

.BANK Success Story: Badger Bank

www.badgerbank.bank



“.BANK not only aligns with our strategic plan, but it offers us a competitive edge, locally.”

**ROBYN NEWCOMB,
MARKETING DIRECTOR,
BADGER BANK**

Badger Bank is an independent community bank in Wisconsin with assets in excess of \$124 million, and has been in operation for more than 130 years. With four locations in Fort Atkinson, Cambridge, Johnson Creek and Jefferson, Badger Bank features a commercial, residential, and consumer loan department, a trust and investment department, and an independent insurance department.

WHY .BANK?

Before they heard of the .BANK web domain offering, executives at Badger Bank had already identified 2015 as a year to be laser-focused on cyber security. Soon after that decision they were invited to attend an introductory webinar hosted by its trade association, the Independent Community Bankers of America, to learn about the benefits of switching to the .BANK domain. Following the webinar, banking staff knew that instituting a .BANK domain name would help solidify its strategic plan of focusing on cybersecurity measures to better serve its customers.

Moreover, they were already off to a strong start having trademarked the Badger Bank name and logo a few years back and registering it in ICANN's Trademark Clearinghouse.

MIGRATION

Like many banks, Badger Bank chose to keep its internal project team small , focusing solely on the leadership of Robyn Newcomb, Marketing Director, and Stephen Fiore, VP and IT Officer, to advance its work. Newcomb and Fiore also relied on the support of the bank's registrar, EnCirca and core processor, Fiserv.

Considering the size of its core team, it was essential to keep other stakeholders apprised of the bank's progress. Periodically, Newcomb and Fiore reported out to a larger IT committee, and one of the bank's Executive Vice Presidents would update the Board of Directors.

Staff were notified of the changes through standing manager meetings and internal emails. Although they encountered a few challenges, Badger Bank staff did their best to anticipate the impact of this change to customers.



@fTLD_Registry

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Bank staff had ongoing discussions to evaluate the needed changes and the impact on customers for nine months before the website went live, with the launch occurring in September 2015.

Badger staff are currently in the process of moving their email accounts over to .BANK, and anticipate doing so by the end of 2016.

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Although the overall experience working with its registrar was positive, there were challenges to overcome in the project. For example, the process of transitioning Badger Bank's website was hampered by the inability to authenticate the administrative contact, a common issue given staffing changes over time. GeoTrust, a digital certificate provider, was brought in to assist in the migration to comply with fTLD's security requirements.

Banking staff were also faced with decisions including implementing Domain Name System (DNS) service needs which caused a few unforeseen hiccups. In the end, all was resolved with bank staff lauding the overall process as a "good experience."

MARKETING CONSIDERATIONS

While Badger Bank's staff has yet to update and reprint its marketing collateral with its new .BANK domain name, its communication efforts have been robust.

Badger Bank customers would be hard pressed not to know about the new .BANK domain. Through a steady rotation of content on the bank's website, they were greeted with the news when signing on for daily activities such as online banking. At home, statement stuffers and mass emails were delivered, and messages pushed through the mobile app. In the branches, digital photo frames flashed news of the announcement.

Externally, Badger Bank staff recognized that informing the media would also be beneficial. A press release was issued to local newspapers and news of the switch was also featured through its social media channels. While Badger Bank's staff has yet to update and reprint its marketing collateral with its new .BANK domain name, its communication efforts to the customer and community have been robust.

LESSONS LEARNED

Although pleased with the end result, Newcomb and Fiore admit that they didn't anticipate the add-on costs for Domain Name System hosting in the total project budget. As a reminder, registrars will set their own rates for administering the domain name switch which also needs to be considered during the budgeting process. They also would advise other banks to learn ahead of time where their current domains are registered to help eliminate some of the cumbersome work they faced such as the issues with getting its administrative contact confirmed.

