

American Banker White Paper

Create an Expanded Profit Center... through a Universal Retail Environment

With the increasing number of transactions done using the internet and other off-premise methods of payment and deposit activities, the need for branch tellers will continue to decrease over the coming years. Due to these significant changes, banks are redirecting and training tellers to specialize in relationship-building activities.

Branches can be designed to emphasize sales, with more boutique areas allowing longer discussions, and fewer teller positions. Service transactions will drop, but sales transactions will increase.

State-Of-The-Art Testing Facility

Four years ago GRFI in conjunction with our Design-Architectural partner VRA, developed our own test branch, the Center for Financial Innovation. The branch is utilized to test and evaluate changes in staffing models and sales-service delivery techniques that we feel will be the new standards for the future.

Reconfiguring Existing Facilities

One of our first key test concepts was the reconfiguration of the transaction and services aspects of the typical branch. We knew that internet banking, the upcoming "Check 21", and other remote deposit services were going to change the face of branching for Small Business and Commercial accounts.

During the ensuing four years we have tested various teller and sales-service configurations within our branch including Remote Staffed Teller Units and Service Area Only transactions.

Multiple Tests Possible

Utilizing the results from our test facility, we are better able to convince our clients on the revised Staffing, Design and Support Programs needed to maintain and improve both service and profits.

How Our Design Eliminates Teller Positions

Today more than half of our new designs and renovations incorporate our Tellerless Branch Concepts. (See Example "A" in the next column for a typical design.) All transactions, both within the branch and drive-through, are handled by personnel staffing the expanded Service Kiosks.

This smaller modified configuration also works well within High Density Urban Areas that do not provide opportunities for drive-throughs or immediate proximity parking.

Their resulting efficiencies in staffing and improved levels of sales-service have been a huge benefit to our clients in the ability to increase Cross-Sell Ratios and New Accounts.

Proactive Support Programs a Must

Emphasis on services plus appropriate new business efforts such as:

- Development of In-Branch Business Resource Center
- Creation of Business and Community Advisory Councils
- Promotion of In-Branch Business and Community Seminar Programs
- Three-Person Small Business Team

High Volume Branches Need Tellers

For those branches that still service higher volumes of traditional transactions we have developed a modified branch design with a maximum of four teller positions (See Example "B" on front page) that better suits the needs of the high transaction trade area.

When a separate teller area is no longer needed we can easily convert the space to other boutique sales-service uses due to prior conversion planning.

Automated Teller Equipment a Must

The creation of Universal Employees that staff the branch and the Service Center is the key to the success.

The staff is supported by highly automated teller equipment such as Cash Dispensers and/or Cash Recyclers and is able to effectively spend more "quality time" with customers.

The automated teller equipment can reduce the normal transaction time from Three-plus minutes to an average transaction time of One minute forty seconds.

Branch Design Flexibility A Must

We also design the service area for easy adaption of the additional transaction needs. The facilities are so designed with a high degree of flexibility for quick and low cost conversion.

