



## **First State Bank Mortgage: Powering personal connections, productivity, and profitability**

First State Bank Mortgage has been committed to its community and providing essential financial products and services for over 150 years. They've long known that the secret to maintaining their competitive edge is offering unparalleled customer service while proactively listening to both their customers and their employees.

# First State Bank Mortgage

## Headquarters

Missouri

## LOS

Encompass

That's what makes the FSB-Blend partnership so prosperous — a mutual appreciation for meaningful communication and co-creation. “We're successful because Blend bought into us as well — we didn't just buy into Blend,” said Vice President of Mortgage Information Systems Jody Adray. “They gave us solutions, and we weren't just a customer. It's been a great partnership.”

## Making it personal

Digitalization doesn't have to replace human engagement — it can reimagine it. FSB recognizes that providing a service structure that facilitates communication and customer comfort, while taking customers' needs into account, is critical.

“We wanted a borrower portal that was easier for the borrower from start to finish,” recalled Adray. “The biggest complaint from borrowers has always been that our portal was too clunky. So we wanted something that was streamlined. We love that it's not just a tool for loan officers — it's a tool for everyone.”

FSB is continuing to invest in innovative technology that enables meaningful, affordable, and personalized experiences for both self-service and LO interactions. And a partnership with Blend makes that possible. “We always do a post-closing

customer survey, and it's amazing how often they say how seamless and enjoyable our process is," said Senior Vice President, Director of Mortgage Production Rita Rieke.

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*Vice President of Mortgage Information Systems*

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## **Improving productivity**

FSB knows the power of a financial institution lies in its people — and they're modernizing employee workflows to help take productivity to the next level. Features like asset refresh and automatic follow-up emails give loan officers the time they need to act as trusted advisors for their clients.

“The asset refresh was, I believe, the number one thing loan officers love, because they don't have to ask the borrower for more bank statements. It helps them go through the process more quickly,” Adray noted. “Automated follow-ups gave them a lot more time back in their day.”

With less time spent on rote tasks, loan officers were able to increase their loan volume. But the time savings don't just apply to LOs — closers can complete four closings in an hour.

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## **Increasing profitability**

FSB hasn't just saved on time. Investing in a comprehensive, scalable, and unified banking platform has been the perfect foundation for two of the key elements that power productivity and profitability: customer loyalty and employee satisfaction.

FSB doubled loan volume year over year, hitting 2.2 billion in 2020 compared to 1.1 billion in 2019. And they reached this milestone with minimal staffing increases. “We only had to add 17 full-time employees to handle twice the volume,” said Rieke.

The team has already seen the benefits of increased efficiency and automation. Rieke noted that profitability increased by 15x. And by adding on other services from the Blend suite, FSB has been able to remain competitive while seeing a return on investment that Rieke calls “tremendous.”

Rieke plans on building on this ROI with Blend's “new and innovative” capabilities. Currently utilizing hybrid closing, they have their sights set on Remote Online Notarization (RON) to make the digital experience fully end-to-end. “All of those new services just add to the bottom line, and we're hoping that they'll come up with other innovations down the line as we continue the partnership.”

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— **Rita Rieke**  
*Senior Vice President,  
Director of Mortgage Production*

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## **Banking on the future of finance**

The face of finance is undergoing a seismic shift, and FSB knows that playing to their strengths will provide a steadfast anchor as they continue driving incremental improvements in personalization, productivity, and profitability.

And Blend will be there every step of the way, powering innovative solutions that empower FSB and their employees to do what they do best: deepen personal connections and maintain a strong sense of community.

## **About Blend**

Blend is the infrastructure powering the future of banking. Financial providers — from large banks, fintechs, and credit unions to community and independent mortgage banks — use Blend’s platform to transform banking experiences for their customers. Blend powers billions of financial transactions every day. To learn more, visit [blend.com](https://blend.com)