

Verizon Wireless Reaches More Customers by Extending its Bill Payment Options

The Challenge: Providing a Consistent, Reliable Online User Experience Beyond Just the Verizon Wireless Website

The technological advances of the past two decades have resulted in an environment where consumers not only expect but also demand dynamic options that allow them to interact with a company when and where they prefer. When it comes to paying bills online, this “preference-driven” landscape is creating a complex situation for businesses like Verizon Wireless that want to provide robust payment options beyond its own website.

As Forrester Research points out, “Biller site users will want a more comprehensive Electronic Billing and Payment (EBP) offering and will see the value in having their bank consolidate all their e-bills and payments in one place.”¹ Wanting to ensure a positive user experience for its customers already using their bank or another site to view and pay bills, Verizon Wireless sought to streamline a process where billing information had to be located, translated, and pulled from the Verizon Wireless website for presentation to the customer.

This created a cumbersome situation where enrollment was expected at multiple sites, with the onus of maintaining the consistency of the information squarely on the shoulders of the consumer. If any discrepancies arose, whether as a result of changes to customer data or even navigational changes at the Verizon Wireless website, an unreliable e-bill delivery experience would result.

This user experience was not appealing to customers who were already uncomfortable with viewing and paying bills online. Furthermore, Verizon Wireless was looking to simplify the process of suppressing paper for those customers seeking that convenience.

The Solution

Verizon Wireless pursued the CheckFree e-Bill Distribution Network knowing they could broadcast bills to 2,200+ destination points, including 46 of the top 50 financial institutions, and optimize the customer experience when viewing and paying bills. Today, Verizon Wireless customers utilizing a bank site to receive their bills enjoy a more convenient and pleasant process:

- **Easy Enrollment:** Customers register in only one place — their preferred consolidated or bank site.
- **Easy Navigation:** Customers remain at the same site throughout the entire process, saving time and eliminating confusion.
- **Reliable Delivery:** Information is readily exchanged directly between CheckFree and Verizon Wireless, including customer account changes, to ensure no interruption of e-bill service. This is especially important to customers utilizing auto-pay options.

Customer Profile

Verizon Wireless operates the nation’s most reliable wireless voice and data network, serving 60.7 million customers (reported 1Q07). The largest U.S. wireless company and largest wireless data provider, based on revenues, Verizon Wireless is headquartered in Basking Ridge, N.J. The company is a joint venture of Verizon Communications and Vodafone.

Challenge

When it comes to paying bills online, this “preference-driven” landscape is creating a complex situation for businesses like Verizon Wireless that understand the importance of providing alternative payment options for customers. The company sought a solution that would provide a reliable bill payment alternative for Verizon Wireless customers already viewing and paying bills online at a consolidated or banking site.

Solution

Verizon Wireless is using the CheckFree e-Bill Distribution solution to meet customer needs by extending its bill payment options to include online banking payment channels, enabling the company to serve customers at their point of preference.

¹ EBPP Forecast: 2005 to 2010, Oct. 4, 2005, Forrester.

The Results

Verizon Wireless was able to address customer needs by extending its bill payment delivery options to include online banking payment channels, enabling the company to serve customers at their point of preference and maximize the value for its online customers. As a result, Verizon Wireless was able to turn a standard business function into a growth opportunity and is enjoying the following results:

- **Increase in e-Bill Enrollment:** Since implementation, the number of customers subscribing to e-bills has tripled due to the simplified, single-site enrollment process.
- **Reduced Errors and Exception:** Verizon Wireless has experienced a 45 percent reduction in rejection rates for e-bill requests, an increase in payment accuracy, and fewer exceptions — a result attributed to eliminating the reliance of data being pulled from Verizon Wireless' website.

These results are consistent with findings from CheckFree that revealed that within a model where there is a direct relationship with CheckFree for e-bills at consolidated sites,² consumers are:

- More likely to adopt paperless billing, which will help Verizon Wireless reap immediate cost benefits for each e-bill activated.
- More satisfied with the online experience, yielding increased customer satisfaction.
 - 16 percent more satisfied overall
 - 17 percent more satisfied with ease of accessing and viewing their bill
 - 11 percent more satisfied with e-Bill enrollment process
 - 9 percent more satisfied with reliability of their bill delivery
- More likely to adopt the e-bill — relationships under this model have a 1.5x adoption level.

Recognizing the need to service customers in new terms, Verizon Wireless found a partner with the right solutions to enable more customers to pay and receive their bills when, where and how they want. Preference-driven billing and payment solutions from CheckFree are helping Verizon Wireless support all levels of payment choice. As a result, Verizon Wireless is better positioned to improve cash flow, create deeper customer relationships and target new revenues.

“Verizon Wireless was looking for new ways to better engage our online customers with more choices. We knew that customers and CheckFree were developing e-bill and home banking relationships, and it made sense for us to explore the solutions that CheckFree had to offer.

CheckFree expanded our reach for e-bills to thousands of destination points, and presented us with the opportunity to work directly with top financial institutions.”

Paul D'Auria

Executive Director & Treasurer
Verizon Wireless

² Latest Consumer Billing and Payment Trends: 2006, CheckFree Research Services/Marketing Workshop /Harris Interactive.



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