

MANAGING YOUR MONEY

Are Banking Tasks Eating Up Your Lunch Hour?

(NAPS)—Admit it. How many paydays have you spent standing in line to cash your check, pay a bill or make a deposit? Or maybe it's a Saturday task that takes up precious leisure time. For more than 25 years, consumers have been getting fast cash from the ATM, but when it comes to making deposits, cashing checks, buying money orders, or doing other necessary banking or bill payment transactions...well, that's another story.

The good news is it's never been easier to do all your banking in one stop. Transactions that currently only take place at the teller's counter are moving beyond the payday lunch hour to 24/7 availability.

According to NCR, the world's leading manufacturer of ATMs, bankers and retailers alike are discovering the benefits to offering expanded service choices. Customers like the convenience of being able to deposit funds, pay bills and take care of a myriad of self-service financial transactions at a location and time of day that they determine. For example, NCR's Convenience TouchPoints™ ATMs help 7-Eleven stores provide a gamut of services at the ATM, such as wire transfers, money orders, and check cashing. Automation can bring additional service locations, particularly where a bank may not be able to justify a full branch operation.

Phil Kasper, director, NCR Americas region Marketing, said, "Traveling to the nearest branch within banking hours will become unnecessary. Just as banking hours no longer apply for cash dispensing, the new super-function ATMs make banking hours irrelevant for these other widely preformed financial transactions."



ATMs today offer much more than traditional cash withdrawal. You can cash checks, buy money orders, wire money or even pay bills without standing in the teller line.

The implications of this change go beyond 24/7 access. The branch of the future is more likely to become a friendlier, open-plan sales office offering more than the traditional banking services. In Norway, branch personnel sell real estate and insurance alongside the more usual banking mix. In the U.S., Fidelity Investments uses NCR's deposit automation to accept checks, offering a printed copy of the check on the customer's ATM receipt. Branch staff concentrate on assisting customers with more sophisticated transactions. Of course, you could still visit the traditional branch during lunch on paydays...some very futuristic branches are even experimenting as cyber-café.

For the customer, the branch is becoming a more 'personal' location without long lines. Individuals wishing to pay bills or deposit a check will do so using Web-enabled ATMs. Customers will have the option of making an appointment with bank staff for other specialized services, secure in the knowledge that their lunch hour will not be spent standing in line awaiting the next available teller.