

## FERAL POLLINATORS IN YOUR BANK

by [Steve Brown](#)

Plant pollination by insects is called entomophily and for domestic crops is most often done by bees. In fact, 90% of flowering crops that farmers grow are dependent upon pollination by bees to produce fruit. Farmers are often reliant on hives of bees brought in by traveling bee keepers to in order pollinate their crops. Unfortunately, there has been a decline in honeybee populations over the last 20Ys, causing difficulty among growers dependent upon them. A recent study in Science found using wild native pollinators could be more effective than bringing in outside colonies of managed domestic bees. The study followed the comings and goings of wild pollinators and compared it to managed colonies of bees on more than 40 crops ranging from almonds to coffee to grapefruit. Visits by feral insects caused a boost in fruit starts at about twice the rate of managed colonies. Scientists surmise this was because wild insects were of different kinds and shapes, creating a diversity of pollen by moving among different plants. Similar to bees, most banks encourage cross-pollination or cross-selling among different business lines. There are many good reasons for doing this - customers are likely to stay with the bank longer, they are less rate sensitive and opportunities for increased business are more likely to come to light from the deepest customer relationships in the bank. What can you do to encourage your bank's feral native cross- pollinators? To be sure, community bankers are more likely to be comfortable talking about different business lines than bankers in very large banks because they know more. In a smaller organization, they are more likely to have worked in or around several different areas and that information is carried with them. By encouraging your staff in different areas to know and understand more about what the people on the next floor or in the next group do, the comfort level gained by more knowledge is likely to result in referrals across business lines. As with different kind of insects with their different shapes, people with different experience can often be really effective in spreading pollen to new areas that can deliver results. That is because a person working in one area of the bank is likely to have a different take on the value or necessity of a product in another area. In addition to more training to understand other areas of the bank, another way to encourage cross-pollination is to be certain that your staff understands the value cross-selling other business lines can bring. Do your lenders understand for instance that quality deposit relationships can lower the overall cost of funds of the bank? Do they know that this will allow them to book profitable loans at lower rates? Do your deposit officers understand that the bank's trust clients are likely to be great long- term customers? Do they also know it reduces rate sensitivity simply due to the convenience of having everything in one place? Finally, does everyone in the bank understand the increased profitably that comes from customers using multiple products? The big bank way of using a one-size-fits-all approach is less effective, so take advantage of that. Use your team's excellent customer service skills to determine what services truly are appropriate and helpful for your good customers. Then, encourage the wild native pollinators in your bank by helping them understand this and your crops and profits should prosper.

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## BANK NEWS

### Bank Brands

BrandFinance.com compiled a list of the most valuable banking brands in the world and the top 10 are Wells Fargo, JPMorgan Chase, HSBC, Bank of America, Citibank, Santander, ICBC, American Express, BNP Paribas and China Construction Bank.

### **Competition**

The Bluebird product offered by Wal-Mart and American Express will now offer FDIC insurance on funds and allow users to write checks from their accounts.

### **Crackdown**

The Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force in conjunction with the DOJ plans to review bank activities and accounts related to payment processors. Regulators are concerned banks are allowing customers that offer deceptive payday loans, fraudulent offers of debt relief, fake health care discount cards and other such activities to keep accounts with them and to process payments for these entities.

### **Another Crackdown**

The FHFA said it will ban fees and commissions paid by insurers to banks related to force-placed insurance on all mortgages guaranteed or owned by FNMA and FHLMC.

### **Customers**

An evaluation of customer experience at 246 companies in 19 industries by Temkin finds credit unions captured a rating of 79% vs. banks at 69%. The rating measures the customer experience across functionality, accessibility and emotional components.

### **Identity Theft**

Javelin Strategy reports losses from account takeover and new account fraud each climbed 50% in 2012.

### **Customers**

A new survey by Ernst & Young finds 63% of corporate executives say they are highly satisfied with the service they get from their core banking partners. In addition, 89% said service quality was the most important criterion for choosing and keeping their core bank relationship.

### **Bank Not Liable**

A federal court in MO has ruled a hacked escrow firm that had its username and password stolen and online banking credentials used to transfer \$440,000 to an account in Cypress, did not follow its bank's recommended security procedures and therefore its bank was not liable for the loss.

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