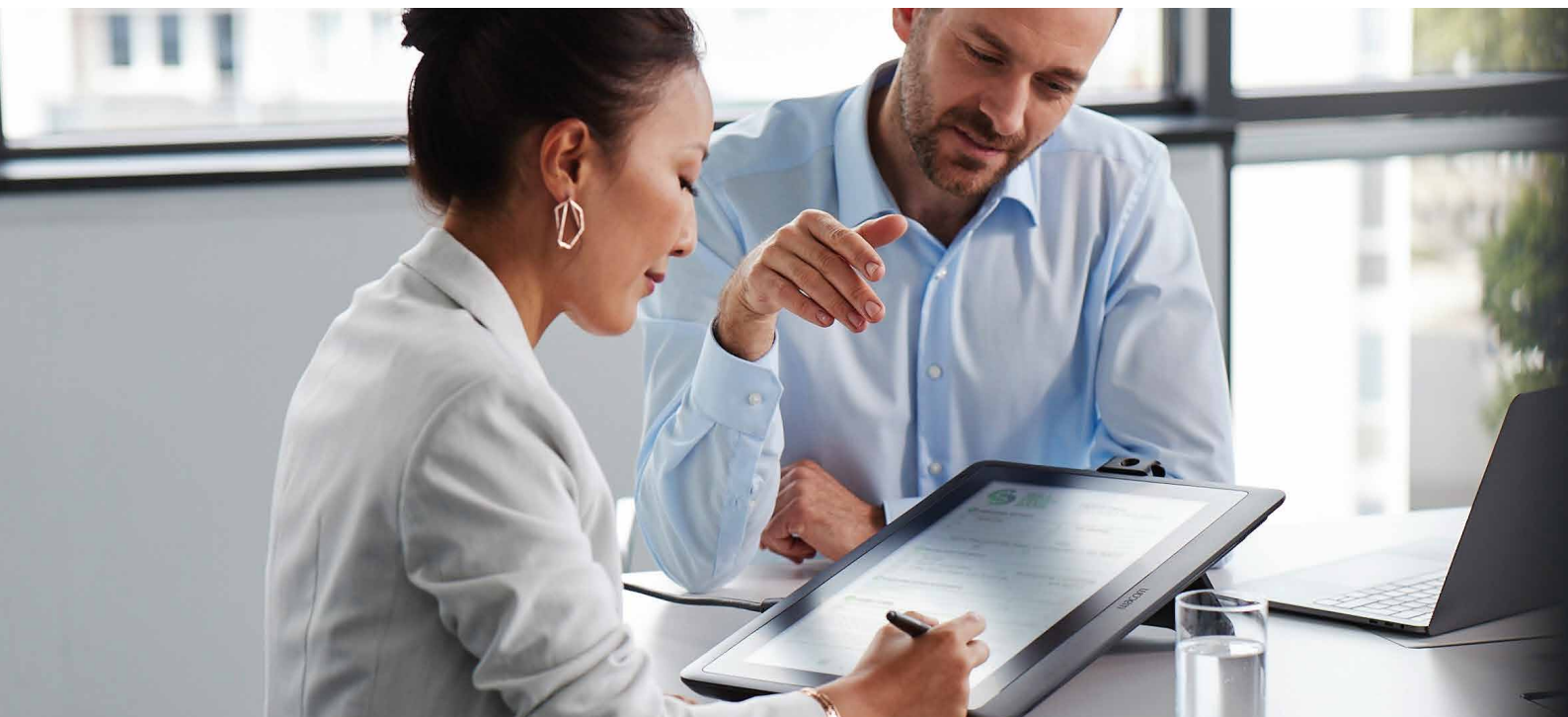


The Future of Bank Branches: Key Industry Insights



Digital has disrupted banks, and customers are becoming more demanding, pushing banks to reshape the customer experience. Customers are getting better customer experience in other industries, so they expect the same from their bank (Distribution 2020. The next big journey for retail banks, 2013). Bank branches provide physical comfort for customers to receive advice and perform transactions. However, customer visits to bank branches are decreasing year over year in developed markets, even though the number of touchpoints increased, driven by mobile and internet (Distribution 2020. The next big journey for retail banks, 2013).

Too many processes at banks still rely on paper, resulting in 38 percent of customers dropping out of onboarding due to frustration with paper and the volume of information required (Vander Elst, Heckel, and Vauclin, 2019). Bank branches will need to adapt to changing customer demands and offer a richer customer experience through a multi-channel approach, combining mobile, internet, face-to-face, and ATM. Industry research found that the importance of having a personal relationship with banks is not going to disappear any time soon (Parrish, 2018). The branch will remain the go-to place for customers when it comes to advising on products the customer perceives as complex, such as lending or investment products. Deloitte surveyed 17,100 banking consumers across 17 countries and found that bank branches are not only preferred over digital channels for complex requests, but customers also value bank branches for simple products such as debit cards and savings accounts (Srinivas and Wadhvani, 2019).



Bank branches will play a key role in deepening customer relationships and acquiring new customers

(Distribution 2020. The next big journey for retail banks, 2013). When banks started consolidating bank branches a couple of years ago, the main reason was cost-cutting. However, this shifted to enhancing the customers' banking experience. Bain consulting states in its report that "a typical large bank in Europe with more than 1,000 branches could expect to see a 50% lift in per-branch economics (lower costs plus higher revenues) through smart digital migration and branch network restructuring" (Schofield, Glusac and Stumbles, 2019, pg.1). To affect the customer's loyalty, offering a hybrid customer experience, combining digital and physical experiences, is more powerful than purely offering digital or only physical experiences (Parrish, 2018). By a combination of initiatives ranging from simplifying online forms and printing formats to migrating more transactions to ATMs to reducing wait time at teller windows, a bank could free up 20% of time spent, resulting in a boost in customer satisfaction and employee advocacy (Distribution 2020. The next big journey for retail banks, 2013).

Traditional bank branches have become obsolete in their current form (Kirk et al., 2018). The network has to change faster and more substantially than most bankers acknowledge. By accelerating branch transformation, improving efficiency and productivity, banks can mitigate the threat from technology firms, beat the competition, delight customers, and achieve stronger, more profitable growth (Schofield, Glusac and Stumbles, 2019, pg.8).



FORCS has helped major financial institutions such as Standard Chartered and Citibank to transform their branches successfully. Our unique and dynamic approach to e-Forms resulted in a significant improvement in our customers' yearly revenue. Unlike other solutions on the market, FORCS is differentiating by offering e-Forms that change in real-time based on user selection, decrease the number of forms versions, and eliminate unnecessary pages. Do business faster and transform your branch by digitalizing customer interactions without losing the human touch.

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