Banking case study

A to Zelle®: Bank upgrades its P2P digital payment app

To keep up with customer demands for quick and easy online transactions, a leading US bank upgraded its Zelle® mobile app with convenient QR coding.

At a glance

Industry
Banking

Challenge
To enhance its customers' digital experience and facilitate digital and self-service transactions, the bank sought to upgrade its Zelle platform with QR code functionality.

Success Highlights

- 100,000 enrolled within month of launch
- 5 million customers in rollout
- 28 million Zelle transactions in first three months

The challenge
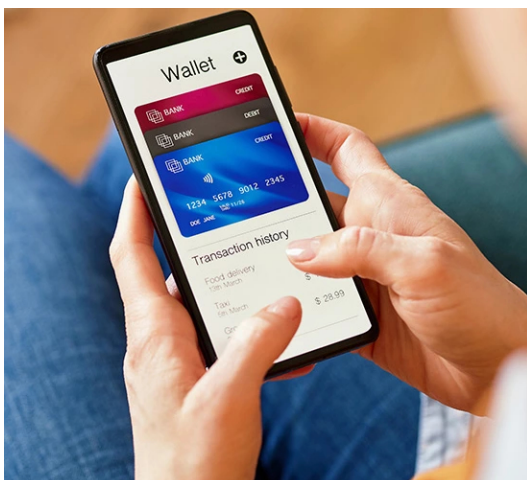
A Top-10 bank in the US serves millions of customers across the country, offering a wide range of products and financial services: consumer and small business banking, commercial banking, corporate and investment banking, wealth management, payments, and specialized lending.

Nearly 7 in 10 US online adults used a digital payment to make a purchase in 2023, according to Forrester. Fully aware of this industry trend, the bank offers its retail customers multiple digital channels to conduct transactions, including web and mobile apps. One of those apps: Zelle®, one of the world's leading person-to-person (P2P) payment platforms.

To enhance its customers' digital experience and shift the transaction mix more toward digital and self-service channels, the bank was looking to upgrade its Zelle platform. Specifically, the goal was to add QR code functionality, so customers could receive Zelle payments via QR code without having to log on to the app.

Our approach

Cognizant has long been a trusted IT partner of the bank, consistently engaging with its digital channels team on application and infrastructure support, digital channels development and modernization, QA services, cloud migration and enterprise data, analytics and payments. So when the Zelle QR initiative emerged, Cognizant was the bank's first call.

Cognizant was part of initial strategy discussions, proof of concepts and final execution, all of which were instrumental in building the solution. To construct and implement the Zelle QR solution, Cognizant built a number of cloud-based components from scratch, including:

- Screens to support enrolling customers to a new QR code process
- Mobile widgets to support P2P incoming transfers and enable customers to use Zelle without logon (a competitive differentiator for the bank)
- API services to generate and map QR code and integrate with Zelle external APIs.

The solution tech stack followed a microservice-based architecture and a Java spring boot solution to manage the generation of QR code pass-throughs. Combined with Cognizant's mobile expertise, that ensured native mobility across iOS and Android platforms, as well as spring boot APIs in Amazon Web Services (AWS).

Business outcomes

When the Zelle feature was rolled out—first in pilot, then in successive waves—the bank's app included a new Zelle QR widget that, within a month of launch, was enabled by 100,000 customers. With the new ease-of-use functionality, customers can now simply select a QR code from a gallery to receive payments ,without having to log in to the app.

The enhanced app was subsequently rolled out to around 5 million bank customers, who can now speedily access QR codes from their devices' home screens to quickly and easily make bank transfers.

The upgraded self-service component of Zelle has boosted customer engagement and led to strong growth in adoption—increases of 11% quarter-to-quarter and 40% year-to-year. In the first three months after launch, 28 million Zelle were recorded.

In upgrading its Zelle platform with QR functionality, the bank has enhanced its customers' digital experience, further shifting its transaction mix toward digital and self-service channels—and meeting the robust and increasing customer demand for quick, smooth and simple online banking.

+11%
quarter-to-quarter adoption

+40%
year-to-year transaction growth

5M
customers in rollout

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