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Several Using All-In-One Solution to Bundle 5 E-Services

By Kevin Jepson, *Technology Writer*

EDISON, NJ,—An all-in-one electronic finance center is changing the way money looks—and the way members do money—at a number of credit union homebanking sites.

The online solution, called Money HQ, bundles five electronic services, including account aggregation, funds transfer, and bill presentment, into a single sign-on website. Money HQ is offered by Online Resources of McLean, Va.

Last month, *The Credit Union Journal* reported that both San Francisco-based Patelco CU and Tampa, Fla.-based GTE FCU have switched to the integrated aggregation and funds transfer portion of the platform, driven by CashEdge, Inc. In sum, 18 credit unions nationwide have signed on with Money HQ since its launch in May.

The Verdict: 'Brilliant'

Brent Evans of Watermark Credit Union in Seattle calls the five-in-one online services concept "brilliant." The cautious vice president of IT will implement the innovative platform "sometime this year."

And Money HQ was named 2003 Innovation of the Year by Financial Insite's Online Banking Report. Money HQ makes some sense out of languishing account aggregation technology by bundling it with related online services in "an innovative model that could speed adoption," according to Jim Bruene, editor of *Online Banking Report*.

Meanwhile, the blue-collar membership at \$152-million Pinnacle FCU is grabbing at the platform, according to Jeanne Chichelo, the CU's senior vice president.

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Nevertheless, more than 100 members signed up for the service one month after the October launch date. That's almost 6% of Pinnacle's homebanking population. "We were expecting 50 members to sign-up in one year," Chichelo said.

Pinnacle has 4,500 active checking account holders, and about 1,700 active home banking members, she said.

The fee-based service combines account aggregation, bill presentment, account-to-account (A2A) transfers, person-to-person (P2P) payments, and balance and electronic bill alerts. Members have the option to conduct next-day inter-institution transfers.

"I can see all my financial accounts on one website with one password," Chichelo said. "I can also perform transactions between institutions or with a friend."

What Members Get

Pinnacle members get Money HQ and bill pay free for three months, after which they pay \$5.95 per month, said Chichelo. Pinnacle CU pays Online Resources about \$5 per month per user.

Chichelo said the credit union may implement relationship-based pricing for the service.

In addition to Money HQ, Online Resources provides branded Pinnacle

Anywhere bill pay and Internet banking services to the 33,000-member CU.

Now that members have greater opportunity to manage and move money online, Pinnacle is watching paper check and ATM transaction volume. Chichelo said that members are writing 10% fewer checks in the first two months of 2004.

The decrease in paper checks and ATM activity may also be linked to Pinnacle's new debit card product, she added.

Even though the CU added check imaging last year, Chichelo said that members seldom ask for the service because they are writing fewer checks.

"There have been a lot of promises made about paper checks disappearing," she said, "but Money HQ brings the checkless society to life.

Money HQ may help Pinnacle become members' primary financial institution, Chichelo said. "This product helps us give the impression that Pinnacle is everywhere. Once members get used to using Money HQ, it's all they'll be able to live with. Eventually, we'll get members' primary checking accounts and win over all their other products."

Chichelo herself has a couple favorite Money HQ features. "Being able to see my stocks in real time and transfer money immediately is so nice. And you start to appreciate P2P transfers when you owe money to someone".

CUJ Resources

For additional info on this story:

* Pinnacle FCU at www.bakelite.org or www.thinkpinnaclefirst.com

* Online Resources at www.orcc.com