

How Zions Bancorporation Keeps Their Incentive Payments Compliant with Varicent ICM

Zions First National Bank was founded in Salt Lake City in 1873 and is one of the oldest financial institutions in the Intermountain West. The financial institution has 122 full-service centers across Utah, Idaho, and Wyoming. They offer traditional banking and innovative technology services that bring value to individuals, small-to-middle-market businesses, nonprofits, corporations, and institutions.

The Challenge

The global financial crisis of 2008 spurred major changes that would impact the banking industry for years to come. To prevent future crises, regulators issued guidance for incentive compensation plans that would help banks avoid excessive risk and remain compliant.

Zions needed a solution to track their incentive payments so they could present full audit trails and comply with regulations. However, their existing systems didn't make these processes easy, causing many errors and re-work throughout.

Multiple teams at Zions, including Finance and HR, were involved with incentive payment processing. They used Excel spreadsheets and email to manage sales inquiries and approvals. But these tools were disjointed and required payroll specialists to manually load approval data into their payroll system. They needed a system that would save them time, boost efficiencies, and allow for easy reporting.

The main reason we chose Varicent ICM was to track incentive payments and ensure appropriate approvals. This helps us stay compliant as regulations change.

Janet Ogden, Business Analyst,
Zions Bancorporation

ZIONS BANCORPORATION

Industry

Financial Services

Size

Enterprise

Geography

United States

Product

Incentive
Compensation
Management (ICM)

Results

Keep regulators happy

The key to compliance is giving regulators a central platform that quickly shows them who submitted an incentive payment, who approved it, and when payroll processed it.

Make profitable decisions

Varicent ICM enables Zions with real-time, reliable data that upper management can use to make informed decisions around the effectiveness of their compensation program.

Scale for the future

Zions has expanded how they use ICM to drive greater business value. For example, they are adding more sellers and sales leaders every day and increasing reporting capabilities to give teams better insights into revenue growth.

The Transformation

In 2008, Zions rolled out Varicent Incentive and Compensation Management (ICM) to standardize their incentive compensation approach and make it more transparent. Today, Zions is still using Varicent ICM to calculate and track their incentive payments.

Here are five reasons why Zions loves Varicent ICM:

Stay compliant in a changing market

Varicent ICM has helped Zions Bancorporation manage their complex incentive compensation plans while maintaining compliance. And they now have confidence that their reports are accurate and compliant with federal regulations.

“Varicent has made it so we can build reports tailored to exactly what our regulators want to see,” said Stephen Diederich, Incentive Compensation and Governance Manager at Zions Bancorporation. “Having the flexibility to maintain our risk management and show our workflow processes has created a great foundation for reporting and auditing.”

Janet Ogden adds, “Varicent ICM has given us better audit trails, and regulators are much happier with the system.”

Foster a collaborative environment

With both Finance and HR managing incentive compensation, Varicent ICM created an environment for Zions to collaborate externally and internally across departments. With Varicent ICM, Zions can meet deadlines and set priorities across multiple departments with a consolidated system and integrated processes.

Create a system specific to their needs

The teams at Zions that use Varicent ICM have different requirements—making flexibility and configurability key. Varicent ICM provides a central location where stakeholders can view and administer approvals, and payroll can seamlessly pick up the incentive payments. Meanwhile, the platform allows teams to specify who can see the data, so they can adhere to security protocols.

“Other vendors have tried to take our business, but we’ve stuck with Varicent,” said Stephen Diederich, Incentive Compensation and Governance Manager at Zions Bancorporation. It gives us the ability to use the tools as we want without constraint.”


Learn about new regulations and trends

The Zions team attends webinars, conferences, and other Varicent events. They find these events invaluable, as they learn how to make their processes more efficient and how other financial institutions are preparing for new regulations.

Receive hands-on support

Zions’ teams appreciate Varicent’s hands-on approach to supporting clients. For example, they’ve met with Varicent ICM experts free of charge to learn how to best use the platform.

“I’ve never had this level of engagement from a vendor before, and it’s incredibly helpful,” said August Krzycki, Business Systems Analyst at Zions Bancorporation. “It is an intuitive solution, but the Varicent team is always available to answer any questions we have along the way.”



Varicent gives us really good audit trails for our incentive payments—from start to finish.

**Janet Ogden, Business Analyst,
Zions Bancorporation**



The Results

Varicent ICM helps Zions maintain compliance and enhance their forecasting through easy-to-understand reports while streamlining communications between stakeholders.

“Varicent ICM has allowed us to effectively communicate with different teams and business partners,” said Diedrich. “It has also allowed us to meet the demands of regulations while giving us the flexibility to change our reporting styles based on new requirements.”

[Learn more by contacting one of our trusted advisers.](#)

Key Takeaways

Maintain audit trails

Varicent ICM helps Zions stay compliant—keeping their legal team and federal regulators happy. Regulators like the single central platform that quickly shows them who submitted an incentive payment, who approved it, and when payroll processed it.

Make profitable decisions

Varicent ICM gives Zions reliable data about incentive payments. Upper management can use this data for comparison and trending purposes. Varicent’s reports also give them the real-time insights needed to make informed decisions around the effectiveness of their compensation program.

Scale for the future.

Zions initially rolled out Varicent ICM to standardize their reporting. Over the years, they have expanded how they use ICM to drive greater business value. For example, they are adding more sellers and reporting capabilities to give teams deeper insights into revenue growth.



Varicent Incentive Compensation Management removes friction from sales compensation, enables you to adapt strategy to stay in step with the market and provides you with actionable insights to outdo past performance.

Learn more about how Varicent can help you and your teams. Talk to one of our experts today.

[Book a demo today](#)