

AT A GLANCE

TATUM BUSINESS STRATEGY & IT ALIGNMENT

Tatum provided a comprehensive expert third-party assessment in touch with daily operations yielding quick actionable recommendations.

TATUM SYSTEM SELECTION & IMPLEMENTATION

FHLBank batch processed every 24 hours, necessitating cumbersome paperwork. Tatum implemented a new system to make these processes real-time.

TATUM CIO SERVICES

Tatum provided a seamless oversight of IT operations when there was a gap in IT leadership during a tumultuous time for mortgage lending. Tatum services freed up executive management to focus on business challenges at hand plus expert counsel recruiting the permanent CIO.

Mortgage lending bank builds stronger technology platform after CIO departure.

Brief Overview

FHLBank Atlanta's mission, as one of 12 regional banks in the Federal Home Loan Bank System, is to support mortgage lending throughout the southeastern United States and provide liquidity to its more than 1,200 member financial institutions including commercial banks, credit unions, thrifts and insurance companies. The Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta is one of the largest banks in the system with over \$200 billion in assets.

Members can turn to the bank to fund mortgages, obtain financial assistance, reduce funding costs to grow their assets, receive counsel on meeting community credit needs, or manage assets, liabilities and daily liquidity. To offer this wide array of resources and services, FHLBank Atlanta depends on up-to-the-minute information easily shared throughout the organization.

Situation

Early in 2008, FHLBank Atlanta's Chief Information Officer (CIO) and key member of senior management retired unexpectedly. The bank found itself with an immediate need for an experienced senior technology executive who could step into the role of CIO, manage the IT organization and seamlessly meld into the senior management team. Executive management determined a seasoned and experienced financial services CIO was essential in maintaining the momentum of critical development projects.

Given the importance of technology to the bank and the tumultuousness of the financial landscape, executive management and the board decided that they needed three things:

- 1) Immediate senior management assistance,
- 2) An independent evaluation of the institution's entire IT service portfolio and
- 3) Guidance in recruiting the right individual who would become their CIO of the future.

In short, they wanted help and they needed answers to questions that would be difficult to ask without an objective, third party evaluation. Was IT responsive to serving the needs of the bank? Could IT take the bank forward into the future? What kind of CIO was the right fit?

“Tatum exceeded our expectations - going beyond serving as a caretaker for our IT organization to acting as an agent of change to move business forward when we needed it most.”

- Cathy Callaway Adams, Executive Vice President and Chief Administration Officer, FHLBank Atlanta

Why Tatum

The bank's management recognized they needed executive leadership which possessed both financial industry and technology management acumen. "We needed to make sure our technology supported our business particularly with the changing landscape of the banking business," said Cathy Adams, Executive Vice President and Chief Administration Officer.

FHLBank Atlanta knew Tatum's financial and technology leadership services could meet their needs for a rapid assessment, strategic planning, program oversight and operational expertise. Tatum's senior talent gave management confidence they could seamlessly take the reins of the Bank's IT department and make crucial strategy and CIO recruitment recommendations.

FHLBank Atlanta contacted Tatum and within days of the departure of their CIO, a highly qualified senior executive from Tatum was serving as interim CIO of the bank. "The speed with which they placed a capable CIO was quite remarkable," said Adams. "Our organization never missed a beat."

Results

Tatum's work began immediately with an extensive series of interviews and meetings with senior executives and upper levels of IT management.

During the assessment, Tatum's interim CIO oversaw the Bank's daily IT operations observing how departments worked with each other and how real-time data could enhance decision-making.

"Performing the IT assessment while running the department provided an intimate level of insight into what was really happening within the organization," said Adams. "Typical consulting firms rarely offer that level of involvement, and it made all the difference."

These insights enabled Tatum to validate the ideas, thoughts and perceptions of the executive team, and formulate a blueprint for improvements in the Bank's day-to-day operations and overall technology strategy.

The enhancements made an immediate impact since Tatum was assessing the issues while simultaneously managing the IT organization. Customer service became a priority for IT responding swiftly to requests and help desk issues. Expecting delivery of software projects with zero defects and delivering on this expectation became the norm; and, real-time architecture was specified and deployed.


Tatum helped FHLBank Atlanta acquire major applications platforms to help them remain viable in a challenging financial services landscape.

"Under Tatum's direction, IT governance was re-focused from a day-to-day activity to one that now helps us manage the bank's strategic future."

- Cathy Callaway Adams, Executive Vice President and Chief Administration Officer, FHLBank Atlanta

As Tatum's work progressed, the Bank's management became comfortable that operations were running smoothly and the trust the IT organization would deliver technology needed for the future was strengthened. Executives also were confident the recommended plan and direction would allow its IT systems to adapt to increasingly flexible markets and industry conditions.

Furthermore, Tatum's work paved the way for FHLBank Atlanta to transition to a permanent CIO. Tatum developed the permanent CIO job requirements and assisted the bank and its executive search firm in the selection process. In early 2009, the bank hired a permanent CIO.

"Tatum exceeded our expectations—going beyond serving as a caretaker for our IT organization to acting as an agent of change to move business forward when we needed it most," said Adams. 

About Tatum

Companies turn to Tatum when critical business challenges arise because we immediately deliver C-level financial and technology operational expertise via solutions tailored to the Office of the CFO. We understand the urgency of NOW and our VELOCI-T solutions were designed to help business leaders accelerate results to *create more value™*.