

# First City Credit Union Reduces Third-Party Collection Costs by 54% with Eltropy and Akuvo

*Automated text messaging campaigns save credit union \$48,000 annually while improving member experience*

SANTA CLARA, CA, UNITED STATES, December 3, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Eltropy, the leading AI-powered conversations platform for community financial institutions (CFIs), today announced that First City Credit Union has achieved a 54% reduction in third-party early-stage collection costs through automated text messaging campaigns powered by Eltropy and Akuvo. The credit union reduced monthly expenses from \$7,400 to \$3,400—a savings of \$48,000 annually.



First City Credit Union Reduces Third-Party Collection Costs by 54% with Eltropy and Akuvo

First City Credit Union partnered with Eltropy in early 2025 to address the high cost of outsourced collection calls. By integrating Eltropy's text messaging platform with Akuvo's collections workflow system, the credit union automated payment reminders for members with delinquent balances, allowing its team to focus on more complex recovery cases.

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*Fred Perez, SVP and Chief Lending Officer, First City Credit Union*

“We've seen about a 54% expense reduction for our early-stage collections,” said Fred Perez, SVP and Chief Lending Officer at First City Credit Union. “That's people calling on our behalf to remind members that their payments are due.”

The integration created a fully automated solution. “With Akuvo partnered with Eltropy, it changed the game

considerably because now we could set the campaigns to occur at certain intervals," Perez explained. "It took the manual process out of the equation and the campaigns would run automatically."

First City also embedded payment links through Repay within the text messages, allowing members to make payments directly from external accounts. "We layered in a repayment link so the member could get a reminder and click on that link to pay from their external financial institution account," said Perez.

## Implementation and Results

First City Credit Union began using Eltropy in February 2025, starting with manual text campaigns before adding payment links in mid-March. By May 2025, the credit union achieved full automation with the Akuvo integration. Results followed quickly:

- Monthly third-party collection costs dropped from \$7,400 to \$3,400—a 54% reduction
- Text messaging volume grew from 2,200 messages in July to 2,800 in August
- Phone call volume decreased significantly, allowing collectors to focus on recovery work
- Member compliments increased for loan servicing staff

"Some of our collectors say, 'Hey, our phones aren't ringing anymore,'" Perez shared. "The members are curing the delinquent balances sooner. While technology does the payment reminders, we're able to reallocate resources to doing bigger picture items than just doing a reminder call."

## Improved Member Experience

Members responded positively to the shift from phone calls to text messages, with very low opt-out rates. "Many of our members prefer that because it's kind of an embarrassing conversation to have," Perez noted. "It's not so embarrassing when you get that by text."

The automation also improved relationships between First City's team and its members. "I have never seen so many member compliments for our agents as this last year," said Perez. "Loan servicing is not generally an area where you're getting that. I think partly because our agents are able to spend more time on the phone with members, listening to them, empathizing with them, and working workable solutions."

## Looking Ahead

Building on this success, First City Credit Union has expanded its partnership with Eltropy to include lending and contact center operations.

"First City Credit Union's success demonstrates the power of combining Eltropy's conversations

platform with complementary technologies like Akuvo," said Ashish Garg, Co-founder and CEO of Eltropy. "By automating routine collection reminders through text messaging, credit unions can reduce costs while actually improving the member experience."

To learn more about Eltropy's collections and loan servicing solutions, visit [eltropy.com](https://eltropy.com) or request a demo. To learn more about First City Credit Union's success with Eltropy, [read the case study here](#).

### About First City Credit Union

Founded in 1937 as Los Angeles County Employees Number 11 Federal Credit Union, First City Credit Union (so named since 1985) provides personal and business banking to consumers and businesses in southern California. As Angelenos serving Angelenos, First City helps its members build money through checking and savings accounts, auto and home loans, credit cards, digital banking, business services, investments, and more. With more than \$900 million in assets, 56,000 members, and capital reserves of 13% of assets, First City is among the nation's strongest financial institutions. For more information, call 800.934.2489, visit [firstcitycu.org](https://firstcitycu.org), or follow First City on Facebook.

### About Eltropy

Eltropy is the leading conversations platform for community financial institutions (CFIs). Its AI-driven communications tools help CFIs communicate, automate, improve operations and engagement, and increase productivity across the institution—all while maintaining the highest standards of security and compliance. Using Eltropy's platform, CFIs can connect with and service their members and customers anytime, anywhere via Text, Chat, Video, Voice—all integrated into a single platform. For more information, please visit [eltropy.com](https://eltropy.com).

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