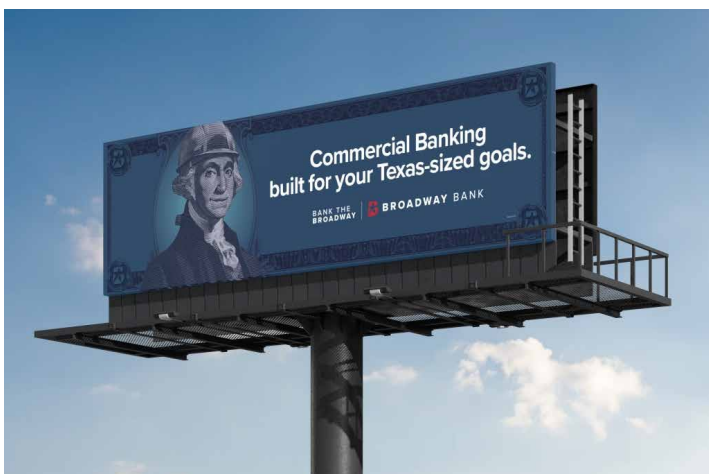


AMERICAN BANKER[®]

MARKETING

Texas bank's marketing campaign draws from U.S. history

By John Reosti | March 24, 2025



Broadway National Bank in San Antonio is rolling out a new marketing campaign to promote its expansion in Dallas and Houston.

Broadway National Bank

In a bid to lift its profile in Dallas, where it expanded in 2022, and Houston, a market it entered the following year, Broadway National Bank is rolling out a marketing campaign centered on scratchboard representations of Benjamin Franklin, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.

Unveiled Wednesday after a year of planning and preparation, the campaign puts the three iconic figures — each of whom fronts a U.S. banknote — in modern poses. Franklin wears sunglasses in one representation, Lincoln a casual shirt in another. Washington dons a construction worker's hard hat in a third.

"They will be the centerpiece, and hopefully super-identifiable, the more impressions we get in our marketplace," Broadway's chief marketing officer, Nathan Kokemor, told American Banker. "When you think about what we do and what we are at our core, we thought the best way to really let people understand who we are was something as identifiable as money."

Marketing is a challenge for many banks. A poll by the American Bankers Association in the fall of 2024 found banks spent the largest portion (40%) of their marketing budget on advertising,



Nathan Kokemor

Broadway National Bank

about par with 2022 and 2023, while they boosted expenditures on new customer acquisition. For most banks, digital advertising brought the greatest return.

Broadway's marketing push was designed to highlight the bank's ability to offer a level of products and services on par with big-bank competitors, but to deliver them with the homespun touch and feel of a family-owned community bank, Kokemor said. Founder Charles Cheever's family controls the \$5.7 billion-asset Broadway.

A more important goal, perhaps, is increasing the San Antonio-based bank's visibility in Dallas and Houston. Entering those megamarkets represents Broadway's most significant strategic expansion in more than a decade, since entering Austin in 2013.

Though it's the largest community bank in the San Antonio metropolitan statistical area, Broadway remains a little-known newcomer in Dallas and Houston. Moving the needle even slightly on name recognition and market share has game-changing potential. The Dallas and Houston markets are Texas' biggest and fastest-growing MSAs. They hold a combined \$970 billion of deposits, according to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.

"We have a long history in the San Antonio area, the Hill Coun-

try, [and] we've been in Austin for some time," Kokemor said. "But really, when you're moving into markets like Dallas, where we've been for a while now, and we're seeing some great initial success, and then Houston, our newest market, you're talking about going in with little to no brand recognition or understanding of what makes Broadway unique."

Broadway CEO David Bohne called the marketing campaign — called Bank the Broadway — "a significant moment" for the 84-year-old company. "Bank the Broadway is a confident declaration of who we are and why we stand apart," Bohne said in a press release.



David Bohne

Broadway National Bank

For the bank, the campaign represents a major investment of time and resources. It hired an outside agency, Toronto-based BondX, and devoted hundreds of in-house hours to development. Prominent scratchboard illustrator Mark Summers drew the characters.

Broadway did not disclose the cost of the campaign.

Kokemor's team has gone from completing about 100 creative jobs a year to "well over 1,000" during his tenure as chief marketing officer, he said. Now, though, with a more ambitious marketing campaign in full swing, the schedule is more complicated.

"When you bring in a campaign of this size, does the machine start to slow a little bit? It does, but we find ways to make those deadlines," Kokemor said.

Broadway isn't the only bank seeking to press expansion plans with a major marketing initiative. Columbus, Ohio-based Huntington Bancshares bought naming rights to the Cleveland Browns' stadium, known now as Huntington Bank Field, in large part to boost its brand as it expands around the country, including in the Carolinas and Texas.

"As we expand the geography, starting from some level of awareness is super helpful," Brant Standridge, president of consumer and regional banking, said last month at the \$204 billion-asset bank's investor day. "Opening Day, against the Dallas Cowboys, more than 20 million people across the country got introduced to Huntington."



Broadway National Bank's casual Abraham Lincoln
Broadway National Bank

"We believe that this is an efficient way of introducing Huntington to a national audience," Standridge added.

Like Huntington's naming rights deal, which runs for 20 years, Bank the Broadway is intended to have staying power. "We see lots of opportunities to extend them," Kokemor said of the characters drawn from U.S. history. "I think there's a million ways to make [them] more relatable, from an auto loan and hanging out in a truck, all the way up to commercial banking. We see this as long-term, and their characters developing over time."

Kokemor also plans to widen the cast as the rollout continues. "We started out with the most identifiable [characters], but we already have plans for additional ones, both from currency and history," he said. "Don't be surprised if you hear from or see others down the road."

Broadway plans to put Bank the Broadway into action "really through consistency, a thoughtful and measured approach to buying impressions that make sense for our target," Kokemor said. The bank will use the characters as much as possible across several different mediums, including billboards, digital and print.

"It's repetition and consistency," Kokemor said. "The audio will be omnipresent whether you're listening to traditional radio, streaming Spotify or hitting your favorite podcast. You're going to see [the characters] on the banners in our financial centers. You're going to see them in the emails you get from Broadway Bank."

Much of the increased workload for Kokemor's in-house marketing team comes from the fact that Broadway is handling many of the chores typically done by agency staff. That saves the bank money and lets the agency focus on creative work.

"That's the big idea," Kokemor said. "I want the next amazing creative [concept]. I don't want them bogged down with the flier that's sitting in the drive-through."