

## *Core Systems: Getting Upgrades and Conversions Right*

Many credit unions are in their fifth or sixth year of amortizing their previous core system purchases which means that quite a few of them are currently evaluating their data processing needs. In addition to this, there are many other factors driving credit unions to research and evaluate their core system positions such as changes in fields of membership, new regulations and the overall competitiveness of the financial marketplace.

Credit unions strive to achieve intimacy with their members, and they also do the same with their vendors. We are in relationship business that is built on mutual trust. We believe that vendors have to earn this trust everyday by keeping their promises, respecting their clients, acting with integrity and providing great service. At AFTECH, we strive to provide an excellent experience for them throughout the lifecycle of our relationship.

This philosophy is especially important during the conversion process when it is critical to avoid member disruptions and minimize staff stress. In action, we do this by assuming responsibility for all problems and focusing everyone's energy on finding solutions. Fortunately, there are better tools and processes in place now than in the past that help manage the process and ensure smooth conversions.

A key component of any project's success is open communications and getting everyone to work together. We accomplish this through a very sophisticated Web-based project management application. Everyone working on the conversion receives secure access so that we are all working together. Our experienced Project Manager, working alongside their counterpart at the credit union, establishes a project plan and schedule that we can all follow and adhere to. This adds a great deal of structure and confidence, and helps keep everyone on track over the course of six to nine months.

From years of experience, our team has learned to identify trouble spots such as new products and services coming online for the first time, third party relationships, etc. and address these issues early in the process. Credit unions rely on us for direction so we have to be much more than a conversion team, we have to act as business consultants. Of course we learn from each other and after every project we make sure that we digest the 'lessons learned.' Somewhat surprisingly, we have found that data conversion itself is very straightforward, while things like tuning operations and finding the right product mixes require a great deal of time and attention.

We always conduct a full dress rehearsal and transact a full day's worth of business before going live; plus we always run a mirror test in the first week of the conversion. Because of these extensive testing efforts and our focus on customer service, we always receive high client satisfaction ratings. AFTECH wants to be the best partner for credit unions that are looking for high service levels, strong leadership, new products, and continuous refinement of technology.



**Joseph Antellocy**  
President

**Joseph Antellocy** has been a citizen of the credit union movement since 1982, when he became the first Credit Union Account Executive for a Pennsylvania based Value Added Reseller (VAR). Over his 22 year core processing career he has managed sales, marketing, development, installation, and support personnel for successful national organizations. Mr. Antellocy has been President of AFTECH since February 2002. Formed in 1980 and based in Malvern, Pennsylvania, AFTECH, a business unit of Fiserv Inc., is a coordinated team of dedicated staff members with an average of more than ten years of either credit union or credit union data processing experience. Utilized by a select family of credit unions, AFTECH brings a systematic approach to successfully implement, monitor, refine, and support credit unions of any size.

**AFTECH**

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