



## Barclays

A CASE STUDY OF UK  
ACCESSIBLE BANKING  
PROVISION

Click here to see  
SignVideo and other  
provisions on the  
**Barclays** website

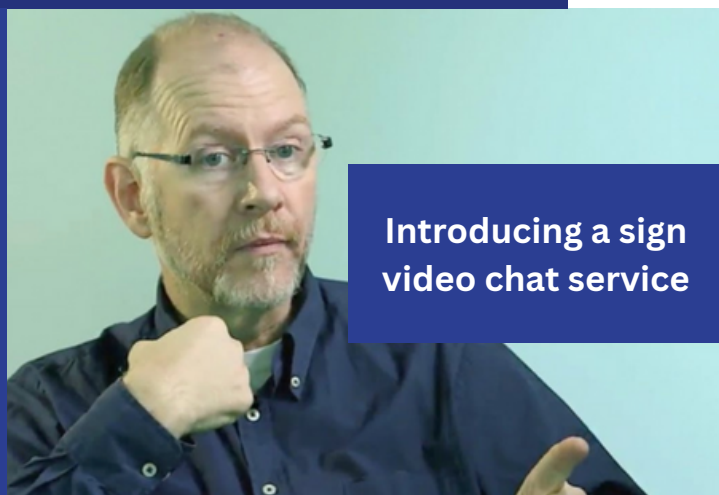


## INTRODUCTION

This case study looks at Barclays Bank in the UK. It builds upon a case study published by 'Zero Project', which reported the bank's use of SignVideo and our desk review exploring the Barclays website. We examined what services the bank offers to the d/Deaf community as well as the ways in which they are communicated.



Supporting  
Customers



Introducing a sign  
video chat service

## Awareness of the Needs of d/Deaf Customer

Barclays have a website section about tailoring the service to fit an individual's personal needs. This is important as we know from our research that not everyone's needs are the same and one solution will almost definitely not be suitable for all d/Deaf customers. Barclays encourages information to tailor their banking service to any specific requirement. They will then add a discrete and confidential note to the customer's account so that staff are aware whenever the person contacts Barclays.

Looking at the Barclays accessibility page on the website, it shows a clear awareness of the specific needs of their d/Deaf customers. At the forefront is the promotion of their online banking app, which was been designed with accessibility in mind and was the first app to receive accreditation from Ability Net

The Zero Project report goes into detail on Barclays past service provisions as well as the current services provided. Before developing the current SignVideo solution, Barclays were only able to offer d/Deaf customers the option for face-to-face interpretation in-branch. By switching to SignVideo, Barclays have shown an understanding of the needs of d/Deaf customers to consume information in British Sign Language (BSL), which is often their first language. It shows that Barclays recognises the importance of having specific information for Sign Language users translated into BSL to be fully comprehended.

The Zero Project's approach is research-driven and aims to identify, curate, and share inclusive solutions that support the rights and lives of persons with disabilities. The Zero Project has collected all these Solutions in a database that is available to the public. In 2016 Barclays Bank and SignVideo received an Innovative Practice Award at the United Nations Zero Project Conference in Vienna and the Zero Project published a case study on Barclays Bank provision of the SignVideo app.



## Service Provision for d/Deaf Customers

On the Barclays website is information on SignVideo. This is a service which gives d/Deaf customers access to an onscreen BSL interpreter during an appointment in-branch or to call the bank. As we have seen through our own research and supported by the Zero Project case study, often d/Deaf people have to rely on family members or pre-arranged interpreters when communicating with their bank. This makes accessing financial institutions much more difficult and time consuming. This was the case with Barclays prior to their use of SignVideo, which has significantly helped to remove these barriers for the d/Deaf community when accessing Barclays. Our own research shows, having only this option these systems can be flawed and at times not well received due to the length of time in having to wait for an interpreter.

SignVideo is explained by a video with a Sign Language translation from SignVideo itself. It explains the service in BSL and is accompanied with subtitles. By using SignVideo, which is free, Barclays customers can be connected to a SignVideo interpreter via a smartphone, laptop or tablet in branch or to contact the call centre. Customers speak in Sign Language while facing the camera and the onscreen BSL interpreter will be able to translate the conversation to the Barclays' advisor. The website details more information about the service being available Monday to Friday (8am to 6pm), making visiting Barclays' branches much more convenient for d/Deaf customers.



## Other Service Examples



On the Barclays website there is a 'contact us' option, either through the SignVideo service, 'Direct Call' or 'Chat' options on the Barclays app, which recognises registered customers without going through identification steps again. This saves d/Deaf customers constantly having to explain their needs every time they want to contact their bank.

Barclays also uses the Relay UK service, telephone banking for lip speakers using their Lipspeaker service and offer customers the option to book a free face-to-face BSL interpreter when visiting a branch if this is preferred. This service needs up to two weeks' notice, and we are aware of the shortage of trained interpreters nationally. There are also hearing loops, which are fixed and portable hearing-induction loops that act as transmitters, cutting out background noise. This makes communicating with branch staff much easier for customers who have a hearing aid.

Most of the information on the Barclays website is not available in BSL. Only the section on SignVideo has a BSL translation video accompanying it. This is one area for improvement in terms of communicating services to the d/Deaf community, as d/Deaf customers would benefit from a BSL version of the complaints process, rather than use the Barclays app, complain in branch or write in through the post.

## CONCLUSION

Barclays does appear to be ahead of some other banks in the UK and Europe in terms of the services it offers to its d/Deaf customers. There also appears to be a greater acknowledgment of the specific needs of the d/Deaf community. SignVideo is an important step in equal access to the financial services offered by Barclays. However, what is not clear from the Zero Project case study, or the website, is how successful these services are in practice. Are these services being promoted effectively to the d/Deaf community and are they being made aware of its existence? This is true for all the banks we have researched.

