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Customer Stories:

Patelco Credit Union



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Patelco Credit Union educates and empowers members with messaging driven by highly

reliable connectivity

- **Business needs** - One of the nation's leading credit unions needed dependable connectivity to power their digital signs it uses to communicate with members.
- **Networking solution** - AT&T connectivity and end-to-end management deliver digital messages to credit union members, freeing Patelco's IT and marketing teams to focus on their core responsibilities.
- **Business value** - The easy-to-use solution gives Patelco the precision to customize messages by location and individual screens within its branches, enabling deeper connections with its members and helping them satisfy regulatory requirements. Remote monitoring tools help ensure uptime and avoid branch involvement in troubleshooting.
- **Industry focus** - Credit union
- **Size** - \$6.7 billion in assets

About Patelco Credit Union

Patelco Credit Union is a not-for-profit credit union committed to serving the financial health and well-being of its 350,000 members. Based in Pleasanton, California, Patelco ignites hope and opportunity for its members by offering personalized solutions, advice, and expertise that empower them to achieve financial freedom. Founded in 1936 with \$500 in assets by employees of the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company, Patelco is in the top one percent of U.S. credit unions with currently more than \$6.7 billion in assets.

The situation

Communicating with its members is vitally important for Patelco. The credit union used an omnichannel strategy to reach its members, including traditional print and broadcast advertising, billboards, and direct mail; online media like websites, email, and social media; and digital signage in its branches. Most of these channels worked well for Patelco, but it had ongoing problems with its digital signs, which often resulted in the failure to launch the credit union's messages according to Patelco's expected schedule. The signs often went down, which

meant that branch personnel, the marketing team, and IT staff had to divert time from more productive work to troubleshoot the problems. Patelco needed a turnkey solution from a dependable communications provider.

Solution

Patelco turned to AT&T to supply the highly reliable connectivity to power its digital signage. The AT&T team focused on getting the digital signage to communicate the correct messages at the specified time. Besides communicating key messaging with their customers, it would free the IT and marketing staff to focus on their core responsibilities. Remote monitoring tools enable AT&T to detect and rectify most issues before they are seen and avoid any need to involve branch colleagues in the maintenance process.

Making life better for members

Optimism is in Patelco's DNA. The credit union was founded in the depths of the Great Depression with \$500 in assets by employees of Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company. Today Patelco is in the top one percent of U.S. credit unions, with more than \$6.8 billion in assets.

"We are definitely on a path to \$10 billion, and we're making great strides to get there," said Rina Johnson, Patelco's Vice President of Marketing. Johnson believes the authenticity and genuineness of the credit union's staff is responsible for the organization's continuing growth. "Everyone from our executive leadership to our frontline and back office staff really believes in our mission and cause, and we're on a journey together," she said.



Part of that journey involves helping make life better for credit union members, which includes activating a disaster relief program for members facing crises. "Living in California, unfortunately, we tend to deal with wildfires and other types of disasters. For instance, we enacted a disaster relief program to help members whose lives were affected by the government shutdown," she said. "We try to take some of the burden off our members who are already experiencing hardship because of things that are out of their control."

These programs involve special loan products at very low or even no interest, and waiving fees if members have to use another financial institution's ATM. "We have also deferred payments on hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of loans," Johnson said. "It's definitely something that we're really proud of. We'll always continue to support our local communities."

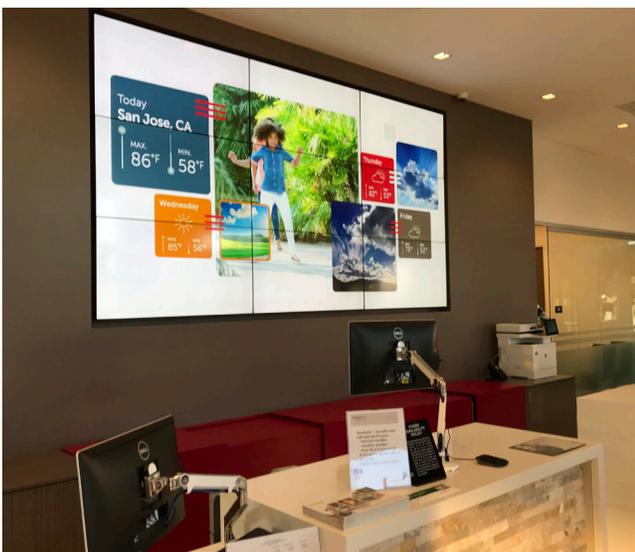
A higher standard

Because credit unions are not typically as well-known as most banks, Patelco staff spend a significant amount of their time educating consumers. "We talk a lot about the value proposition, but as a nonprofit

we don't have big dollars to spend. It's tough for us to compete from a traditional marketing perspective," she said.

Patelco works hard to create awareness of the benefits of membership because there truly is a difference, she said. "As a credit union, we're a member-owned financial cooperative. Our shareholders are our members, so for us it's all about giving back to our membership," she said. "We hold ourselves to a higher standard. We care most about people and that's deeply rooted in our mission. We create and design products and services with our members' financial wellness in mind, not our bottom line."

The strategy is working well for Patelco. "Once someone becomes a member of Patelco, they tend to stay a member," Johnson said. "We have about 350,000 members right now and membership is growing year after year. The exciting thing about our business is that there's still so much opportunity out there."



Support at every life stage

Last year Patelco decided to revitalize its brand by moving from an emphasis on rates and fees to a mission and purpose-based brand. "We're all focused on the goal of improving the financial health and well-being of our members," Johnson said. "We want to be the lender and financial institution of choice for our members through every stage of life, to help them manage day to day and whenever they need support and help. We want to be there to provide them with the counsel, guidance, products, and solutions that'll get them there."

Johnson said she and her colleagues are proud of the credit union's unwavering focus on members. "We don't look at them as customers. We really value the relationship and trust that they've put in us," she said. "Everything that we do from a marketing perspective is really from the lens of sharing information about how our products and services and a relationship with Patelco can improve our members' lives."

Whether members have a need today or tomorrow, it's important for Patelco to understand them and deliver information that is important to them, she said.

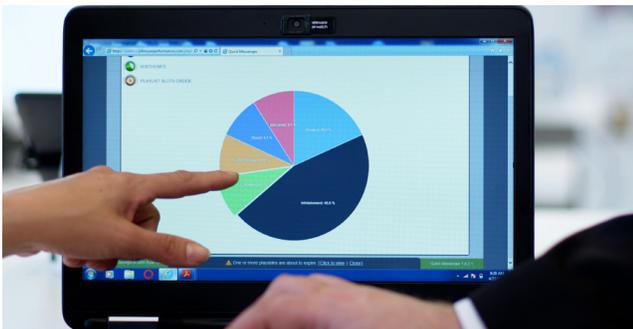
Patelco uses a variety of media to reach members and potential members, including traditional media and new online channels. The company also used digital signs to create custom messages for its members in branches. However, its digital signs were unreliable, and often failed to launch the credit union's messages on the schedule that Patelco's marketing team had created.

“There was a real lack of reliability. We didn’t have much faith that what we were posting was actually getting published on the schedule we set,” Johnson said.

“There was a lack of transparency, so when things were down, we didn’t know about it. And we had limited customization options,” she said. Patelco needed a turnkey solution with rock-solid connectivity from a dependable, professional communications provider.

Engaging and educating members

Patelco Credit Union chose AT&T to deliver the connectivity its digital signs required. Thanks to the services provided by AT&T, the credit union now disseminates the correct messages exactly where



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Rina Johnson,

Marketing Vice President, Patelco Credit Union

and when the marketing team wants them to be delivered.

The credit union considers the digital signs an important tool for engaging members, so they’re often used in high-visibility spots behind the tellers. “As members are walking into a branch, we want the signs to be one of the focal points that draw them in,” Johnson said.

Patelco provides the content imagery and a schedule, which AT&T puts together and publishes. The content varies from advice on financial health to product and service promotion to community events. “Right now we’re supporting the March of Dimes ‘March for Babies’ walk in Pleasanton, so we might promote that to let members know that we’re a proud sponsor and ask them to join in our efforts to support that cause,” she said.

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Collaboration engages members and partners

Collaboration is important to Patelco, Johnson said. “We don’t have standard vendor relationships as far as I’m concerned. If we’re going to invest the time and energy into a provider that’s going to help grow our business and achieve our goals, it has to be a company that is truly invested. There’s got to be a mutual level of understanding and time investment,”

she said. “Otherwise I think you get a standard cookie-cutter solution. When people are really engaged—and that includes the providers that we have—I feel like we definitely can achieve better results together.”

Johnson said she’s happy with her team’s collaboration with AT&T. “It’s amazing. Really fantastic. I think our AT&T account team is very engaged in our business, which is definitely important.”

AT&T provides Patelco with mobile broadband and location connectivity and provides the credit union’s digital signage virtually seamlessly. If there are questions or concerns, Patelco has one vendor to work with, which greatly simplifies operations.

The AT&T solutions are also easy to use, Johnson said, which is important because of regulations with which credit unions must comply. “For example, we offer financial solutions, products, and services that aren’t insured, so we’re not allowed to promote these in the same area where we promote insured products such as the teller area,” she said. “It’s really great because we can customize the content in our branches with multiple screens to highlight our financial solutions services on at least one screen.”

Customizing messages to build connections

The ability to target its messaging makes the communication more personal, Johnson said, so members and guests that walk in can get a deeper

connection with the people who will be serving them. “I think that’s always comforting and reassuring. It makes us a little more approachable,” Johnson said. The AT&T Digital Signage solution is able to associate the right expert name and photos with the right site, requiring very little effort from Patelco marketing to create site-specific messages. “We didn’t have that before and the ability to make customized changes is something that we can now do much more easily.”

The AT&T platform also helps with compliance efforts by enforcing business rules on what messaging types are allowed to play in specific areas of the branch—especially, avoiding investment messaging in transaction areas.

Patelco is pleased that its digital messaging has become a stronger part of its overall marketing efforts. “People constantly need to be reminded and the message needs to be reinforced,” she said. “We send someone a direct mail piece, they go online and see the message again, or walk into a branch and see a digital ad that supports that same message. That’s what it’s all about for us.”

Patelco will continue to invest the time to find ways to educate people on the credit union’s value proposition. “We’re not trying to lure people away from banks; we’re just trying to be an option. If someone needs a loan or another type of product or service, we just want to be considered,” she said. “Repeating our message helps us to continue to get our brand out there.”