

Bank revolutionizes its IT infrastructure with managed services

It's a conundrum. Although Montana is one of the largest states by area, it is also one of the least populated. For Darryl Rensmon, that means a lot of wide-open spaces. "Our bank has 29 branches across the state," Rensmon says. "We cover a lot of territory, and it can be difficult to support each location."

Rensmon is the senior vice president/chief operating officer and chief information officer for Opportunity Bank of Montana, a full-service financial institution founded in 1922. The community bank's mission is to provide strong financial futures for Montanans. This mission guides the efforts of all the staff and supports the bank's focus on being part of every community they are in.

Because the bank had challenges efficiently providing technology support to its footprint, a logical step was outsourcing much of the network, technology support and systems. The bank's existing managed service provider faced challenges with inefficiencies and high costs.

Opportunity Bank needed a full-service provider that understood the regulatory environment and could assist with modernizing the bank's technology stack while providing reliable services. RSM US LLP's financial institution technology (FIT) as a service offering was the solution.

A new approach

Opportunity Bank chose RSM to provide managed IT services. The goal of the engagement was to migrate

the bank's IT infrastructure to RSM's modern data center, improve network operations, enhance remote connectivity, ensure uptime and provide the technical know-how to support the bank's strategic initiatives, internal technology team and the entire bank staff.

"We needed a change," Rensmon says. "Our IT infrastructure was old and antiquated, so we couldn't do the things we wanted to do. If you come into work, and your computers don't function well, you just don't feel good about your day."

RSM met with the Opportunity Bank IT team to hone the delivery of virtually all the bank's IT operations, supplementing the organization's internal staff and modernizing the infrastructure. Rensmon says the bank saw immediate improvements.

"We no longer experience the issues we faced in the past," Rensmon says. "We've seen a significant improvement in the reliability of our systems."

In addition to improving the bank's network performance, RSM facilitated seamless upgrades, patches and maintenance, resulting in improved service reliability and operational stability. Furthermore, the modernization of



the bank's IT infrastructure had a ripple effect throughout the organization. The improved technology and operational efficiency boosted employee productivity.

Rensmon says he noticed a significant decrease in IT-related issues among the bank's employees. He adds that the enhanced functioning of critical systems, such as lending platforms and core banking systems, also improved customer interactions and satisfaction.

"With IT, you want to provide timely support when needed," Rensmon says. "Since we transitioned to RSM for managed services, our systems run smoother, and the staff members appreciate the effort to provide resources to help them do their work."

Beyond the technology

Rensmon says that Opportunity Bank has also benefited from RSM's FIT as a service pricing model, which aligns with the bank's asset size and operational performance. He believes this approach allows Opportunity Bank to create an economy of scale.

"I appreciate that as our operations change, the pricing adapts accordingly," said Rensmon. "It's not a fixed-cost structure. There's flexibility based on our needs, which results in substantial cost savings." This model enabled the bank to achieve strategic initiatives without delaying projects due to budget constraints. Rensmon says the bank's staff has renewed confidence in their technology solutions. He says that the evidence for RSM's performance is not just anecdotal, but objective.

"Our systems consistently perform well when reviewed by auditors and external examiners," Rensmon says.

The relationship between RSM and Opportunity Bank continues to evolve. Rensmon envisions the further expansion of RSM's services in addition to providing managed IT services. For example, RSM will be involved in the bank's core contract renewal process. Rensmon believes that RSM can offer insight

and an objective perspective to provide valuable support in making well-informed decisions on such critical contracts.

Rensmon believes that Opportunity Bank will leverage RSM's industry experience and insights to drive constant improvement; embracing cloud technologies and remote support models remains central to the bank's future IT strategy, Rensmon says. He believes that ensuring IT adaptability and efficiency is crucial for Opportunity Bank's success, and he credits RSM for facilitating discussions about ongoing support, strategic planning, innovation and security reviews. Rensmon says the engagement with RSM has created an environment of open communication.

"We have regular meetings to work through any potential issues, and RSM is responsive to our needs," Rensmon says. "There's always somebody at RSM to assist us at a moment's notice."

The takeaway

Rensmon says that with RSM's guidance, the bank has overcome the challenges of managing a widespread IT infrastructure with a limited internal workforce. He believes that by modernizing IT operations and improving service delivery and efficiency, RSM's efforts have enabled bank employees to dedicate their time and attention to meeting the needs of their customers and providing exceptional customer service.

"The patient guidance that we get is so key," Rensmon says. "From the top down, all the way through RSM, people are just very helpful and supportive."

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