

# FIRSTMERIT CORPORATION

## FIRSTMERIT BANK IMPLEMENTS COUPA FOR BEST IN CLASS PROCUREMENT AND REPORTING CAPABILITIES

	<b>CUSTOMER</b> FirstMerit Corporation
	<b>LOCATION</b> Akron, OH
	<b>INDUSTRY</b> Banking & Financial Services
	<b>COMPANY SIZE</b> 1,001 - 5,000

FirstMerit Corporation is a \$24.1 billion diversified financial services company headquartered in Akron, Ohio. With 412 banking offices, operating in five states, FirstMerit is the 28th largest bank in the nation by assets (as of 9/30/13).



“WHEN FIRSTMERIT ACQUIRED CITIZENS, THERE WAS A WIDER FOOTPRINT AND DOUBLE THE BRANCHES AND EMPLOYEES. WE WANTED TO STREAMLINE THAT PROCESS AND THEN MAKE SURE THAT WE WERE TAKING THE BEST OF BOTH CORPORATIONS. AND, OBVIOUSLY THE COUPA PROCESS THAT CITIZENS BANK HAD BEEN USING SINCE MAY 2012 WAS THE BETTER OF THE TWO WORLDS.”

**ABBY GIBBS, PROCUREMENT OPERATIONS SPECIALIST**

**COUPA:** Tell me about FirstMerit Bank? You acquired Citizens Bank in 2013?

**Abby:** Yes. We originally implemented COUPA for Citizens Bank in May 2012. In September 2012 the acquisition by FirstMerit bank was announced. The closing of the acquisition took place in April 2013 causing our footprint to double, increasing to over 400 branches in five states.

**COUPA:** When Citizens was acquired by FirstMerit Bank, you had to go through another review process. What was the business goal at FirstMerit and why did they choose COUPA?

**Abby:** I was lucky enough to implement COUPA twice in 18 months! At FirstMerit, the primary business goal was based on a decision to streamline the business process, saving work and time while gaining efficiencies for both procurement and the branches. We wanted to make sure that we were taking the best of both corporations. Obviously the COUPA process that Citizens Bank had been using since May 2012 was the better of the two worlds.

*"Coupa is fantastic because I don't have to engage my IT person every time I want to onboard a new vendor."*

**ABBY GIBBS,  
FIRSTMERIT CORPORATION**

**COUPA:** How was the implementation different with FirstMerit than it was for Citizens Bank?

**Abby:** For FirstMerit it was a culture shock. They had me in a panic that people were going to resist it. Honestly it has been embraced. I can see people are ordering. It's working. I think some are really surprised at how quickly people just adapted and said, "Oh I can do this." I'm not surprised, because I've done it before. COUPA has been a good thing for FirstMerit Bank. Even for the people that I think were fearful of what was going to happen.

**COUPA:** Why do you think COUPA was so quickly adopted?

**Abby:** I conducted eight separate webinars and two follow-ups, four strictly around ordering and how to place an order. The other four were around how to approve, which is so simple that you shouldn't have to do a webinar on it.

To give you an idea, we've been live at FirstMerit for not quite two months and we are getting pretty close to four thousand PO's in those eight weeks.

**COUPA:** Was the ease of use an important element to employee adoption?

**Abby:** That was one of the things that we felt at Citizens too. COUPA is just easier to use and more user friendly. The reporting capabilities are wonderful, which is something that FirstMerit hasn't had visibility into in the past.

**COUPA:** Did you need to engage IT resources to set up the Supplier Network?

**Abby:** Honestly, COUPA's system doesn't require IT to do the actual vendor integration for PO's, punch-outs, or invoicing. To me, that is fantastic because I don't have to engage my IT person every time I want to onboard a new vendor.

**COUPA:** What was the process like for building punch-outs with your vendors?

**Abby:** With COUPA, it's standard CXML. The vendors are easily able to integrate if they have done it before. I actually went through it with a vendor who had never ever built a punch-out in their life and they were ready to go by day one.

**COUPA:** What's next for FirstMerit?

**Abby:** We're going to start digging deeper into the various lines of business such as facilities and IT, and see how we can improve their processes. We'd like to take some of the paper out of the process for both internal and external purchasing.