

ZIONS BANCORPORATION

A COLLECTION OF GREAT BANKS

Industry
Banking

Size
Enterprise

About

Zions Bancorporation is a bank holding company headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah. It is one of the nation's premier financial services companies. The company is a national leader in small business administration lending and public finance advisory services.

Geography
North America

Solution
Varicent ICM

Coming together for compliance and compensation

Ensuring multiple departments are aligned to meet federal regulations can be a difficult task for any organization. To meet the changing requirements placed by government while consolidating its teams, Zions Bancorporation transformed its internal approach for its incentive compensation processes and reporting.

The Challenge

For the banking industry, the global financial crisis of 2008 spurred major changes that would impact the industry for years to come. In order to prevent similar situations from occurring in the future, banking regulators issued new guidance for incentive compensation plans. This would help ensure banks had practices and arrangements in place to avoid excessive risk

taking. Zions Bancorporation needed a back-end system that could assist with creating standardize reports that were compliant with the new federal regulations. They needed to be able to present a full audit trail to show they were conforming to the rules.

With the combination of heavily monitored regulations and constrained resources, the team also required a flexible, efficient system that was able to centralize how Zions Bancorporation would track incentive payments and provide approvals for payments.

"The main reason we chose Varicent, was to track incentive payments and ensure appropriate approvals."

— Janet Ogden, Business Analyst, Zions Bancorporation

The Transformation

In need of a more standardized and transparent approach to incentive compensation, Zions Bancorporation selected Varicent Incentive Compensation Management (ICM) as

their solution. Over a decade later, Zions Bancorporation is still using Varicent to ensure accurate and compliant compensation payments.

There have been many changes to the organization since implementing Varicent back in 2008. Key takeaways include staying compliant in a changing market, creating a reporting system tailored to their individual needs and fostering a collaborative environment both internally and externally.

Staying compliant in a changing market

In a heavily regulated industry, staying compliant is essential. Varicent has helped Zions Bancorporation manage their complex incentive compensation plans while maintaining compliance. The team utilized Varicent to respond to the critical view of regulators.

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

With Varicent, Zions Bancorporation does not have to worry about their reports meeting industry standards. They have the confidence their reports are accurate and compliant for their federal agencies.

Creating a system specific to their needs

For Zions Bancorporation, flexibility is key. Varicent gives Zions Bancorporation the ability to create their own set of workflows to meet the needs of their unique structure. “Other vendors have tried to take our business,

but we’ve stuck with Varicent. It has the ability for us to use the tools as we want. The flexibility to use the tool to how we want to use it and not to be constricted in any boxes,” Diederich shares.

Fostering a collaborative environment

With both their finance and HR teams managing incentive compensation, Varicent created an environment for Zions Bancorporation to collaborate both externally and internally across departments. With Varicent, Zions Bancorporation was able to meet deadlines and set priorities across multiple departments with a consolidated system and processes in place.

Varicent also provides its Varicent Advantage service, which has an ample number of resources, including Ask an Expert which allows customers to sit down with Varicent experts free of charge. The Zions Bancorporation team utilized Varicent Advantage to learn how to best use the solution for their needs. “I’ve never had this level of engagement from a vendor before and it’s incredibly helpful,” explains 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,” Krzycki continues.

“I’ve never had this level of engagement from a vendor before and it’s really helpful.”

—August Krzycki, Business Systems Analyst, Zions Bancorporation

The Results

Varicent ICM helped Zions Bancorporation maintain compliance and enhance their internal structures and forecasting through easy-to-understand reports, while streamlining communications for various stakeholders. The team at Zions Bancorporation has created their own set of workflows given the unique structure and demands of their industry. “Despite having constrained resources, Varicent has allowed us to communicate with different teams and business partners effectively. It has also allowed us to meet the demands of regulations with the flexibility to change our reporting styles based on new requirements,” says Diederich.

In a highly regulated industry such as banking, Varicent ICM has helped Zions Bancorporation maintain compliance. It has acted as a central back-end system where internal users can go to for table structures and reporting.

Looking to the future

While Varicent ICM was obtained by Zions Bancorporation to use as back-end system to standardize reporting originally, in the near-future, the team at Zions Bancorporation is looking to create more end-user systems. Collaboration continues as the team plans to work with the finance team to source a system that will be inputted into Varicent ICM for their calculations.

By utilizing the full capabilities of Varicent, the team is updating their systems to track commission successes throughout the year. With this functionality, Commission Officers can track their commissions and see how they are progressing towards their specific goals.

Varicent ICM offers best-of-breed scalability, flexibility and self-service capabilities, empowering organizations to use their compensation plans as a critical tool to improve their go to market strategy.

To learn more about how Varicent can help you and your teams, book a demo today.