

CUNA MUTUAL GROUP REPORT

Winter 2022

The Evolving Consumer Expectations Every Credit Union Needs to Know



By Opal Tomashevka
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What people expect from their primary financial institution (PFI) is changing. COVID-19 certainly played a role, as consumers experienced the convenience and time-savings of using digital means to accomplish everyday tasks. The pandemic was not the only reality to alter expectations, however. Louder cries for social justice and the acceleration of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) principles echoed across the country, inspiring many people to rethink where they do business and with whom.

These expectations present two critical imperatives for growth-minded credit unions. From a digital perspective, members expect their credit unions to get up to speed with technology and seamless experiences. On the social justice and DEI front, they expect meaningful, intentional action that delivers on the credit union promise to help people – all people – achieve financial well-being.

New research from CUNA Mutual Group underscores the urgency for credit unions to align with expectations. The research was among the most comprehensive we've ever conducted, inclusive of a larger portion of the U.S. population. As just one example,

we talked with Native American, Alaskan Native and Indigenous consumers, as well as Multiracial and Gen Z consumers. These growing populations provide a much-needed perspective in terms of what today's multigenerational, multicultural consumers expect from their financial services providers.

Below are a few of the takeaways included in the What Matters Now™ 2022 Research Report.

Younger generations want to know where brands stand. Taking a stand on social and political issues is important to consumers, especially those under 40. A large number of Gen Z (42%) and Millennial (34%) Americans believe brands should always focus on social and political issues. When speaking out, credit unions should start by looking within. If employees want to hear something, chances are high members do, too.

Multicultural, Gen Z and Millennial consumers are less happy with DEI efforts. DEI practices matter to young consumers and multicultural consumers, and there is plenty of room for improvement. Take staff representation, for example. Whereas 80% of White consumers are satisfied with their PFI's consumer-facing team, only 58% of Asian consumers, 68% of Hispanic consumers and 69% of Black consumers are satisfied that their PFI has staff representing their culture. Credit unions must elevate DEI plans to the level of other strategic imperatives to ensure promises are lived out authentically.

Giving back to the community is a significant value. Younger and multicultural consumers want their credit unions to do well, and to do good. Half of Black (51%) and Multiracial (49%) consumers say it's important that their PFI is active in giving back. A similar percentage of Millennials (53%) and Gen X (47%) agree.

When it comes to the "how" of giving back, consumers want their PFIs to focus on three distinct causes above many others: improve financial well-being, solve for food insecurity, and support education.

As your credit union moves into 2023, think through the programs, policies and products that meaningfully connect back to your members. Are there changes you could make to better align with the expectations your community has for you? For more ideas, download our [2022 What Matters Now research report](#).

Preparations for Our Transition to TruStage™ Continue

We are busy working behind the scenes, preparing for our May 2023 TruStage™ brand launch. There is nothing for you to do at this time; we will keep you well informed of our progress in the months ahead.

[Learn More](#)



DEI Services Helps Credit Unions Advance Multicultural Business Strategy

Equity is central to the credit union movement. While the word means different things to different people, a common thread of outcomes runs through most definitions. Whether it's career development, dignified financial services or community betterment programs, outcomes are the central measurement of what makes a multicultural business strategy effective.

It's against this backdrop that CUNA Mutual Group stood up DEI Services. A comprehensive collection of solutions to support multicultural business strategy and holistic diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, DEI Services opens doors to equity across a credit union's workforce, its marketplace and its community.

Eight unique offerings are available through [DEI Services](#) and can support a credit union no matter where they are on their DEI journey. Here are a few of those offerings:

- **Multicultural Business Strategy Assessment and Workshop:** Data-driven insights to understand, attract, engage, and drive financial equity for members and potential members through intentional marketing, products, processes, staffing, and community partnerships.
- **What Matters Now™ Analysis:** Directly apply tailored insights that go deeper than CUNA Mutual Group's [What Matters Now research report](#) that reflect your community's specific demographics.
- **The Inclusion Institute:** Six-week experience where leaders and staff examine their identity in the context of history, modern systems, and interpersonal relationships to practice essential skills that advance DEI in their organization.
- **DEI One-on-One:** Individualized support plans to accelerate or kickstart a DEI journey.
- **Workshops:** One- to six-hour interactive experiences for large or small groups on a variety of [multicultural business strategy and DEI topics](#) to take a credit union from insight to action.

One credit union leader called his engagement with DEI Services "powerful work." Of the Inclusion Institute, Maps Credit Union Chief People Officer Scott Sadler said, "It rocked our world. Many times throughout the experience, there wasn't a dry eye in the room."

If your credit union would like to learn more about DEI Services, connect with a DEI Services Advisor at deiservices@cunamutual.com.

A Differentiated Claims Experience

By Jamie Ludwig, Director, Claims and Operations

A differentiated experience means different things to different people. That's why we work to meet customers where they are at claim time.

We lead with our **Digital First, not Digital Only Focus** to help ensure we exceed expectations for members who prefer a digital experience. We recognize at claim time, that the human voice and extension of support from another hand can be impactful. Our team focuses to help combine **the digital experience** and **the human connection** to create differentiated experiences.

The digital experience

With digital preferences shifting, it was clear digital would be key in streamlining the process. We defined what the member valued and updated the experience to create a personalized, simple experience that members may appreciate at such an important time in their life.

The secret sauce of the digital experience is in the system-driven decisioning capability. Once the information is entered either online by the member or by a CUNA Mutual Group employee, we can apply rules-based logic and predictive analytics technology to drive accurate decisions, faster.

Providing access to helpful digital tools 24/7, including a web channel and our Virtual Cognitive Agent voice option, is essential at claim time to ensure members have what they may need. Especially at midnight when worries could make for another sleepless night.

The human connection

Our purpose in claims is **We deliver on the promises made...** People pay for a promise that if something happens to them, we will be there to help, and our team is passionate about bringing that purpose to life. Our employees are purpose-driven to do the right thing for the customer at the right time.

This could mean simply listening to a member tell their story, offering community resources to help a member during a difficult time, or sending a sympathy card to someone on the other end of the line who the employee feels may need extra comfort through our Heart String Card program (an employee-generated concept). Whatever the member needs, we're here to help during likely one of the most difficult times in a member's life.

Unless otherwise indicated, all data in this report is sourced from CUNA Mutual Group's 2021-2022 What Matters Now™ quantitative and qualitative research, conducted in partnership with Ipsos and The Collage Group.

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