

# case study

## Fifth Third Bank

**Fifth Third Bank Meets Sales and Compliance Objectives and Reduces Administrative Costs with Saba®**

### Solution Overview

### Industry — Financial Services

#### Challenge

Maintain sales momentum during a period of rapid expansion, growing from 4,000 to 20,000 employees

#### Benefits

- Support sales training resulting in 100% increase in unit sales for trained employees
- Reduced learning administration time and costs associated

#### Solution

Saba® Learning  
Saba® Publisher

Fifth Third is a diversified financial services company headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio. The company has \$81 billion in assets and operates 17 affiliates with 930 full-service Banking Centers. These include 132 Bank Mart® locations open seven days a week inside select grocery stores, and 1,875 Jeanie® ATMs in Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Florida, Tennessee and West Virginia. Fifth Third operates four primary lines of business: Retail, Commercial, Investment Services and Fifth Third Processing Solutions. The bank has consistently maintained strong credit quality, and, over a 20-year period, shares of its stock have outperformed the S&P 500 by 21-fold.

*“ We expect Saba® Learning to help decrease administrative time by 50% through the elimination of manual training processes. We also expect the Saba system to help improve our cross-sell ratios. Simply stated, if each employee sells one more credit card due to the skills acquired through training, we can more than pay for our learning technology investments. ”*

Eric Bowling, Vice President, Infrastructure and Delivery Learning, Talent, and Organization Effectiveness  
Fifth Third Bank

### The Challenge

Over the past five years, Fifth Third has grown from 4,000 to about 20,000 employees through numerous acquisitions in the Midwestern and Southeastern United States. As the company grew in size and geography, it relied on a decentralized organizational structure to keep staff close to customers and support an aggressive, sales- and service-oriented culture. To maintain this strong customer focus in the face of such rapid growth, Fifth Third also had to find new ways to disseminate knowledge across the organization as efficiently and effectively as possible. Fifth Third had three important business requirements that led to the creation of a Human Capital Management initiative:

- Fifth Third needed to be able to bring employees in newly acquired banks up to speed quickly on Fifth Third's financial products and services to maintain sales momentum, respond to a rapidly changing marketplace, and ensure consistent knowledge, culture, and best practices across units.
- Fifth Third had to quickly and efficiently ensure that its employees were in compliance with regulations, including Patriot Act and Sarbanes-Oxley Act, in order to reduce risks associated with non-compliance.
- Fifth Third wanted to reduce administrative costs associated with managing learning across a decentralized, geographically dispersed area, and eliminate inconsistent processes and procedures within individual branches and units. Fifth Third believed that getting the organization to adopt e-learning would contribute significantly to both of those goals.

### The Solution

Fifth Third chose Saba® because of its ability to quickly and efficiently deliver e-learning to Fifth Third's 20,000 employees following the bank's rapid expansion.

Contributing to the decision was the responsiveness and attentiveness of Saba sales and technical teams in fitting the proposed solution to Fifth Third's requirements.

Implementation began in early January 2002, and Saba went "live" in early May.

Using Saba, Fifth Third was able to adopt one system to develop, acquire, deliver, test and administer all of its e-learning content across its four lines of business and 17 affiliate organizations — a significant achievement. At the same time, individual employees have a personalized view of learning information based on their affiliate organization. Saba also enabled Fifth Third to more rapidly integrate newly acquired employees and provide them with knowledge of new and existing financial products in support of the bank's sales and service focus.

Fifth Third initially delivered online content primarily on product knowledge, because employees' motivation would be higher as they familiarized themselves with the new experience of e-learning. As the benefits of the Saba solution became clear in terms of effectiveness, time and flexibility, Fifth Third began to roll out more content

related to internal operational processes and new financial institution regulations. The Saba system has enabled Fifth Third to leverage externally developed content such as regulatory information, and to create its own proprietary content, using Saba Publisher.

### Results

Implementing Saba has yielded positive results in terms of sales and compliance-related objectives. For example, Fifth Third rolled out a complex new financial product to its sales employees in a four-module e-learning course, with no other training available. Those who completed all four modules were able to sell 100% more units than those who did not.

On the operations side, Fifth Third had to make changes to its account reconciliation process, and was able to train and test 900 employees across multiple locations within one week. "We never could have done that via teleconference to the level we needed and ensure that the learning occurred," said Eric Bowling, vice president, Infrastructure and Delivery, Learning, Talent, and Organization Effectiveness at Fifth Third. "With Saba we were able to deploy learning very quickly and ensure that we had a testing protocol in place with very little administration involved — and the feedback from our employees was incredible."

Bowling said Saba had also reduced administrative costs significantly, with one employee saying it had reduced administrative time by 50%. The administrative time that the education team is saving is giving them more time to develop content and to work directly with employees.

According to Bowling, Fifth Third's success implementing Saba was due not only to the capabilities of the solution itself, but also to the fact that the business needs of the organization were defined up front. Fifth Third knew what it wanted from the system, and implemented it accordingly in realistic, achievable steps. In addition, internal constituencies supported the implementation and worked together during the deployment. Representatives from senior management, various lines of business and IT staff all contributed to the success of the initiative.