



Key Technologies Used To Communicate With Customers

technology pandemic

Summary: Physical distancing has accelerated three technologies used by financial institutions to stay connected with their customers.

Before the coronavirus, the average number of times that people checked their phones daily was 58. If you figure a 12-hr day, that would be more than once every 15 minutes. These days, that number has surely gone up and with that, certain technologies are being used more too.

Physical distancing due to COVID-19 hastened the use of technologies that make it easier for customers to interact with their community financial institutions (CFIs). With residual uncertainty in opening up some branches to full capacity, we give you a rundown of three key technologies used more frequently by financial institutions to stay connected with their customers.

Text messaging. Texting had not been used much to communicate with customers before the crisis, but, it could be these days. Mozeo, a communications and marketing company, found that cell phone users have their device within reach for 14 hours a day, and 98% of text messages are read within 90 seconds. Since some CFIs may be already using text notifications for alerts, here is a peek into the next step in text messaging.

One financial institution launched a text messaging option in April, during the beginning of stay-at-home orders, and saw adoption increase twofold on average every couple of weeks through June. Text messaging options included account concerns and online banking help. The benefit for customers was that they could text a staff member and get an answer easily, without much waiting. If extra help was needed, the discussion thread history was available so information didn't need to be repeated.

Chatbots. COVID-19 stay-at-home orders have also accelerated the use of chatbots. Vendors are now offering CFIs AI-powered virtual assistants that have been customized to understand and communicate specific industry vocabulary so customers can have clearer conversations. Now could be the time to check some of these out.

Natural language processing has made chatbots an easier way to communicate. That fact, coupled with the continuing need for physically-distant conversations, Gartner estimates that 80% of new enterprise applications will have a robust chatbot component by the end of 2020.

Virtual meetings. The digital technology that seems to be getting the most attention across all industries is virtual meetings. Some CFIs are using these services to communicate with customers who prefer the more "human touch", at least virtually.

Even some older customers who had earlier been reticent to adopt digital banking are now embracing these technologies to communicate virtually with staff -- particularly those who may be more susceptible to contracting the virus.

While the restrictions from COVID-19 have prompted the broader use of these technologies, it is likely that they will continue even after the crisis subsides. So, the efforts you put in today to stay connected to your

customers will be worth it even in the future. For additional technologies being considered as businesses reopen, read [New Technologies Facilitating Businesses Reopening](#).

COVID-19 IMPACTING YOUR RESERVE

COVID-19 uncertainty makes calculating your reserve more challenging. So, we created a complimentary analysis of the historical relationship of loss rates, GDP, and unemployment to use for your calculations. The Q2 report is now available. Simply download [Reserve Insights: COVID-19](#) today.

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