

USE CASE: Financial Institution

A credit union with a member focus

Connexus Credit Union serves more than 430,000 members across all 50 states. Each week, thousands of these members call the credit union's member contact center. They ask questions about their unique financial picture, or request guidance in relation to their deposit and loan accounts.

Challenge:

Connexus lacked the ability to quickly and accurately diagnose the type and scope of issues that its members were calling in about. The organization knew having the ability to easily access this information would assist in enhancing the experience of their members.

Outcome:

Leaders were able to better understand member pain points, coach specific consultant behaviors and measure improvement. When the credit union grew through a merger, they adapted and planned for member needs thanks to prompt analysis of emerging issues.

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

8.8%

decrease
in effort-creating
language

5%

increase
in effort-reducing
language

9.7%

decrease
in confusing
language

12.2%

increase in
voice authentication
enrollments

Challenge: The Member Experience Team didn't have an easy or accurate way to measure everything that happened in those conversations.

Anecdotal evidence of emerging member issues often made its way into strategic discussions, but leadership had little ability to quantify a problem. Some members completed after-call surveys, but at times the member feedback was generic, making it difficult to identify which specific issues might cause them to respond the way they did.

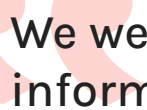
Valuable information about member interactions, such as the specific obstacles members faced to activate a debit card or what caused member confusion or frustration, got lost the moment the conversations ended. After calls, consultants selected a single reason for the call from a predetermined list, even though many conversations included discussions about several issues.

Those codes helped them count how many people called for various issues, but consultants didn't have a way to attach sentiment to it or dive deeper into specifics. Unless team leaders connected with consultants about each issue, they didn't know what problems members had or if they were upset.

“What we really wanted to know was, **‘What is causing our members the most pain?’**” said **Craig Stancher, Director of Member Experience at Connexus**. “We knew we wanted to get to a place where we could obtain greater insights that were truly actionable.”

The search for an AI solution

Connexus began searching for a conversation intelligence platform, but wanted to make sure they found a solution that would do more than give them a mountain of data to sort through.



We were really new to having this type of information readily available. We needed help understanding what data was important and what is static noise that we could ignore.”

- **Craig Stancher**, Director of Member Experience at Connexus

Tethr's approach differed from other options they considered. Instead of focusing on features, functions, or basic call handling metrics, Tethr focused on showing Connexus its members' pain points and identifying the behaviors consultants could work on.

One way it does that is through Tethr's custom score, the Tethr Effort Index, which measures dozens of variables that captures the overall member experience. The score minimizes the need for post-call surveys because it automatically scores every interaction, and shows users a benchmark of how they compare to other businesses.

Finding immediate improvements

After signing with Tethr, 30,000 monthly calls were uploaded to Tethr. The Connexus team **received metrics on a variety of measurables, which had never been analyzed** before. In some aspects, what they found reassured them.

A story about a negative call could reverberate through the contact center, but now they had **definitive statistics to prove how well their consultants managed situations.**

They also discovered **how to improve the member experience** by coaching consultants to use different language. For example, consultants used phrases as a stall tactic while accessing information, such as “I’m not sure, hold on.” That terminology could signal to members that consultants were confused or unsure. So, based on insights gleaned from Tethr, the team coached consultants to use advocacy-focused language, such as “Let me access your account so I can tell you.”

Within the first month of using Tethr, consultants' use of action-focused advocacy language, one of the largest factors in positive customer experiences, increased by 41.7 percent.

Preparing for growth and managing change

The Connexus team is now leveraging the power of Tethr to prepare for new growth and manage changes. **Connexus recently merged with Heritage Credit Union, which brought an additional 30,000 members under their care.**

Although Stancher has managed through merger before, it’s the first time he has prepared for such a change with the help of Tethr. When Connexus announced the merger, they also began using Tethr to monitor common questions from Heritage members.

Then they used those insights to guide and coach their consultants on what issues to expect as the members onboarded with Connexus. They’ve taken findings from those early calls to develop resources and trainings for consultants and developed targeted resources for them.

When the merger became official, consultants had a list of common answers to debit card activation questions ready. In the first week of the transition for Heritage members, the Connexus team used Tethr to monitor specific barriers members faced to digital banking registration and work to solve them on day two post-merger.

“Tethr enables us to pivot quicker, in the moment, instead of waiting for a survey a month later,” Cooper said.

Once the merger occurred, Connexus had the ability to continually monitor barriers that new members were facing. An example of this was identifying that members needed additional guidance with the transition to Connexus' Digital Banking platform.

Analysis during a merger

“We knew there would be a big wave of calls those first weeks, and we weren’t going to be able to change that. We were able to pivot to make the call volume more manageable. Consultants don’t have to spend time searching on the back end for answers because we knew what answers they were going to need.”

- Anthony Cooper, Connexus Service Enhancement Specialist

Sprinting toward success

As the team has become more experienced using Tethr, Connexus' Member Experience Team now coaches consultants to hyper-focus on improving a different behavior during a short focal period. After these "sprints," they've seen lasting results.

↓ **8.8%**

During the first phase, they looked at members who were upset about missed promises or missed expectations and worked to decrease effort. After four weeks, **effort creating language decreased by 8.8%** and effort reducing language increased by 5%.

↓ **9.7%**

In one sprint, they focused on decreasing language that communicated consultant confusion. It **decreased 9.7%** in three weeks.

↑ **12.2%**

In another sprint, they encouraged consultants to ask members to sign up for voice authentication services. It **increased 12.2%** after the sprint. When members adopt the voice authentication system, which is a fixed cost, it reduces average call times by 78 seconds per call - an equivalent **labor cost savings of 4.5 FTE**.

Frankly, some of the things we do with Tethr, we would not have even attempted to analyze before. It would have been a monumental undertaking. I'd need to hire 5 more people, and even then, we wouldn't match the capabilities of Tethr."

The difference of becoming data-driven

Adding Tethr's analytical capabilities to the Member Experience Team has reshaped how the credit union approaches decisions, goals, and strategy.

While Connexus always focused on its members, now they can measure member experience definitively without relying on anecdotal evidence. This new approach has improved the experience of not only Connexus members, but also Connexus employees.

"We don't have to ask for any effort or work from our members or our employees. Tethr runs in the background and does a fantastic job telling us what we need to know," Stancher said. "Having this information at our fingertips has made our decision making more data-driven."

RESULTS

41.7%

increase in advocacy language in the first month

3.8X

increase in consultants engaging in member education

16%

decrease in consultant confusion

46%

decrease in members having to repeat information