Alacriti

SUCCESS STORY

Alabama Credit Union Chooses Payments Platform with Real-Time Core Integration

Saves money on fees while improving the member experience

Background

Alabama Credit Union was founded in 1956 to serve The University of Alabama. They have grown to serve other groups and now have 34 locations across Alabama and North Florida and 110,000 members. Alabama Credit Union has $1.2 billion in assets and 53,639 active loans. They are known for personal service, low-cost loans, and above-average dividends on deposits.

Needing a Change

The ability to make payments with Amazon Alexa by voice and full integration with their core provider were top features of Orbipay EBPP that interested Alabama Credit Union. "A big factor that set Alacriti apart was a relationship with our core that allowed us to do a live integration. We didn't have to do a posting file every day. That was a big differentiator that no one else had," said Dustin Kizer, Alabama Credit Union Digital Services Director.

Alabama Credit Union's previous EBPP solution had a very high fee structure, and there was no core integration. Also, although it had an online solution, Alabama Credit Union never fully launched it to their members because it required complete enrollment, requiring the user to create a separate login from their online banking. Recovering those logins was a burden to their members and their call center, so they shut it down. Members were only able to pay by phone. Payments were manually credited to each loan by the phone agent in order to provide immediate credit for the member and for the payment to reflect in online banking the same day. However, Alabama Credit Union would have to settle it on the backend a couple of days later. Because of this, a lot of errors were made. It was an inefficient process that they were able to streamline with Alacriti with the live core integration.

Orbipay EBPP Benefits

Alabama Credit Union also appreciated the customization capabilities and flexibility they received from the Alacriti team whenever they had an issue and needed customization. For example, Alabama Credit Union wanted to queue any failed payment postings into a live dashboard for agents. This allowed for same day corrections for payments that needed overrides or had excessive late fees to collect. "It was very interesting that Alacriti was able to build something like that from scratch pretty quickly, which is also an example of the adaptability that we appreciate," said Kizer.

Overview

Challenge

Due to limitations with their payments platform, Alabama Credit Union had to take payments over the phone and manually provision members' accounts. Because of a lack of integration with their core, there were inefficient processes and a lack of convenience for their members.

Solution

With Orbipay EBPP, Alabama Credit Union was able to save staff time, reduce errors, and provide a modern payment experience to its members.

Results

Alabama Credit Union was able to process more payments and saw a huge reduction in staff hours needed to accept phone payments. They also were able to reduce delinquency in first-time indirect loan payments.

To find out how your organization can benefit from Orbipay EBPP, contact us at (908) 791-2916 or info@alacriti.com.

Alabama Credit Union is happy with the level of support they receive. They hear from their customer success manager frequently, and she knows what's on their roadmap for the next two years and makes sure things are done.

A favorite with Alabama Credit Union employees is the payment center portal. Agents posted errors, and overpayments have dramatically decreased. After a payment was made with the old system, a team member would then have to go to the core and manually give a member provisional credit. Then three days later, the accounting team would have to reconcile. Additionally, in the past, call center agents would have to do two steps on the phone with the member. Now they just click one button, saving time and effort. The system remembers payments, so there is no longer a need to retype a card number every time—members simply confirm the CVV.

Members can make payments on their own, and guest pay is a huge benefit because payers don't have to create a login just to make a payment. "For the members, the overall ease of use with guest pay is by far a favorite. They don't want to have to create a login. They just want to go to the website, make a payment and leave. It also opens the door for people helping our members to make a payment on their behalf without getting access to their account or seeing confidential information. So it really solved a lot of problems," shared Kizer. For Alabama Credit Union staff, "The biggest benefit for us was the adaptability. This was the first live integration with our core."

Results

A very important result for Alabama Credit Union was the lift in productivity in the call center. They immediately started seeing benefits with payment processing with the launch of enrolled web and guest web. They saved 86 man-hours a week across their 50 agents.

In addition, they were able to process significantly more payments with Orbipay EBPP. In 2021, they processed 45,000 payments worth over $18 million, which was four times the amount they were able to handle in the past. They earned $169,000 in fees, which helped offset some of the cost of the partnership.

An unexpected outcome was that their first payment delinquency in indirect loans dropped dramatically. After implementing Orbipay EBPP, they realized that many of their indirect members struggled to make the first payment due to the complexity of the experience with their old system.

Members really enjoy the benefits of core integration. In the past, members would get frustrated that they would log in and didn't see their payment, despite Alabama Credit Union advertising a cut-off time in which members could expect to see their payment post. This was another reason they went to phone payments. As a result of not seeing the payments immediately, a lot of people would call and cancel payments. It was a huge improvement for members to have a seamless experience and be able to utilize the single sign-on enrolled web. They can make a payment, and when they click on their account, they see it's already in their history. The immediate gratification made a big difference in the member experience.

Alabama Credit Union launched skip-a-pay in August 2021, a feature that allows members to skip a payment for a fee. Previously, they only offered skip-a-pay around the holiday, and it was an entirely manual process. A member would visit a branch and sign a form, and the loan officer would make the due date change and collect

the fee from their checking account. 2021 was the first year where members could use their debit card and skip-a-payment regardless of the time of year in their mobile banking experience. Alabama Credit Union was able to process under 1,200 skip-a-pay requests, earning $39,000 in additional fee income.

Looking Toward the Future

In 2022, Alabama Credit Union has strategic communications planned with Pay by Text, a feature that allows members to make payments via SMS text messages. The goal is to ensure that their outbound communication is actionable whenever a member receives a text message, allowing them to make a payment or ask a question. The solution makes the payment through Pay by Text or initiates a Glia interaction where Alabama Credit Union can help the member answer a question. The partnership solution between Alacriti and Glia enables financial institutions to leverage Alacriti's payments-focused AI chatbot, Ella, within Glia's digital Customer Service platform to help members navigate the digital payments experience. The solution allows the member to continue the same conversation over all channels without having to repeat themselves or re-enter information. Reps can also co-browse and guide members through their session. "For 2022, we said, let's make sure that we have a unified messaging platform for every way that members can do business with us," said Kizer. They expect even more relief in their call center, which receives a spike in calls when balance alert texts deploy.