

Dickinson Financial

Fast-growing financial services company improves efficiencies and customer service using Adobe® LiveCycle® ES Software



Dickinson Financial

www.afbank.com

Industry

Financial services

Challenges

- Enhancing service quality and responsiveness
- Boosting employee productivity
- Improving compliance with bank processes

Solution

- Account opening

Dickinson Financial is using Adobe LiveCycle ES solutions to enhance customer experiences and reduce the time and manual effort to process customer requests.

Results

- Streamlined processing of up to 20,000 service requests weekly translates into annual savings of hundreds of thousands of dollars
- Reallocated staff from routine administrative tasks to higher-value, customer-facing activities
- Extended services available through the call center
- Achieved rollout of 40 new processes in just 45 days
- Accelerated debit card request process by 300%

Systems at a glance

- Adobe LiveCycle ES. Modules used include:

Adobe LiveCycle Process Management ES

Adobe LiveCycle Forms ES

Transforming customer experience

With banks across the United States, Dickinson Financial serves customers at more than 130 branches nationwide, including several locations on or around military bases in nearly 20 states. For years Dickinson Financial has made customer service, operational efficiency, and strategic placement of its branches a top priority—providing a successful formula for growth.

Dickinson Financial traditionally used paper forms to initiate and process customer service requests for new accounts, debit cards, account changes, and other activities. Most forms had to be manually routed to Dickinson Financial's central office for processing. Transmit time—coupled with errors from manually handling documents and rekeying data, as well as from routing forms for approval—could hinder the company's ability to meet its aggressive customer service and efficiency goals.

Josh Laire, application development and integration manager at Dickinson Financial, recognized that too many resources were being allocated to processes that were yielding returns below the company's overall rate. The problem would only get worse: with Dickinson Financial continuing to grow, time-intensive manual processing could stifle profitable growth.

Laire focused on deploying systems that would eliminate the need to allocate additional staff to manually handle customer compliance and customer service requests—instead, the company would adopt highly scalable, software-based systems to automate processes and boost returns. Laire aimed to improve scalability, but he also wanted to take advantage of the other benefits of automation, including improved employee productivity, reduced errors on business forms, better risk management through automated compliance with documented processes, and overall improved customer service.

"In our business, we win customer loyalty by delivering excellent services," says Laire. "Any financial service provider that is slow to respond to changing customer demands will lose out in this competitive market."

Focus on profitability

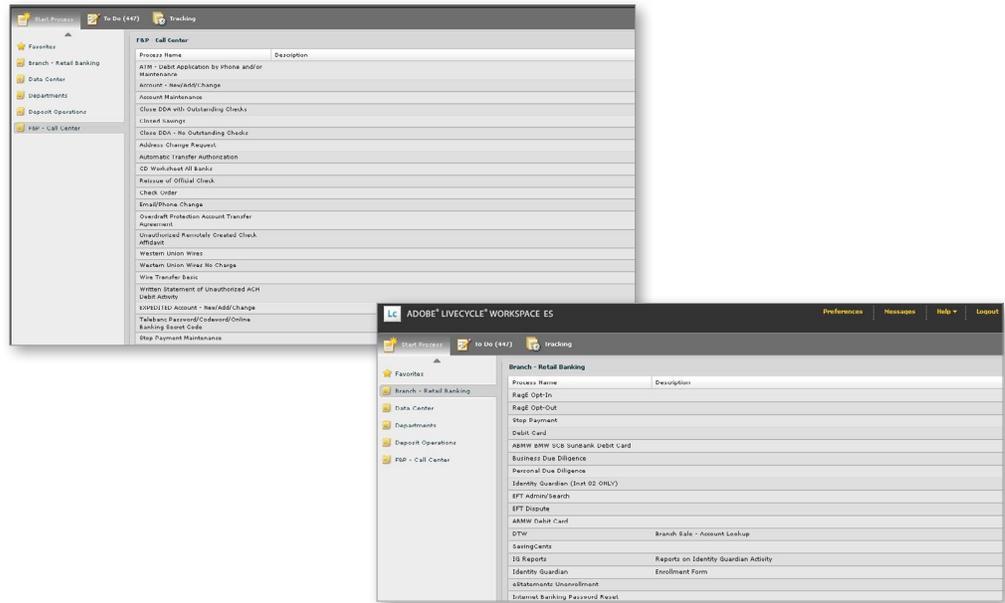
Inefficiency and customer dissatisfaction are the two most obvious costs of manually intensive processes, but other areas of concern include the hidden costs of lost opportunities. For most banks, the vast majority of accounts are marginally unprofitable—approximately 80% of the profits come from just 20% of accounts.

For its long-term vitality, Dickinson Financial sought to build its "share of wallet" by further enhancing customer service and by selling higher-margin products—such as mortgages, lines of credit, or savings accounts—to customers. To accomplish those goals, staff needed to have more time to spend with customers, talking with them and finding opportunities to better understand their needs and cross-sell and up-sell products.

"Heavy reliance on manual processes to manage requests has a direct impact on the time front-line employees can spend with customers," says Laire. "We wanted to automate dozens of routine processes to transform customer experiences and free up staff to have more time to engage directly with customers."

Dickinson Financial turned to Adobe LiveCycle Forms ES and Adobe LiveCycle Process Management ES to streamline completing and processing forms as platform- and application-independent Portable Document Format (PDF) files. Now, dynamic digital documents can be used to initiate more automated processing of dozens of customer service activities, including account changes, account openings, and card requests.

With Adobe LiveCycle ES, Dickinson Financial has streamlined operations by replacing inefficient paper-based processes with dynamic digital forms. For instance, the Adobe solution enables the bank to process more than 5,000 debit card applications per week—accelerating delivery of cards by as much as 300%.



“With Adobe LiveCycle ES, we have seen the time to process customer requests drop from weeks to just days or even hours. That kind of responsiveness goes a long way to enhancing customer experiences and building loyalty.”

Josh Laire
Application development and
integration manager,
Dickinson Financial

With Adobe LiveCycle ES solutions, the bank can enable its dispersed operating groups to achieve greater consistency when working with customers and when managing their internal processes. For example, bank branches often had different versions of forms on file, so staff sometimes mistakenly completed and submitted outdated versions of request forms. Identifying and correcting the resulting errors caused delays and increased administrative works.

With Adobe LiveCycle ES solutions, forms are available as PDF files on the company’s intranet, helping ensure that front-line employees always have the latest versions and do not waste time submitting out-of-date forms.

Today, Adobe solutions are used by hundreds of service employees in bank branches, as well as by several hundred employees in the company’s customer call center, to automate customer service processes.

A platform for growth

With Adobe LiveCycle ES solutions, the bank can manage some of its most important and complex processes, such as complying with BSA and Patriot Act requirement—eliminating manual processing of more than 50 customer, due-diligence, and compliance forms.

Each automated process gets off to a strong start. Dickinson Financial employees in branches and call centers enter just a few details about existing customers or requested services, and back-end systems instantly validate and prepopulate the appropriate forms with data on hand. For new customers, the digital forms apply rules to help ensure, for example, that dates are entered in the correct format and social security numbers have the right number of digits. This intelligent form filling virtually eliminates the illegible and incomplete forms that were previously a major source of errors and delays.

One of the first processes that Dickinson Financial automated with LiveCycle ES solutions was its debit card application process. The application used to take several paper forms and required manual processing by two or three bank personnel. With manual data entry, data scanning, processing, fulfillment, and shipping, a customer typically wouldn’t receive a debit card for a couple of weeks. If there were any data entry errors in the process, or if forms were misdirected in transit, the wait could be even longer.

To facilitate getting the cards to the customers sooner, Dickinson Financial created a dynamic online service for debit card applications based on LiveCycle Forms ES. The company also automated document completion and now moves completed PDF forms across the country instantly without the delays of mailing or faxing.

"By integrating front-line processes and back-end systems using LiveCycle ES, we can complete the same forms in as little as five minutes. With more than 1,300 change-of-address requests coming in weekly, we're saving more than 200 employee-hours and thousands of dollars per week."

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With LiveCycle ES, the bank has consolidated multiple forms into fewer, more dynamic digital forms that can be used by call center personnel and staff in branches nationwide. The new forms enable staff to enter customer information once. After forms completion, the new systems initiate a consistent process that automates approvals routing, data capture, and even notifies customers when requests are complete. Because all LiveCycle ES routing is electronic and controlled, requests processed through LiveCycle ES take much less time compared to handling the same requests manually.

The streamlined processing has helped the bank serve more customers more efficiently. Through automation, Dickinson Financial can process more than 5,000 service requests weekly related to debit card services, both on site in the branches or over the phone in the call center. As a result, the company accelerated card approval and delivery to customers by up to 300%, reducing processing time from 15 days to 5 days.

"With Adobe LiveCycle ES, we have seen the time to process customer requests drop from weeks to just days or even hours," explains Laire. "That kind of responsiveness goes a long way to enhancing customer experiences and building loyalty."

Emphasizing customer experience, not administration

Overall, the Adobe solution is helping the company increase the profitability of customer services. Because Dickinson Financial slashed time spent on manual review and correcting errors on forms, employees in branches and call centers have more time to talk to customers about their needs and explore cross-selling and up-selling opportunities.

Using LiveCycle ES, the bank has seen direct returns from automating everyday processes. For example, change-of-address requests are common at the bank. According to Laire, change-of-address requests are one of the most time-consuming, manual processes at the company, requiring review and updating of data in six different systems.

"The process can easily take fifteen minutes per form to complete," he says. "By integrating front-line processes and back-end systems using LiveCycle ES, we can complete the same forms in as little as five minutes. With more than 1,300 change-of-address requests coming in weekly, we're saving more than 200 employee-hours and thousands of dollars per week."

Automation has had a profound effect on the accuracy of data captured and reviewed in bank processes. The drastic improvements in form accuracy through automation has resulted in less reworking of requests and enabled the company to reallocate up to 50% of staff once dedicated to processing documents on paper. "The efficiencies are impressive, but the real benefit has been how much faster we can respond to customer requests," Laire says. "Because we can initiate more complete, accurate requests up front, we end up needing fewer resources downstream to fix errors."

More business automation, more benefits

As the above examples highlight, Dickinson Financial is automating forms and processes to benefit both the bank and its customers, who enjoy faster, more efficient services. "Adobe LiveCycle ES has helped us establish a platform for becoming a paperless bank," says Laire. Ultimately, the company's goal is to streamline more than 300 internal employee and customer-facing processes, providing users with access to essential forms via the corporate intranet or Internet.

"It's been easy to rollout new processes supported by LiveCycle ES," says Laire. "In just a month and a half, we automated 40 new processes." Already, with dozens of bank processes streamlined using Adobe LiveCycle ES, Dickinson Financial is saving thousands of employee hours each week, translating to financial savings of hundreds of thousands of dollars annually.

"LiveCycle ES solutions are helping us to meet our customers' needs and our business goals faster," says Laire. "The ability to adapt and respond quickly in today's market is vital to our success."

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