



Visual Merchandising Makes the Most of Member Branch Visits

With all the promise and widespread usage of digital banking, it might seem logical that branches will somehow start to become unimportant and unused. However, the branch remains a critically important channel for credit union members, who will continue to visit even though digital capabilities are available. **In fact, an Accenture study¹ found that a full 87 percent of consumers plan to visit their financial institution branches in the future.**

Today, members use branches and digital channels for different reasons. For instance, although digital deposit capabilities are often an option, many members feel more comfortable making their deposits in person. Other members might use digital deposit, but only visit the branch for functions they can't easily complete online that gives them, like loan applications and new account openings.

Credit unions should consider their branches an important member touchpoint. The branch provides a great opportunity to reach members with strategically targeted messaging while they're in a location to conduct business. This gives credit unions a unique opportunity to inform members about their products and services, communicate their messaging and branding, and nurture positive relationships that lead to an improved member experience.

Implementing a comprehensive, high-quality, and strategic visual merchandising program can help credit unions make the most of the opportunity to connect with and educate members during branch visits. Deseret First Credit Union recently implemented a successful visual merchandising program in its branches.

Read on to find out how Deseret First Credit Union got its visual merchandising right.

Challenge

Founded in 1955 and headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah, Deseret First Credit Union (DFCU) operates 11 branches throughout the state and serves more than 60,000 members. The credit union's field of membership is anyone who is a member of, or related to a member of, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS), or works for one of the select employee groups. Like other financial organizations, DFCU had been



experiencing a decline in transactions and branch traffic, so it wanted

to optimize its marketing efforts in brick-and-mortar locations. In doing so, DFCU looked to leverage the point-to-sell and transaction moments and provide compelling imagery and provocative statements to spur members into action during their branch visits, boost member loyalty, and increase share of wallet.

Previously, DFCU had worked with various print vendors that provided lobby posters on easels and attached to teller stations. Because each of the credit union's branches had been built at a different time or acquired over the years, their layouts and architectural designs were different and therefore didn't have the same look and feel. Marketing materials lacked a high-quality, professional appearance, and in many places, they were out of members' line of sight and obstructed pathways.

DFCU wanted to improve the appearance of its physical locations and better utilize its branch space. The credit union hoped the improvements would boost transactions and increase loyalty for existing members while creating an inviting, contemporary branch atmosphere that could attract new members. It wanted to create a consistent look and feel in its messaging and branding across all branches, to inform members about product offerings and inspire them to deepen their relationship with the organization.

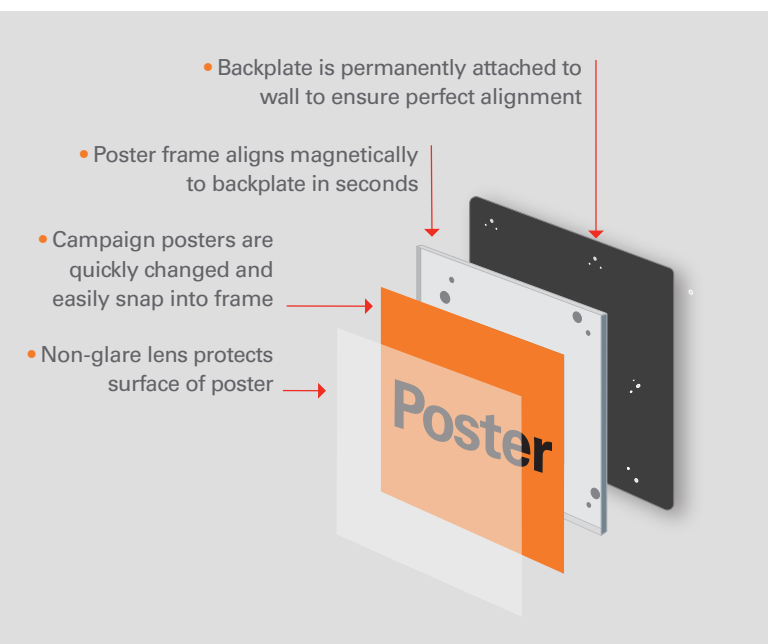
Solution

DFCU approached visual merchandising design firm Kane Graphical, of Chicago, to create an effective visual merchandising program. DFCU is now taking a progressive approach to transforming its branches, starting with one branch and ultimately upgrading all locations. The credit union worked with Kane Graphical in November 2017 to refresh its South Jordan location, and once the visual merchandising program was up and running, DFCU began transforming its Taylorsville branch.

Central to DFCU's visual merchandising program is Kane Poster Blocks,[™] a display system comprising quality graphics mounted to a series of 22-inch-by-22-inch frames that create an impactful marketing message. The modular frame system can be custom configured



Kane door banding



Kane Poster Blocks system

to create different eye-catching displays in varying sizes. The individual Poster Block components can be easily changed and updated. Because the graphic panels attach to the frames with magnetized strips, staff can quickly swap out panels when they want to change their messaging.

Jared Dance, DFCU's assistant vice president of marketing, oversees the credit union's marketing, planning, and implementation efforts. He explains that the organization knew it would have to invest in branch merchandising to improve the credit union's image. "Not only did we want a consistent look and feel, but we wanted to communicate to our current and prospective members that we are a modern, full-service financial organization that is capable of meeting all their financial needs," Dance says. **"It was an investment, but we knew that once the Poster Blocks were in place, we'd have them for years and see a positive return."**

Dance notes that although DFCU has used other vendors for signage, nothing beats the Kane Poster Blocks for design, quality, and impact. "We looked at other options, but the Kane products were the best fit for us," Dance says.

The Poster Blocks are made of quality materials, they have a very clean look, and they're convenient, according to Dance. **"This tool and resource gives us clear and consistent messaging so every branch will display the same signage inside. Consistent branding is key for any business," he adds.**

As part of its comprehensive branch evaluation, consultation, and installation services, Kane Graphical worked with DFCU to devise several creative campaign options. DFCU provided information about the credit union, graphics, website landing pages, and style guides so Kane could get a sense of its previous efforts. Then Kane presented several customized campaign options, creating extremely detailed mock-ups to demonstrate to credit union executives how the visual solutions would work to achieve the desired effects.

"Kane has a library and a toolkit of its family of products we could choose from," Dance points out. "The company came to the site, took hundreds of photos, and then provided recommendations based on their professional experience. We were in close communication while the final plans were being developed, and then Kane created the documentation and installed the panels within a few days." While the majority of the signage is inside the branch, other components in the Kane Graphical refresh include door banding and drive-through area signage. The credit union swaps out panels on a monthly basis to keep the messaging fresh.



Mortgage campaign — left: 2x2 (44"x 44"); right: 4x2 (88"x 44")

Results

DFCU has completed implementations at two of its branches and has a third in progress. Feedback from DFCU's members and staff has been overwhelmingly positive. "We've received good comments. Our staff likes the overall professional look and feeling of the branch, and they feel that the signage has elevated our image," Dance says. "We've had many positive comments from members, as well, who like the locations' new looks."

DFCU has been so impressed with the striking results of the Kane Poster Blocks that the credit union is evaluating the usefulness of television screens that have long been used to communicate the organization's messaging.

Today, most DFCU branches include televisions, but in light of the credit union's success with the Kane Poster Blocks, executives are reviewing the relative effectiveness of its TVs. "We actually removed the TVs from our South Jordan location because they clashed with the Kane designs," Dance points out. While change is never easy, Dance stresses that it's critical to take the first steps to reach strategic goals.

"If you want to enhance your brand strategy, enhance the look and feel for who you are and what you stand for as a business, look very closely at Kane Graphical," says Dance. "The company can provide solutions and options to enhance your overall interior and exterior marketing strategy. If you want to be progressive as a business, you need to take a look. There's no better time than now to make the change."

For more information

For more information on how Kane Poster Blocks and other products can help take branch marketing to a new level, visit Kane Graphical at kanegraphical.com, call 1-800-992-2921, or email sales@kanegraphical.com.

Coordinated messaging: wealth management and auto loan campaigns — left and right: 2x2 (44"x44")

