

BANK SYSTEMS & TECHNOLOGY

Business Innovation Powered By Technology

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LOAN ORIGINATION

Easy Money

First National Bank automates its lending process with Fiserv's easyLENDER.

FOR A BANK that has seen its asset size jump 36 percent since 2002, entering loan information manually is far from efficient. To streamline the loan-origination process, Beloit, Wis.-based First National Bank and Trust Co. (\$592 million in assets) decided to replace its legacy lending system. "From an efficiency standpoint, entering every loan manually was cumbersome and time-consuming," recalls Mike Cuccinelli, First National's operations manager. Inputting data manually also increased the risk of inconsistencies and led to more duplicate records, he notes.

The bank began looking for a solution in late 2003, researching offerings from about 16 vendors. In doing this initial research, Cuccinelli says, "This concept of 'dynamic documents' came up." As someone inputs a loan into a system with dynamic-document capability, the system is intelligent enough to adapt the loan documents based on factors such as the type of loan, collateral, borrowers and guarantors, he explains. Finding a solution that possessed these capabilities became a key requirement, Cuccinelli adds.

Based in part on the vendor's dynamic documents capabilities, First National selected Fiserv's (Brookfield, Wisc.) easyLENDER suite of loan-origination software in mid-2004. The bank liked the list of available documents and the way that easyLENDER interfaced with its core processing systems from Lincoln, Neb.-based Information Technology Inc. (ITI), a business unit of Fiserv. "There are a lot of automatic interfaces between easyLENDER and our ITI core systems,"

Cuccinelli says. "We get a lot of automatic loading from one to the other, which saves us a lot of time."

The bank installed the software on two Compaq servers from HP (Palo Alto, Calif.), which were purchased for the implementation, running Microsoft (Redmond, Wash.) Windows 2003. easyLENDER went live in First National's mortgage area in January



"We ... increased volume in loan operations without adding to the staff," says Mike Cuccinelli, First National Bank and Trust Co.

The technology already has yielded benefits. According to Cuccinelli, it saves First National an average of 12 minutes per loan. "Our volume has probably increased by 25 percent to 30 percent in the past year and a half," he says. "We purchased a couple of branches, and we absorbed that increased volume in loan operations without adding to the staff"

2005. To prepare, Fiserv provided training for the bank's loan-operations and IT staff. "The training was five days of hands-on, classroom-type sessions," Cuccinelli says. First National also established an in-house conversion team. "There is a mapping process that takes place," Cuccinelli explains. "It is meticulous, but not highly technical. It really is not that hard, as far as conversions go."

Now, when an existing customer applies for a loan, customer information is transferred directly into easyLENDER, which pre-fills the appropriate forms. "Before, we had to prepare loans document by document, typing each individually," Cuccinelli says. "Now, the documents are created automatically."

The bank now uses the technology for home-equity, commercial and consumer installment loans, too, and may expand it to other areas. Longer term, "Fiserv's plan is to create partnerships with various title companies, where you can remotely send your packages to them," Cuccinelli relates. That would more tightly integrate the electronic flow of information, he says, saving First National even more time. □ — Judy Ward

Snapshot

» **Institution:** First National Bank and Trust Co. (Beloit, Wis.).

» **Assets:** \$592 million.

» **Business Challenge:** Increase efficiency by automating the loan-origination process.

» **Solution:** Fiserv's (Brookfield, Wis.) easyLENDER software suite.

 **Lending Solutions**