

Core-Connected Technology Delivers A Full-Service Member Experience From A Self-Service Machine

History was made in Lubbock, Texas in late April 2020 when **Alliance Credit Union**, with the help of Bancsource, installed the first five core-connected interactive teller machines (ITM) on a FLEX core system.

Branded as Alliance Express, and introduced to members as an “ATM with personality,” the ITMs utilize the credit union’s FLEX core system software to offer advanced, 24/7 self-service transactions that extend far beyond the capabilities of a traditional ATM.

Josh Wade, chief operating officer of Alliance Credit Union, says 24/7 access to a broader range of financial services has been a tremendous benefit for members.

“Regular transactions that would normally be restricted to office hours are now available to our members at a time that fits their schedules,” says Wade.

With consumer demand for self-service options on the rise, and accelerated even more by COVID-19, the move by Alliance to deploy this progressive technology was driven by the credit union’s commitment to members’ needs, and its trust in its FLEX core.

FLEX is a leading provider of core system software for credit unions. The company

offers technology solutions that help credit unions compete in the crowded financial services space.

“Being able to anticipate the needs of your members is a foundational element of providing exceptional member service,” says James Simonsen, chief technology officer of FLEX. “But just as important is agility — being able to shift quickly when a need arises or implement new services before members even realize they need them.”

Alliance’s ITMs are directly connected to the credit union’s FLEX core. This core-connectivity enables members to make deposits, withdrawals, loan payments, and transfers. They can also view their statements, check balances, and even cash checks at the self-service ITM.

If they need help, with the press of a button, they can connect with a live teller via the machine’s video screen. Response time is 3-5 seconds from the moment the button is pressed.



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BRANCH TRANSFORMATION

Alliance’s choice to deploy ITMs was a plus for many of their members, but one specific group seemed to have the most to gain — those working in healthcare.

The credit union has a branch located within Lubbock’s medical district, but even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, long workdays made it difficult for healthcare workers to get to the credit union during business hours.

With the possibilities that ITMs promised, Alliance made the decision to radically transform its medical branch to better serve the needs of the members who frequent that location. The credit union converted the branch from drive-through service to a branch served by two ITMs with virtual teller capabilities and 24/7 accessibility.

With help from Bancsource, the transformation happened fast.

“We were able to go from zero, to serving our members fully with an ITM within a matter of weeks. That’s unheard of in the banking industry. Everything is typically so slow to happen,” says Wade.

Bancsource’s high level of service and efficiency is something that Wade and other Bancsource clients value.

“As a leader in core-connected ITM technology and with a decades long track record in industry leading integrations and field services, says Jeff Chick, Chief Executive Officer for Bancsource, Bancsource is known as the partner to choose for rapid response.”



OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

Positive member feedback and an increased volume of transactions at Alliance’s medical branch reinforced that the transformation to ITM service was the right call.

That, along with successful deployments of ITMs at other locations across Lubbock, has prompted the credit union to consider opportunities to expand its service area with ITM placement in outlying communities.

“With the ITMs, we can pretty much do whatever members want to do from wherever they are,” says Wade. “This technology enables us to serve members in rural communities, and have them enjoy the same benefits and service as our members in Lubbock.”

While Alliance’s focus has been on enhancing the member experience, the use of core-connected ITMs has also helped improve internal efficiency. Use of the self-serve machines has relieved some of the busyness that tellers at high traffic branches often experienced. A single teller is now able to serve up to 10

members at a time, and perform other tasks that previously were assigned to back office staff.

That’s something that Wade says has made the project even more worthwhile.

“The investment is quickly returned if you’re able to find those efficiencies,” Wade says.

Wade’s calculations indicate that the machines will have paid for themselves within two and a half years.

NO TURNING BACK

Consumer demand for convenience has been driving the evolution of credit union services, from the first drive-through lanes to the advent of the ATM, and the progression of online and mobile banking options. Now, core-connected ITMs are revolutionizing the member experience. Credit unions are no longer limited by the size of their staffs or their hours of operation. Core-connected technology gives them ability to provide a full-service member experience via a self-service machine.