

Case study: Park National Bank

The best thing to happen to banking.

How Park National Bank created a white glove digital service for their customers.

March 2023



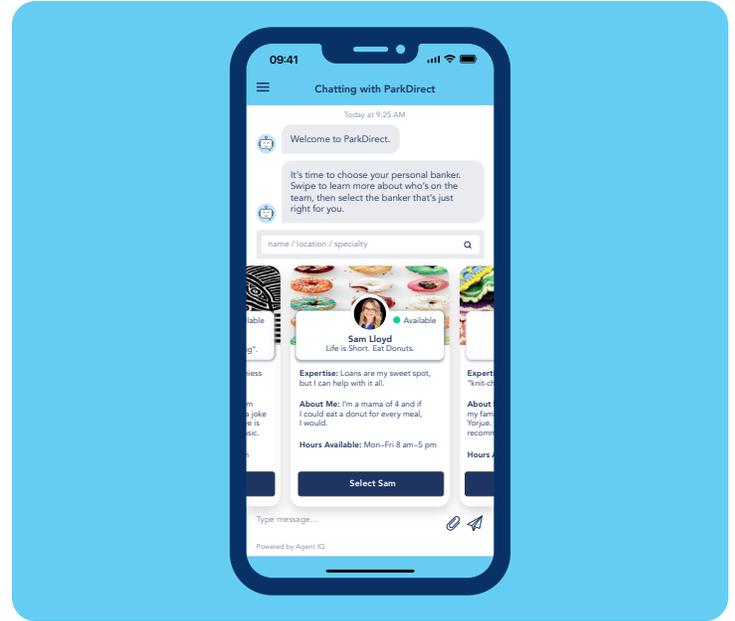
Introduction

Back in early 2020, most of us had no idea how the world was going to change and the impact that COVID would have on the world surrounding us. Financial Institutions were not immune to the dramatic changes that were happening to the planet, and were forced to find new ways to serve their customers at least temporarily, if not permanently.

Customers wanted more

But even prior to the widespread impact from COVID, [Park National Bank](#) (\$10B out of Ohio) realized that customer behavior was starting to change. People were relying more on digital banking tools for routine transactions, and the opportunities to engage with them were less consistent. Of course customers could handle transactional tasks such as checking balances and transferring money with their mobile app, but in the words of Park National's CMO, Michelle Hamilton, the big question that their institution was facing is "How do we bring back the conversations and the relationships that we used to have in the branch?"

These weren't just the conversations about the weather or which sports team won that weekend, but conversations about life that allowed customers to be heard and welcomed. Conversations that opened up opportunities for bankers to provide guidance and help. Park National needed to find a way to create a digital connection that allowed their customers to experience the same warmth and humanity they were accustomed to, no matter what channel they decided to engage with.



78% of customers choose to **wait for their personal banker** when another banker was immediately available

"With ParkDirect the goal is to see how engaged our bankers can get with their customers."

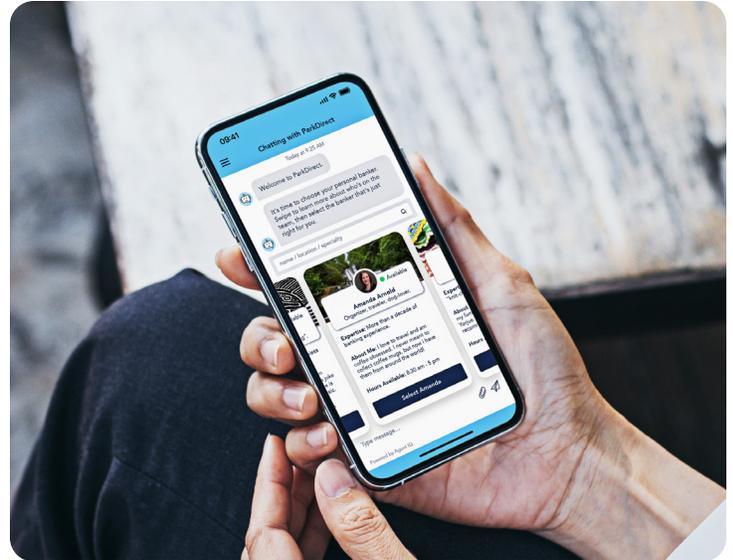
— Michelle Hamilton, CMO Park National

White glove service anytime, anywhere

In April 2020, Park National partnered with Agent IQ to launch ParkDirect—a white glove digital service that allows customers to select and engage with a personal banker to assist them with their financial needs. Even though the strategic initiative yielded in ParkDirect was started well before this date, no one could have predicted how timely a digital communication and engagement service would be at exactly this moment in time. The COVID lockdown that kept customers from coming into branches accelerated the need for the ParkDirect service to be available, so Agent IQ and Park National Bank launched the service in just 4 short weeks. Some customers even cited the ability to take care of their banking without the worry of “touching another door handle” as a reason for signing up for the service.

As valuable as the service was during the early days of the shutdown, appreciation for this channel of communication and engagement has only grown over the last few years. Hamilton explains “This is more than traditional chat service or call center, where the goal typically is to get the customer served and off the phone as quickly as possible. With ParkDirect the goal is to see how engaged our bankers can get with their customers.”

This unique approach has customers raving about the service. ParkDirect bankers have helped customers open accounts, apply for credit cards and loans, get advice on their finances, and more. In a recent comment, a customer shared, “This is the best thing to happen to banking,” and Hamilton and the team couldn’t agree more. “We have created a level of service that feels almost nostalgic, like coming in to the branch and seeing the familiar face of the banker who’s served you for years.” The flexibility and convenience of this service allows Park National to meet their customers wherever and whenever they are needed, all while feeling like they’re in their hometown bank.



Adoption rate of the ParkDirect app spiked as high as **60%** when offered at new account openings

“We’ve always believed in differentiating our bank through building relationships. Now, we can do that in a whole new way.”

— Michelle Hamilton, CMO Park National

The value of great relationships

With all initiatives, there has to be a way to measure success. While metrics like revenue and cost savings are important, Park National has found that connecting with customers in this way allows them to strengthen relationships. And when customers are engaged they open up about their needs. As Hamilton explains, "We've always believed in differentiating our bank through building relationships. Now, we can do that in a whole new way."

A few of the many tasks that Park National has been able to help their customers with through the app are:

- Set up online banking/mobile banking
- Transfer funds
- Order new debit cards
- Block cards that were lost/stolen
- File disputes for fraudulent charges
- Add signers and remove signers on accounts
- Setup automatic payments or other external transfer payments for loans
- Explore loan relief options for customers facing hardship
- Open checking and savings accounts
- Apply for credit cards
- Determine if they could get preapproved to buy their first home
- Get information about refinancing their mortgage or vehicle
- Connect with investment specialists
- Get in touch with a commercial lender
- Receive advice on improving credit scores

Curious to learn more?

Contact us today at hello@agentiq.com to learn how Agent IQ can help your institution create a white glove digital service for your customers.



"And... thanks so much for this service. Best thing to happen to banking!"

— ParkDirect Customer