

Wells Fargo: All ATMs will take phone codes, not just cards

March 21 2017, by Ken Sweet



In this Sept. 21, 2016, file photo, a customer uses a Wells Fargo bank ATM in New York. On Tuesday, March 21, 2017, Wells Fargo announced plans to upgrade all 13,000 of its ATMs to allow customers to access their funds using their cellphones instead of traditional bank cards. (AP Photo/Patrick Sison, File)

Wells Fargo plans to upgrade all 13,000 of its ATMs next week to allow customers to access their funds using their cellphones instead of

traditional bank cards.

The announcement was made by Wells Fargo CEO Tim Sloan on Tuesday at an employee town hall in Orlando.

While banks like JPMorgan Chase and Bank of America have announced similar upgrades to their ATMs, those are still being rolled out. Wells would be the first to upgrade all of its ATMs with the feature across the United States.

To access their money, customers would get unique eight-digit codes from their Wells Fargo smartphone app, and enter the code into the ATM along with their PIN number. The machines will still accept debit cards as well.

"Whether a customer happens to have a card on them or not, (the upgrade) provides another simple and secure way to withdraw cash at any of our ATMs," said Adam Vancini, head of virtual channel operations at Wells Fargo.

One limitation of the one-time code, though, is that it won't work on the secure doors that many branches have for non-business hours that require a customer to swipe an ATM or debit card to gain entry. Wells Fargo said those secure doors are found at a small percentage of branches, mostly in major metropolitan areas like New York City or Chicago.



In this Friday, March 17, 2017, file photo, Wells Fargo CEO & President Timothy Sloan is interviewed in one of his bank's branches in New York. On Tuesday, March 21, 2017, Wells Fargo announced plans to upgrade all 13,000 of its ATMs to allow customers to access their funds using their cellphones instead of traditional bank cards. (AP Photo/Richard Drew, File)

The announcement comes as Wells Fargo is looking for ways to woo back the customers it alienated after the San Francisco-based bank admitted that employees opened as many as 2 million checking and [credit card accounts](#) for their customers without getting authorization. The bank said Monday that activity at its branches remains depressed from a year ago, with customers opening 40 percent fewer checking accounts per day last month compared to a year earlier, while the number of [customer](#) interactions with branch bankers per day was down 17 percent.

Wells said it plans to roll out another upgrade to its ATMs later this year,

which will allow customers to access the ATMs by holding their smartphones up to a reader on the machine, instead of entering the eight-digit code. It would be similar to using Apple Pay or Samsung Pay, the bank said.

Chase, Citigroup and Bank of America all announced last year similar upgrades to their ATMs, but the rollout has been slow. Chase's upgraded machines are still in major markets like New York, Miami and San Francisco, while Bank of America says roughly half of its ATMs have the cardless capabilities.

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