

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

First Bank Streamlines Reg E Compliance

FINBOA'S SOLUTION REPLACES INEFFICIENT TRACKING VIA EXCEL SPREADSHEETS AND ADOBE FORMS.



FIRST BANK

Like many financial institutions, First Bank sometimes struggled to ensure full compliance with Regulation E (Reg E). The Bank's internal communication was inefficient, so information about claim status was hard to access. First Bank turned to FINBOA Inc. to provide a cost-effective and efficient Reg E compliance process automation solution.

First Bank, which operates nine branch offices in Illinois and Indiana, offers a variety of banking, investment and money management services to local businesses and consumers. FINBOA Reg E SaaS tracks disputes that consumers have with electronic funds transfers and bank card transactions. Before implementing the FINBOA dispute tracking solution, First Bank kept track of such interactions with Microsoft Excel spreadsheets and Adobe forms. Whenever a dispute arose, the Bank's Retail Department worked with the customer to fill out a form that was sent to Operations, setting off a series of steps resulting in an eventual resolution.

“Our main challenge was trying to get all the dispute information in one place so the pieces of the compliance puzzle were complete and accessible.”

Communications Problems Abound

However, inefficiencies and communication breakdowns arose. Sometimes, the customer issues were unclear, so employees went back and forth a few times to clarify the issue. Communication with Bank customers was scattershot. A customer would call, get somebody familiar with their case one time, and someone unfamiliar with it the next. Often, Stephanie Morrill, Deposit Operation Fraud Specialist at First Bank acted as the gatekeeper to such information, spending a lot of her time updating coworkers about a case's status.

Occasionally, Operations was not notified when a customer filed a claim. Banks face a time constraint: Reg E requires that the financial institution provide provisional credit within ten days of when a dispute arises. Sometimes, Operations was notified of a complaint on the eighth day, which led to a time crunch and potential for non-compliance.

“FINBOA met our needs and had lower pricing and higher quality than the competitors.”

Customer service suffered. If First Bank’s Morrill was temporarily out of the office or unavailable, the resources standing in for her did not always have the full view of the case because the information was in Morrill’s Excel spreadsheets. As a result, sometimes the coworkers recreated provisional credit letters that had already been sent.

Such problems were exacerbated when First Bank’s Morrill went on vacation. “The fraudsters seem to just know when you’re leaving for vacation” she said. “I ended up with a lot of outstanding issues whenever I came back, so it took me several days to catch back up.”

Obtaining a customer’s signature was another challenge. On occasion, the customer was not in the immediate area. These transactions must be secure, which meant that the customer had to print the form remotely, sign it, scan it and return it.

Challenges were evident even at the end of the process. The bank held a case open for 85 to 90 days. First Bank manually calculated its timeframe to close cases. Once in a while, a case hit that 90-day closure mark, but was not closed out.

FINBOA’s Ease of Use Seals the Deal

First Bank’s Morrill attended a Reg E Dispute Webinar sponsored by FINBOA and eventually scoured the market for Reg E automation solutions. “The first thing we were looking for was software that would allow us to see all the pieces of the puzzle in one place. Second, we needed the ability for our Customers to electronically sign the dispute form without having to come into the Bank.” She continued, “FINBOA met our needs and had lower pricing and higher quality than the competitors. The system was easy to maneuver and offered customizable forms. The other systems were not user-friendly at all and required a lot of manual input.”



FINBOA’s customer service was another differentiator. “With FINBOA, we felt like we were getting personalized service whereas the other company was huge, and I was just a name to them and not

“You (FINBOA) are always easy to get ahold of and you respond quickly to any problem I’m having. There’s honestly nothing I would change.”

a person,” explained First Bank’s Morrill.

So, the Bank signed up for the service. First Bank’s Morrill served as the beta tester for the solution. After it was running, the Bank conducted webinars with staff at other branches, so they too could take advantage of the SaaS solution.

As part of the courseware, First Bank’s Morrill grabbed screenshots of the system in action and built a general manual as well as one to train the Operations staff and a third for the retail staff. During training, the staff built test cases, so they were familiar with the system. They then deleted them without affecting the system.

A Bevy of Benefits

FINBOA’s excellent customer service continued as the deployment took shape. “We had a certain set of questions that we wanted answered on our Dispute form, so we worked with FINBOA to customize the Dispute form so it matched what we were currently using,” explained First Bank’s Morrill.



Then, we replicated the approach with the provisional credit letters and final credit letters. We worked with FINBOA to customize our digital forms to be in line what we currently had and make the process better.”

Claims became easier to manage. One change was that FINBOA’s case management software put all of Reg E pieces (the Dispute form, claim status, how much provisional credit customer received, when they got it) in one central place that any employee can access.

In addition, dispute documents flow more efficiently. The Retail staff is the first point of contact with the customer and now enters the Dispute form as well as answers to questions adding context in the central database. First Bank sends Dispute forms to consumers electronically and has them sign and return each digitally. Having put the FINBOA solution in place prior to COVID-19, First Bank was well



BENEFITS



CLAIMS EASY
TO MANAGE



DISPUTE DOC
EFFICIENCY



COMMUNICATION
INCREASED



EMPLOYEE
SELF-SUFFICIENCY



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SATISFACTION

positioned to effectively manage Reg E compliance despite closed lobbies and remote staffing.

Communication improved dramatically. Information is collected more consistently and relayed to the Operations team faster. No longer was such data communicated verbally from one employee to another. As a result, communication breakdowns between Retail and Operations disappeared.

Automating First Bank's manual dispute tracking reduced Bank claim processing time by over 50% while improving information access, communication and customer experience. Employees now access FINBOA Reg E dispute tracking for information about any claims rather than calling First Bank's Morrill. Finally, she can fully enjoy her vacation time knowing there will be a lot less Reg E work waiting for her when she returns to the office

HOW CAN FINBOA HELP

FINBOA's end-to-end process automation is optimized for Reg E. Eliminate the need to use multiple systems, requiring manual steps that cause regulatory deficiencies. Financial Institutions using our SaaS solutions report doing in minutes, what used to take them hours, making compliance easy.

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