# Sun East Federal Credit Union Partners with SRM and Drives a Seven Figure Bottom-Line Improvement

## Taking the Lead

One spring, at the GAC conference in Washington, D.C., a satisfied member of SRM's walked by the team in the convention hall and declared: "You guys don't need a booth, just put up a quote with my picture that says, "IF YOU DON'T DO THIS, YOU'RE CRAZY!" That happy client was Michael Kaczenski, President and CEO of Sun East Federal Credit Union.

In the fall of the previous year, Kaczenski had been actively seeking opportunities with vendors that would add value to the organization and decrease costs. During his tenure, the credit union had grown membership to over 53,000 and their assets to $878M, and the organization was setting its sights on growing to $1B in the near term. As is often the case, he heard about SRM through the grapevine and was introduced to the SRM territory rep by a mutual friend.

Kaczenski notes, "SRM described a relatively simple strategy in which they would gather documents and present opportunities; that is exactly what happened, and we were pleasantly surprised by what they found. They took the lead on implementing cost savings and made a huge impact to our cash flow." Sun East was ready for growth opportunities in the economics of their debit card and credit card programs – they now had a partner with highly specific expertise to help them review and improve these programs.

"The money SRM delivered has allowed us to make investments in key initiatives that are placing us on a path to reach $1B in assets, much more quickly than anticipated." Kaczenski continued, "Once the guesswork was out of the equation, we could fire things up on our goals – offer members more attractive rates, grow membership, expand the team, and advance our technology."

> "The resulting strategy has prepared us for our future; we have a good partnership and we obviously trust SRM for the long term."
>
> **Michael Kaczenski,**
> **CEO & President Sun East Federal Credit Union**

## Behind-The-Scenes Knowhow

SRM reviewed the terms of the vendor contracts, including card networks and processing structure, weighed those against peer institutions in its benchmark database, and negotiated over $1M of improvements. There was nothing in this process that affected members – no issuing of new cards, no change of card numbers, and no member communications were required. Kaczenski says, "We needed behind-the-scenes experience of the terms and benchmarks to come in and help us with these vendors. I would tell other executives they are 'crazy' if they don't have SRM review the terms of their contracts."

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## The Bottom Line

SRM's expertise helped Sun East FCU achieve savings that were previously unidentified. From start to finish, it took four months with status calls every other week. They provided the expertise to make informed decisions and maximize their negotiation position - leading to impactful gains.

From Kaczenski, "We all just live our lives, and one day someone helps us implement a seven-figure improvement – without changing anything from what we're already doing." He continued, "and the bonus is that we aren't locked into a framework that can't change when we grow. Now, we have a good partnership and we obviously trust SRM for the long term."

## About Sun East Federal Credit Union

Chartered in 1949, Sun East continues its commitment to build relationships and deliver products to members that grow with each market's needs. With assets over $635M, the credit union has more than 52,000 members and seven branch locations throughout Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. They provide personal and commercial products including loans, online/mobile banking and bill pay as well as investment and insurance services to its members.

## About SRM

SRM (Strategic Resource Management) has helped 1,000+ financial institutions add more than $5 billion of value to their bottom line in areas such as payments, digital transformation, core processing, artificial intelligence, digital assets, and overall operating efficiency. SRM – now in its 30th year in business – has lowered costs, created revenue opportunities, increased productivity, and provided a competitive edge for clients in an environment of constant and accelerating change.

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