

Absa to launch predictive alert service

Absa Bank has piloted a new predictive alert service that not only notifies customers of potential shortfalls in the bank accounts, but which also offers personalised options to make it easier for customers to manage their finances.



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By using the latest in big data and open source technologies, Absa's smart personal alert enables customers to effectively manage their monthly payment obligations and avoid unexpected surprises. To date, it has been piloted to more than 50,000 customers in South Africa, according to Yasaman Hadjibashi, chief data officer for Barclays Africa.

"The alert works by applying historical transactional behaviour to cheque accounts and assists customers who might not be able to make certain regular monthly payments, thereby helping them to avoid unexpected overdraft charges," she says.

"The solution prompts customers, based on their individual circumstances, to transfer or deposit funds into their account or connect instantly to a dedicated Absa colleague who will help them find the right solution."

Typical industry alerts

Hadjibashi explains that typical industry alerts normally focus on notifying customers when they reach or are close to pre-set minimum limits. These alerts often arrive too late for a customer to act appropriately, and typically without the right personalised options.

"By predicting and better understanding our customers' behaviour, we are able to proactively engage with them before the funds are depleted - and without the customer first having to set a minimum limit. We are then able to provide them with tailored opportunities to manage their account."

By also connecting them directly to a dedicated Absa colleague in real-time, Absa is offering relevant engagement via a personalised service and an end-to-end experience in one short call. Almost a third of calls resulted in product application.

Proactive actions

Of the 50,000 customers who have been part of Absa's pilot to date, 60% proactively took actions following the alerts to manage their payments better, and 84% confirmed that they found the alerts useful and preferred the service to continue.

"Data science brings us closer to understanding our customers' everyday banking needs and helps us protect them again

unnecessary additional charges, through the use of predictive low balance alerts. Analytics is helping us build a deeper understanding of customer behaviour and ensuring that our engagement with them becomes more personal and relevant,” says Anna Nascimento, head of commercial engagement, Personal Bank at Absa.

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