

Secrets of High-Performing Banks



Sean Payant, Ph.D.
 Chief Strategy Officer
 Haberfeld
 sean@haberfeld.com

Haberfeld is an associate member of the Indiana Bankers Association.



Many financial institution executives spend considerable time thinking about strategies to improve overall profitability and create sustainable growth.

The focus across industry press and conference best practices is generally aimed at strategies to cut expenses – using technology, looking at staffing levels, increasing productivity, etc. Although this advice is sound, is that actually what high-performing banks do?

To answer this question, we looked at 81 institutions which have been in the top five for return on equity for five consecutive years and compared them to peers. These high-performing institutions averaged an efficiency ratio of 52.04%.

As the data illustrates, high-performing institutions don't attempt to save their way to prosperity. They underperform in noninterest expense to assets by 24% to overperform in noninterest income to assets by 325%. How does your bank stack the deck in its favor?

The key to better results is aligning marketing and execution. As noted by high-performing banks, it's about making an investment in growth to create a sustainable advantage that produces superior results. After 35-plus years, here's what we know:

Product – get product right.

People hate fees. Compressed margins and decreased profitability can lead to the discussion of increasing monthly service fees or minimum

balance requirements. The chart below shows recent research on the criteria consumers use when selecting a primary financial institution.

Compression in bank earnings will continue to have little impact on what consumers desire from their banking partners. Your retail and business product considerations must remain compelling if you want to have the greatest opportunity to grow core customers.

Processes – remove barriers. Stop getting in your own way. While we must be in compliance, excessive compliance creates barriers. Look at your customer identification program as well as your retail and business account opening policies:

- Do they create barriers to growth?
- Is it easy for a consumer to open a retail or business account at your bank?
- Do you have restrictive scoring metrics that are actually costing you revenue opportunities?

Metric	High-Performing	Other	% Variance
Return on Assets	3.18%	1.14%	179%
Return on Equity	31.22%	10.76%	190%
Net Interest Margins	3.60%	3.27%	10%
Cost of Fund	0.33%	0.33%	0%
Yield on Loans	5.64%	5.08%	11%
Loan/Deposit Ratio	69.27%	67.67%	2%
Noninterest Income to Assets	\$22.30	\$5.25	325%
Noninterest Expense to Assets	\$28.76	\$23.26	24%
Equity Capital to Assets	11.11%	10.81%	3%

Note: Data Through 9/30/2021



Promotion – marketing to grow.

Increase your spending on strategic marketing.

- **Proactive:** According to Novantas, 65% of consumers consider only two options when they decide to change primary financial institutions, meaning 65% of your current customers already know where they would bank if they didn't bank with you. You must be top-of-mind *before* consumers and businesses know they want to switch. Your marketing must create the opportunity for them to pick you.
- **Targeted:** You need to use data and analytics to help you understand where to market *before* you market. Your marketing resources must be allocated to target consumers and businesses who haven't chosen your bank yet, but could and should.
- **ROI-focused:** You must define what and how you will measure success in terms of return on investment *before* you market, not after. Make sure your marketing investment is working to create tangible, measurable results.

People – invest in training your team.

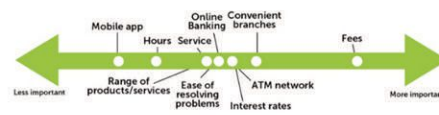
Too often our industry treats training as an event rather than a way of life. Employees who do not understand your products and services will not be able to recognize opportunities with customers, let alone speak in terms of benefits rather than features.

It is crucial to commit to regular training initiatives regarding your products and services. Then once you have trained everything, start over and do it again – knowledge leaks unless it is reinforced regularly.

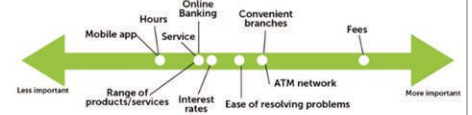
The actions of high-performing banks tell the story. Banks that invest in growth reap the greatest rewards. Make sure you have all of the right strategies in place to capitalize on the growth opportunities that present themselves in any environment. **HB**

TOP CRITERIA CONSUMERS USE TO CHOOSE NEW BANKING PROVIDER

Results for consumers of all age groups



Results for consumers under 40



SOURCE: Market Street Research © January 2020 The Financial Brand

BANKERS' BANK

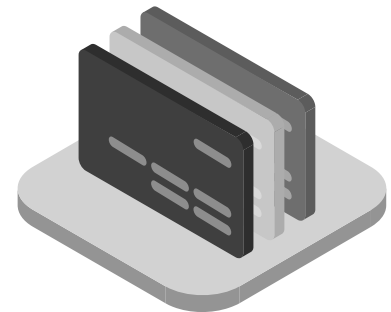
Member
FDIC

1 IN 5 CUSTOMERS USE PREPAID CARDS ON A MONTHLY BASIS

Don't miss an opportunity to better serve your customers and attract new customers. Community Prepaid through Bankers' Bank is a new solution that allows community banks to provide reloadable and gift cards to your customers. Don't be fooled, not all prepaid programs are the same.

With Community Prepaid, you'll have:

- No upfront costs — no charge even for the plastics
- No compliance concerns — Bankers' Bank owns the assets
- No complicated balancing or accounting issues — offset load amounts and be paid your revenues directly into your Bankers' Bank DDA account
- **No reason to not add this to your product set**



Visit [BankersBank.com](https://www.BankersBank.com) to learn how our new prepaid program can benefit your bank and customers.