Independent Banker  
March 2024  
Columns

[tag] Flourish

[hed] Putting the person in personalized marketing

[quote] We want to take what you do, highlight your authentic approach to relationships and demonstrate the community bank difference, so you can leverage the momentum in your communities.

[body]

When it comes to community bank marketing, it’s about the person, not the product. As relationship bankers, the client connection drives community bank decisioning around solutions, promotions and outreach. Through every communication, community banks seek to deepen their customer ties, not merely sell them on the next big thing.

With that, we again see how community banks truly differ from their megabank and nonbank counterparts. When I think about how others approach marketing, it’s more about pushing the technology they provide or the products they offer. Others in financial services aren’t stopping to realize individual stories; rather, they are simply in the act of the sell.

Community banks embody the polar opposite of that transactional approach and are focused on building connections. While you offer advanced technology and state-of-the-art solutions, you do so in a way that supports what your communities need. You are in the relationship for the long term.

For example, today, your customer may need a savings account or a home loan, but you will be there to support their future life goals and evolving needs over time, rather than providing a singular product. In short, community banks strive to ensure the people, families, small businesses and communities they serve stand to prosper over time.

It takes a lot to convey that fundamental difference. That’s why the ICBA National Campaign is so important. Through these efforts, we’re able to bolster the community bank story on a national platform, and individual community banks can amplify it on the ground in their own communities. We want to take what you do, highlight your authentic approach to relationships and demonstrate the community bank difference, so you can leverage the momentum in your communities.

It’s working. As we close out year one of the National Campaign, we’ve seen a 2,000% year-over-year jump in organic traffic to <i>*banklocally.org*<i>. Fifty-five percent of those aware of the campaign indicate they believe community banks are very important to the local economy. In addition, 26% of millennials who recalled the campaign searched online to find a community bank, taking a meaningful step toward banking in a way that makes a difference.

So, we will keep supporting you in elevating the visibility of community banks. We’ll stand beside you as you continue to demonstrate the positive impacts you make. We’ll advocate for you to ensure your voice resonates across the U.S.

Because as a community bank, it’s about the people you serve, not the products you offer, and in banking, that makes all the difference.

[ends]

[sidebar]

*Where I’ll be this month*

I’ll be attending ICBA LIVE in Orlando from March 14–17. I hope to see you there!

[sidebar ends]