Credit Union Marketing Agency Publishes 2026 Deposit Growth Guide as Checking Incentives Average $277 per Account

Deposit growth marketing strategy, financial institution campaign services, and credit union marketing strategy that grow core deposits and lower cost of funds

LAKE MARY, FL, UNITED STATES, September 7, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Evok Credit Union Marketing, a full-service credit union marketing agency with offices in Lake Mary, Tallahassee, and Memphis, has published a new resource for marketers under pressure to fund the lending pipeline: Credit Union Deposit Growth Marketing: Campaign Strategies That Attract Core Deposits and Lower Cost of Funds.

> “Every credit union can buy accounts. Very few are buying deposits. The account that gets the paycheck funds the loan book.”
>
> *Larry Meador*

The guide arrives as the price of a new account continues to climb. 43% of financial institutions offered cash incentives on new checking accounts in 2025, with the average incentive valued at $277. Paying that premium for an account that never receives a payroll deposit and closes inside a year produces a marketing expense with a matching balance sheet line, which is why a deposit growth marketing strategy measured by funded activity outperforms one measured by application volume.

"Every credit union can buy accounts. Very few are buying deposits, and the difference shows up in the cost of funds about two quarters later," said Larry Meador, Chief Strategy Officer at evok. "The account that gets the paycheck is the one that funds the loan book. Everything else is a container with a debit card in it."

The funding math has tightened across the system. The aggregate loan-to-share ratio stood at 81.5% in the first quarter of 2026, while the number of federally insured credit unions fell to 4,250 from 4,411 a year earlier. Fewer, larger institutions are now competing for the same regional balances with proportionally larger budgets, and members compare yields against digital-first competitors on the same phone screen they use to check a share balance.

Activation is where most acquisitions quietly disappear. Research indicates accounts receiving

payroll deposits hold 23% higher balances and stay open roughly twice as long, while estimated direct deposit penetration among newly acquired accounts is only 55%. The guide argues that financial institution campaign services should be designed to move the paycheck, not just the application, with incentives paid on qualifying deposit activity rather than on the act of opening an account.



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The resource organizes deposit marketing around six priorities:

Rate-led versus relationship-led acquisition. Deciding what a campaign is actually buying before creative development starts, since targeting, offer terms, and success metrics diverge sharply from that point forward.

Primary checking acquisition. Winning the account that anchors the household, with switching assistance replacing feature lists in the creative.
Direct deposit capture. Structuring the first 30 days of onboarding around a single conversion event instead of a generic welcome series.

Certificate and money market offer design. Using new-money conditions and odd-term structures to add balances without repricing the existing book.
Deposit retention marketing. Reading behavioral signals such as stalled payroll deposits and declining average balances before the money leaves, and defending balances with targeted pricing rather than broad rate matching.

Cost-of-funds measurement. Reporting cannibalization rate, marginal cost of funds, and 6- and 12-month balance retention next to account totals, so the board sees funding quality alongside campaign volume.

The publication continues evok's 2026 credit union series, which has covered loan growth marketing, member retention, and paid acquisition. Together the resources give marketing leaders a credit union marketing strategy that connects deposit acquisition, lending capacity, and household primacy inside one plan rather than three disconnected campaign calendars.

The full guide is available at Credit Union Deposit Growth Marketing: Campaign Strategies That

Attract Core Deposits and Lower Cost of Funds. Credit unions seeking help with segmentation, offer construction, activation tracking, or board-level reporting can reach the team through evok's credit union practice.

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