



ASB Bank

Consona Customer Management

Consona Customer Management Assists ASB Bank to Deliver Excellent Customer Service

ASB Bank has spent 10 years integrating Consona Customer Management into its business processes and systems to provide its staff with a single customer view.

A History of Innovation

The story of ASB is one of innovation in offering premium customer service and convenience. Since opening as Auckland Savings Bank in 1847, ASB has harnessed technology to initiate many “firsts” for New Zealand’s personal and business banking customers—the country’s first internet banking site; a direct banking operation for customers choosing to interact only through ATMs, internet and phone; online share trading; the option to stop receiving paper statements; online and phone-based high interest savings; enhanced identification controls for increased customer security; a virtual wallet for making and receiving payments online; and browser-based mobile banking (via PDA), to name a few.

According to Greg Lister, CRM program manager for ASB, technology is only part of the picture. “Technology is simply a set of tools for creating additional services and convenience for our customers,” he said. “Consona Customer Management is central to our customer service approach, so much so that we actually can’t easily identify the specific contribution it makes.” That sentiment was echoed by Stuart Armstrong, project manager for ASB Bank, in the retail banking division: “We absolutely do not recognize an ROI for CRM alone because it is so central to everything we do. You simply cannot separate it from our operations.”

Consona Customer Management at the Centre

“Consona Customer Management is the single source of truth for all customer information across ASB’s business areas,” Lister said. In fact, as the central application, Consona Customer Management is interfaced to dozens of other systems throughout the bank’s operations. “It maintains the single view of all customer contacts and history,” he explained. “Every time a customer touches ASB, Consona Customer Management provides a record of all previous contacts so that the bank can quickly assess the customer’s situation and needs.” Integration is important to customer service. When a customer has a change of address, for example, it can be changed in one place and all other databases should be updated. If that doesn’t happen, it can lead to considerable customer frustration, as well as extra costs for the bank.

Having comprehensive information immediately available is vital, of course, but it is equally important to have a system that’s usable. “We have reviewed other CRM offerings,” said Armstrong. “Many CRM systems are too complex. Whether you’re an 18-year-old teller on the front line or a 25-year old experienced personal banker, the technology has to be transparent. Consona Customer Management does this. It provides just what you need a CRM platform to do. It’s simple to use.”



Return on Investment at a Glance:

ASB Bank, one of New Zealand’s top-rated banks, saw the following return on investment after implementing Consona Customer Management and integrating it with its front- and back-office applications:

- Regularly rated as No. 1 major bank for customer service in New Zealand.
- One view of complete customer relationship, and all activities, available to service representatives to enhance customer service.
- Growth in bank business without equivalent expansion of staff numbers.
- Greatly reduced processing turnaround time for loans, credit cards and insurance applications.
- Marketing lead generation and support tied to customer relationships and activities.

“Consona Customer Management just does it. It provides just what you need a CRM platform to do. It’s simple to use.”

— **Stuart Armstrong**, Project Manager, Retail Banking Division, ASB Bank

ASB has leveraged Consona Customer Management to support a dramatic expansion of both services and volume of business in recent years. The system helps over 3,000 staff users and more than 400 call centre operators track more than one million active customers and 2,500 front line staff at 140 branch offices and 20 business and rural banking centres. Consona Customer Management also helps ASB actively pursue marketing activities. “The system tracks opportunities and triggers a representative to contact, say, a customer that has a term deposit that is about to mature,” said Lister. “Our goal is to continue extending our use of the system to offer even more convenience for the customer and to identify products he or she may need.”

Supporting Growth

As system functionality and breadth as well as transaction volumes have increased, ASB has kept a careful watch on system capacity, making sure there is enough power on hand to deliver a fast response. “The users have come to expect sub-second response time for everything, from their experience with video games, mobile phones, and the like,” Lister said. “We have to stay ahead of the increasing demands to make sure they get what they need and the system is truly responsive.”

Interestingly enough, the transaction levels in the branches have decreased while overall engagements with customers have increased. Lister and Armstrong agree that this is another sign of success as more customers are relying on direct channels to communicate with the bank and conduct their business—the web, ATMs, and phone-based facilities.

Even though both men preferred not to discuss direct ROI, it is obvious that there has been considerable cost savings for ASB, as staff numbers have not increased commensurate with the increases in business. “If we had not been able to significantly reduce the turn-around time for processing home loan applications, for example,” Armstrong said, “we would have had to add significantly more staff in our lending operations.”

Processing a home loan application used to be a 14-step process involving several tasks that were paper-based. The process is now highly automated in a continuous, streamlined, quick-response system. Approval time for personal loans has been slashed from 24 hours to between 15 minutes and one hour. Insurance transactions can be completed in 15 minutes.

As the bank continues to grow in customer numbers, branches, business volumes and services offered, Consona Customer Management will be at the core of customer service and convenience. “We are continuing to integrate more applications,” Lister said, “to maintain that single face of ASB for all customers in all areas of activity.”

More Than Just CRM

Consona Customer Management is a true enterprise CRM solution for ASB Bank. It is used for a variety of workflow functions including loan document processing; trace requests to support areas; a wide variety of administrative forms; and more. The solution is used to track core sales activity through structured notes, which are passed to the sales reporting systems.

Future projects will expand processing capabilities further into the commercial areas of the bank’s business and also extend online origination capabilities. “It’s a mature system,” Armstrong said, “totally embedded into the culture of ASB. But that doesn’t mean there are no more opportunities to extend the reach of the system and develop even more convenience for our customers.”

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~**Greg Lister**,
Program Manager – CRM,
ASB Bank

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Consona Corporation
77 Pacific Highway North Sydney,
New South Wales 2060 Australia

+61 (02) 9409-4300

info-au-nz@consona.com
www.consona.com/crm

