without a member having to drive to the branch ... for conversations where the human element is essential," explains Sears.

Empathetic teaching techniques are another way to allow for more personalized solutions even through digital channels. "For example, employees are empowered … to make recommendations and guide members in critical service moments," shares Sears. "This approach not only reinforces our shared values but builds staff confidence and adds value that our digital program alone couldn't provide."

Doug Brown, president of digital banking for NCR Corporation (*ncr.com*), Atlanta, points to a recent study by NCR and the Harris Poll that, perhaps surprisingly in this age of privacy concerns, found 86% of people prefer that their financial institution have more access to their personal data. "It reveals that different generations have loosened up a bit and are OK with financial institutions using their information to improve digital banking experiences," says Brown. "Utilization of this data also creates consistency across different channels by providing a personalized user experience that members have become accustomed to from retailers and tech companies outside of financial services."

And while Brown notes that age segments have some impact, personal needs and desires almost always supplant generational habits. "As the pandemic pushed people from all generations towards digital banking, credit unions with trailing satisfaction ratings should see this as a mix of generational issues, technology infrastructure [and] budget restraints."

To combat these trends, Brown suggests that credit unions meet member demands by providing them with a digital-first, connected experience, when and where they need it, and continually evaluating your approach to service. "Commit to being there for your members in a way that best meets their lifestyle and expectations for a modern financial institution."

SHIFTING THE VALUE PROPOSITION

"Banks have capitalized on the transition from branch to digital banking without having to change their value proposition," notes Corey Gross, co-founder of Sensibill (*getsensibill.com*), a financial data company specializing in daily spend tools based in Toronto. "They leverage their ability to acquire, partner and spend to enhance their digital competitiveness.

Meanwhile, once the pandemic hit, many credit unions "were adjusting from branch service to ramping up mobile and online offerings in a matter of months. This change of pace was more reactive than proactive, leading to a decline in satisfaction ratings," explains Gross. "Fintechs, such as Chime (*chime.com*) and N26 (*n26.com*), and big tech companies, like Google and Apple, have also … disrupted the credit union space."

Though the disparity in technology between big banks, consumer-facing fintechs and CUs has impacted satisfaction, there are opportunities to close the gap. One is to leverage fintech partnerships, which offer technology enhancements at a relatively low-entry cost and improved customer-centric innovation.

"Technology partners can help flesh out new capabilities, which at first blush may seem experimental … but they end up being what keeps your app and brand on the home screen," Gross notes. "Credit unions don't have the dollars to spend on R&D like the big banks. However, it's still important to make the barrier to entry for innovation as low as possible; on-scale and high speed are necessities."

Gross says when vetting a potential fintech partner, ask what they can offer your members and the problem they solve.

"This approach can help cultivate a better member banking experience, making solutions within the mobile app more relationship-based and less transactional and ultimately helping members achieve financial wellness with tools and education."

Striking a Balance *in Canada*

CUES member Rob Paterson, CEO of $10 billion Alterna Savings and Alterna Bank (*alterna.ca* and *alternabank.ca*), Ottawa, Ontario, offers a unique perspective to member satisfaction challenges in the U.S. "Canada continues to excel in customer satisfaction ratings, and credit unions lead in all service categories, according to a Canadian Credit Union Association report published in October 2020.

"Since our country is so diverse and widespread—the second largest in the world by landmass—technology is super important, and we've had to stay ahead of the technology curve," Paterson notes. "We've supported and embraced fintech collaboration, and I think that's given us the edge in service technology."

By leveraging fintech partnerships, technology enhancements have been made that help consumers with budgeting and forecasting. Paterson says these tools continue to keep Canadian credit unions ahead of the banks. He also notes that while there are fewer smaller credit unions in Canada, smaller doesn't have to mean "not mighty."

"Credit unions have an opportunity to partner with fintechs to help bridge current customer satisfaction gaps, and these partnerships can bring the right capabilities at a much faster rate," says Paterson. "When vetting potential fintechs, first understand what the problem is you're trying to solve. Then, find a fintech that understands and can solve the problem with you. … After finding value in the solution, ensure the fintech is in it for the long haul."

In 2017, Alterna added a new mobile offering for members, Sensibill (*getsensibill.com*), a financial data company specializing in daily spend tools, based in Toronto. "Sensibill enables members to track their spending by organizing receipts into spending categories," explains Paterson. "They can create folders (utilities, vacation expenses, warranties, etc.) and better budget or make real-time decisions based on their spending habits and compare spending from month-to-month or year-to-year. It's simple, yet data-rich, revealing unique spending patterns."

Today, about 20% of 186,000 Alterna members use the technology, and it is part of the credit union's onboarding program. "People are looking for quality tools to help them manage their finances. And in our parents' and grandparents' generations, interactions were done face-to-face at the branch," notes Paterson. "Today, these interactions are happening in digital channels. The key is to have the same interaction and offer the same practical advice that the branches have done in years past."

Paterson concludes that credit unions can strengthen their value proposition using technology. "It's enhancing the advisory component via technology that will continue the momentum of the cooperative, people-before-profit values of credit unions."

"It's critical to understand how the member feels once the interaction is complete."

– Daniel Michaeli

Technology solutions such as Sensibill can, for example, help members save money at a granular level, whether it's tracking food purchases, finding a better price on a purchase or capturing everyday spend at minute levels. "Fifty percent of Canadians and 63% of Americans are living paycheck-to-paycheck," says Gross. "Though COVID exposed this weakness, it's by no means a new problem." By offering enhanced financial tools, credit unions have the opportunity to influence member habits in real-time. "In return, you gain loyalty and enhance your value proposition."

Gross notes that Sensibill clients have seen three times more engagement with their mobile apps and 1.9 times more products purchased, and their customers are 16 times less likely to churn or leave the institution. (Read more about working with fintechs on p. 10.)

Daniel Michaeli, CEO and co-founder of Glia (*glia.com*), New York, believes that declining satisfaction rates not only indicate deficiencies in technology but a lack of focus on the outcome of a member interaction.

"Regardless of the segment or a member's preferred channel, it's critical to understand how the member feels once the interaction is complete," stresses Michaeli. "Lead with what the member is wanting and how you want them to feel."

Michaeli notes the focus for credit unions has always been on service—for banks, it's typically been improving efficiencies. "It just so happens that banks digitizing their business aligned with improved efficiency ratios and resulted in a bump in customer satisfaction ratings."

Refocusing on where and why service delivery is happening is also a necessity. "Where and what your members are doing in the digital space offers much data to glean," adds Michaeli. "This data affords you ... the understanding of a member's unique circumstance. It also lets you bring your member-centric philosophy to the digital world."

INSTILLING A CULTURE OF CHANGE

"Today, consumers want the digital convenience to check balances, track purchases, pay bills, even apply for a mortgage—all with minimal clicks," reflects Jesse McGannon, VP for CUESolutions provider Strategic Resource Management Corporation (*srmcorp.com*), Memphis, Tennessee. "However, the pace of change is of equal concern, and some credit unions are struggling. ... The answers aren't only to 'invest more in digital' or 'add more features.' That's unsustainable.

"It requires instilling a culture of change at a grassroots level, and credits unions may grapple with this for a variety of reasons," stresses McGannon. "Staff and boards tend to skew older and sometimes lack versatility. ... There is often a lack of a mature change management function to support and drive this culture of change—and having a framework for change, an area that can analyze and review technology investment requests, is critical.

"Instill rigorous processes for technology decisions ... to ensure value. It's not enough to simply throw dollars at digital; instead, ensure meaningful change is accomplished fast and well."

Youthful talent can help you compete in the arena of meaningful change. Consider again the example of Chase. The big bank recruits "top-tier youth talent for rotational management development programs," says McGannon. "To build a culture of change, it may be necessary to redefine your organizational chart every two to three years. Also consider adding a chief transformation officer to instill a change culture and drive the change portfolio."

The same goes for your board, says McGannon. Seek diversity in many areas, including age and abilities. "Bank boards tend to be advisory in their capacity (with experts offering critical information), while credit union boards tend to be immersed in operations or decision-making. Shifting to an advisory role would serve credit unions well and give leaders more autonomy, facilitate a faster pace of change and instill a more agile culture."

Strategic planning, leadership and investment must align for digital advancement to become embedded in a credit union's culture. "And as the saying goes, 'It starts at the top,'" concludes Kassab. "Resources, time, budget and talent need to be funneled toward the goal of being a technologically advanced financial institution. Tech needs to be front and center, not an afterthought.

Stephanie Schwenn Sebring *established and managed the marketing departments for three CUs and served in mentorship roles before launching her business. As owner of Fab Prose & Professional Writing, she assists credit unions, industry suppliers and any company wanting great content and a clear brand voice. Follow her on Twitter @fabprose.*

MORE ON MEMBER EXPERIENCE

Tech Time: Crafting a Technology Infrastructure (*cumanagement.com/0521techtime*)

How to Regain the Service Lead (*cumanagement.com/0620service*)

Future-Proofing the Member Experience (*cumanagement.com/1220futureproof*)

Bringing Member Preferences Into Focus (*cumanagement.com/1220focus*)

Move Out of the 'Circle of Chaos' to Your Next Great Digital-First Marketing Opportunity (*cumanagement.com/podcast95*)

Inclusive Climates Rely on *Psychological Safety*

CUES MEMBER GRADUATES OF DEI CORNELL CERTIFICATE PROGRAM SHARE TOP TAKEAWAYS.

BY LISA HOCHGRAF

Do your team members feel they can be their authentic selves at work?

Before you say yes too quickly, ask youself these deeper questions—or better yet, ask them:

Can your team members look at your leadership ranks and see people similar to them? Seeing someone of their own race on your executive team or on your board signals that they have an opportunity to grow and advance.

Are they comfortable displaying personal photos in their workspaces or Zoom windows? Think of how your team would react to photos that might depict a family headed by two men or by two women—or that show the activity of members of a different social class from the one that is most common among your staffers.

Do they feel individually valued for the ideas they offer in meetings? People in some organizations report that they are consistently asked to speak on behalf of "all young people" or "all women" or some other demographic group, rather than just to share their best ideas.

The more questions like this you can answer "yes" to, the more likely it is that your credit union is off to a good start in creating an organizational climate that includes psychological safety—a key foundation for a climate where people can be their authentic selves at work.

When CUES asked my classmates from this spring's inaugural offering of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Cornell Certificate Program (*cues.org/ecornell-dei*) about their top takeaway from the course, several cited a better understanding of pyschological safety. This result isn't suprising, as the Cornell course provided research-based evidence that psychological safety helps to drive high levels of employee engagement, which in turn helps to drive solid business performance.

My classmates also cited as top takeaways a better understanding of the terms "diversity," "equity" and "inclusion"—and how the three are inextricably intertwined. And they expressed in their responses how they were now more motivated than ever to create inclusive climates

Alphabetical list of class participants, not all shown above: Blessing Allison, Samantha Amburgey, Kristi Amick, Lea Ammerman, Celia Armstrong, Shelli Bardsley, Jane Barron, Trevor Beaton, Maryrose Bernabe, Jennifer Binkley, Scott Bonacorsi, Kayla Borup, April Clobes, Tony Covington, Raquel Crossley, Lauren Davison, Robyn Dietrich, Silvia Dimma, Kelli Ellsworth Etchison, Derek Fuzzell, Angela Gargo, Marnie Gerkhardt, Jeanne Gervin, Amanda Hallmark, Lisa Hochgraf, Ayren Hurst, Sara Janssen, Deb Jewell, Tara Klun, Roberta Kozlowicz, Jennifer Kuhn, Laura Leschewski, Dale Morris, Jim Newstrom, Cara Nisbet, Brad Penner, Donna Perkett, Brandy Phillips, Chaz Rzewnicki, Chelsea Schaberg, Jennifer Stangl, Kelcey Stevens, Craig Stokes, Amy Thomas, Leona Warner, Tonja Wheatley, Laurie Wiest, Janine Williams, Jennifer Young, Tina Zito for their organizations. Here are their thoughts in their own words.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

Several of my classmates described applying the idea of psychological safety to both employees and leaders of their credit unions right away.

"My top takeaway from this program is the vital role that psychological safety of employees plays in the overall success of the credit union's DEI journey," writes CUES member Raquel Crossley, recruiter at $4.3 billion Northwest Federal Credit Union (*nwfcu.org*), Herndon, Virginia. "With the help of this program, I have been able to assess the current climate of the overall organization and look forward to providing the same information and resources to our management team to ensure they are also aware and creating spaces where employees have high levels of psychological safety, while feeling that they are both seen and heard for their individual differences."

CUES member Chelsea Schaberg writes: "It is tough to choose just one top takeaway from the Cornell diversity, equity and inclusion certificate program, but one item I plan to apply immediately is integrating psychological safety and inclusion practices into our leadership trainings and performance appraisal process.

The certificate course taught the importance of supporting leaders at all levels in understanding their key role in building and sustaining an organization's environment of inclusion. "Since the program, we have already started communication to leaders on these themes and are working on training and additional support to help them on their inclusion journey," says Schaberg, AVP/human resources at $6.1 billion Michigan State Federal Credit Union (*msufcu.org*), East Lansing.

CLARIFYING MEANING

A common way people are encouraged to think about the meanings of the terms "diversity," "equity" and "inclusion" is that diversity is where everyone is invited to the party, equity is where everyone gets to contribute to the playlist, and inclusion is when everyone has the opportunity to dance. The Cornell certificate program did an excellent job of making connections between these three key concepts and grounding them in day-to-day actions.

"My biggest takeaway was something that was said in one of our live sessions: 'Diversity counts people, inclusion makes people count,'" writes CUES member Blessing Allison, director of learning and development at $1.2 billion Red River Employees Federal Credit Union (*rrfcu.com*), Texarkana, Texas. "Sometimes diversity and inclusion can become mucky," she adds, "especially when first diving in. But this clearly states the importance of both diversity and inclusion as well as the role each of them plays in an organization."

Similarly, CUES member Amanda Hallmark's No. 1 takeaway from the program was "learning about how diversity, equity and inclusion are deeply intertwined and connected, how the small actions and behaviours we implement—right now, right here—make, support and lead to big change." Hallmark is talent development manager at $771 million Integris Credit Union (*integriscu.ca*), Prince George, British Columbia.

INSPIRATION FOR THE JOURNEY

One of the things that teach the most are stories, as evidenced by these comments from CUES member Brandy Phillips, VP/mortgage lending and co-chair of the DEI Council at $4 billion TDECU (*tdecu.org*), Lake Jackson, Texas.

"During one of our live sessions, our professor shared a story about a man who had friends that were impacted in the Pulse nightclub shooting" in Orlando in 2016, Phillips writes. "This man said that no one in his office acknowledged him ... and how isolated and alone that made him feel.

"This story helped me realize we can have an impact on inclusion and belonging simply by ... having the courage to speak up and say, 'How are you doing?'" she continues. "To me, that was pretty powerful, and it doesn't cost a dime, but the impact is priceless."

CUES member Trevor Beaton, chief people and innovation officer at $1.2 billion Synergy Credit Union (*synergycu.ca*), Lashburn, Saskatchewan, also has a clear vision for his pathway forward.

"It is hard to chose one key takeaway from the DEI certificate course," he writes. "It allowed me to reflect in many aspects to be a stronger leader, to model a better example. I spent a good deal of my career creating a profile for myself by not being afraid to speak up and provide my opinions. A key takeaway for me: to create a more inclusive environment requires me to listen first instead of speaking first.

"I also want to ensure we hear from everyone in the group and will support them in getting their ideas and thoughts on the table," he adds. "I look forwarding to working on my personal skills and modeling a better example for others to foster a more inclusive environment."

Senior Editor of Credit Union Management **Lisa Hochgraf** *(*lisa@cues.org*) was honored to join the inaugural class of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Cornell Certificate Program* (cues.org/ecornell-dei) .

MORE ON DEI

African American Credit Union Coalition (*aacuc.org*)

Credit Union Women's Leadership Alliance (*cuwla.org*)

CU DEI Collective (*cudeicollective.org*)

CU Pride (*cupride.org*)

Global Women's Leadership Network (*cuwomen.org*)

National Association of Latino Credit Unions & Professionals (*nlcup.org*)

CUES' DEI Resource Center (*cues.org/dei*)

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Cornell Certificate Program (*cues.org/ecornell-dei*)

Data-Driven *ATM Strategies*

NEW WAYS TO COLLECT AND ANALYZE INFORMATION CAN BOOST ATM PROGRAMS.

BY RICHARD H. GAMBLE

Implementing an ATM strategy is old stuff. The tools for collecting and analyzing data are new stuff, especially when artificial intelligence and machine learning are involved. High-end ATMs or interactive teller machines can do new stuff. So how can credit unions apply the new stuff to the old stuff and develop smarter ATM strategies?

It takes some work. Today, credit union leaders can see more data and make smarter ATM decisions, reports Sabeh Samaha, president/CEO of Samaha & Associates (*ssamaha.com*), Miami, but it's still a challenge because the data live in disparate systems—core, card processing and online banking. "You need to see the whole picture to make the best decisions. The ideal would be automated analysis and artificial intelligence applied to a consolidated database in the cloud, but we're not there yet," he observes.

"Data analytics can help forecast cash needs based on usage and when to increase or decrease the cash load to ensure optimal member experience, even based on seasonal patterns," notes Terry Pierce, director of ATM product management for CUES Supplier member CO-OP Financial Services (*co-opfs.org*), Rancho Cucamonga, California.

Any ATM strategy today needs to be part of a comprehensive delivery channel strategy, says Floyd Salamino, VP/analytics at CUES Supplier member Trellance (*trellance.com*), Tampa, Florida. "You need to look at the volume and the types of transactions and the level of member engagement across all channels. Then you need to collect data and analyze it to find the optimum delivery channel, taking note of trends," he explains.

Data analysis needs to follow and implement strategy, not direct it, notes Emily Engstrom, director of client relations at CUESolutions provider AdvantEdge Digital (*advantedge.digital*), a CUNA Mutual Group company (*cunamutual.com*) based in Madison, Wisconsin. Once strategy

is solidified—i.e., target member segments identified, goals set, success defined—CUs can determine which key performance indicator they need to track to gauge effectiveness. "They can make sure they have the data elements they need to collect (and from where) to make measurement efficient, effective, accurate and as close to real time as possible," she says.

LOCATION IS KEY

The stakes can be high. ATMs are critical to almost branchless $7.5 billion PSECU (*psecu.com*), Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Its market is "saturated with ATMs," says CUES member Barb Bowker, chief member experience officer, so placements must be analyzed carefully. Relevant data include member population near the potential placement, the ability to provide public accessibility 24/7, and the quality and functionality of other ATMs in the vicinity that offer surcharge-free access.

Smart decisions are based on all the ATMs in a target area and what they can and can't do (e.g., take deposits, pre-stage withdrawals), Bowker explains. It would be nice to see all that data with a click or two, but at this point, it takes time and effort to gather and process it.

But PSECU does the work. Seeing all the locations and functions that were available to members from PSECU and network ATMs led the CU to shift its emphasis around 2007 to accommodate select employee group relationships, Bowker reports. At that time, surcharge-free ATMs were becoming more widely available in the marketplace—an offering that once set PSECU apart from other financial institutions. As such, the credit union began focusing on placing ATMs in areas that supported SEG members to maximize the benefit it could provide those groups. Where members do occasionally use out-of-network ATMs today, PSECU will rebate the fees for transactions made with a PSECU debit card—up to $20 a month for direct-deposit members and up to $8 a month for those without direct deposit.

To determine ATM placement, it's possible to use card transaction data to map where your members live, where they work, their commuting routes and even where they shop, Salamino explains. Then you can see where there may be gaps in member access. To determine the type of machine, look at what members are doing in a branch that could be done at an enhanced ATM, personal or video teller machine and the benefits of migrating some of that activity to a more robust machine or machines, he adds.

AI and machine learning could improve data-driven ATM strategies, Bowker says, by "marrying member or potential member geolocation data relative to ATM locations (PSECU's and others') in order to identify gaps or duplications and to ensure that members get personalized messages that fit their ATM usage."

AI can help ATMs deal more personally with members, Samaha agrees, but it's not much help at choosing locations. "There are too many factors—parking, neighborhood issues, light, walking distance—to automate decisions unless there is historical information from an ATM on that site. A human has to make most site decisions."

HIGH TURNOVER HELPS

BECU (*becu.org*), with almost $28 billion in assets and based just south of Seattle in Tukwila, Washington, knows a thing or two about where to put ATMs. Some of its 254 units average over 10,000 transactions a month, reports Scott A. Smith, director of retail product strategy and management. "We're told those are very high numbers," he says. Due to such heavy use, the average life of a BECU ATM is often just five to six years. With a steady stream of renewal dates and machine replacements, Smith and his team are not saddled with legacy commitments and can better seize opportunities to phase in new technology as it becomes available.

> **"We'll look at placing stand-alone ATMs where our digital membership blossoms and where our brand is valued."**
>
> – Scott A. Smith

The data BECU analyzes is mostly internal. "We have a hefty P&L (profit and loss) model for each machine," Smith explains. BECU doesn't so much add or drop ATMs as migrate them. "We hardly ever remove an ATM from a branch, but many of our ATMs sit on leased space in high-traffic shopping locations, and we're always watching whether the landlord will raise the price at the next renewal date and whether we're better off to stay or move."

Member experience counts the most when BECU introduces high-tech features to its fleet. Its new ATMs come with five cassettes for dispensing bills, Smith reports. The credit union looks first at what denominations members prefer and then at cost efficiencies. For example, a diversified pilot to test demand for $5 bills is still ongoing but was delayed because COVID-19 skewed demand while many restaurants and other small-bill users were shut down.

BECU ATMs can take cash or check deposits in a single bundle with no envelope and do the reading, sorting and posting quickly on site. The credit union's ATMs do not yet include live video and audio, cash recycling, biometric or contactless authentication, or pre-staged transactions, although some of these features are under review.

Part of Smith's data analysis is calculating how often members use BECU ATMs and when and where they use other ATMs, including those within the no-fee CO-OP Financial Services shared ATM network. "We see which foreign machines our members are using in high volumes and decide when it's better for us to place our machine in that location or pay the foreign transaction fees to others in the network," he explains.

ATMs in BECU's fleet can be displayed on a map showing their physical locations tied to the physical locations of the CU's members, Smith reports. But the CU's ATM strategy is about to reach beyond physical proximity. "We're planning to extend our footprint by recruiting digital members and to serve them primarily through our digital channel. We'll look at placing stand-alone ATMs where our digital membership blossoms and where our brand is valued," he explains.

If BECU moves forward with the project, all full-service ATMs, including digital channel placements, would offer robust teller functionality, Smith explains. "We envision ATMs that can take loan payments, open accounts and transfer money between a member's BECU and non-BECU accounts."

MORE ON ATMs

Market Numbers Highlight ATM Trends (*cumanagement.com/0521atmtrends*)

The State of ATMs (*cumanagement.com/0720atms*)

Safe Use of ATMs Amid COVID-19 Concerns (*cumanagement.com/0620safeatms*)

A Look at the Impact of COVID-19 on Member Transactions During April (*cumanagement.com/0420transactions*)

PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS

Some of the most sophisticated data analysis around ATMs belongs to vendors. For example, Diebold Nixdorf (*dieboldnixdorf.com/en-us*), North Canton, Ohio, has introduced a tool called DN AllConnect Data Engine, says Jim Flannery, senior manager for Global Advisory Services at the company. "Detailed, technical data are continuously retrieved from sensors and data points within more than 60,000 connected, deployed devices," he explains, "which enables Diebold Nixdorf to build a precise, constantly refined understanding of every single connected device and generate personalized, actionable insights according to how each terminal is performing."

When an issue is reported, DN AllConnect Data Engine leverages its knowledge of the failing device, analyzes the latest data collected, diagnoses the issue and identifies the root cause, reports Chad Buckland, VP/managing director for North America. Then it provides information about the precise fix, the required level of skills and experience of the technician, the spare parts needed and the time the repair should take, he explains.

"We can fix more things remotely, and if we have to send someone to the site, we can always send the right person with the right tools," Buckland says. "This makes maintenance more efficient, saves the credit union money and improves the member experience."

The data engine is "prescriptive, preventative and predictive," he explains. It also uses "machine learning and artificial intelligence to detect impending failures." Credit unions don't normally see this vendor data, but the results are shared at monthly or quarterly performance meetings. As ATMs add functionality and complexity, such real-time feedback will become even more important, he predicts.

Diebold Nixdorf's advisory services team uses ATM data to provide tailored research and reports that provide ROI analysis, point out opportunities and weaknesses, and make recommendations, Flannery says. "We can even write their strategic plan for the ATM channel if that's what they want."

Basic data analysis is based on transaction volume and focuses on the level and type of usage of each ATM compared to what would be optimal for that location, Pierce explains. Peer benchmarks can help guide decisions about when and where to add or eliminate an ATM, and data from a card-processing provider like CO-OP can add insight into where members use their debit cards aside from ATMs.

But, like Smith noted for BECU, Samaha warns credit unions to beware of numbers that may have been skewed by the COVID-19 experience. "COVID is having a huge impact on member behavior. You have to anticipate how that could affect your analysis." High use of drive-thru ITMs in 2020 might lead to greater investment in such technology just in time for usage to decrease when members get vaccinated and are less fearful, he illustrates.

Richard H. Gamble *writes from Grand Junction, Colorado.*

Database *Housekeeping*

Before trying to make concrete decisions based on data analysis, many credit unions need to take a step back and put their data (ware)house in order. Without clean, accessible and accurate data, they run the risk of making guesses instead of data-driven decisions, notes Emily Engstrom, director of client relations at CUESolutions provider AdvantEdge Digital (*advantedge.digital*), a CUNA Mutual Group company (*cunamutual.com*) based in Madison, Wisconsin. "And measuring outcomes is hard unless there is a single, trusted source of truth," she says. Data analysis could be compromised by unclean data, inconsistent data definitions and conflicting methods of collection, storage or analysis.

Once accurate, complete data are available and analysis is aligned with strategic goals, several applications can boost interactive teller machine effectiveness:

- Reports can show how members in target segments are engaging in other channels—the most common transactions that occur in person or by phone that could be done with more efficiency and engagement through ITMs.
- They can show where members in target segments live, work and play. Work-to-home traffic patterns have changed significantly during the pandemic, Engstrom points out. But card transaction data can show where members shop, go to a doctor, pick up carry-out, keep appointments, play sports or attend school—how they are living today. "The data could signal an opportunity to place a stand-alone ITM where members are active when current branch locations don't match their activities," she notes.
- They can show time-stamped remote deposit captures in the mobile channel or balance inquiries in the chat channel, which can help CU leaders set the best hours for ITM activity, she explains. "Where are the simplest versus the most complex transactions taking place, and how might virtual teller staffing strategy be adapted to provide targeted members with the best ITM experience?"

Special Report: Growth

Credit Union Management

JUNE 2021

HOW TO GET GROWING AS LIFE GETS GOING

Great opportuniy exists as CUs emerge from the challenges of the pandemic.

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How to Get Growing as *Life Gets Going*

GREAT OPPORTUNITY EXISTS AS CREDIT UNIONS EMERGE FROM THE CHALLENGES OF THE PANDEMIC.

BY ART CHAMBERLAIN

All right, let's put this pandemic behind us and get going and, more importantly, get growing. That's the sentiment you often hear when you talk to credit union leaders right now about what they hope for as vaccination levels rise, economies reopen, and members get back to more regular activity.

But after 14 months of historic uncertainty, how do we get back into growth mode? What has changed? And what might we miss if we don't stop to think hard about our current reality?

To get insight into what factors you need to keep in mind, we asked leaders from three different credit union industry sectors for advice.

MIND YOUR MINDSET

Brian Scott says that while CUs face challenges this year as the economy gets back in gear, "there are good things happening too." Chief growth officer of CUESolutions provider PSCU (*pscu.com*), a credit union service organization based in St. Petersburg, Florida, that provides 1,500 credit unions with payments processing, risk management, marketing, digital banking and collections services, Scott encourages credit unions to be more aggressive in lending and more purposeful in their marketing right now, particularly looking to expand their reach to family and friends of members.

The pandemic "stomped on the gas of things that were already happening, both things that were coming up and things that were going down."

— Brian Scott

"Fewer than 10% of family members of credit union members also belong to that credit union, and it should be the inverse of that," Scott says. "It should be 90% are members."

Scott says that he and the team at PSCU "think about the pandemic as an accelerator of things that were already happening. It wasn't like there was a new trend that came out of it. It stomped on the gas of things that were already happening, both things that were coming up and things that were going down."

For example, cash use and check writing have been declining for years, but the pandemic pushed the move to digital, causing credit unions to place even higher priority on transforming their offerings.

Scott also urges CUs to increase their efforts in working with the small business sector, noting that many entrepreneurs who were hammered by the pandemic are going to be looking to get back into business on their own or expand their current operations.

"I think credit unions could play a huge role in that small business market space," he says. "It was one of the first and hardest-hit areas, but it could be one of the fastest growth areas."

Credit unions have a lot of data about their members and need to use it to help them, Scott says. He urges credit unions to move beyond basic financial literacy initiatives to using data to serve more specific needs. Some members may need loans, for example, while others could use investment advice.

"Being able to have that data and make smart decisions about what's best for members' financial health is really powerful," he says. "By harnessing that power, credit unions could become champions for financial wellness. They have a high level of trust, and using that trust to help members is a great place where credit unions could be doing a lot more."

While credit unions and their competitors are offering information and advice, they aren't advising consumers well, Scott says. "If I actually guide you towards what is best for you, that's the step that nobody in the marketplace has really been willing to take. I think that's a place where credit unions could really differentiate themselves."

A big challenge to implementing this is the need to retrain staff and change their mindset.

"Training starts at the board level, training the board that this is a different and better way of interacting," he says. "Imagine if every teller or MSR (member service rep) was proactive, reaching out to say: 'Hey, it looks like you've been struggling to make ends meet for the last two months. Let's talk about how we can change that.'"

An option Scott favors is an "anytime" or "anything" loan that gives members a constant line of credit of perhaps $20,000 and the freedom to use it for whatever they need—a car repair, bill payments or a vacation—without telling the credit union.

MAKE CRITICAL PIVOTS

"Now is the time to demonstrate that your credit union is accommodating and working together with your members," says Jim Giacobbe, president/CEO of CUES Supplier member United Solutions Company (*unitedsolutions.coop*), a Tallahassee, Florida-based technology CUSO founded in 1983, which offers such technology solutions as data processing, the OnCore office automation suite, network services and email hosting.

"Examine the pros and cons of the past 12 months," Giacobbe advises. "There have been a lot of things that have gone wrong, but there have been a lot of good things too."

Giacobbe cites the increased focus on digital strategy, reduced lobby hours and earlier closing times that have lowered expenses without hurting member service.

"COVID taught us that people will make drastic changes in their lives to protect their safety and security," he says, suggesting that credit unions need to consider how they can incorporate a sense of safety and security into their advertising and marketing over the next 12 to 24 months. "People are focused on that right now," he notes.

"If you are bent on returning to the way things were, you may be missing a critical pivot in the market," Giacobbe continues. "I don't want things to go back to the way they were pre-COVID. Too many good things have come out of this. I want to concentrate on some of those things going forward."

Giacobbe urges credit union leaders to be prudent this year. "Right now, if I'm a credit union CEO, I want to be cautious, but I don't want to stop what I'm doing and I don't want to panic. Stay the course and execute on your strategic plans."

He says the pandemic reinforced the shift to digital and that caused problems for some credit unions last year.

"They were really struggling to become more efficient, to improve their digital channels and digital strategies," he explains. "Because of the lockdown, my 90-year-old father was using his iPhone to check his account balances and deposit checks. We need to concentrate on digital strategies because that's the world we live in. That's the new reality for us."

Giacobbe recommends adding such new services to your credit union's website as chatbots with artificial intelligence that can answer basic questions and even integrate with the core.

"Provide your members with self-service products so they can open accounts or apply for loans," he advises. "Members don't want to go to the branch anymore, but if they must, make it easy for them with appointment-setting software."

One piece of advice: Be sure your team members use your digital and mobile products for their own financial business so they are comfortable with them and ready to help members with their questions. If your employees don't understand the tools really well, they are less likely to promote them and support them effectively when working with members.

"Everyone is buying online, and convenience is king," Giacobbe says. "You need to get your credit cards on your members' phones and linked to their Amazon accounts. You need to help your

MORE ON GROWTH

Don't Give Up on Revenue Opportunities (*cumanagement.com/0521revenue*)

Lending Perspectives: Need to Pump Up Your Loan Growth? (*cumanagement.com/0421lendingperspectives*)

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"If you are bent on returning to the way things were, you may be missing a critical pivot in the market."

— Jim Giacobbe

members add their cards into their phones. Don't be afraid to be hands-on and show your members exactly how easy it is to do business with you."

While he's focused on digital, Giacobbe also tells credit unions not to abandon the voice channel, particularly since it now offers new features and is easier for members to operate than it was in the past.

"Believe it or not, interactive voice response has come a long way," he explains. "The products we use have more options and even integrate with Alexa and Google Home."

BE READY TO EVOLVE

Renato Oliveira says he's optimistic about the future for credit unions if they respond well to the increased digitalization of financial services caused by the pandemic.

"Credit unions need to start preparing teams to exclusively manage their digital members," he says.

Chairman and CEO of ebankIT (*ebankit.com*), a digital banking software developer created in 2014 that is headquartered in Portugal with a U.S. office in New York, Oliveira notes that credit unions are the backbone of many communities. With such a critical social position, it is important that credit unions of all sizes be at the ready to offer services to meet member needs "so that communities can get the help and support they need to recover after the pandemic and prosper."

"Smaller credit unions can have a harder time reacting to the current situation since they do not have access to the same resources," he emphasizes. To compete, they may need to find external services and integrated solutions that will provide them "an innovation road map."

Oliveira suggests "this can mean choosing solutions already available in the market" or choosing a service used by others that can be customized to your branding through simple configuration changes.

"Credit unions need to have a vast and greater digital offering that can cover ... different ages—and not only the younger members," he says. "New interfaces and a readiness to evolve will be fundamental to answering members' current and future needs."

The need for rapid change may mean that "financial institutions can no longer wait to create their own architecture" and should look for a digital product that can be deployed quickly while providing the capability for continuing innovation.

Digital transformation needs to speed up and, to avoid losing the race against members' demands, credit unions may need to buy ready-to-use solutions, instead of building them, Oliveira says. "It is important to get flexible, so robust solutions that can be adapted to what the members are looking for at different times (are key). Financial institutions need to start thinking digital-first by looking for products and partners with that mindset that will help build optimized user experiences for every single digital channel."

Oliveira says that when members want service or have a problem, they expect immediate and helpful action from their credit unions. But until now, the quality of digital service has been second on the priority list of many organizations. That must change.

"It is mandatory to start thinking mobile-first and about how to provide the best service to a completely digital customer that no longer seeks face-to-face interactions but needs to be served," he says.

Oliveira says new tools that enable "more autonomy for contact centers or marketing and sales teams will be extremely important to capture new users and sell more financial products."

Another key feature as things move ahead will be the rise of artificial intelligence.

"After this shaky time that we are all facing, members will look to credit unions not only to ask for credit products but also to seek guidance to better manage their money in an experience completely personalized according to each customer's needs," Oliveira says. "Artificial intelligence algorithms will help customers decide where to invest, how to apply and what financial products to buy. It will lead financial institutions to sell more and better to their customers."

Based in Campbellford, Ontario, **Art Chamberlain** *has written about credit unions for more than a decade and has been a member for more than 30 years.*

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CURRENCY FINANCIAL EDUCATION EXPERTS

Key Aspects of a Top-Performing Debit Program

By Kari Anne Arnosk, Principal, Advisors Plus Consulting, PSCU

PSCU's recently released case study, "Exceptional Debit Growth Through Strong Focus: Secrets of Top-Performing Credit Unions," provides an in-depth look at key drivers for debit purchase volume growth and insights from candid discussions with two of PSCU's top debit-performing credit unions. The entire case study can be downloaded online at AdvisorsPlus.com/Insights.

Today's increasingly competitive financial services and payments landscape requires credit unions to explore every avenue to secure the primary member relationship. Checking – which is linked to a debit card – remains the most connected payment offering for consumers. A compelling checking product and competitive promotional strategy can do wonders for establishing the foundation for a long-term member relationship.

Utilizing extensive analysis of market and credit union performance data, PSCU's Advisors Plus partners with credit unions across the country to improve their checking and debit offerings. Here are several focus areas from PSCU's Advisors Plus team of consultants that credit unions should examine to refine their portfolio strategies and accelerate growth:

Management Intensity

While credit union executives are not typically in the branches selling debit cards, their support and focus is paramount. A broad and deep belief in the value of checking and debit that permeates the entire organization – and a desire for every credit union member to benefit from checking – is key. Dedicated management for debit and checking products is a critical component of a top debit performer's formula to accelerate growth and deepen relationships. Starting at the top, executives that share a belief in the importance of growing their checking and debit portfolios will see success in the form of enhanced member relationships and overall growth.

Metrics and Analytics

Tracking performance and establishing goals for debit and checking account growth helps develop a roadmap for success. Credit unions that embrace a hands-on approach with continuous monitoring and analysis of performance metrics, which are shared and communicated throughout the credit union from executive management to branch staff, will keep everyone aligned and engaged to meet goals and better serve members' needs.

Product Strategy

Successful credit unions continuously tweak their checking product lines to adapt to market changes, reward members for their relationship and focus on digital services as primary engagement factors. This starts with an attractive product that is easy for members to understand, provides value to members for their active relationships and evolves over time to remain competitive and relevant in the market.

Culture

All employees within the credit union must embrace their checking product as "best in the market." Their passion and enthusiasm is likely to be contagious to members and ultimately help drive product growth. Part of a successful culture is created through ownership and usage of a credit union's checking account by its own employees, whereby their personal experiences become a positive testimonial for members.

Marketing

Top performers invest dedicated marketing dollars in debit and checking, and they plan continuous marketing and communication efforts with a year-round calendar of initiatives. At a minimum, there should be quarterly contact with the checking base. This may include debit campaigns focused on key spend opportunities (such as the holiday season or Amazon Prime days) or solicitation of direct deposit, which is directly correlated with spend. Targeted checking acquisition campaigns with cash offers provide an opportunity to further grow the debit card portfolio via new checking accounts.

Future Considerations

Credit unions should always plan ahead to be ready for what is next, proactively stay on top of industry trends and look to continuously improve the digital member experience. With new competitors and expanded forms of payments coming to market daily, debit card and checking success across credit unions will require more focus and effort than in past years. But the potential return is well worth the effort.

Kari Anne Arnosk is a Principal Consultant with the Checking and Debit Card practice at PSCU's Advisors Plus with over 25 years of experience in the financial services industry. Kari Anne advises credit unions on ways to enhance portfolio growth and profitability.

ONE YEAR OF PANDEMIC:
What has changed in the Digital Banking Experience

OMNICHANNEL DIGITAL BANKING PLATFORM ENABLING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

2020 was the year of the most radical changes and evolutions in the business models of all types of industries. Despite being a trend already noted throughout the last decade, finacial services' digital transformation has met an unprecedented acceleration. Digital banking has gone from a convenience to an absolute necessity, a transformation that will continue to dictate changes in the market during the coming years.

Usually resistant to change, consumer habits were reversed in record time. In a few months, the world has witnessed an evolution in people's behavior which under normal circumstances would take years. Long-term confinements and fears of face-to-face contacts have driven people away from bank branches and physical stores.

This consumers' shifting to digital has forced banks and credit unions to optimize customer experience as a way of ensuring efficiency, with repercussions in front office, backoffice and central tools for delivering global, secure, and highly scalable services.

CHALLENGES BROUGHT BY ACCELERATION OF DIGITAL ADOPTION

Accordingly, financial institutions are taking on the challenge of integrating solutions that improve their own services' architecture and promote customized journeys. Clients expect to be able to perform operations such as opening bank accounts or subscribing products in the comfort of their homes.

According to a study conducted by the USA based consultancy firm Crowe, the use of digital banking by clients with typical low adoption rate has raised from 25% pre-March 2020, to 60% by the end of September 2020, with the highly engaged digital users rate reaching over 80% by the same time. Clear signs that the new habits will become permanent practices.

This evolution has not caught banking institutions off guard, for sure, but the new reality may be a challenge greater than initially foreseen. It is mandatory to provide the best service to a completely digital customer, that no longer seeks face-to-face interactions. Financial institutions need to focus on digital, searching for innovation, improving quality of services and provide the best end-user experience including new technologies that will help decision making and processes simplification. Paperwork will become more and more obsolete, so digital channels need to be adapted to offer the complete selling process through the users' channel of choice whatever that may be.

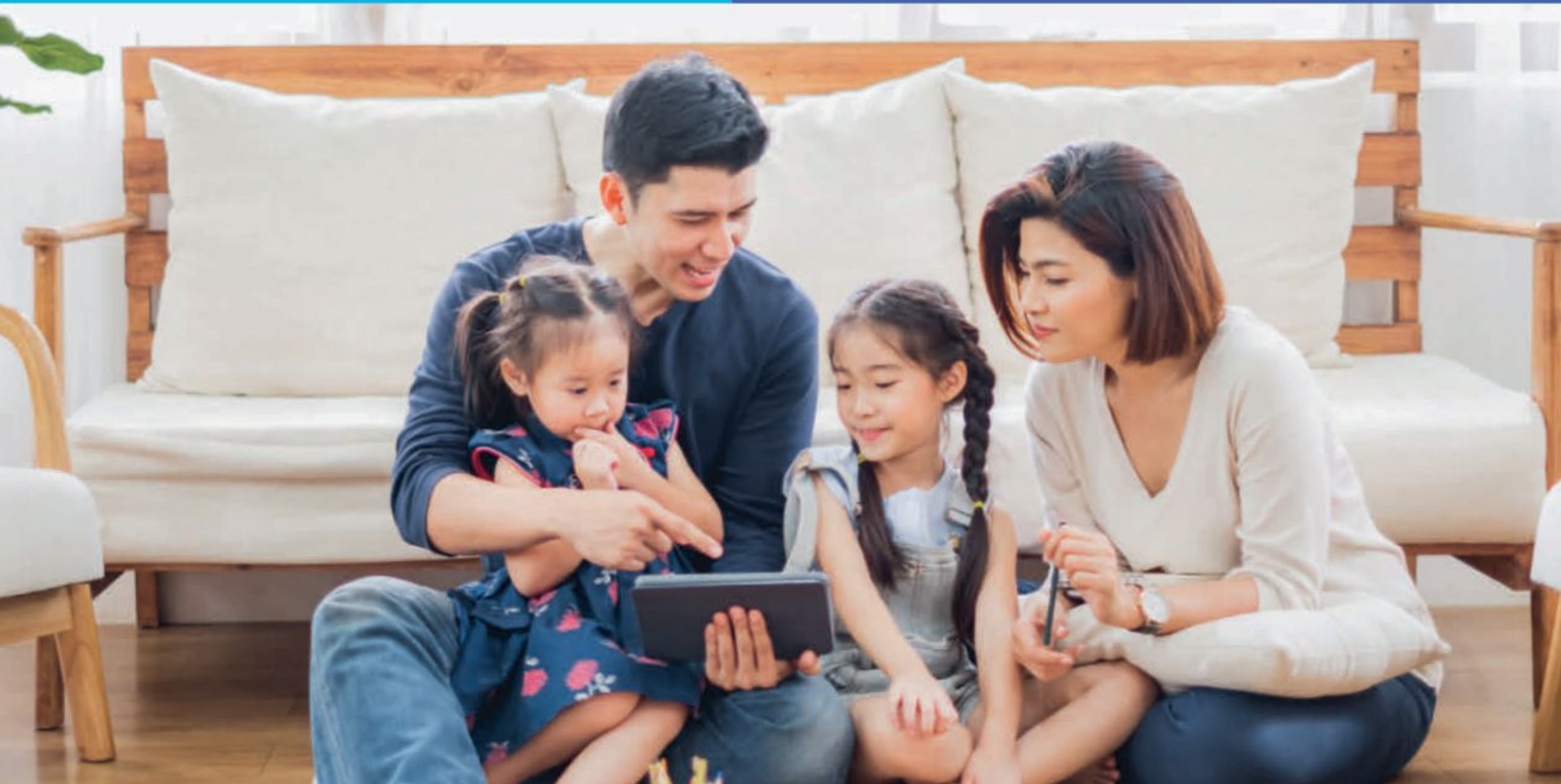
HUMANIZING BANKING

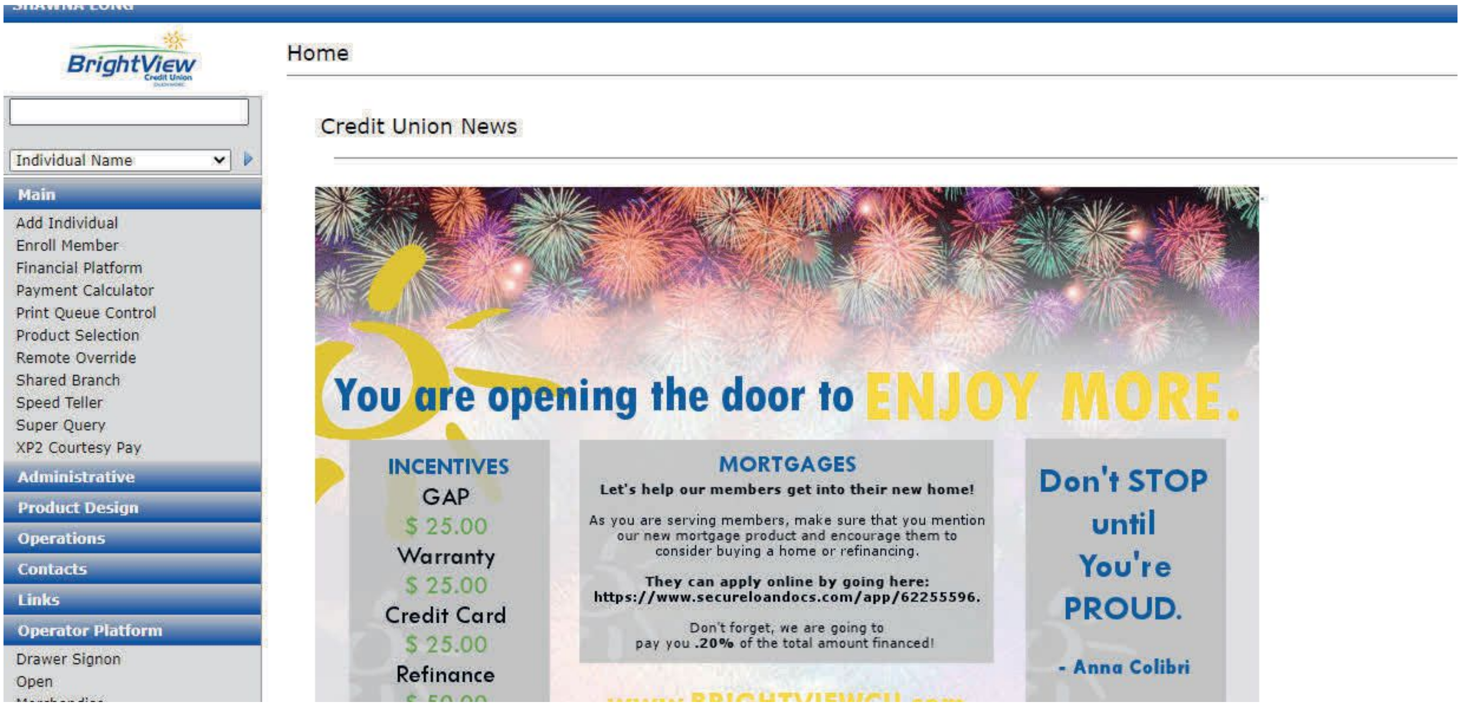
Additionally, customers are increasingly relying on alerts, notifications, and other features to enjoy improved banking experiences. These can only be achieved by the adoption of agile and customizable platforms which are able to gather non-financial information, create context and help with dynamic solutions. The consequence, for financial institutions, is the possibility to understand and anticipate real time financial needs. This alters banking interactions from reactive, transactional banking, to proactive, life-event oriented experiences.

The main challenge for banking institutions will be to incorporate a more human and customized experience in digital banking. For that effect, the most innovative omnichannel digital banking platforms are already merging human communications into user experience.

The future will continue to include an increasing investment in technologies with the potential to speed services, enable access to competitive and innovative marketplaces, reduce bureaucracy and, most importantly, to generate empathic connection with consumers in a digital environment. With the right technological partner, digital banking can become more human than ever.

The main challenge for banking institutions will be to incorporate a more human and customized experience.





"We were very impressed with the training prior to conversion and the project management team. United Solutions was sensitive to our needs and very responsive. It was a really solid conversion effort and United Solutions had great follow through. XP2 and United Solutions will help CARO be efficient in serving our members needs. - Anne Shivers, CEO and President of Caro Federal Credit Union

OUR COMPANY

The United Solutions Company (USC) is a Credit Union Service Organization (CUSO) founded in 1983 with its headquarters in Tallahassee, Florida. USC has two fully replicated data centers in Tallahassee and Ashburn, VA, clients in 30-states, and hosts multiple core data processing systems for credit unions. USC is proud to be the first CUSO in the State of Florida.

United Solutions provides the OnCore XP2 and DataSafe Core Processing Systems in hosted environments. The architecture of our core systems enables your credit union to operate efficiently and effectively.

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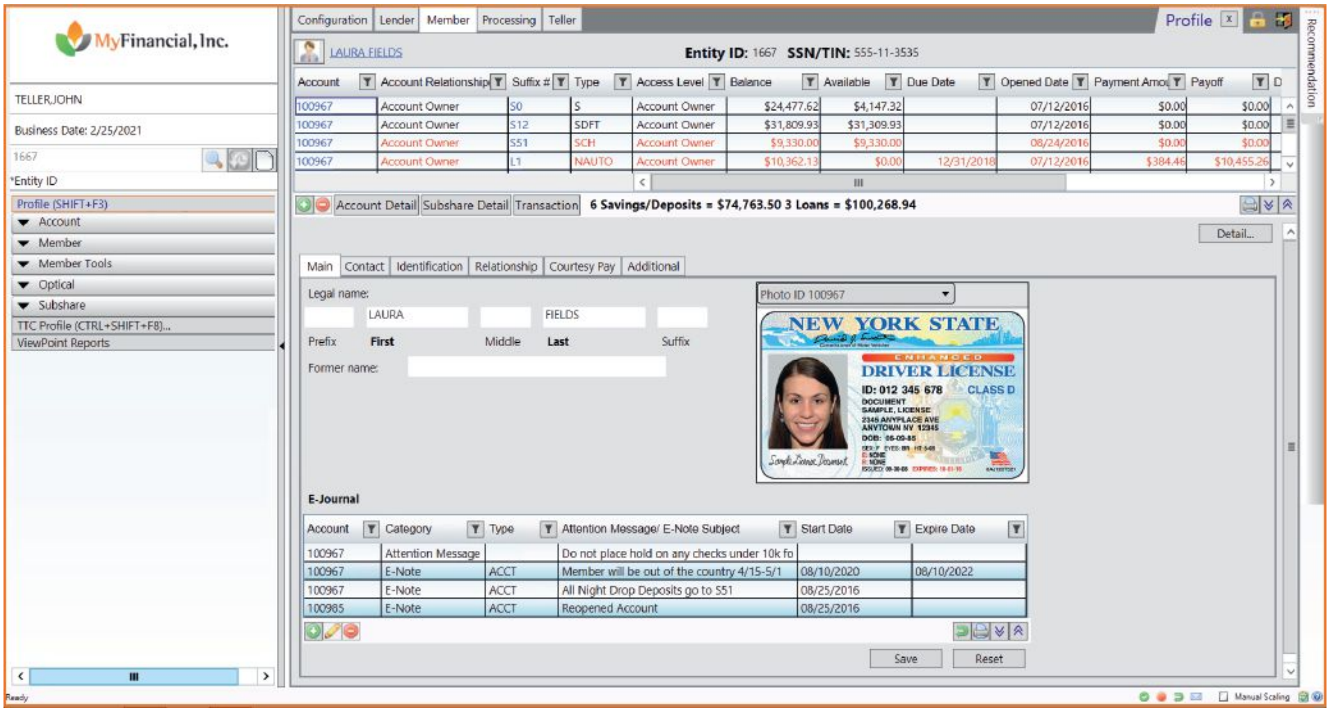

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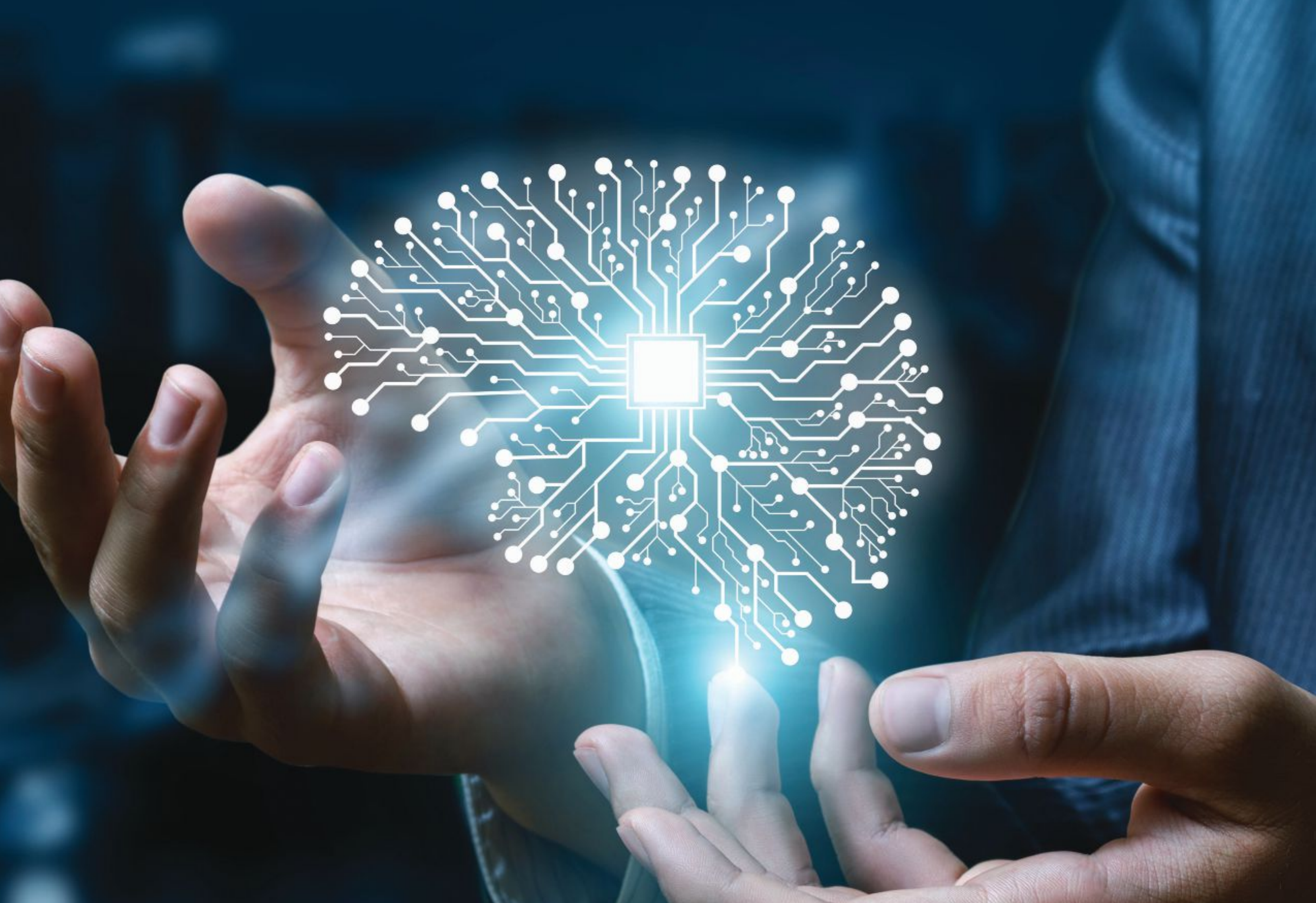

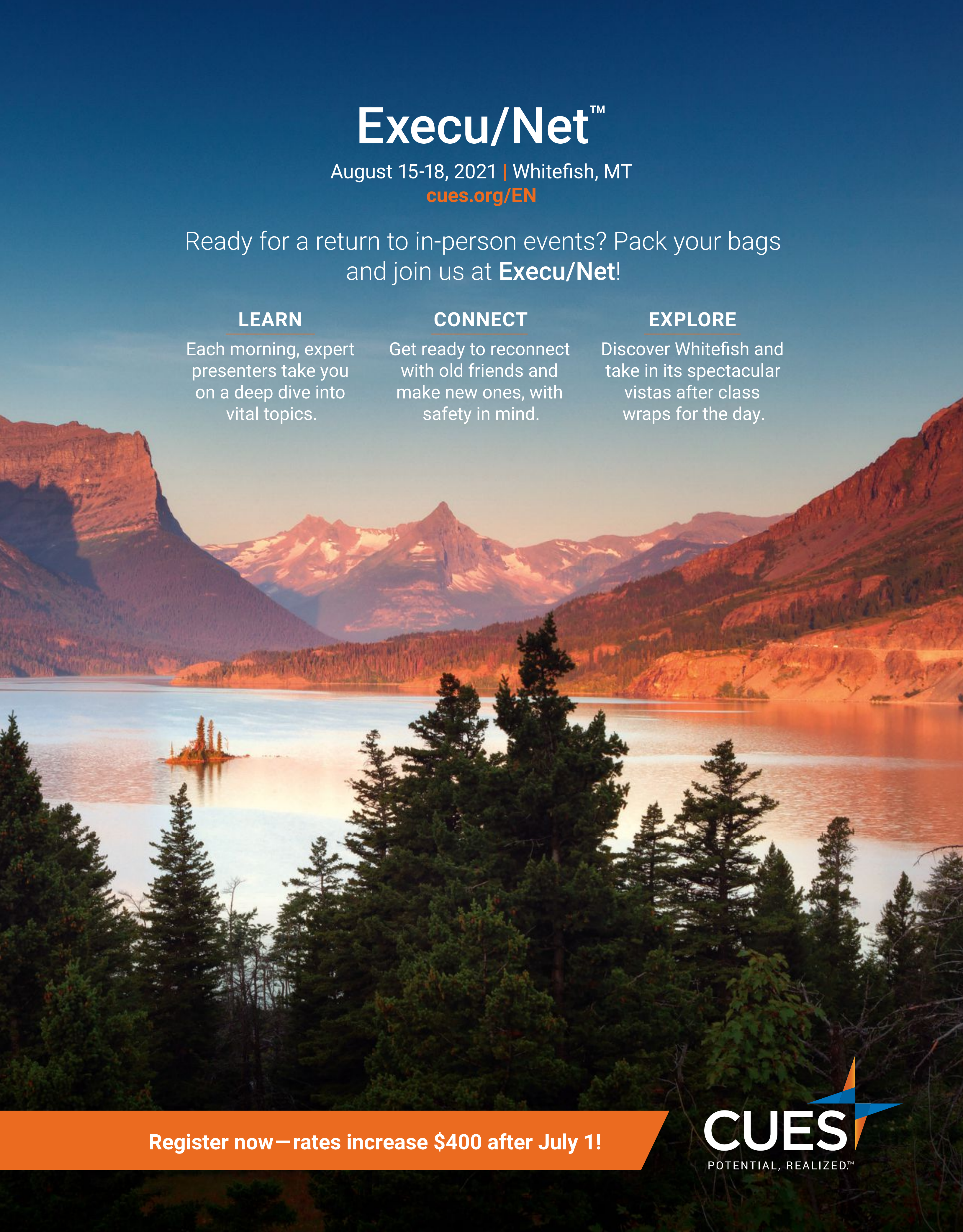
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CUES Advanced Management Program from Cornell University	OFFERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Cornell University	**Program Begins July 13**	cues.org/eCornell-CUManager
AUGUST 2021			
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Cornell Certificate Program	OFFERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH Cornell University	**Program Begins August 11**	cues.org/eCornell-DEI
SEPTEMBER 2021			
Board Liaison Workshop		**September 21, 23, 28**	cues.org/BLW

2021 **IN-PERSON** EVENTS CALENDAR

JULY 2021			
Supervisory Committee Development Seminar	Amelia Island, FL	**July 26—27**	cues.org/SCDS
Director Development Seminar	Amelia Island, FL	**July 28—30**	cues.org/DDS
AUGUST 2021			
CEO Institute III: *Strategic Leadership Development (Summer Session)*	*Darden School of Business* University of Virginia	**August 15—20**	cues.org/INST3
Execu/Net™	Whitefish, MT	**August 15—18**	cues.org/EN
DECEMBER 2021			
Directors Conference	Marco Island, FL	**December 5—8**	cues.org/DC

2022 **IN-PERSON** EVENTS CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 2022			
Symposium	Wailea, Maui, HI	**February 6—10**	cues.org/SYMP
MARCH 2022			
Execu/Summit®	Big Sky, MT	**March 13—18**	cues.org/ES
MAY 2022			
CEO/Executive Team Network™	Austin, TX	**May 15—17**	cues.org/CNET
JUNE 2022			
Governance Leadership Institute™ I	*Rotman School of Management* Toronto, Ontario, Canada	**June 5—8**	cues.org/GLI
Governance Leadership Institute™ II	*Rotman School of Management* Toronto, Ontario, Canada	**June 8—10**	cues.org/GLI2

*Dates and locations are subject to change. For pricing options, visit **cues.org/Events.***

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CUES Welcomes Two *to Board of Directors*


Jennifer Binkley, CCE


Tiffany Ford

CUES is pleased to announce Jennifer Binkley, CCE, president/CEO, Altura Credit Union, Riverside, California, and Tiffany Ford, president/CEO, University of Michigan Credit Union, Ann Arbor, Michigan, have accepted appointments to serve on its board of directors.

"I'm pleased to welcome these two great industry leaders to the CUES boardroom. Jennifer and Tiffany both bring a wealth of leadership experience and knowledge along with them, and I look forward to working with them and to the contributions they will make," says John Pembroke, CUES president/CEO.

Binkley heads up $2.1 billion Altura Credit Union. Since being named president in 2017, she has focused on enhancing Altura CU's member experience, increasing performance and financial stability, and becoming a top employer. Ford joined $1.1 billion University of Michigan CU in 2011. Under her leadership, the institution has grown significantly in both membership and asset size. The credit union has also won multiple local and national awards for talent development and its products and services.

In-Person Events *Returning!*

CUES is pleased to announce select in-person events are returning in 2021, starting with offerings coming this summer. "We're excited we're at the point where we can plan to get back out there and safely hold face-to-face meetings again," says Joette Mitchell, CUES VP/executive education and meetings. "At the same time, we know we have to proceed in a thoughtful manner. Our hotel and business school partners all have an exceptional focus on safety, and we're working alongside them to assure we have proper safety protocols in place."

Registration is open for these 2021 events:

- Supervisory Committee Development Seminar, July 26-27, Amelia Island, FL
- Director Development Seminar, July 28-30, Amelia Island, FL
- CEO Institute III: *Strategic Leadership Development*, Aug. 8-13, Darden School of Business, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA
- Execu/Net™, Aug. 15-18, Whitefish, MT
- Directors Conference, Dec. 5-8, Marco Island, FL

"To account for social distancing, we are limiting the number of attendees for each event," says Mitchell. "Spots are going fast, so anyone who is interested should get their registration in sooner rather than later." Learn more at the CUES in-person events page, including information about CUES' safe meeting practices at *cues.org/in-person-events*.

CUES Strategic Innovation Institute™ *Moving Online in 2021*

Strategic Innovation Institute (*cues.org/sii*) will be offered in an online format in 2021, starting July 19. This challenging program is tailored specifically for CU executives and offered in partnership with the Stanford Graduate School of Business, which was ranked number one in a tie for first place in *U.S. News & World Report's* list of 2022 Best Business Schools.

"Stanford faculty worked diligently alongside us to convert every aspect of the program to an online offering, while still maintaining the integrity of the institute. The online program will offer the same access to esteemed faculty members," says Joette Mitchell, VP/executive education and meetings at CUES.

"The strength and integrity of the program has not changed. We are offering the same curriculum, updated to address timely issues brought on by the pandemic. We also took care to develop a schedule to help avoid Zoom fatigue, including small-group work, case studies and simulations, along with other opportunities to help make it easy to get to know one another," says Christopher Stevenson, CAE, CIE, SVP/chief learning officer at CUES.

Online Learning

CUES members can attend all webinars and access playbacks for free. CUES Elite Access™ Virtual Classroom (included with Unlimited and Unlimited+ memberships) offers an innovative take on online education. Learn more at *cues.org/events*.

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JUNE 10
12 p.m. Central
Elite Access Virtual Roundtable: HR Community

JULY 14
12 p.m. Central
Elite Access Course: From Adversity to Resilience: How to Turn Setbacks into Opportunities

JULY 19-AUG. 4
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