

RECORD Searchlight

FRIDAY JUNE 29, 2007 REDDING, CALIFORNIA

47 CENTS

NORTH STATE BANKING

ATMs go envelope-free

Banks hope machines make deposits simpler

By Tanya Roscorla
Record Searchlight

You insert your debit card into the ATM, type in your password and select "deposit."

In return, the ATM asks how much you are depositing and tells you to insert a stack of bills or checks into the machine — without using an envelope.

Envelope-free automated teller machines are becoming more common around the country and were installed two months ago at two Redding bank branches.

Wells Fargo has envelope-free ATMs in 32 California counties, including the branches on Pine Street and East Cypress Avenue, spokeswoman Julie Campbell said.

The news: Manufacturers are developing ATMs that let customers make deposits without using envelopes, and some of those machines are in Redding.

What's next: Major banks including Wells Fargo and Bank of America plan to convert all their ATMs to the envelope-free version.

Bank of America has switched 2,000 of its 12,000 standard ATMs to the higher-tech machines, spokeswoman Betty Riess said. Bank of America does not have the ATMs in Northern California, but has installed them in Southern California and bigger cities across the nation. The bank has another 5,000 ATMs that do not accept deposits.

Other banks are following suit. A

See ATM, A-5

RECORD SEARCHLIGHT • REDDING.COM

ATM

CONTINUED FROM A-1

manufacturer of the new machines, Wincor Nixdorf USA, is working with eight of the top 20 U.S. banks to test technology including the envelope-free ATMs, said Alan Walsh, Wincor's vice president of banking.

The ATMs take a digital image of the deposited checks and allow the amount to be digitally verified, Walsh said. The machines also tell customers when the amount they deposit does not add up to the number they entered.

With the older machines, employees count the money in the envelopes the next morning and physically send the checks to the check-writer's bank.

The ATMs work well for small-business owners who don't have time to put money into an envelope, Walsh said.

"You search for an envelope, it's wet, you have to hand-write on the back of the envelope, and you have something in the back of your mind that wonders where the money is going," he said.

chines, Walsh said. The bulk-check machines the company started developing in 1995 are one of two forms of the new ATMs and allow customers to insert up to 10 checks into the ATM at once. The other version of the ATMs require checks to be inserted one at a time.

Wells Fargo credits cash to a customer's account the same day when the bills are deposited before 7 p.m. on a weekday, Wells Fargo's Campbell said. The older ATMs credit cash to customers' accounts the next day.

Checks could be subject to holds, she said.

Bank of America customers can make ATM deposits until 8 p.m. and receive credit the same day, Riess said. Checks also can clear on the same day, but holds that are normally in place still apply.

The financial institution started using single-check ATMs in 2006, Riess said.

But many people still have not heard about the technology, including those who bank at Wells Fargo.

Frank Sauer, 69, uses ATMs to get cash but makes deposits with a teller at Wells Fargo.

"I like to go inside and deal with a real person and

How it works



1 The bulk envelope-free ATMs can take a stack of up to 10 checks or 30 bills at once.



2 The machine calculates and reports the amount the customer inserted. The customer then can hit "OK" to verify the amount or ask the machine to return the cash and checks.



3 The customer can request a printed receipt with an image of the checks or an itemized listing of each check's amount. The machine also prints a list of the bills and their denominations.

Phil Fountain / Record Searchlight

But when he heard about how the new machines work, he said, "Well, maybe I'll change my mind if it's

that easy."

Reporter Tanya Roscorla can be reached at 225-8221 or at troscorla@redding.com.

The firm is the only manufac-