



## MARKET CHANGES BRING OPPORTUNITIES

Capital One (the credit card giant) is buying Hibernia. Citibank is officially entering Texas via First American. Chase and BankOne are becoming one. Countrywide Bank is now the second largest “bank” in the DFW area (thanks to escrow deposits from Countrywide Mortgage and the above-market CD rates paid by the bank). Plus, a myriad of other small- to mid-size banks continue to merge throughout the state.

Hmmm. The competitive landscape is changing—again.

One thing is certain: when the market changes, your bank has an opportunity to gain new customers and increase its market share. The question is: How?

When market conditions change—mergers, new bank competitors, locations, products, pricing, people, etc.—your bank can take advantage of this change. Some new business will simply knock on your door. Most of it, however, you must earn.

This issue of FOCUS includes five strategies to do just that.

### 1. Ramp-up your bank’s visibility so you’re seen as a strong alternative

- Boost media advertising, promotions and direct mail to promote your products and services
- Introduce new product deposit and loan specials to promote your bank’s “value” position
- Use the power of the press to get more mileage out of newsworthy bank events
- Increase local sponsorships and community involvement efforts

### 2. Know your “new” competition

- Research your new competition’s performance in its current markets. Talk to people in that market and find out what the bank does well and what it does poorly.
- Study the bank’s image position, as well as its products, services and pricing positions
- Proactively market the image and strengths of your bank—particularly in areas where you have a competitive edge

### 3. Protect, then expand

- Strengthen your business development targeting the customers of your the “new” competition
- Call on your top customers to retain their business. They will be targets of the new competition.

### 4. Attract new talent

- Directors, officers and employees may not like the change taking place at “their” bank. This is your chance to attract them—well-respected directors, lenders with large portfolios, and personal bankers and even tellers who have strong followings. Chances are, they’ll bring a lot of business with them.

### 5. Generate internal excitement

- Use this time to re-invigorate your staff with a sense of mission by emphasizing customer service, sales and reinforcing your commitment to being the leading local bank
- Create a customer appreciation program to show how much you value your current customers