NBK in 2020...
Leading Digital Services ... Futuristic Branches... Exceptional Rewards

Initiatives to support entrepreneurs included waiving fees and providing banking solutions to mitigate the pandemic's fallout.

An exceptional year, no one could have expected its outcome, but for Consumer Banking Group at National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), 2020 was continuing for years in preparation for a changing and challenging digital banking future. Looking at the flow of digital services and electronic payment solutions that the bank launched in the first two months of the year, we find clear proof of the product’s positive digital transformation vision, and a huge technological infrastructure with which the group anticipates the exceptional circumstances that prevailed all over the world. Through this, it was able to meet the needs of customers under these challenging circumstances and successfully provide exceptional services, which further consolidated NBK’s excellence and leadership and widened the gap with its closest competitors.

NBK Mobile Banking
Customers’ dependence on mobile banking has increased, as NBK Mobile Banking App has become deservedly the bank’s largest brand and the most important digital channel. The number of users increased by 35% during 2020, compared to last year, whereas the number of transactions made using NBK Mobile Banking increased by 53%, compared to last year.

NBK encouraged customers to make their transactions digitally during the lockdown to keep them safe. Additionally, NBK continued to add new services and updates to NBK Mobile Banking App including Push Notifications service, Bill Payments, electronic branch appointment booking service, adding NBK Mobile Banking App to Huawei Appgallery, allowing transfers to SmartWallet payment, NBK Go Alerts which enable mobile customers receive notifications about exclusive offers, and NBK Rewards Miles while shopping.

This development coincided with a significant increase in the number of new app users, with the increased reliance on mobile devices to conduct banking transactions, with monthly average of 450,000 transactions. Thanks to these updates, customer satisfaction with the services provided through NBK Mobile Banking boosted by 9%.

Closer to You
NBK has proven that it is closer to its customers, regardless of the circumstances, thanks to its various digital channels, which accounted for 89.0% of total banking transactions during the lockdown period, and the lockdown did not prevent the bank from reaching its customers even at their doorsteps through the mobile branch, or inside the qualified areas to meet their necessary needs through mobile ATMs.

NBK Mobile Banking and NBK Online Banking accounted for 83% of banking transactions during 2020. NBK also communicated and transacted with its customers through NBK Contact Center on 18818 and NBK WhatsApp on the same number, as well as call-free contact numbers in many countries around the world. During 2020, the bank answered more than 2.1 million calls through NBK Call Center.

NBK also launched its service allowing account opening electronically, in cooperation with the Public Authority for Civil Information (PAC), becoming the first bank in Kuwait to launch this service allowing customers to open an NBK account electronically, without the need to visit a branch. NBK continued to consolidate its leadership in the market by upgrading its banking network, adding 68 branches, after opening a branch in Bonn, Kuwait, and a wide network of c.14,000 POS terminals, including c.1250 NFC-enabled devices, in addition to the largest ATM network in Kuwait, with c.330 ATMs.

Cutting-edge Payment Solutions
As usual, NBK anticipated, the procyclicality measures imposed by the exceptional circumstances, reengineering the use of cards, by providing various digital payment solutions, which promoted customers’ demand for digital banking transactions. Therefore, 2020 witnessed an, 200% increase in contactless payment transactions, compared to last year, whereas total online credit card rate was 94% on annual basis.

Early this year, the bank launched two advanced digital payment solutions, namely FirstPay and GomisPay, providing customers with a quick and safe payment method. In addition, the bank carried on its accelerated steps toward creating cutting-edge payment solutions, by launching Samsung Pay using MST and NFC technologies.

Futuristic Branch
NBK was keen to accelerate the implementation of its comprehensive vision to evolve from the traditional concept of branches, in order to integrate with digital channels to provide an inclusive and exclusive banking experience for the bank's customers. To this end, the bank opened its new branch at the Avenues Mall.

The new branch is considered a model for futuristic branches, being totally different from the traditional banking branches, starting from its design, the way of providing interactive services and cutting-edge technological solutions, thus ensuring quick and easy transactions for customers, while keeping them safe at the same time. In addition, the new branch includes a space dedicated to meetings and seminars, which will contribute to increasing banking awareness.

Exceptional Rewards
With life returning to normal, NBK set out on an exceptional rewards program, as it announced a 10% cashback campaign, in cooperation with VISA in July, which was extended until 15th March 2021. The bank also launched its cashback campaign allowing eligible NBK MasterCard Credit Cardholders to receive up to 10% cashback on their purchases, which lasted for two months until mid-December.

On the other hand, NBK Salary Transfer Campaign this year was totally exceptional this year, by offering customers who transfer their salaries to the bank to use the service for an interest-free loan up to 125,000, or participating car draws, a non-interest loan up to KWD 13,000, or earning Miles from NBK Kuwait Airways Visa Card, allowing them to travel to London with Kuwait Airways/Chris Cliff.

Premium Banking Services
NBK’s quick response to the changing needs of its Premium Banking Customers due to the prevailing exceptional circumstances was strongly present, by providing them with exclusive services during lockdown period which fit their lifestyles, including: freeremium service for Kuwaitis evacuated from abroad during the full lockdown using special fares, and following all precautionary measures, providing groceries and pharmacy supplies safely, as well as cash delivery to their homes.

Along with the exclusive services, NBK maintained a package of exclusive offers for Premium Banking Customers including: cashback on Netflix subscriptions for Family Banking Customers during the lockdown period to enjoy entertainment and stay safe at home, free insurance package offer, and recently, exclusive reservation for two days for customers at Marriott’s in the Almoainase.

Entrepreneurs
NBK took the initiative to support SMEs and mitigate the repercussions of the crisis on their businesses, as, from the first day, it took quick action by stepping collection of fees for POS terminals and waiving POS monthly rental fees for its customers for a period of 3 months.

The bank remained in touch with its entrepreneurial customers despite the crisis, and even intensified virtual meetings through various electronic platforms, in which it discussed the integrated banking solutions that were provided to be in line with a smooth and easier manner.

With the beginning of new normal, the bank designated 5 additional branches to serve Business Banking Customers, in addition to Al Ain Al Jaber Branch.

Local and Global Recognition
NBK’s efforts and excellence in providing the most advanced services to its customers were remarkably recognized at the local and international levels, as seen in its winning the Best Consumer Digital Bank in the Middle East for 2020 from Global Finance magazine.

NBK also received the Best Customer Service Bank, Excellence Award from Kuwait Public Relations Association (KOPRA).

NBK’s Rewards - Excellence despite the Exceptional Circumstances
The excellence of NBK’s rewards is evidenced by the fact. However, the contributions of Consumer Banking Group employees throughout the year despite exceptional circumstances, deserve appreciation and praise for their relentless efforts, overview spirit, and excellence in meeting customers’ needs, which saw radical changes, but that did not prevent them from providing the usual exceptional banking experience featuring a wide range of top-notch and most advanced banking products and services to NBK Customers.

Consolidated Digital Leadership in 2020
57% Increase in NBK Mobile Banking Transactions
22% Increase in NBK Online Banking
90% Percentage of customer satisfaction with the services provided through NBK Mobile Banking
44% Annual increase in total online card payments
An average of 200% increase in NTFM transactions through NBK Mobile Banking

Digital payment solutions anticipated the extraordinary circumstances by providing various safe payment methods

Launching an exceptional rewards campaign for all customer segments with the return to normal life