



Communiqué & iStatements boost

NORTHWEST SAVINGS BANK'S
EFFICIENCY AND SAVES MONEY



innovation, OPERATIONAL OVERHAUL

Headquartered in Warren, Pennsylvania, Northwest Savings Bank is a 113-year-old federally chartered savings bank with more than 170 locations across five states. Offering a wide range of traditional financial services, as well as trust, investment management, employee benefit plans, and brokerage services, this \$7 billion community bank caters to retail as well as commercial clients, including small businesses and a strong mix of larger companies.

Northwest has diligently ensured that its customers have innovative products and services, while staying intensely focused on managing costs and improving operational efficiency. To that end, the bank embarked on a project to implement two new technology solutions: one to overcome the roadblocks created by its lackluster printed communications solution; the other to deliver a more robust, efficient electronic statement offering than their former offering.

After a thorough due diligence process, Northwest chose Optria Communiqué to overhaul the bank's printed statements and notices capabilities, and Optria iStatements to deliver a more competitive, feature-rich, engaging electronic statement offering to its customers.

"What attracted us to Optria was their knowledge of the banking industry and the fact that they were intimately familiar with our core processing environment," said Northwest Chief Information Officer Andrew Young. "Optria also had solutions for both the print and electronic worlds. We wanted to work with the same vendor for both delivery channels. No other vendor offered such sophisticated solutions."

holistic APPROACH

Young, and Northwest's IT Project Manager, Tina Dinger, developed a comprehensive plan to implement both of the Optria systems in a staged approach, with Optria Communiqué implementation first, followed by Optria iStatements. "We decided to take a holistic view of the projects, which included reviewing our processes and procedures to ensure we weren't just making the new systems adapt to our outdated or antiquated processes," Young noted.

Northwest's objectives were clear—they wanted to reduce postage costs, increase efficiency by eliminating manual processes, and enhance customer service. They also set very specific benchmarks that they expected to achieve.

"One of the driving forces for the Optria Communiqué initiative was our strong desire for automation," said Dinger. "We were hand stuffing all our statement and notices. Although we



Executive Summary

INSTITUTION: Northwest Savings Bank

HEADQUARTERS: Warren, Pennsylvania

ASSET SIZE: \$7 billion

KEY CHALLENGES:

- Statements were bland, unattractive and hard for customers to read
- Couldn't leverage statements and notices to deliver marketing messages
- Hand stuffing of statements and notices was extremely time and labor intense
- Excessive, non-standardized forms and envelopes increased costs of supplies
- Inability to pre-sort mail prevented bank from realizing maximum postage savings
- Were leasing, maintaining expensive equipment for processing
- Statements and notices were taking too long to get to customers

SOLUTIONS:

Optria Communiqué and Optria iStatements

RESULTS:

- Have reduced postage, processing, labor, hardware maintenance and leasing costs by more than half a million dollars
- Reduced print processing cycle time by 3 business days and electronic statement notifications to less than 24 hours
- Eliminated 90% of the manual statement/notice insert process
- Eliminated unnecessary equipment, resulting in \$45,000 saving

CLIENT STATEMENT:

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ANDREW YOUNG
Chief Information Officer
Northwest Savings Bank

had purchased an inserting machine, we weren't using it. On top of that, we had to do all the presorting of our notices and statements. We outsourced the pre-sort to a 3rd party. This was extremely labor intensive, inefficient, and expensive," she said.

boosting EFFICIENCY



"We have achieved dramatic improvements across the board as a result of implementing Optria Communiqué," Young said. "We reduced our lease and rental expenditures, we significantly reduced our tabletop statement production equipment and we reduced labor expenses in the statement prep department. Overall, our operating expenses have been reduced by over \$500,000 within 18 months of implementation. The most significant savings continues to come from our ability to now presort all the work in-house very easily and efficiently, which enables us to benefit from reduced rates from the post office."

Tina agreed. "Because Optria Communiqué integrates with our third party provider for CASS and PAVE, we can now automatically do all the pre-sorting and the manifesting in house, which allows us to take full advantage of the postage discounts. We have also been able to reduce our total cycle time by almost 3 business days."

Dinger explained that since Optria Communiqué integrated with their archival system, the bank was able to successfully convert the customers who were still receiving their physical checks to an electronic image delivery.

Dinger also cited improvements in the quality of their statements and notices.

"We were able to review and redesign more than 35 notices and statements—far beyond just the checking statement. We used Communiqué to help us put these documents through a rigorous quality control process and then revamp them," she said.

According to Young, they also felt it would be an excellent opportunity to consolidate the many forms and envelopes the bank had been using with their old system. "With Optria Communiqué, we were able to standardize this and significantly reduced the range of sizes and types of forms we were producing, which reduced the cost of these supplies."

image as AS KEY CATALYST



According to Young, the key catalyst behind their move to Optria iStatements—the second phase of the implementation— was primarily because their current electronic state-

ments were unattractive and hard to read. Comments from customers echoed this sentiment.

"We were offering electronic statements, but they were just not good looking. Competitively speaking, our old system wasn't in line with the level of sophisticated products and services we typically offer our customers. Also, we didn't have the best opt in – opt out process for customer selection of electronic document delivery," Young explained.

Northwest has been impressed with how quickly they are able to deliver their statements and notices to customers. In many cases, they are actually delivering them by 10am the following morning. "We have surpassed our original goal of 24 hours and are now delivering the email notifications that the statements are ready in less than 12 hours," Dinger said.

Both Young and Dinger are very pleased with the look and feel of the statements. And from the many comments and feedback they have received, so are their customers. "Our customers now have access to a much better looking statement. Before, all we could offer was a down and dirty print file, which wasn't very pretty. Now, their statements are interactive and customers have the ability to pull up more than 35 documents online that may have been mailed in the past. Within their statements, customers can click on a check image, reconcile their accounts and more," Young said.

Northwest also likes the fact that customers can choose the specific types of documents they want to receive electronically and which they want to receive in hard copy. "We really like the fact that Optria iStatements isn't an all or nothing proposition. The customer has choices," Dinger explained.

Invaluable COMPLIANCE



As with all Optria solutions, iStatements is compliant with regulatory requirements, including bank notifications of undeliverable emails.

"This has been invaluable to us. If the bounce backs continue after a set number of attempts, we are notified so we can meet the requirements to send a hard copy of the statement to the customer and remove that email address from our list. Prior to implementing Optria iStatements, this all had to be managed manually," Young explained.

"By continuing to increase the number of customers who choose to go paperless, Northwest will continually derive value from our choice to implement Optria's solutions, enabling us to not only realize even deeper cost savings and efficiencies, but also to reach out to customers in new ways to cross-sell other products and services, strengthen the Northwest brand and increase loyalty by communicating more often and more effectively with our customers," Young concluded.



THE POWER BEHIND GREAT CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS

Optria, LLC provides customer communications management software exclusively for the financial industry. Our Customer Communications Management Suite—consisting of Optria Communiqué, Optria iStatements and Optria Kinetique—enables banks and credit unions to easily create relevant, branded printed and electronic communications and marketing campaigns, as well as provide customers and staff with account alert capabilities for dynamic, personalized communications with every customer. Optria's solutions are proven to increase productivity, reduce costs, increase revenue and help financial institutions create a greener environment.