Modernizing Member Experience:

Choosing the Right ITM Strategy for the Next Generation of Credit Unions

By Marvin Bowers

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Executive Summary

The financial landscape is shifting—faster than most credit unions can adapt. While institutions invest in digital transformation and branch redesign, many are still constrained by outdated infrastructure, fragmented vendor ecosystems, and rising branch operating costs. Member expectations have changed: they demand convenient, reliable access to services across all channels—and they expect those services to be fast, intuitive, and consistent.

Interactive Teller Machines (ITMs)—enhanced ATMs capable of performing most teller transactions with or without video assistance—have emerged as a cornerstone of the modern branch experience. But not all ITM platforms are created equal. In fact, the wrong ITM strategy can create more complexity than it solves. Choosing the right vendor—and more importantly, the right architectural approach—is crucial. It's not just about delivering digital transactions; it's about ensuring long-term scalability, operational efficiency, and member satisfaction.

This whitepaper provides a strategic comparison between two dominant ITM providers: Hyosung and NCR. We analyze their technology stacks, integration models, support ecosystems, and long-term risk profiles. The findings are grounded in real-world credit union case studies and enhanced by third-party research on technology adoption trends in the financial sector.

Our aim is to offer something more than a checklist or product guide—we want to equip decision-makers at every level, from frontline ops managers to C-suite executives, with the clarity to ask the right questions and recognize the hidden costs before they surface. We believe that when you combine real-world case studies with plainspoken analysis and just a hint of healthy skepticism, you unlock better decisions.

Like Daniel Pink suggests in *To Sell Is Human*, today's most important business decisions don't hinge on persuasion—they hinge on understanding. This paper is for anyone who's been handed an RFP, sat through a vendor demo, or wondered why a 'smart' machine needed six calls to get fixed. We hope it helps you cut through the fog, get honest about trade-offs, and build something that actually works—for your members, your staff, and your balance sheet. Whether you're launching your first ITM or reconsidering an existing platform, this guide will help you align technology choices with your institution's strategy, member goals, and financial realities.

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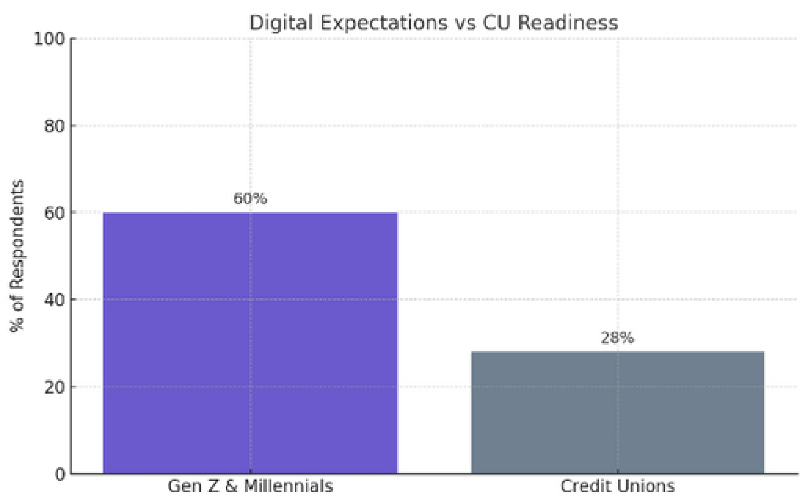
1. The Shift: Why Credit Unions Are Rethinking ITM Platforms

A New Mandate for Experience

Credit unions have always differentiated on member experience, but in a post-pandemic world, experience has taken on a new dimension. It's no longer just about friendly service or local branding—it's about convenience, continuity, and control. Members expect to start a task in a mobile app, continue it at a machine, and finish it with a person—without explaining themselves three times. They want service that adapts to their life, not the other way around.

ITMs, when properly deployed, meet these demands by merging the simplicity of an ATM with the utility of a branch. Done right, they become digital branch ambassadors: always on, never sick, and consistent. But when built on legacy video-only models, they become just another call center with a screen.



Data from Cornerstone Advisors and Filene Research Institute makes this clear: Gen X and millennial members are now more likely to switch institutions due to poor digital or self-service experience than due to loan rates. And while most credit unions still rely on tellers to fulfill core transactions, digital-first members increasingly avoid those queues altogether.

Filene's 2024 digital transformation report reveals that Gen Z and millennials are 60% more likely to choose a financial institution based on its self-service and omnichannel capabilities. Yet, only about 28% of credit unions have deployed ITMs in a way that enables true self-service. The majority remain tethered to outdated, video-first systems that don't scale and don't meet member expectations for autonomy.

This isn't just about cost or convenience. It's about how members perceive their credit union: modern and empowering—or old-fashioned and frustrating.

Staffing Pressure Meets Rising Cost of Delivery

It's not just that tellers are harder to hire—it's that the old model of full-time, in-branch staffing simply doesn't scale anymore. Since 2020, front-line turnover at credit unions has jumped by over 35%, according to a CUInsight workforce study. As institutions compete for talent with rising wages, better benefits, and hybrid flexibility in other industries, staffing every branch with skilled employees has become a logistical—and financial—strain.

At the same time, the shape of branches is evolving. Smaller footprints. Universal bankers. Consultative interactions over routine transactions. Members are being guided to digital channels for the basics, while staff focus on higher-value engagement. But this model only works if the "digital channel" can actually deliver on its own.

That's where many ITMs fall short. When the machine relies on a remote teller to complete basic functions—or worse, routes members into a queue with no visibility—it doesn't reduce the labor burden. It just relocates it.

The real question isn't whether your ITMs can reduce staffing—it's whether they're built to replace routine labor with reliable autonomy. Credit unions that get this right aren't just saving headcount. They're reallocating human energy where it matters most: trust, empathy, and advisory conversations.

In the words of Daniel Pink, "We're all in sales now", Every frontline interaction is an opportunity to build loyalty—and that includes your machines. When ITMs work well, they're not just efficient. They're persuasive. They say: "We value your time. We built this for you. We're not making you wait just to deposit a check."

The "Invisible" Complexity Problem

Here's where it gets messy. The biggest risk in ITM strategy isn't bad hardware. It's good hardware buried under a pile of mismatched software, integration fees, and finger-pointing vendors. Many credit unions inherit this complexity without realizing it. They start with a promising machine and end up coordinating four different companies to make it work.

One vendor manages the box. Another licenses the teller video platform. A third writes the middleware to talk to your core. A fourth answers the phone when the screen freezes. These systems might look polished on the surface, but underneath, they're patchworked together by contracts and luck. When something breaks, the support loop becomes a game of hot potato.

This isn't just inefficient—it's demoralizing. Your IT team burns hours chasing issues they didn't architect. Your staff gets frustrated. And most importantly, your members feel it. Transactions time out. Branding feels off. The machine becomes a point of friction instead of empowerment.

And here's the part nobody puts in a sales deck: every layer of tech you don't own introduces another layer of risk. When you're not in control of your integration stack, you're not in control of your experience.

The question isn't whether ITMs can modernize your branch. It's: are you building something that scales with your strategy—or buying into someone else's sales strategy?

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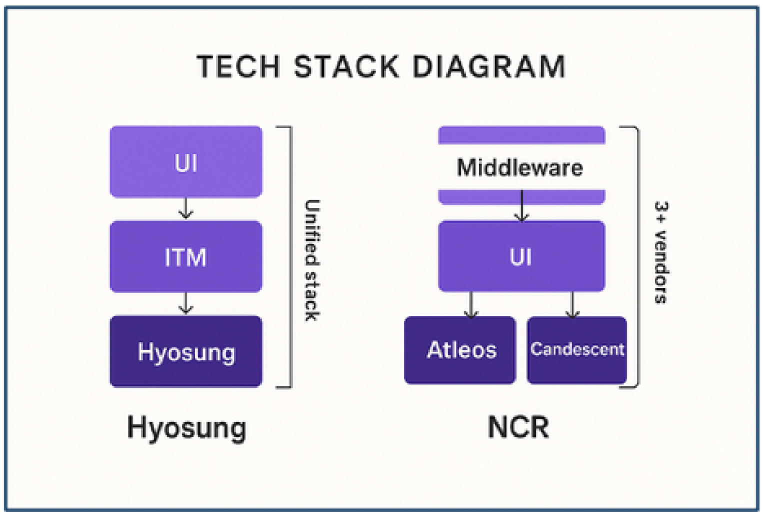
2. Architectural Models: Hyosung vs. NCR

Hyosung: Vertical Integration for Flexibility and Scale

Imagine building a house where the architect, the contractor, the electrician, and the warranty rep are all the same person. That's what Hyosung offers in the ITM space. They design the hardware. They write the software. They support the updates. And they back it all up with one national service team.

This vertical integration gives credit unions clarity and control. No middleware licenses. No guesswork about which vendor to call. Hyosung's BlueVerse™ core integration connects directly to platforms like Symitar and Fiserv DNA, enabling 90–95% of teller transactions to be completed independently by members—including check deposits, fund transfers, and loan payments.

But the power here isn't just the interface. It's the institutional autonomy. Staff can update branding or modify workflows without a coding degree or a six-week SOW. That kind of agility matters when your frontline realities shift week to week.



Credit unions like First Nebraska Credit Union have leveraged this model to increase self-service rates, reduce dependency on teller labor, and reclaim hours otherwise spent chasing down support tickets. It's not just tech—it's an operating system for modern service delivery.

NCR: Multi-Entity, Middleware-Heavy Deployment

NCR's model is built on partnerships—and that's both its strength and its risk. Since the 2023 corporate split into Atleos (hardware) and Voyix (software), ITM deployments often require coordination between multiple vendors, including third-party development shops like Candescent that maintain parts of the digital platform.

This modularity allows for powerful customizations, especially in large financial institutions with in-house IT teams. But for most credit unions, it adds layers of cost, delay, and friction. Each component—hardware, software, middleware—operates on its own roadmap. When things go wrong, resolution often means filing multiple tickets, syncing across time zones, or waiting for engineering resources that aren't on your payroll.

Institutions in this model frequently cite launch delays of six to eight months, often due to core integration challenges or remote video staffing logistics. It's not that NCR can't deliver. It's that delivering requires orchestration—and every extra conductor adds complexity.

Side-by-Side Comparison

Feature	Hyosung	NCR
Core Integration	Direct, real-time via BlueVerse™ core connector	Requires third-party middleware or custom APIs
Vendor Ecosystem	Single vendor: hardware, software, service aligned	Split: Atleos (hardware), Voyix (software), partners
Member Transaction Model	90-95% of teller transactions via self-service	Video-assisted model for many core functions
Branding & UI Control	Local customization via no-code admin tools	Requires vendor-led or professional service support
Deployment Timeframe	Standardized rollout, often 20-30% faster	Longer lead times due to integration dependencies
Support Structure	One call, one vendor: unified response path	Multiple vendors with varied SLAs

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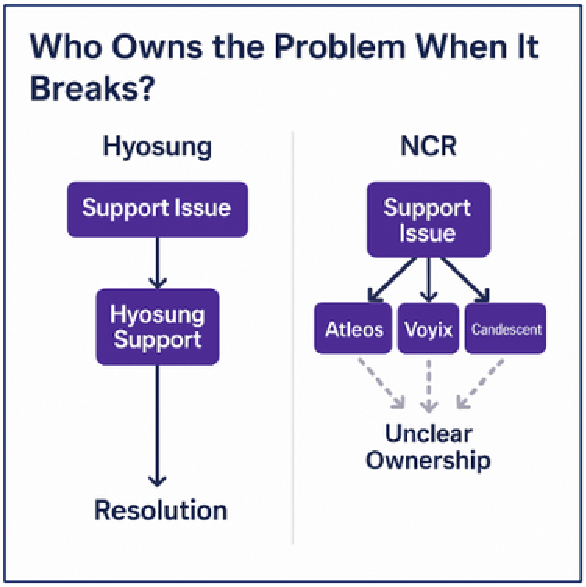
3. Managed Services & Support Models

Let's face it—many of the biggest costs of an ITM strategy don't show up on the invoice. They show up six months later, when your team is chasing patch notes, juggling three service contracts, or wondering why a feature that worked yesterday doesn't today.

Since NCR split into Atleos and Voyix, the lines of accountability have only grown blurrier. But things took a more complicated turn in 2024 when Voyix sold its Digital Banking business to Veritas Capital. That business, rebranded as Candescent, now owns and operates the key middleware and integration layers that make NCR's ITM systems function within many credit union environments.

This means NCR no longer controls the full ecosystem. The glue that once bound hardware, software, and core integration under one roof is now fractured. While Candescent may be capable, it operates with its own priorities, separate service contracts, and its own development cycles—none of which are aligned contractually to Atleos or Voyix.

So when something breaks? Hardware may route to Atleos. Software UI bugs go to Voyix. Core integration quirks go to Candescent. That's not a service model—it's a customer service maze.



In contrast, Hyosung owns the full stack: hardware, software, service, and core integration. That means your ops team gets:

- A single number to call
- A unified escalation process
- Remote monitoring and patching built in
- One contract, one invoice, one roadmap

Hyosung's model simplifies operations and makes total cost of ownership predictable. When the whole system is built and supported by one team, updates are streamlined and problems are easier to solve.

Case Study: Five Star Credit Union (AL) deployed 40 Hyosung core-integrated ITMs across its 17 branches. This allowed them to process over 65,000 transactions monthly, with 99% completed via self-service. They reported an annual savings of approximately $240,000 in staffing costs. Members quickly adapted, shifting their behavior toward ITM use while maintaining high satisfaction ratings.

Case Study: St. Mary's Bank (NH)—the nation's first credit union—partnered with Hyosung to deploy ITMs across its branches. The credit union saw strong member adoption and reduced the need for in-lobby teller staffing, while maintaining a consistent branded experience. Member feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and St. Mary's plans further rollouts in 2025.

The key takeaway? A managed service model isn't about outsourcing. It's about owning the experience. When your ITM stack is unified, your staff gets time back—and your members get consistency.

4. Strategic Risks & Long-Term Considerations

Digital Banking Divestiture & Vendor Fragmentation:

When NCR split into Atleos (hardware) and Voyix (software) in 2023, it introduced a two-vendor structure that many institutions found challenging. But the real disruption came in 2024, when Voyix sold its entire Digital Banking business to Veritas Capital. That business—including the

ITM software stack, user interface layer, and core integration tools—was rebranded as **Candescent** and now operates entirely outside NCR.

NCR's Evolving Ecosystem

Year	Event	Impact on FIS
2022	Corporate split into two units	Fragmented support paths
2023	Banking software divested	Candescent now owns integration
2024	Veritas Capital acquisition	Dependence on a new vendor
	CSP rolled out	Limited choice of services

This shift represents more than a name change—it's a structural fork in the road. NCR no longer owns or manages the integration layer that makes their ITMs function in a core-connected environment. Financial institutions that sign a contract with NCR today must now rely on a separate company, Candescent, for what many assumed was part of the core ITM platform.

The implications are significant:

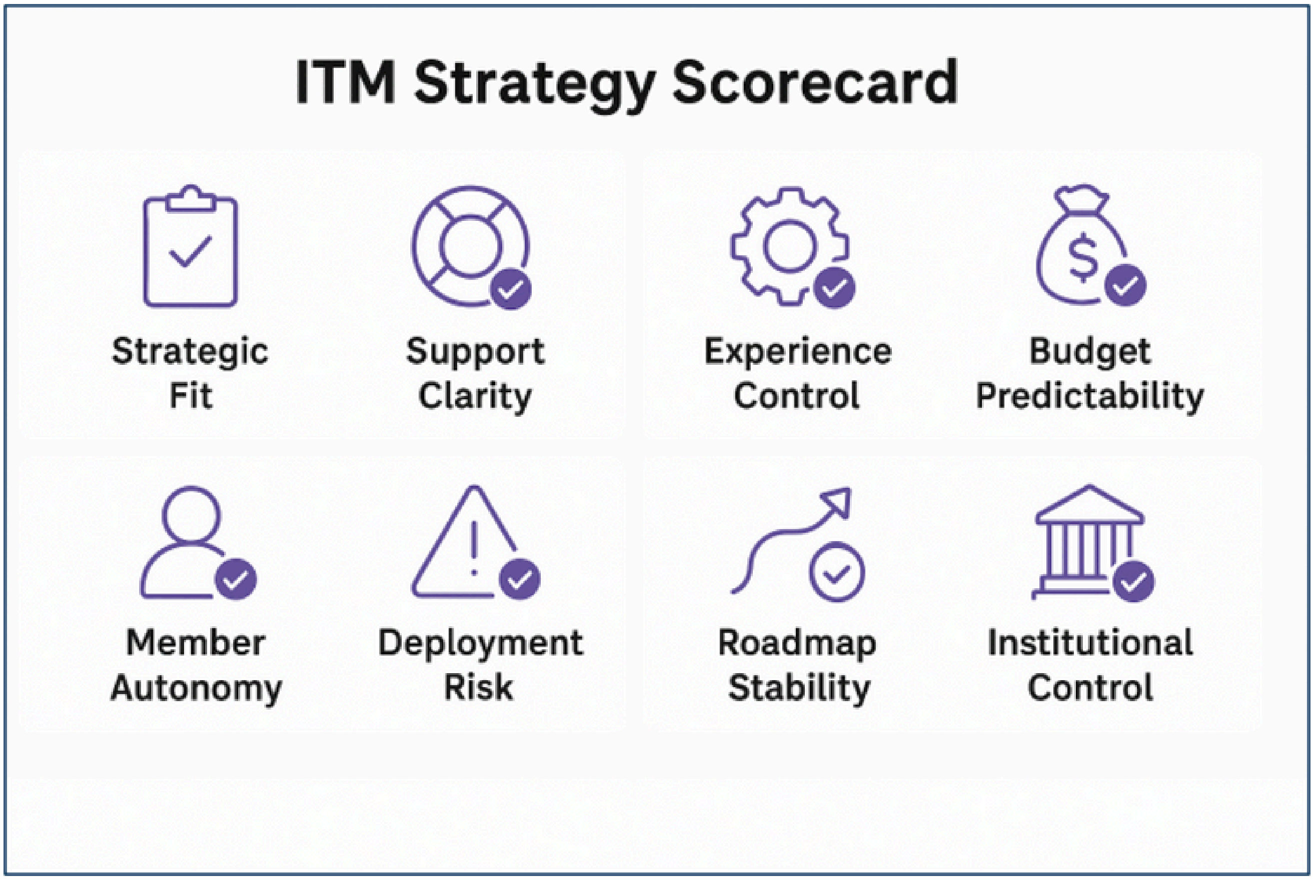
- **Support Disruption:** When something breaks, institutions must navigate three separate entities—Atleos for hardware, Voyix for UI bugs, and Candescent for integration issues. There's no unified SLA.
- **Roadmap Drift:** Each entity now operates on its own timeline, with no contractual obligation to stay aligned. A patch from one vendor could create a conflict for another.
- **Higher Operating Costs:** Institutions must manage three relationships, three invoices, and the gaps in between. Integration costs often balloon because coordination isn't baked into the model.

The CSP Lock-In Issue: NCR's Channel Services Platform (CSP), now positioned as the preferred ITM delivery model, is cloud-hosted and offers the appeal of offloaded infrastructure. But CSP also mandates the use of NCR-specific services for key processes like check processing—meaning institutions using platforms like Alloya face friction or duplication. CSP simplifies NCR's backend but narrows the FI's options.

Cost Transparency: NCR continues to unbundle critical functionality—video teller support, deposit automation, even basic customization—into separate licensing lines. While the base price may appear competitive, institutions often see 15–20% annual increases once all services are fully scoped.

Member Experience Risk: With fragmented ownership comes fragmented accountability. Institutions report longer ticket times, inconsistent video teller quality, and integration mismatches that stall self-service transactions. The result isn't just technical debt—it's erosion of member trust.

In short: NCR's ITM platform is no longer a single product from a single company. It's a patchwork of independent vendors. And for institutions committed to operational clarity, that fragmentation is not just inconvenient—it's strategic risk.



5. Decision Framework: Questions That Define Long-Term Fit

ITM decisions are often framed around features—but the real make-or-break factors are structural. Vendor alignment. Staff autonomy. Budget predictability. The best decisions don't start with a demo—they start with the right questions.

Here are the expanded decision criteria every credit union should evaluate:

- **Strategic Fit:** Does this solution align with our transformation roadmap and strategic initiatives (branch redesign, digital-first service, labor reallocation)? Will it allow us to close or reconfigure branches without sacrificing access?
- **Support Clarity:** Will our operations team have a single escalation path—or are we dealing with multiple vendors, disjointed SLAs, and slow resolution times? Who owns the problem when something breaks?

- **Experience Control:** Can we control branding, workflows, and user experience without high-cost consulting or external developers? Can we iterate fast based on member feedback?
- **Budget Predictability:** Is pricing transparent and bundled? Or are there hidden costs for middleware, remote teller services, check processing, and future feature unlocks? Are we buying into a licensing model or a landmine?
- **Member Autonomy:** Can members complete the majority of routine transactions—deposits, payments, transfers—without help? Or are they being rerouted to a remote teller every time?
- **Deployment Risk:** How fast can we go live? Does the vendor provide prebuilt core adapters and proven rollout plans—or are we staring at a 6–12 month integration curve with third-party developers?
- **Roadmap Stability:** Is the ITM software roadmap owned by the same company as the hardware? Are we subject to shifting partnerships, divestitures, or misaligned product priorities?
- Institutional Control: Are we buying a tool we can master—or a dependency that will own us over time?

Think of this as your ITM gut check. These questions can serve as a vendor-neutral scorecard during RFP evaluations or internal planning. If the answers feel complicated, misaligned, or vendor-dependent, the architecture probably is, too.

6. Conclusion

Branch modernization isn't a capital project anymore—it's a redefinition of the operating model for the next decade. In a market shaped by staffing challenges, rising member expectations, and the push toward operational agility, ITMs are not a luxury—they're a requirement.

But the right ITM platform isn't just a machine. It's an operating model. It's a commitment to long-term simplicity, service consistency, and cost clarity. The wrong choice doesn't just slow down deployment—it locks in complexity for years.

Hyosung's vertically integrated approach delivers something increasingly rare in financial services technology: true operational control and long-term continuity. Control over support. Control over experience. Control over costs. That's what institutions are buying—not just a screen, but a strategy.

We encourage executive teams to pilot intentionally, measure ruthlessly, and commit only to solutions that reduce—not redistribute—complexity.

"If you don’t actively design your technology architecture, it will actively design your outcomes." —Gene Kim, co-author of The Phoenix Project

If your ITM strategy doesn’t reflect your member promise and operational priorities, then it’s not a strategy—it’s just an upgrade. Choose different. Choose better.

About the Authors

This paper was developed by Marvin Bowers, EVP of Sales & Marketing at Cornelius Systems. Marvin is a veteran of the banking technology industry with a deep background in branch automation, ATM strategy, and financial institution partnerships across the Midwest. Marvin is also an experienced speaker and writer in the fields of digital payments, branch transformation, and ATM-as-a-Service. He is committed to helping financial institutions make smarter, faster decisions about the tools that shape their member experience.

To learn more or request a live consultation, visit **www.mycornelius.com** or contact **sales@corneliussystems.com**. With decades of experience deploying, servicing, and integrating cash automation and ITM platforms, the Cornelius team brings deep insight into the operational, technical, and cultural factors that define long-term technology success.