

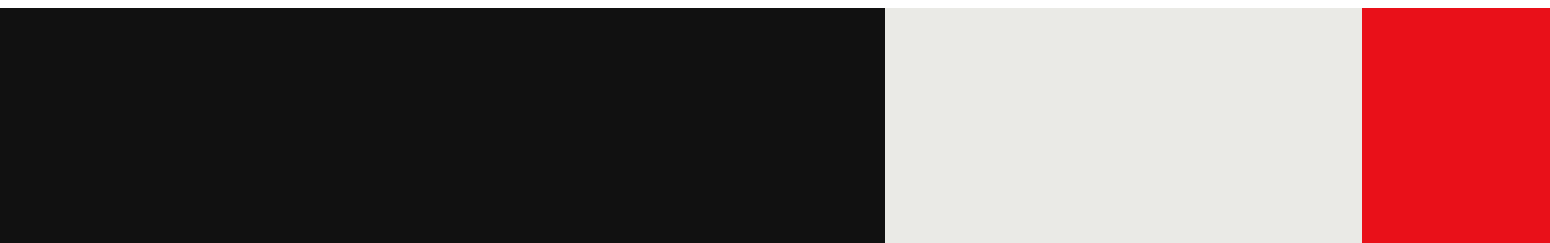
# Most banking customers only go to the branch when they have to

Article



**The data:** According to data collected through Temenos' April 2021 [survey](#), **three in five** customers said their last visit to a branch occurred because they needed to go there, rather than because they wanted to.

Further, consumers increasingly favor digital channels—with **65%** and **51%** of users preferring mobile and online, respectively, as opposed to just **42%** preferring branch visits.



**Shutting branches—or staffing up?** The new data provides a sobering outlook for bank branches, and echoes the [sentiments](#) expressed by a majority of global banking executives. Not surprisingly, the number of bank branches continues to decline across the country—not a single one of 10 of the largest banks in the US [increased](#) its branch footprint from 2017 to 2020.

In-branch banking is near the bottom of the barrel for features that US banking customers [prefer](#) when selecting a financial institution. But even though physical locations have fallen out of favor, consumers still value being able to speak with a human representative: **Nineteen percent** of those surveyed for Temenos’ study indicated that increasing access to people should be the top item that banks focus on.

**The big takeaway:** Banks should employ a hybrid branch model that prioritizes more complex, in-person services—which are more effective in building customers’ trust.

Consumers still place weight on being helped with complex, infrequently used services on their branch visits: Just 1% said they will be less likely to [purchase](#) high-value products in person once the coronavirus pandemic subsides.

Banks should go beyond simply facilitating basic transactions, and utilize their branch networks to provide meaningful experiences to customers at important moments in their lives —**29%** of those surveyed by Temenos found “solutions that helped them reach their life goals” to be appealing.

Offering high-value services in-branch would make better use of a bank’s resources and would go a long way toward establishing trust with customers— an [important](#) need that many consumers have cited.

**Number of US Bank Branches, by Financial Institution, 2017-2020**

*number of bank branches and % change*

	2017	2018	2019	2020	% change
Wells Fargo	5,814	5,627	5,363	5,228	-10.1%
JPMorgan	5,146	5,037	4,925	4,884	-5.1%
Bank of America	4,515	4,396	4,253	4,173	-7.6%
Truist Bank	3,429	3,154	2,896	2,864	-16.5%
U.S. Bank	3,090	3,051	2,909	2,271	-11.9%
PNC Bank	2,487	2,410	2,330	2,253	-9.4%
Regions Bank	1,423	1,410	1,401	1,346	-5.4%
TD Bank	1,260	1,243	1,234	1,219	-3.3%
Citibank	702	700	695	692	-1.4%
Capital One	640	581	473	436	-31.9%

Source: NCR, "Research Brief: Bank Branch Closure Update (2017 - 2020)," Dec 14, 2020

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