Homeowners Financial Group
Delivers the Best of Both Worlds with Encompass Consumer Connect

The challenge
No question, Homeowners Financial Group is a dominant force in mortgage lending, with $1.5 billion in annual loan volume and 40 branches spread throughout 14 states. But, no matter how much the organization has grown, the one thing that hasn’t changed is the unwavering belief that people are at the core of its success.

“We have a family-oriented culture and accessible leadership that makes everyone on staff feel like they contribute, and that reflects in the way we take care of our customers,” said Brandon Durham, product support manager for Homeowners Financial Group USA, LLC. “As an 85% purchase lender, with all of our loans self-sourced through referrals and our own networks, human relationships are everything.”

Keeping those relationships strong is one of the reasons that Homeowners Financial Group was an early adopter of Encompass Consumer Connect™. Its leadership saw it as a way to further differentiate the company by giving customers more options.

“It’s a great, secure tool for delivering and receiving documents to and from the customer,” Durham said. “Our customers can eSign loan documents and upload them from wherever they are, and from any device. It makes their life a little easier and the whole experience more convenient.”

While most competing solutions are “one size fits all,” Encompass Consumer Connect is highly customizable, so every company using the platform can make it their own. “You can customize the configuration for each and every aspect of the platform in minutes. If there’s additional data you want to ask for, you can add it in. If there’s a drop-down you don’t need, you can uncheck that box to hide it,” Durham said. “In addition, we can make it look the way we want with our brand look-and-feel.”

For example, Durham disabled some of the self-serve features, like ordering credit. Instead, he linked the borrower to a loan officer at that point.

“We wanted to automate it to a point, but then have a person step in, so we stay true to our relationship/referral model. But, we

The solution
According to Durham, a number of factors set Encompass Consumer Connect apart. “A lot of online applications are rigid and written in industry jargon. Encompass Consumer Connect lets us utilize an easy to understand interview-style application with icons and pictures that help guide the borrower through the process. It’s very user friendly, written in everyday language,” he said. “For example, instead of asking for ‘loan amount,’ it asks, ‘How much are you looking to borrow?’”

He was equally impressed by the borrower portal, the centralized point-of-contact between loan officer and customer, accessible through the desktop, laptop, or mobile device.

“Create a centralized and secure borrower portal for streamlined loan officer interaction and document exchange, with the ability to stay true to its relationship/referral model.”

Results
• Improves borrower experience
• Increases loan officer efficiency
• Reinforces brand online
• Customized platform to fit company’s workflow and preferences
• Usable on all device types
• Easy-to-understand loan application

Profile
• Homeowners Financial Group USA, LLC
• Scottsdale, AZ
• 40 branches in 14 states
• $1.5B annual loan volume (2017)

Challenge
Create a centralized and secure borrower portal for streamlined loan officer interaction and document exchange, with the ability to stay true to its relationship/referral model.
“We wanted to give our clients the ability to interact with us the way they wanted to interact with us.”

Brandon Durham
Product Support Manager
Homeowners Financial Group

still use mobile to facilitate the loan from beginning to end,” Durham said. “With this hybrid approach, we can give our clients the best of both worlds.”

Although little to no loan officer training was necessary, before going live Homeowners Financial Group required its loan officers to log into the borrower portal, complete an application, and replicate their borrower’s experience firsthand.

“This helped them see the value of the platform and, when we went live, we had 100 extra people who could help our customers use Encompass Consumer Connect™ and get them excited about its features,” Durham said. “It was also a way for us to get their feedback on additional customizations that would make the process even better.”

The results
Although Homeowners Financial Group has only been using Encompass Consumer Connect for six months, it has already realized some significant results.

Saves Time
“One of our loan officers’ biggest complaints used to be how much time they were spending trying to manage the disclosure process. Just getting the documents from the customer was a struggle in many cases,” Durham said.

Now, the first thing Homeowners Financial Group customers see when they log into the borrower portal is a list of any open tasks and a progress meter, so they can see what they need to do and how far along they are in the process. Customers can quickly take care of everything from that one spot—eSign documents, or upload additional information. The loan officer saves time previously spent tracking down paperwork and the customer saves time printing, scanning, copying, and returning documents.

Reduces Closing Delays
Keeping the process moving along through Encompass Consumer Connect has already had an impact on closing timelines.

“Once we have legal eConsent from the customer, we can do business electronically, which shortens our closing window,” Durham said. “We have actually closed loans in less than 10 business days, which is something we couldn’t do before!”

Enhances the Borrower Experience
Most importantly, Encompass Consumer Connect helps Homeowners Financial Group give its borrowers the kind of customer experience that makes them raving fans for life.

“We now can customize the mortgage experience to each of our customers, based on how they prefer to interact,” Durham said. “With our referral model, we can’t just close loans, we have to wow everyone. Encompass Consumer Connect gives us that edge.”