

An Iterative Approach to Maximizing Value in a Customer Engagement Solution:

A practical approach for
financial institutions of any size

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Agent IQ Perspective

In their “Driving Value and Values During COVID-19” September 2020 report Accenture identified the need for innovation as being greater than ever and highlighted the need for AI and people to work together seamlessly, and customers seeking warm relationships, human conversations and reliable advice. In this case study we highlight how one institution managed to deploy a solution advancing all of the above.

Technology companies have spent decades trying to answer the question of how to increase the productivity and output of their product team while dealing with ever accelerating changes in consumer expectations and a competitive market.

In the last decade, it has become clear that there is a consensus answer as the vast majority of tech companies have converged on an agile approach to software development. Agile basically means small teams working in small time slices or iterations making small but from product usability complete improvements. While the definition of “small”, depends on the size and maturity of the institution, typically small means 5-7 people working in 2-week slices or sprints.

At Agent IQ, as you might expect, we are also following an agile approach to software development. But for a young fintech, anything else would be shocking.

More importantly, we have spent large amounts of time and effort to enable our partners and clients - the financial institutions (FIs), to follow a similar approach. Our solution is designed and implemented to be highly modular and configurable. In turn this allows any FI to choose the modules and configurations to deploy with initially and then change the configuration, enable additional modules, or expanded functionality as desirable.

Furthermore, our solution does not require expensive and time-consuming core banking or other backend integrations to enable initial deployment and can be deployed parallel to any existing infrastructure. Backend integrations can be added after the initial deployment to help increase overall efficiency of FI personnel and allow for more streamlined and customer-friendly automation.

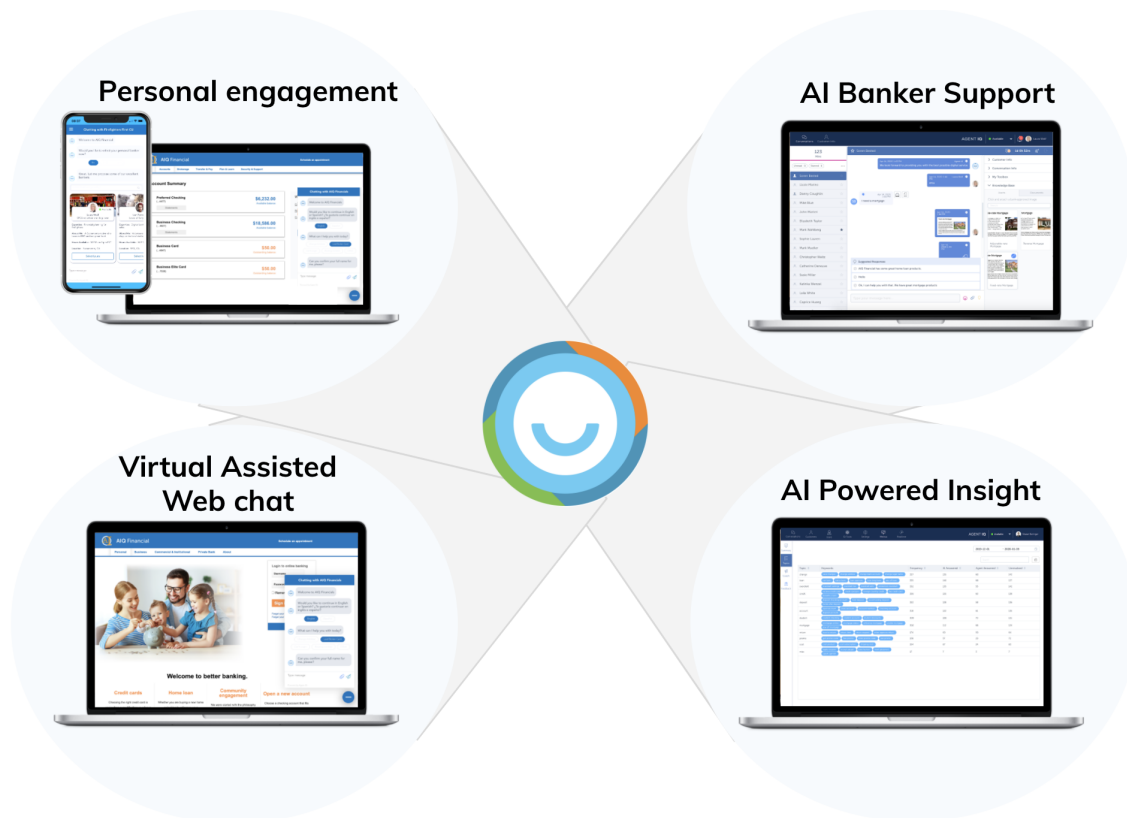
In this case study, we demonstrate how even smaller, resource-strapped institutions can benefit from the iterative, agile approach and gradually deploy a comprehensive and powerful customer engagement solution. The deployment went through several iterations including replacing an anonymous webchat solution, launching an authenticated and secure mobile customer engagement application and a conversational AI based self-service solution.

Partner Introduction

Agent IQ partnered with Pinal County Federal Credit Union (PCFCU); a credit union based in Pinal County Arizona. PCFCU is a \$200M institution and has 7 branches in and around Pinal County. PCFCU was established in 1954 and serves anyone who lives, works, worships or attends school within Pinal County. Current membership is around 23k members and 12k households.

Solution

Agent IQ provides a comprehensive customer engagement solution which enables Banks and Credit Unions to not only service their customers and members but to build and maintain personal relationships with each one of their members. The Agent IQ solution uses state-of-the-art AI and Human Language Understanding technology to make the customer engagement more impactful and efficient.



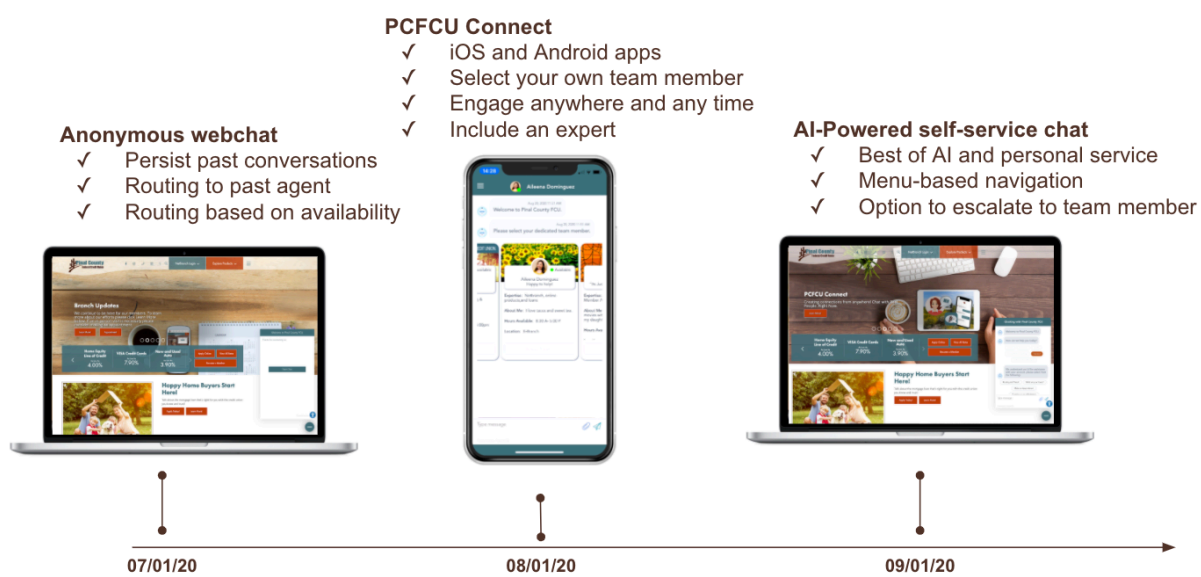
The Agent IQ solution is modular and highly configurable allowing individual modules to be deployed, enabled, and configured separately. This design and implementation enable FIs to quickly deploy the initial configuration of the customer engagement service and then iteratively refine or expand the offering.

Additionally, several internally facing AI-modules-continuously work to help support FI employees with relevant suggestions and information in context as well as extracting and visualizing insights for any engagements on the platform.

Deployment Timeline

PCFCU partnered with Agent IQ to empower the community to achieve financial success by extending their legendary member experience to members anywhere any time and enable leapfrogging the digital service offerings of their larger competitors. Nonetheless, given the available resources it was imperative to break out the rollout and deployment into smaller, incremental segments and follow an iterative approach to ensure quick progress without disruption to existing services or any negative impact on the member community.

To achieve these goals, the initial rollout was limited to replacing the existing anonymous webchat solution. From there, additional services were rolled out once the team adjusted and positive member feedback was verified.



In three months, PCFCU has completed three iterations and incrementally deployed:

- Anonymous web chat, launched 07/01/20
- PCFCU Connect (Authenticated Personalized Service), launched 08/01/20
- AI-Powered self-service chat, launched 09/01/20

Anonymous Webchat

Agent IQ Anonymous Webchat provides FI public website customers with the ability to engage customer service through web-based messaging. Besides providing team-based routing, customer verification support and basic messaging, Agent IQ webchat offers several notable advantages over competitors in the space:

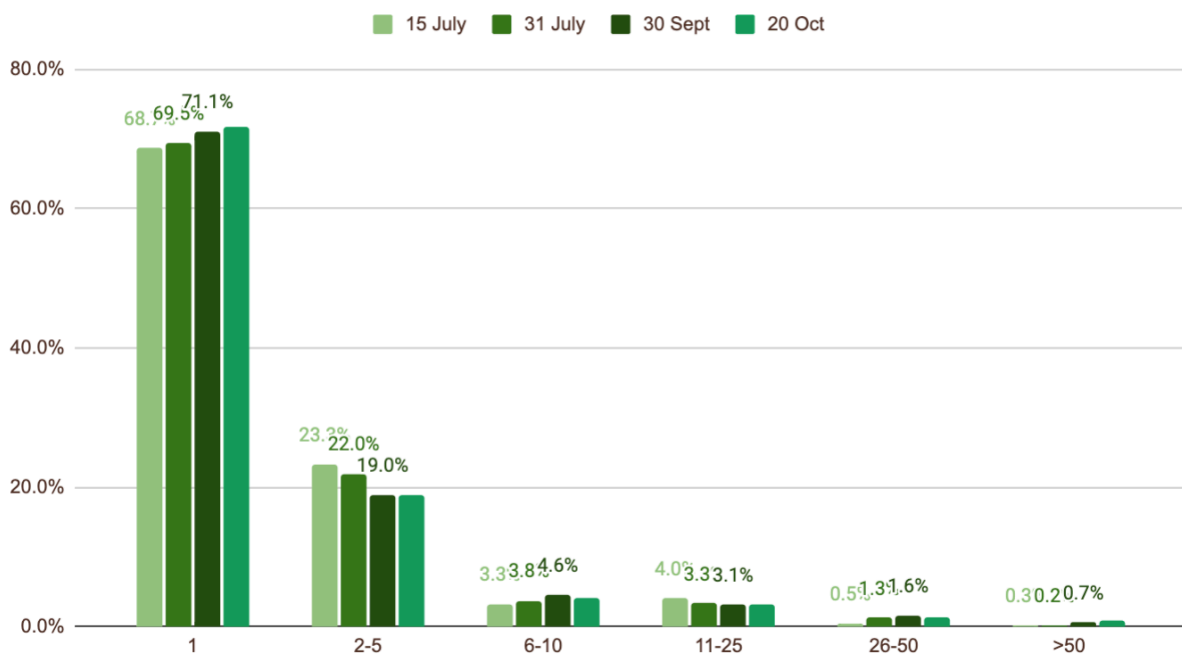
- Agent IQ webchat allows segmentation of customers into different groups, offering different experiences to each group
- Agent IQ persists conversational history across visits and allows agents to understand member needs over time

PCFCU's initial deployment of Agent IQ replaced a webchat solution and is primarily serviced by call center personnel. Before the deployment, the call center team went through a 3-hour training session, which was sufficient for them to start effectively using the Agent IQ web-based agent interface.

Insights

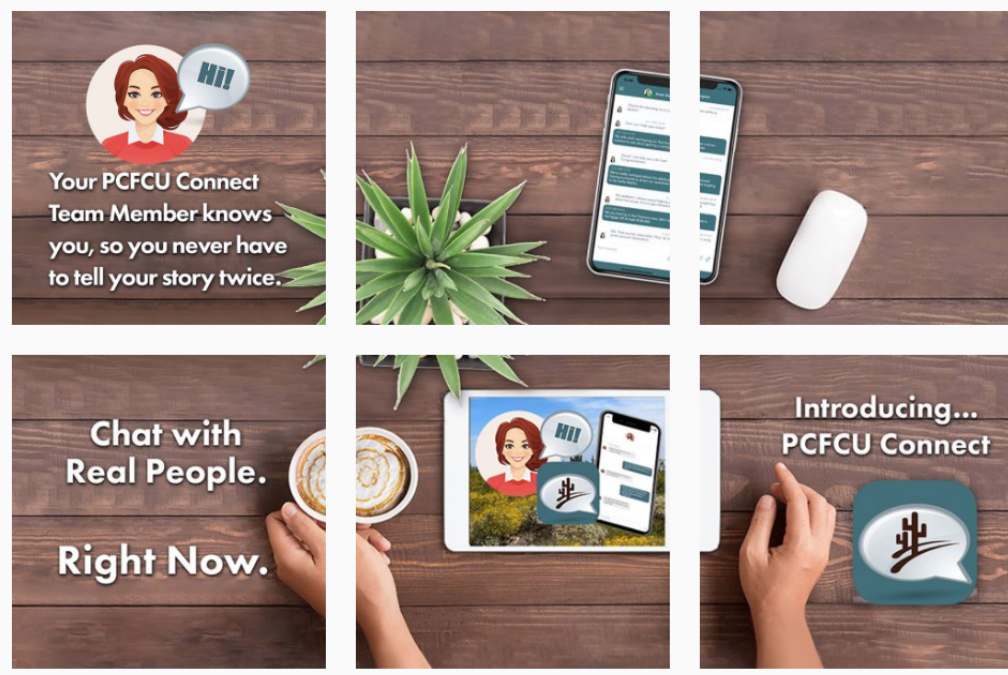
During the initial 3 months, 971 individual members (or 4% of the total population) used webchat; notable is that 31% of those returned to chat more than once, and 10% visited more than 5 times! The repeat visits were not due to unfinished business -- as the average NPS rating of 9.7 clearly shows -- members enjoy the service and interacting with team members. The high number of repeat customers and frequent visits really shows interest in and the potential value of providing the members with a long-term relationship through webchat.

Web Chat Returning Members



PCFCU Connect (Authenticated Personalized Service)

Agent IQ offers a solution for FIs who want to provide a long-term authenticated, personalized service. This can either be integrated into an existing mobile or online banking application or be deployed as a stand-alone branded mobile application. PCFCU opted for a standalone mobile application, PCFCU Connect.



PCFCU Connect was deployed through Apple and Android app stores and made available on 08/01/2020 exactly a month after initial anonymous webchat deployment. Members who download and use this service are primarily served by in-branch employees chosen from several locations. These employees were trained separately from call center employees that primarily serve the anonymous channel, which helped reduce operational overhead and allowed the relevant employees to receive training very close to their respective deployment dates.

The mobile application was promoted through several marketing channels, including social media, email, and the website as well as through prize drawings.

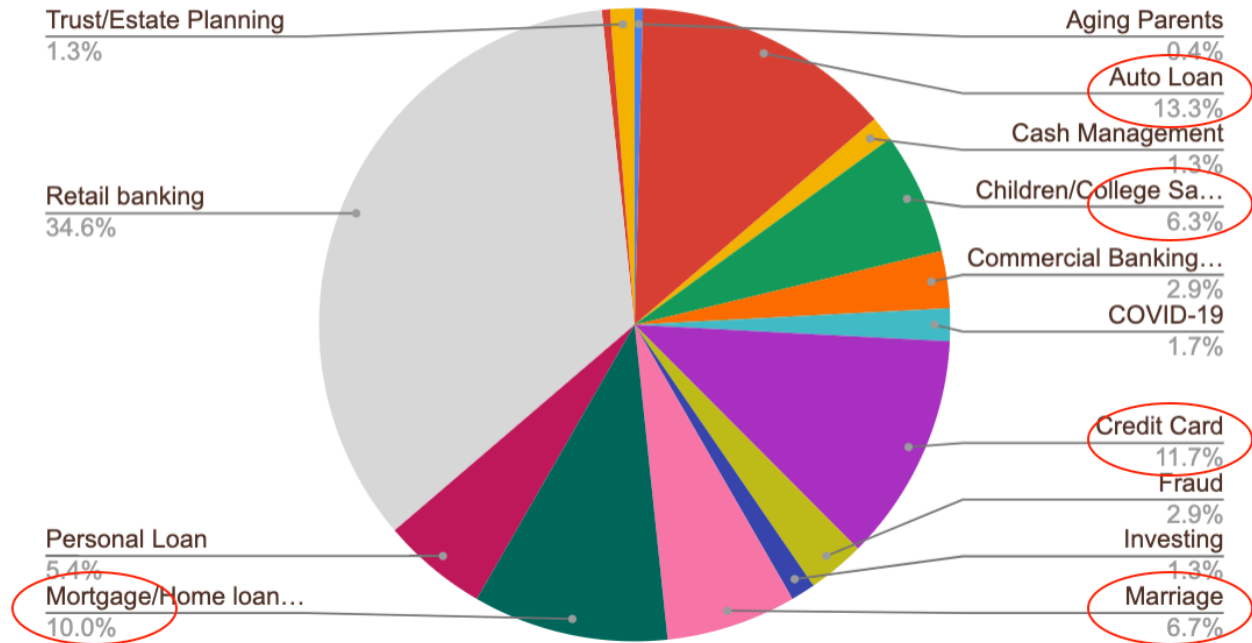
Insights

Ten weeks after launch, 386 members (almost 2% of the total population) downloaded and started using the app. As expected, repeat visits and frequency of visits was higher for this population at 79.3% and with 1.17 conversations / member per month.

One of the benefits of using the Agent IQ solution is the built in AI capability for insight and analysis. This enables institutions to easily visualize the most common conversation topics. Conversation analysis for webchat and PCFCU Connect is shown below.

In addition to retail banking, members frequently discuss other products including mortgages and auto loans. They are also happy to tackle open-ended topics like planning for children/college savings and marriage.

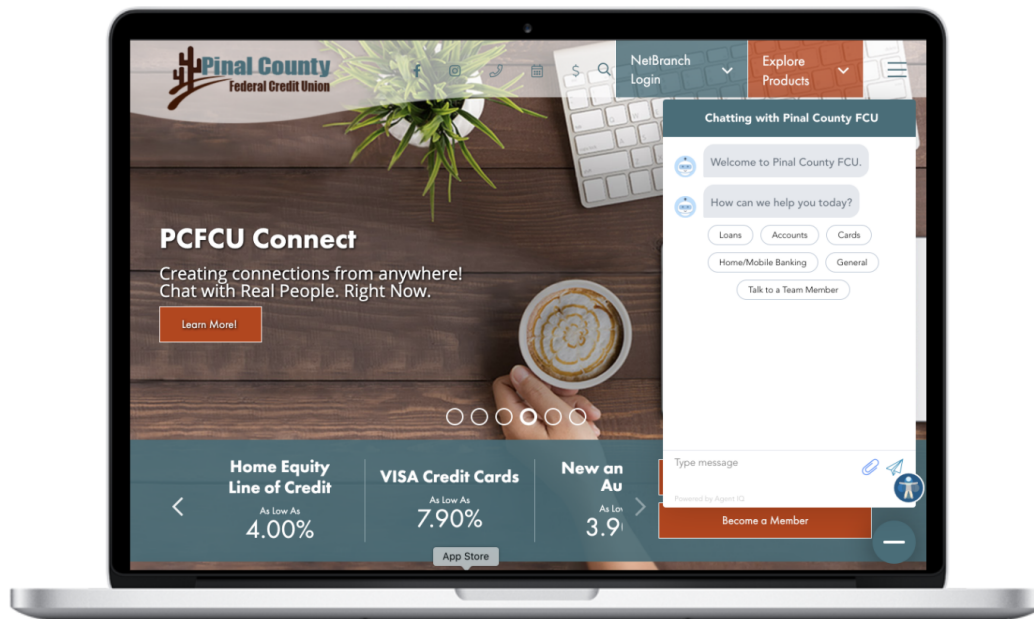
PCFCU Connect Conversation Topics



AI-Powered Self-service Webchat

In addition to human-based engagement, Agent IQ provides a state-of-the-art Conversational AI capability that can be configured through an intuitive, no-code self-service UI and deployed to supplement the overall member experience.

After the successful deployment of anonymous webchat and PCFCU connect, the team turned to improving the member experience while increasing the efficiency and allowing members with basic questions to self-service. Conversation analysis yielded the 6 most common topics and several relevant sub questions. These were added to the solution through the configuration UI and deployed on 09/01/2020. In line with the principle that AI should be used to supplement the experience and not be a moat between members and member associates, an option to be connected to a human team member was included at every level.



It took 2 days to plan out and configure automated workflows and deploy them on top of anonymous webchat.

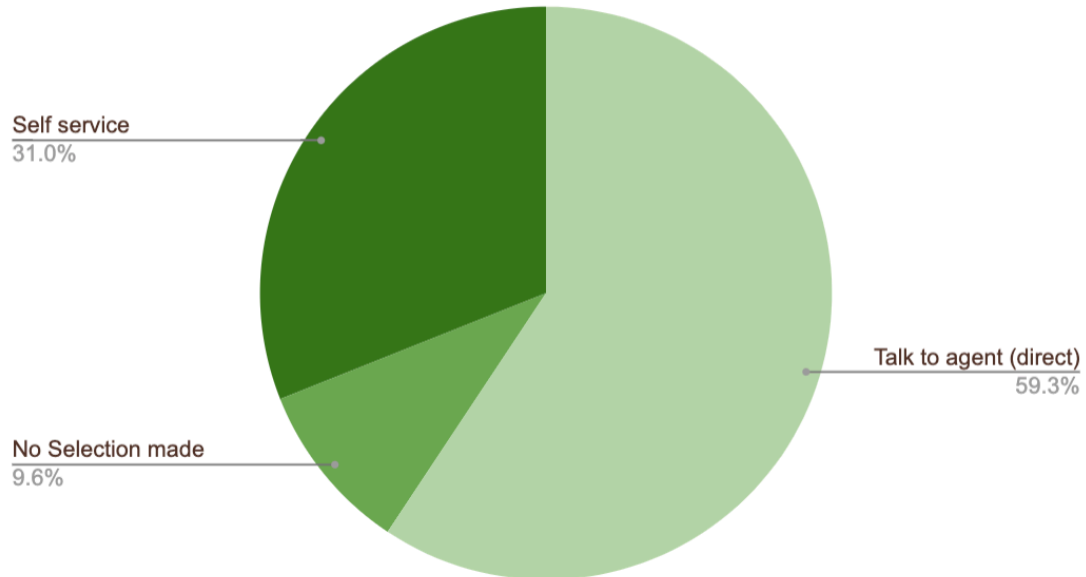
Insights

To better understand member behavior, the engagement data was analyzed. One of the main questions was whether members would choose the self-service support model or opt to talk to a team-member. While the majority did choose to talk to a team-member (59%), almost one third (31%) choose the self-service path. Of those who opted for self-service, 70% completed the journey without reaching out to a team member.

These numbers show that not only are members willing to engage with the AI solution, but that a significant fraction can satisfy their needs without escalation to a human. Furthermore, given the ability to

choose between self-service and talking to a team-member, members can choose the path most-likely to yield desired results.

Web chat member selection



Learnings

In a mere 3 months following the initial deployment of the Agent IQ service to members of Pinal County FCU, it was observed that:

- Members have a keen interest to discuss a wide range of topics through PCFCU Connect with the personal team members.
- Members value having their own team member and will wait for them (71%) even when other team members are available.
- Some members use web chat as a primary way of engaging with Pinal County. Having persistent chats greatly improves the member experience.
- AI is able to serve between $\frac{1}{5}$ and $\frac{1}{3}$ of members engaging through web chat.
- AI analysis of conversations provides deep insight into member needs.

In addition, the combined Pinal County FCU and Agent IQ team also showed that FIs of all sizes can benefit from an iterative approach to deployment. The observed benefits were:

- Lower operational overhead and reduced coordination costs
- Faster time to live deployment and valuable user data
- Enabling gradual adaptation to changes, as well as sufficient and timely communication
- Extending the engagement footprint and capabilities without disruptions to service
- Leveraging data from earlier iterations to increase the beneficial impact of future iterations

FIs that incorporate this approach will benefit from a stronger ability to adapt to changes and are ultimately more likely to be successful now and in the future.

Next steps

Natural next steps in the evolution of the service include integration into the existing mobile banking app and banking backends. These would make access to service more seamless for members and allow the FI to further increase the range of self-service options. More will be shared in future case studies.