

CASE STUDY

# How Peoples Bank grew response balances by \$79M+ in 6 months with better Onboarding

## Key Results

**4x**

increase in marketing execution efficiency

**1,000**

incremental accounts generated in 6 months

**12%**

above norm in Accounts Per Household for New Customers

## OVERVIEW

### How OptimaFI helped

Peoples Bank needed a faster, more targeted way to deepen relationships and support deposit and loan growth. OptimaFI provided ready-to-launch onboarding and cross-sell campaigns, segmentation expertise, and execution support that allowed the bank's lean marketing team to operate at the scale of a much larger bank.

### About Peoples Bank

AUM: ~\$2.4B in assets

Locations: 20+ branches across seven Washington counties

Solutions: Onboarding, Cross Sell

## CHALLENGE

# Growing conversions without overwhelming customers

Peoples Bank champions its customers and prioritizes building long-term relationships within the communities it supports. Expanding existing relationships — through relevant products, timely communication, and consistent engagement — is a natural extension of that commitment.

But effective onboarding and cross selling require multiple, well-timed journeys running in parallel. It also requires reliable and timely data on customer behavior and lifecycle stage. Without a deep well of insights and a proven execution model, it's impossible to scale.

Peoples Bank had worked with vendors that provided tools or execution support in the past, but much of the strategy and segmentation still fell to the internal marketing team. The extra burden limited campaign consistency and made it difficult to sustain high-quality programs.

**“Our previous vendor relied on us to fully customize each of the journeys and identify the best time to reach out. We didn't always have that knowledge, and it took way too long for us to pull all of those pieces together and implement them.”**

#### **Marisa Ellis**

VP & Director of Marketing  
Peoples Bank



### What success required

- Scale onboarding and cross sell without adding staff
- Run multiple lifecycle-based journeys concurrently
- Improve targeting and timing to increase relevance
- Maintain a thoughtful, customer-first marketing approach
- Minimize the hands-on work required of the internal marketing team

## SOLUTION

# Data-backed insights improve relevance and timing

OptimaFI provided Peoples Bank with a clear understanding of where relationship growth opportunities existed. The Opportunity Assessment applied peer benchmarks directly to Peoples Bank's customer base, highlighting where product adoption, engagement, or balances lagged peer norms. This gave the marketing team a data-backed view of which customer segments and products represented the greatest opportunity for onboarding and cross sell.

For Peoples Bank, this approach replaced broad assumptions with focused priorities. Rather than deciding where to market based on gut instinct, the bank could align outreach with areas where customers were most likely to benefit.

**“OptimaFI’s recommendations were based on industry best practices and what was working for similarly-sized banks. That was much more valuable than the anecdotal data we had access to.”**

### Marisa Ellis

VP & Director of Marketing  
Peoples Bank

# Proven workflows reduce internal burden

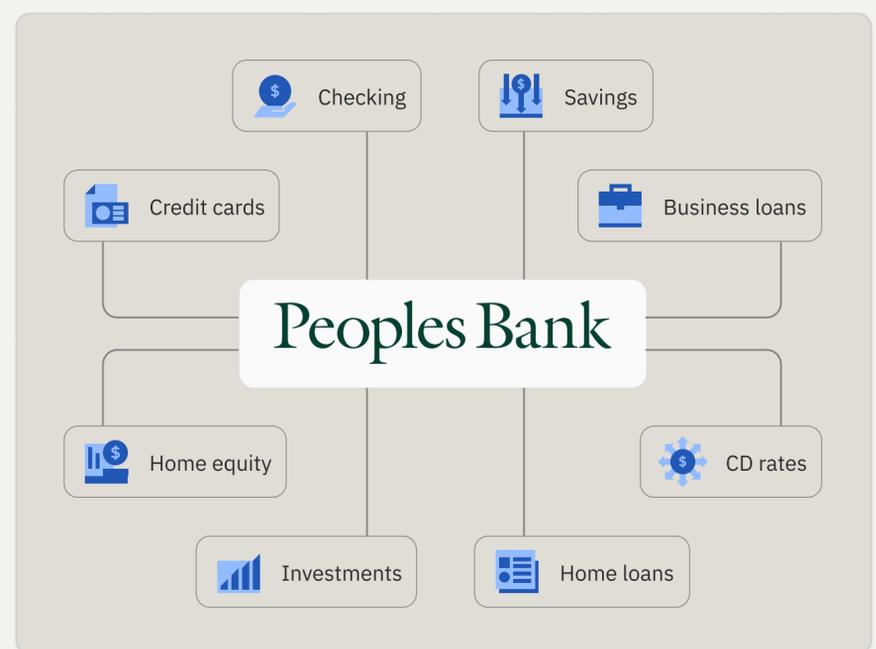
OptimaFI paired peer insights with established onboarding and cross-sell workflows. These workflows incorporate best practices around segmentation, timing, and messaging structure, based on what's worked for similarly-sized banks.

OptimaFI also handled onboarding and cross-sell collateral. Marisa was impressed with how thoughtfully they applied Peoples' brand guidelines to digital ads and physical mailers. They handled all of the creative and didn't add work to the bank's graphic designers.

**“Orchestrating and coordinating this many vertical journeys could easily require at least one or two more FTE. That wasn't realistic for a bank of our size, so that's where OptimaFI comes in.”**

### Marisa Ellis

VP & Director of Marketing  
Peoples Bank



# Confidently scaling execution

Within months, Peoples Bank felt confident in its ability to ramp up campaign volume without sacrificing consistency. Having OptimaFI to handle segmentation, targeting logic, and execution support meant campaigns could launch more quickly, run concurrently, and be adjusted on the fly based on lifecycle needs rather than calendar-driven promotion.

**“We were able to stand up between 6–10 onboarding and cross-sell journeys within the first six months with OptimaFI. We would not have been able to do that on our own.”**

### Marisa Ellis

VP & Director of Marketing  
Peoples Bank

## RESULTS

# Measurable growth from scaled execution

By scaling onboarding and cross-sell efforts, Within six months, Peoples Bank grew response balances by over \$79M and generated 1,000 incremental accounts.

This growth was powered by scalable onboarding and cross-sell efforts, which enabled Peoples to launch and sustain 4–5x more campaigns per year. Work that previously took weeks — defining segments, mapping journeys, and coordinating execution — now too days.

**“Before working with OptimaFI, we would launch around three campaigns a year. Now we’re able to launch at least a dozen.”**

### Marisa Ellis

VP & Director of Marketing  
Peoples Bank

# Strategic execution without added headcount

Beyond account growth, Peoples Bank also saw stronger early relationship depth among new customers. Accounts Per Household for New Customers ran 12% above benchmark targets, based on peer performance insights derived from OptimaFI’s Peer Performance Index, which analyzes 12B+ normative data points from community financial institutions nationwide.

This indicates that onboarding and cross-sell efforts are not only driving account openings but also encouraging customers to adopt multiple products earlier in the relationship.

**“All of the things that I, as a marketer, have to do anyway — email journeys, cross selling, direct mail, digital advertising, etc. — OptimaFI is helping us do them in a much more strategic and targeted way.”**

### Marisa Ellis

VP & Director of Marketing  
Peoples Bank

# Consistency leads to more opportunities

Running onboarding and cross-sell journeys in parallel enabled consistent engagement across customer segments and the ability to connect customers with products that fit their needs.

Marisa says the ability to better connect customers with the products they need when they need them is “every marketer’s dream.” She even shared a firsthand account of a customer learning about a Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC) through one of OptimaFI’s direct mail campaigns, and proactively asking their bank about the product.

**“A customer walked into their nearest branch holding a postcard, and said, ‘This talks about HELOCs. I want to open up a HELOC.’ This sweet customer was proof that OptimaFI’s messaging works.”**

### Marisa Ellis

VP & Director of Marketing  
Peoples Bank

# Build stronger relationships at every touch point.

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