

Building a Sustainable Strategy for Acquisition Growth

With tighter margins and shifting consumer expectations, standing out requires more than just attractive rates or one-time incentives. While these tactics might capture attention and drive short-term wins, achieving sustainable growth depends on a strategic data-driven approach to customer acquisition.

According to the Vericast Cash Incentives Survey (February 2026, n=100), 28% of consumers view bonuses as a smart way to earn extra money, while an equal share sees them as a short-term gimmick. When asked, “Have you ever switched financial institutions primarily for a promotional cash offer?” 33% of respondents said they considered it but didn’t switch. Gen Z (16%) was the most likely to take the cash incentive and then leave the FI. For financial institutions, this proves that incentives may open the door to new customers, but developing trust and personalization through consistent value is what encourages customer retention.

By taking a data-driven approach, financial institutions can acquire more low-cost core deposits, lucrative loans, and high-yield customers. Thriving in today’s market means working smarter — using market intelligence to find the right opportunities, personalizing outreach to meet customer needs and refining what works through measurable results.

Focus on High-Opportunity Markets

Financial institutions are moving away from branch proximity or radius targeting and instead using predictive market intelligence to identify and prioritize markets with the greatest acquisition potential. This approach can improve ROI and help uncover high-opportunity geographies that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Most financial institutions already have a treasure trove of first-party data, but it doesn’t capture the broader market perspective. Understanding market dynamics — income trends, competitor saturation, and demographic shifts — can reveal where the best opportunities lie. That is where a partner’s third-party data expertise comes in. When providers weave together this complex set of data sources into a specialized market intelligence platform, institutions gain richer insights into consumer behavior. This knowledge is power — it enables financial organizations to achieve greater engagement and conversion rates, ultimately helping them make more effective use of their marketing budgets.

Make Media Work Smarter, Not Harder

Modern consumers move seamlessly across channels, and financial institutions must follow. For banks and credit unions, this means avoiding blanket strategies and focusing on the touchpoints audiences value most — those that drive the highest ROI — and allocating budgets accordingly. By analyzing performance data across both digital and traditional media, institutions can ensure every channel contributes meaningfully to their overall strategy.

According to [BAI](#), digital channels accounted for nearly 62% of bank marketing budgets in 2025, compared to 38% for offline channels. This shift reflects a growing focus on platforms that deliver clear attribution and measurable results. Digital channels offer efficiency, scale and personalization, but direct mail and other traditional methods can reinforce brand messages and connect locally with customers.

When powered by first- and third-party data, direct mail evolves into a precision tool for local acquisition and cross-sells. It can cut through digital clutter, support compliance for regulated messaging and drive stronger results when paired with digital channels like email. Proximity-based strategies, such as branch geofencing and local event sponsorships, can further strengthen community presence and engagement.

Keep Personalization in Focus

Personalization is no longer optional. [Forrester Research](#) reports that 54% of consumers want financial providers to use their financial data to create personalized experiences. As it becomes easier for consumers to switch financial providers if their needs are not met, delivering a personalized experience is more critical than ever.

The Vericast Cash Incentives Survey found that 44% of consumers are moved by personalized offers, while 42% are influenced by brand reputation (February 2026). Financial institutions that embrace a data-driven approach can deliver messaging and offers that align with individual needs. FIs that can translate insights into tailored, frictionless and locally relevant experiences may be better positioned to attract and retain customers beyond an initial incentive, ultimately building stronger engagement, satisfaction and loyalty.

Personalization starts with understanding audience needs and preferences. Using customer data to create segmented messaging helps financial institutions craft communications that resonate with specific demographics and life milestones. Timely, relevant offers not only build trust but also help institutions stand out in a crowded market. By connecting with customers and members around their financial goals or life stages — such as saving for college, buying a home or preparing for retirement — banks and credit unions can create deeper, more lasting relationships that drive acquisition and growth.

Evaluate and Refine Campaign Performance


Maximizing the impact of marketing campaigns requires advanced reporting tools that evaluate performance, calculate ROI and provide actionable insights to refine strategies. For financial institutions, success in deposit acquisition begins with a clear focus for each campaign — whether it's growing balances, expanding specific customer segments or attracting new accounts and households.

This process starts with understanding the needs of prospective customers or members, projecting desired outcomes, and setting measurable KPIs and milestones to track progress effectively. The need for performance-driven acquisition strategies has never been greater. Despite modest increases at the margins, bank marketing budgets remain largely flat. The [ABA's 2026 Bank Marketers Survey](#) found that most budget categories showed little year-over-year change, signaling continued restraint rather than aggressive growth.

Timely visibility into metrics such as Cost Per Acquisition (CPA), conversion rates and performance by channel or segment provides the data teams need to pivot quickly, double down on what's working and scale campaigns with confidence — while justifying the value of every marketing dollar spent.

Partner with Vericast to Unlock Your Full Acquisition Potential

Acquisition is an ongoing process — not a one-time effort. It demands a sustained, long-term approach to growing your business in a targeted, strategic and sustainable way. Vericast can combine your financial institution's first-party data with our extensive third-party data and expertise in marketing, finance, and media to craft tailored growth strategies.



Using [proprietary data analytics and advanced modeling](#), we identify prospects who align with your ideal customer profile and engage them with personalized, compelling offers through the channels we believe they're most likely to respond to. Continuous reporting and insights allow us to refine strategies over time, aiming at sustained growth and stronger customer loyalty.

With decades of industry experience, a compliance-forward mindset and a broad portfolio of [acquisition and retention](#) solutions, Vericast helps financial institutions across the country solve their biggest marketing challenges and achieve more.

[Discover why financial institutions choose Vericast](#) as their trusted partner for acquiring new customers, deepening customer relationships and fortifying their balance sheets.