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Trends show ATMs changing from business add-on to business driver

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/24-7PressRelease/ - KNOXVILLE, TN, February 10, 2008 - Automatic Teller Machines (ATM) have transitioned from a business add-on to a business driver when kept clean and operating well, a trend that will gather even more speed in 2008, says Chuck West, chief executive officer of National Services Associates (NSA), which conducts field service work on some 40,000 ATMs annually.

ATM machines as a result are no longer the stark, bleak machines in a store corner with the sole purpose of providing customers quick access to cash. They are increasingly the reason people come into a business - and why they might leave if the ATM makes the wrong impression.

National Services Associates has more than 400 field service representatives working in the U.S. and Canada. National Services Associates has worked on ATM branding, information posting and cleaning for Chase Bank, American Express, NetBank, Nationwide Money Services and Cardtronics.

West says that over the last 18 to 24 months companies and stores have realized that ATMs bring people in the doors. Further, banks enjoy the branded aspect of ATMs that increases their customer reach beyond their branch footprint.

"ATMs used to be an extra, something stores installed because the competitor down the street might be doing the same thing," West said.

"Today customers may pass a store that doesn't clearly advertise that it has an ATM. The signage has to be well-done, not just a poster stuck up in the window. Customers make judgments about stores based on ATM presentations and quality."

Instead of sticking ATMs off in a corner and letting them languish, stores are giving them more prominent locations and keeping not only the machines but the areas around them more attractive and inviting, West said.

"It's not uncommon for a customer to enter a store, go to the ATM, and if it doesn't look good to leave and go elsewhere," he said. "A well-maintained ATM gives a good impression about the entire store; it motivates people to spend more money there."

West said that the most common ATM problem areas National Services Associates is asked to deal with are dirty ATMs, machines that are not functioning properly or that are missing key branding or regulatory compliance notices.

"That hurts businesses, which is why we are increasingly being tasked to ensure those problems are eliminated," West said. "ATMs have evolved from something nice to have in a store to an asset essential to its prosperity. There's nothing that suggests this will change; in fact, going into 2008, as society becomes even more electronic, I'm confident this trend will gather speed."

About National Services Associates

In 2007 National Services Associates was named by Business Tennessee Magazine as one of Tennessee's 100 fastest growing companies, and in 2006 the magazine also cited National Services Associates as one of the state's 50 fastest-growing privately held companies.

National Services Associates, in addition to working with sign companies, retailers, automotive dealers and other major companies, has a large niche with financial institutions and Cardtronics, the world's largest ATM operator.

National Services Associates puts people in the field wherever they are needed to carry out tasks and projects for financial,

retail, point-of-purchase, convenience stores, regional or national restaurant chains and other companies that require consistency, speed and dependability in the physical presentation of their image to their customers and vendors.