



Account Opening in a New York Minute

Apple Bank and Candescent Deliver

Apple Bank is a storied New York institution, renowned for its strong branch presence and unwavering commitment to customer service. With more than 75 branches across greater New York and recent expansion to New Jersey, Apple Bank delivers a full range of retail banking services to individuals and businesses, both in-branch and through robust online and alternative channels. The bank's team of local bankers live in the communities they serve, providing personalized attention and a deep understanding of each customer's unique needs.

Operating in one of the nation's most complex regulatory environments, Apple Bank expertly balances stringent compliance requirements with the demand for fast, frictionless banking experiences, serving a diverse and dynamic clientele across the region.



The Opportunity

For Apple Bank, account opening had become a critical pressure point that was falling short of both customer expectations and employee needs. Operating in one of the most highly regulated states in America, the bank faced the challenge of meeting strict compliance requirements while delivering an experience that is aligned with digital leaders, with speed that is expected in today's instant gratification environment and with convenience expected by today's consumers.

Before working with Candescent, a single account opening could take nearly an hour, requiring bankers to jump across multiple systems, chase down documents customers, require coordination with the back office and route all applications through manual review. New applicants were left waiting; existing customers were not recognized as such, digital applications followed analog processes, branch employees were strained with paper processes and the risk of fraud continued to be top of mind.

The leadership team saw account opening as a source of friction for customers, employees and compliance teams and was viewed not just as a transaction to be fixed, but as the first real test of the bank's customer promise. They wanted to create a secure, frictionless, digital-first experience online and for the branch at offsite locations that gave customers confidence, empowered employees, protected against fraud and could adapt as regulations and customer needs evolved. That meant moving away from rigid, closed systems and toward a more extensible framework: one that could plug into existing banking systems, allowed integration new technologies and would allow the Bank to scale across both consumer and business banking as the bank plans its expansion strategy. In short, Apple Bank saw the chance to transform account opening from a highly manual and compliance-driven bottleneck into a seamless, future-ready interaction that balanced customer convenience with rigorous fraud protection.

The Solution

Apple Bank partnered with Candescent to implement a next-generation account opening platform designed with extensibility, automation and fraud prevention at its core. Rather than layering fixes onto outdated systems, the bank embraced Candescent's modern, extensible platform that could be tailored to the regulatory environment while keeping the customer experience front and center.

Replacing manual, repetitive tasks with intelligent automation was the first step in transforming the experience. What had required bankers to toggle across three systems—entering customer information, storing documents, and flagging suspicious applications—was consolidated into a seamless, end-to-end process. Customers could now begin an application by simply entering a phone number and limited personal information, while embedded two-factor authentication and fraud checks worked quietly in the background.

The deployment focused on three critical areas:

- 1 Scalability for expansion which required automation of operational tasks including application analysis, document archiving and automation of data to monitoring systems.
- 2 Extensible integrations with 110+ APIs, enabling configurability, compliance and business process improvement, doubling throughput without increasing resources.
- 3 Built-in fraud detection powered by Candescent's ecosystem to identify risk earlier without slowing legitimate applicants down.

Together, these changes turned account opening from a tedious, hour-long transaction into a 5–10 minute, high-value interaction, delivered through what bank leaders described as one of the most successful implementations in their digital transformation roadmap.

The Impact

The impact of Apple Bank's transformation was immediate and measurable. What was once a manual and labor-intensive bottleneck became a streamlined process that freed bankers to focus on relationships rather than paperwork.

Through this modernization, Apple Bank achieved:

- **Significant time savings:** The account opening process shrank from 45–60 minutes to just 5–10 minutes—giving bankers back an average of 50 minutes per application.
- **3X productivity and scalable growth:** By automating manual processes, Apple Bank tripled its productivity, processing nearly 800 applications a month with the same staff and newfound bandwidth. This operational leap enabled the bank to finally launch marketing campaigns for digital products; confident they could handle surging demand and scale without significant increases in headcount.
- **Fewer manual reviews:** Applications requiring intervention were reduced from 80% to around 30%, cutting the operational burden nearly in half and auto declining applications that do not meet the Bank's risk tolerance
- **Stronger fraud prevention:** Built-in verification and Candescent-powered detection enables fraudulent applications to be intercepted earlier, reducing exposure while maintaining speed.
- **Future-ready technology backbone,** supported by an extensible framework that positions Apple Bank to expand the solution beyond consumer accounts into business and commercial banking.
- **Enhanced productivity:** Labor intensive KYC processes and customer outreach turned into automated workflows and frontline staff reclaimed 50% of their time once lost to back office regulatory processes.

In the words of Apple Bank leadership,

“... this was the most successful technology implementation in the institution’s digital transformation journey over the last 6 years.

Turning account opening from a low-value transaction into the first step of a stronger, long-term customer relationship. The partnership with Candescent proved to allow for a seamless implementation, a solutions-oriented project team and the Bank to achieve their objectives of a customer centric onboarding experience. The bank not only modernized a critical customer-facing process but also lived up to its brand promise: to deliver a remarkable experience with every customer interaction.



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Atlanta, Ga.-based Candescent is the largest independent digital banking platform in the United States. With a comprehensive, digital-first product suite, Candescent drives success for its financial institution clients by delivering a seamless experience that elevates and connects digital and physical banking channels. Candescent currently serves more than 1,300 banks and credit unions representing nearly 30 million registered users. For more information, visit www.candescent.com.

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