

A History of Doing the Right Thing Leads to Greater Outreach and Improved Outcomes

HOUSTON'S FIRST CREDIT UNION CONTINUES TO FOCUS ON COMPLIANT STRATEGIES THAT PUT MEMBERS FIRST

Established as the Houston Postal Credit Union in 1929, to serve the financial needs of local postal workers, Plus4 Credit Union has continued its legacy of providing affordable financial solutions to a greater field of members since its renaming in 2005. Over the years, the credit union has implemented many programs to help its members accomplish their financial goals.



For example, Plus4 implemented JMFA OVERDRAFT PRIVILEGE® to ensure that its courtesy pay strategy was a responsible, fully compliant option that would help members cover occasional overdrafts caused by unexpected expenses, financial emergencies and account balancing errors. According to Plus4 CEO Vladimir Stark, the program has enabled the credit union to give its members what they need to protect their personal finances, while giving the institution compliance and program management peace of mind.

In 2004, credit union management decided to fully take the reins of their overdraft solution and began managing it on their own. Following several years of successful performance, they became concerned that program results weren't maintaining a sufficient level of satisfaction for the credit union, or its members. "We noticed that we were lacking some consistencies in our program outreach, and had some uncertainty about whether our processes and procedures were meeting all regulatory expectations," explained Stark.

It also was very important to the credit union's management team and board that they were serving all of their members properly, with

options to help them address their individual financial needs. "We wanted to make sure that we were maintaining our overdraft program accurately so it would provide the most benefit to as many members as possible," he continued.

Based on previous experience with JMFA, Stark and his colleagues were convinced that the company's level of overdraft program implementation and maintenance expertise—along with its knowledge of the regulatory space—would help Plus4 achieve a level of program consistency that would better serve members and prevent any regulatory risk for the credit union.

Since re-signing with JMFA, Plus4 has continued to experience the benefits of tapping into the company's knowledge and ongoing sensible advice in areas that are critical to its member-focused mission.

INFORMED EMPLOYEES PROVIDE BETTER SERVICE

According to Stark, a major benefit of working with JMFA is the ability to access the company's extensive employee training opportunities. "JMFA's training has always been on-point," he said. "Now that our employees understand the program more completely, they are much more knowledgeable and consistent in how they present it to our members."

He has noticed a difference in the attitudes and confidence level of employees after they have completed JMFA's training. "The folks managing our program were fired up after attending the JMFA Academy," he commented. "They had more clarity and understood exactly what they had been missing in our program, as well as where they needed to focus in order to fix it. When they came back to the credit union, they shared that training with other employees to spread the knowledge and understanding to their co-workers."

NEXT GENERATION TECHNOLOGY LEADS TO GREATER RESULTS

Prior to working with JMFA again, one of the areas of concern for the credit union was its ability to monitor how members were using the program. "We weren't able to track program use and results as effectively as we would have liked," said Stark. "Consequently, we weren't able to precisely identify which members had opted in to coverage for POS and ATM transactions. Now, with JMFA's software, we have the means to see who has been participating and can identify which members we haven't spoken to about the program—or who might need a follow-up to help them use the service more effectively."



"JMFA's training has always been on-point."

"The folks managing our program were fired up after attending the JMFA Academy."

COMPLIANCE EXPERTISE PROVIDES TOTAL PEACE OF MIND

When Plus4 management was contemplating the need to re-evaluate the credit union's overdraft strategy, maintaining regulatory compliance was a key driver in the decision to renew its relationship with JMFA. "We wanted to make sure we didn't violate any regulations related to consumer protection or other regulatory oversight," said Stark.

"Having JMFA review our disclosures gives everyone much more confidence when it comes to avoiding any type of scrutiny from our examiners or possible civil litigation. Plus, the emails I receive from our consultant team reinforce our ability to keep all staff members up-to-speed on what is required. In turn, that enables us to provide more comprehensive, thoughtful member service."

ONGOING ACCESS TO BEST PRACTICES INCREASES OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Overall, Stark appreciates the commitment JMFA's team maintains toward the credit union. "I am able to call my contacts to ask questions, request additional training or set up a meeting to discuss an action plan to address any needs we might have," he explained. "The JMFA team is very responsive. They understand our business and our objectives. They have been a great strategic partner that works alongside our staff to help us accomplish our goals."

WHEN IT ALL COMES TOGETHER AS PRESCRIBED, EVERYBODY WINS

Plus4 Credit Union takes seriously its responsibility to provide members with the programs and services they rely on to shape their finances for long-term success. For Stark and his team, this means maintaining programs that are based on responsible and sound practices, that utilize technology efficiently, and that are delivered in a consistent and transparent manner.



"The JMFA team is very responsive. They understand our business and our objectives. They have been a great strategic partner that works alongside our staff to help us accomplish our goals."

"Thanks to JMFA's fully transparent disclosures and ongoing communications resources, members have more confidence in what the overdraft service offers," he said. "As a result, more are inclined to consider the program as an option to support their financial security."

RESPONSIBLE SERVICE SUPPORTS A SERVICE-DRIVEN MINDSET AND MISSION

For anyone who is on the fence about the value a courtesy pay program adds to the member service experience, Stark offers this advice: "If providing excellent service is part of your mission, then JMFA OVERDRAFT PRIVILEGE® is a sensible solution. It is a socially responsible, compliance-guaranteed program that is maintained around sound financial practices."

From a performance standpoint, Stark believes that a by-product of consistently delivering a solid solution, such as JMFA OVERDRAFT PRIVILEGE®, is an increased level of comfort and empowerment for members—which leads to stronger relationships, loyalty, and business growth opportunities.

About John M. Floyd & Associates

JMFA is one of the most trusted names in the industry. Whether it's recovering lost revenue, uncovering new savings with vendor contract negotiations, creating more value, serving account holders better or delivering a 100% compliant overdraft service—JMFA can help you deliver measurable results with proven solutions. To learn more, please contact your local representative or call us at (800) 809-2307.