

**Customer Success Story**

# How Zions Bancorporation Achieves Standardization, Transparency, and Scalability with Varicent Incentives

Zions Bancorporation (Zions) is one of the nation's premier financial services companies with approximately \$90 billion of total assets at December 31, 2022, and annual net revenue of \$3.2 billion in 2022. Zions operates under local management teams and distinct brands in 11 western states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. The Bank is a consistent recipient of national and state<sup>1</sup> wide customer survey awards in small- and middle-market banking, as well as a leader in public finance advisory services and Small Business Administration lending.

## The Challenge

After a turbulent time in the financial services industry in 2008, new rules and regulations were created. Zions needed to ensure they adhered to new regulations, created transparent audit trails, and kept regulators informed. The key objective in partnering with Varicent was to build a solution that minimized risk and delivered transparency and auditability. With another significant market shift after COVID-19, Zions was on a mission to drive profitability, advance operational efficiency, and improve agility but realized it was impossible to achieve this without better insight.

Zions' incentive compensation was operated by localized affiliate and department management. This allowed for specific and custom reports but created inefficiencies and redundancy across the organization.

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

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

**Industry**

Financial Services

**Size**

Enterprise

**Geography**

North America

**Product**

Varicent Incentives

## Results

**Standardization for seamless rollout**

Zions successfully implemented standardized Varicent reporting across all affiliate banks, ensuring consistency for eligible employees in incentive plans.

**Enhanced transparency and communication**

Zions' leadership now has clear insights into company performance and incentive payments, with enhanced communication through tailored performance reports and detailed affiliate bank information.

**Make informed decisions**

Varicent Incentives gives all users a single version of truth they can use when making sales and business decisions.

Zions had difficulty gathering a holistic financial picture since each affiliate was driving towards their objectives specific to their market with no standardized reporting or goals. Each affiliate and department used reporting for their unique requirements with a wide variety of data formats, metrics, financial outputs, and reporting styles which felt virtually impossible to aggregate at the head office level. The team decided to leverage Varicent to improve efficiencies.

## The Transformation

To create efficiencies, the Zions centralized incentive compensation into two departments reporting up through Finance and Human Resources. With a central team, they created standard incentive plan metrics and frameworks that allows local management to have optionality in their design without compromising the efficiency in administration and reporting.

They partnered with Varicent, a global leader in sales performance management solutions, to achieve these goals. Here are three transformations achieved through [Varicent Incentives](#):

### Centralized incentive team

Varicent's team used standard metrics and frameworks to streamline administrative calculations and create consistent, transparent report sets. These framework components can now be used side by side for comparative performance models.

### Reduce operational redundancy

Zions centralized several key departments and processes, including finance and incentive compensation that resulted in measurable efficiency gains. Working with Varicent, they designed, built, and implemented

standard compensation plans and metrics across their affiliate locations to streamline administrative tasks and create consistent portfolio reporting.

### Clearer data insights

Transparency at the affiliate and staff level has resulted in leadership and plan participants better understanding their metrics and incentive plan performance.

## The Results

Standardization enabled Zions to roll out the current phase of Varicent reporting across all affiliate banks and the eligible employees who participate in the retail and lending incentive compensation plans. Zions leadership now has transparency into total company performance including incentive payments with affiliate bank drill down capability. The Zions team communicates consistently with their affiliates and delivers flexible, tailorable performance reports with portfolio, affiliate, and individual-level details.

The more efficient, standardized processes and reporting have given Zions confidence that they can adapt to market conditions and implement strategy changes with ease. The team has changed their incentive compensation plans to drive the desired seller behavior, with the smaller administration staff – easily and quickly. The incentive compensation team feels assured they can scale their sales team and drive profitable growth without hiring new staff.



Looking to the future, the Zions incentive compensation team is most excited about the continuous improvements and fine tuning possible with trending and detailed insights.

They continue to innovate and test ways to drive value. The team is also building additional frameworks and modeling new incentive programs before rollout to contribute to Zions objective to improve profitability. As the team evolves and grows with their affiliates and data, the sky is the limit for the value they hope to deliver.

## Key Takeaways

### Efficiency allows for needed flexibility

Zions achieved operational efficiency by centralizing incentive compensation, utilizing Varicent's standard metrics. This streamlined administrative processes while allowing local management flexibility in designing incentive plans.

### Operational streamlining improves insights

Centralization and collaboration with Varicent reduced redundancy, providing Zions leadership with a clear, comprehensive view of company performance and detailed insights into incentive payments at the affiliate bank level.

### Transparency allows for adaptability

Zions improved transparency at all levels, enhancing understanding of metrics and incentive plan performance. This transparency empowered the company to adapt to market conditions, implement strategy changes efficiently, and drive desired seller behavior for profitable growth without significant staff expansion.

Zions Bancorporation, N.A. Member FDIC, is not a subsidiary or affiliate of Varicent

**Varicent Incentives empowers teams to use compensation more strategically to drive revenue growth, amplify their commercial strategy, and improve efficiency across their organizations.**

**Learn more about how Varicent can help you and your teams.**

[Book a demo today](#)

