



## Will Drive-Through Banking Continue?

business customers customer experience

**Summary:** The coronavirus has prompted the revival of the drive-through teller. Should you consider expanding this banking channel?

As far as we know, the first drive-up window teller was at Grand National Bank in MO in 1930. Fast forward 90Ys and we are seeing a resurgence of this banking channel.

For some time, experts have been telling bankers that branches are undergoing profound changes and that the old ways of transacting business need to be reimagined. Yet, the experts never expected COVID-19, which has brought back one of the previous staples of branch banking: the drive-through teller.

### The Revival of the Drive-Through Teller During COVID-19

Across the country, drive-through tellers are making a comeback. Customers are responding strongly to banks that offer this service. Banks with drive-through tellers in MA, MI, and PA saw long lines in the early days of the pandemic. Citigroup reopened 30 drive-through teller windows and BBVA USA increased the types of services available in the drive-through, including opening a new account. As we are still dealing with the possibility of infection from the coronavirus, many customers may still feel more comfortable banking this way.

Unfortunately, many community financial institutions (CFIs) that once had drive-through windows removed or replaced them with drive-up ATMs. Those drive-up ATMs are still helpful in this era when the less contact, the better. But sometimes a customer needs or wants to deal directly with a teller, which today means navigating a gauntlet of precautions at a branch, like having to wait outside when the number of patrons reaches an established limit. If the choice is between standing in line outside and sitting in a car in a drive-through lane, many customers would choose the latter.

### Should You Consider Adding Drive-Through Tellers?

CFIs thinking about going back to the future with drive-through tellers will need to do some **cost-benefit analysis** to be sure it is worth the trouble, especially if the move requires significant site changes. However, as you review your branch footprint, this may be one of the areas to discuss.

You should also think about the **banking needs of your customers**, of course. Keep in mind that some customers may like the extended hours of drive-through, but do not necessarily need the on-site personnel. If that is the case, drive-through ATMs may be sufficient or as you upgrade, [ATMs with interactive tellers](#).

The age of COVID-19 has forced banks to rethink ways of conducting business. Often that has meant finding new, high-tech solutions. But sometimes, it can mean bringing back a time-tested method, like the drive-through teller. We think you can do both.

## TWO APPROACHES TO STRESS TEST YOUR LOANS

Now more than ever, it is important to stress test loans of all types from multiple perspectives. Choose your approach and get expert help, as needed. Learn more about [credit stress testing](#) today.

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