

.BANK Success Story: Farmers State Bank

www.fsbctx.bank



“The moderate investment for our .BANK domain was well worth the benefit of the security improvements we now have.”

**MARK CORNELISON,
IT MANAGER, FARMERS
STATE BANK**

Farmers State Bank is a state chartered community bank dedicated to providing for the consumer and commercial business needs of Shelby County, Texas. From its five full-service locations and two loan offices including the home office in Center, Texas, the 80 employees of the bank offer a comprehensive range of financial products and services to meet the needs of individuals, businesses and government entities. The bank currently manages \$350M in assets and is an active member of both the American Bankers Association and the Independent Community Bankers of America.

WHY .BANK?

Mark Cornelison, Farmers State Bank’s IT Manager, said that he began seeing articles about .BANK in early 2015 and discussed this with others in the Texas banking community. After more research on fTLD’s website about the .BANK requirements and the benefits to Farmers State Bank in using .BANK for its online presence, he was convinced this would be an asset for the bank and its customers at a modest cost. He presented this plan to the IT Steering Committee and the board and it was quickly approved so that FSBCTX.BANK could be registered during the .BANK launch in June 2015. Mark noted the .BANK project was easily approved as “It sold itself based on the security requirements.”

He also shared that once the registration process began with EnCirca, the bank’s registrar, his confidence in the security aspects were confirmed by the verification element of securing the .BANK domain. The confirmation call and detailed process reassured him that .BANK would meet his hopes for a secure domain for the banking community that is not open to just anyone.

MIGRATION

The bank formed an implementation team of 5 people including members of the marketing, IT, and operations groups and started the planning process in June 2015 once the domain was registered. Within four months, this group was able to make the changes needed to launch the bank’s new FSBCTX.BANK website.



@fTLD_Registry

| www.register.bank



The bank initially used the information in the fTLD Guide to Leveraging .BANK to understand the steps needed for the migration. They also alerted their online banking provider, Fiserv, early in the process to ensure that this critical service could be used with the new .BANK domain.

As Farmers State Bank had recently transitioned its email address from an old domain, the bank decided not to make another email change at the time of the migration to FSBCTX.BANK. Mark remarked there is no current plan to migrate email to .BANK.

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

DNS hosting is provided by EnCirca and the needed changes to redirect customers to the FSBCTX.BANK domain were confirmed with Fiserv to ensure support for the vendor's critical online banking component. Although Farmers State Bank hopes to be able to use the FSBCTX.BANK domain with Fiserv's online banking service in the future to provide customers with a continuous .BANK experience, that effort is currently pending.

The bank plans to indefinitely maintain its former domain name for website forwarding to ensure continuity of services to its customers. Email services continue to be provided under the prior domain using Trustwave. The decision to retain the former domain name for email simplified the conversion process as there were concerns that changing it might result in potential issues with .BANK being recognized as a legitimate domain by customers and/or vendors.

The overall technical transition for the website went smoothly with no issues being identified by customers at any phase. The IT team does find references to the old domain name on the website that need to be corrected to use the FSBCTX.BANK domain occasionally but this is a minor maintenance issue.

MARKETING CONSIDERATIONS

Farmers State Bank worked to ensure that there was a smooth transition so that customers were not impacted by the website address change. As the technical work was progressing, the bank used its monthly employee training sessions to provide information and answer questions about the transition so the staff would be ready to help the customers if needed when the transition was complete.

Once the FSBCTX.BANK domain was in place, materials were added to the website and an email blast was sent to customers confirming the new domain name. Banner ads in the local newspaper and on the website highlighted the name change for the first few weeks after the transition and flyers were available in the bank offices and in teller lines to provide details about the change. The bank also posted information on the Shelby County Today (www.scttx.com) website, which is a local community resource.

The new domain name is being used on all new marketing products and updated on materials such as letterhead and business cards as existing supplies are depleted.

LESSONS LEARNED

Mark identified the only real issue in the migration to .BANK was related to a staff transition, which delayed their ability to make the needed redirect updates on the DNS for the old domain to point to FSBCTX.BANK. He noted the need for ensuring that user credentials to these infrequently accessed accounts be kept up-to-date and that it's now part of the bank's maintenance activities.

There were no other issues encountered and Mark confirms that the moderate cost of the migration was well worth the time and expenses because of the benefits of the security aspects to the bank and its customers.

