



# Shifting Perceptions of Banks through the Pandemic

Recognizing Leading Bank Responses During the COVID-19 Crisis

January 28, 2021

The shock of COVID-19 and ensuing race for PPP funding forced many small business owners to rethink relationships with their commercial banking providers.

The unique anxiety of this pandemic has combined health concerns with pressing liquidity needs amid lockdowns. Many business owners were unexpectedly juggling disruptions to their workforces while simultaneously struggling to manage through softening revenues.

The government's SBA/PPP program represented a timely and opportune path forward for many. However, borrowers' client experiences differed dramatically based on their banking partners. While some providers grappled with new processes and application volumes, others were able to rise to the occasion. The very best even improved their customers' perceptions despite the raft of challenges in 2020.

## Commercial Banking Standouts in COVID-19 Crisis

We developed a Crisis Response Index (CRI) that features performance metrics rated as most important to business owners in the current environment.

Bank scores are comprised of feedback from customers across key criteria, including perceptions of valued long-term relationships, speed in response to loan requests, overall digital experience, utilizing data & analytics, and quality of advice to help your business grow.

# Greenwich Crisis Response Index—Q4 2020 Update

## Standout Commercial Banks Amid Crisis

SMALL BUSINESS BANKING <sup>1</sup>	MIDDLE MARKET BANKING <sup>2</sup>
Associated Bank First Horizon FNB Corporation Frost Bank Fulton Bank Pinnacle Financial Zions Bancorporation	BBVA Fifth Third Bank First Horizon Frost Bank Fulton Bank Regions Bank Truist

Note: <sup>1</sup>Small Business Banking defined as U.S. companies with annual revenues of \$1-10 million. Based on 2,568 respondents. <sup>2</sup>Middle Market Banking defined as U.S. companies with annual revenues of \$10-500 million. Based on 2,871 respondents. Greenwich Associates requires a minimum threshold of lead relationship citations for eligibility.

Source: Greenwich Associates Commercial Banking Program, Q4 2020

**National Banks:** More than a third of small businesses have a banking relationship with one of the three largest (National) providers. An historic 'competitive advantage' was flipped on its head as customers lined up for funding. The sheer volume of applications led to delays in communication (both real and perceived). Some business owners interpreted these experiences as cues to initiate a new relationship.

**Community Banks:** Smaller banks were able to absorb the (far more modest) application volumes and were able to take on new customers. Already favorable perceptions of Community Banks rose even higher in the initial months following the outbreak. Borrowers lauded high-touch approach and felt 'put at ease' by assigned bankers shepherding the process.

**Regional Banks:** By the Q4, the Community Banks' lead had been materially eroded by Regional Banks that made steady gains throughout the year. In fact, Regional Banks drove the greatest perception gains of any bank-type in 2020. Despite a more modest initial perception bump, Regional Banks climbed in each quarter of the year.

**Super Regional Banks:** Super Regional Banks stand apart in that their customers' perceptions remained (statistically) consistent over the course of a tumultuous year. Super Regional Banks operate in a sweet spot with more tenured bankers and elements of technology that make the process less cumbersome. We see several of these providers as particularly well positioned for success in 2021.

Greenwich Associates welcomes the opportunity to share additional information about how expectations and perceptions are changing in commercial banking during this crisis.

---

[www.greenwich.com](http://www.greenwich.com) | [ContactUs@greenwich.com](mailto:ContactUs@greenwich.com)

Coalition Greenwich, a division of CRISIL, an S&P Global Company, is a leading global provider of strategic benchmarking, analytics and insights to the financial services industry.

We specialize in providing unique, high-value and actionable information to help our clients improve their business performance.

Our suite of analytics and insights encompass all key performance metrics and drivers: market share, revenue performance, client relationship share and quality, operational excellence, return on equity, behavioral drivers, and industry evolution.

## About CRISIL

CRISIL is a leading, agile and innovative global analytics company driven by its mission of making markets function better. It is majority owned by S&P Global Inc., a leading provider of transparent and independent ratings, benchmarks, analytics, and data to the capital and commodity markets worldwide.

CRISIL is India's foremost provider of ratings, data, research, analytics, and solutions with a strong record of growth, culture of innovation, and global footprint.

It has delivered independent opinions, actionable insights and efficient solutions to over 100,000 customers through businesses that operate from India, the U.S., the U.K., Argentina, Poland, China, Hong Kong, and Singapore.

For more information, visit [www.crisil.com](http://www.crisil.com)

## Disclaimer and Copyright

This Document is prepared by Crisil Coalition Greenwich, which is a part of Crisil Ltd, a company of S&P Global. All rights reserved. This Document may contain analysis of commercial data relating to revenues, productivity and headcount of financial services organisations (together with any other commercial information set out in the Document). The Document may also include statements, estimates and projections with respect to the anticipated future performance of certain companies and as to the market for those companies' products and services.

The Document does not constitute (or purport to constitute) an accurate or complete representation of past or future activities of the businesses or companies considered in it but rather is designed to only highlight the trends. This Document is not (and does not purport to be) a comprehensive Document on the financial state of any business or company. The Document represents the views of Crisil Coalition Greenwich as on the date of the Document and Crisil Coalition Greenwich has no obligation to update or change it in the light of new or additional information or changed circumstances after submission of the Document.

This Document is not (and does not purport to be) a credit assessment or investment advice and should not form basis of any lending, investment or credit decision. This Document does not constitute nor form part of an offer or invitation to subscribe for, underwrite or purchase securities in any company. Nor should this

Document, or any part of it, form the basis to be relied upon in any way in connection with any contract relating to any securities. The Document is not an investment analysis or research and is not subject to regulatory or legal obligations on the production of, or content of, investment analysis or research.

The data contained in the Document is based upon a particular bank's scope, which reflects a bank's data submission, business structure, and sales revenue Reporting methodology. As a result, any data contained in the Document may not be directly comparable to data presented to another bank. For franchise benchmarking, Crisil Coalition Greenwich has implemented equal ranking logic on aggregate results i.e., when sales revenues are within 5% of at least one competitor ahead, a tie is shown and designated by = (where actual ranks are shown). Entity level data has no equal ranking logic implemented and therefore, on occasion, the differences between rank bands can be very close mathematically.

The data in this Document may reflect the views reported to Crisil Coalition Greenwich by the research participants. Interviewees may be asked about their use of and demand for financial products and services and about investment practices in relevant financial markets. Crisil Coalition Greenwich compiles the data received, conducts statistical analysis and reviews for presentation purposes to produce the final results.

THE DOCUMENT IS COMPILED FROM SOURCES CRISIL COALITION GREENWICH BELIEVES TO BE RELIABLE. CRISIL COALITION GREENWICH DISCLAIMS ALL REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES, EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED, WITH RESPECT TO THIS DOCUMENT, INCLUDING AS TO THE VALIDITY, ACCURACY, REASONABLENESS OR COMPLETENESS OF THE INFORMATION, STATEMENTS, ASSESSMENTS, ESTIMATES AND PROJECTIONS, ANY WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE ARISING OUT OF THE USE OF ALL OR ANY OF THIS DOCUMENT. CRISIL COALITION GREENWICH ACCEPTS NO LIABILITY WHATSOEVER FOR ANY DIRECT, INDIRECT OR CONSEQUENTIAL LOSS OR DAMAGE OF ANY KIND ARISING OUT OF THE USE OF ALL OR ANY OF THIS DOCUMENT.

Crisil Coalition Greenwich is a part of Crisil Ltd., an S&P Global company. ©2026 Crisil Ltd. All rights reserved.