



» Case study

Branch

Helping the hourly workforce gain financial wellness through cards for payments and spending

Industry:
Digital Banking

Features:
Debit cards, tokenized cards, in-app provisioning

Background:

Branch, a challenger bank that partners with employers to help workers grow financially, has a big vision for the future of work: its team believes in helping solve the challenges that America's 78 million hourly workers face every day. Branch founder Atif Siddiqi's teenage experience working a part-time retail job later inspired him to launch Branch in 2015. He found that financial technology tools had not evolved for hourly workers the way they had for the desk-based workforce, and Siddiqi wanted to bring innovation to the way these workers get paid.

The Branch mobile app helps workers meet their everyday financial needs by receiving money and managing their incoming cash in one place. When hourly workers sign up for Branch, they receive a zero-fee bank account and auto-budgeting tools to help them manage their income. They can also instantly access their earned wages and tips. If workers have an unexpected financial event and need access to their wages ahead of their usual payday, they can instantly get a portion of their paycheck, when they need the funds, and even receive their full paycheck up to two days early. With 78% of Americans reporting living paycheck to paycheck, and 67% of Americans reporting that their pay fluctuates week over week,* it's important for workers to have options to draw from their earned income ahead of payday if an unexpected financial event arises. Branch's financial flexibility tools have become critical for an hourly workforce who may not have a cushion for emergencies.

Branch believes that employers can play an important role in their workers' financial wellness. If workers encounter unexpected financial setbacks, they might typically incur fees from traditional financial services — which means that before workers can even set their sights on longer-term financial benefits, they need to feel secure in their ability to address short-term financial needs. When employers partner with Branch, they can help their employees get on the path to financial wellness, while attracting and retaining great talent.

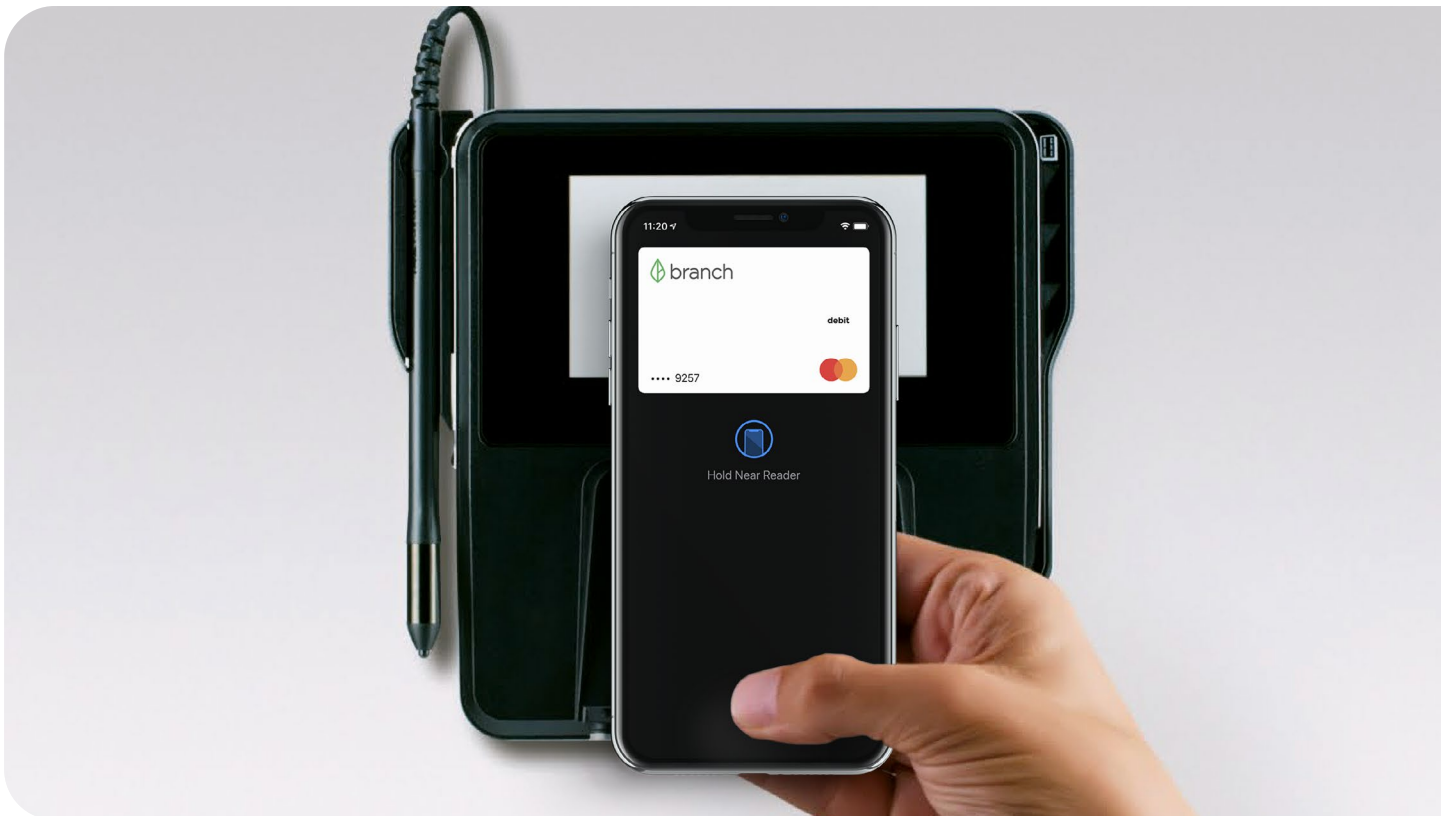


*<https://www.branchapp.com/blog/the-future-of-the-workplace>

The problem:

Branch needed a card issuer and processor who could:

1. Issue physical and virtual cards for workers
2. Disburse pay advances to workers
3. Offer quick developer setup and easy ongoing program management
4. Provide hands-on care and support, from ideation to implementation, and beyond



The solution:

Giving workers critical financial wellness tools

Branch partners with Marqeta to offer:



Debit cards for disbursements and spending

The Branch Card, an EMV debit card powered by Marqeta, enables workers to receive their payouts and use the same card for their spending needs. When workers sign up for a Branch Card, they open a fee-free checking account with Branch. If hourly workers get into a bind and need an advance on their earnings, they can access a portion of their earned wages instantly via the Branch platform. Branch early wage access can be disbursed to the hourly workers via their existing debit card from their bank, or they may open up an account with Branch via the Branch Card. When hourly workers choose to get the Branch Card, they may receive advances to their paychecks on this card, and their tips and mileage reimbursements can also be added to the card. Branch uses Marqeta webhooks to notify workers in real time whenever they receive their pay or tips via direct deposit.



Digital wallets for immediate access to funds

Branch partnered with Marqeta to launch tokenized cards for digital wallets in early 2020. Within the Branch app, a worker can opt to create a new Branch Card that can be pushed directly to Apple Pay or Google Pay for receiving funds from paycheck advances. This digital-wallet card can be used to spend the funds immediately. Enabling digital wallets eliminates the need for a worker to wait on a physical card to arrive and be activated, which is key when funds are needed quickly.

“My car broke down. I had \$25 to my name and about \$5 in my bank account. I get paid every 2 weeks. I downloaded the Branch app, connected my bank account [. . .] and they funded me \$150. I was able to get to work, drop my car off at the shop, and also pocket an extra \$25 to help me through the rest of the week.”

Khalil J., Family Dollar employee & Branch customer

The results:

Branch launched with Marqeta in February of 2020 and has since seen its business ramp up quickly. In 2019, after Branch announced that the Branch Card, powered by Marqeta, would be launching the following year, Branch reported accumulating a waitlist of over 100,000 workers. After rolling out the Branch Card to everyone on that list in 2020, Branch reported that its total card spend increased by \$1 million after just one week.

Branch is pioneering new innovations powered by Marqeta's platform, such as being the first digital bank to go live with Plaid's data network, Plaid Exchange — an integration enabled by leveraging Marqeta's

transaction webhooks. This integration gives Branch cardholders instant visibility to their account activity after spending with their Branch Card, so they can make informed financial decisions based on real-time account information. And Branch is innovating on behalf of hourly workers, having launched a magnetic-stripe Driver Tip card in spring 2020 for Domino's, which enables Domino's workers to access same-day tips and mileage reimbursements digitally via direct deposit.

Today, hundreds of thousands of hourly employees at Fortune 1000 enterprises use Branch every day.*

"As a challenger bank that partners with employers, Branch is focused on providing free, flexible financial services for working Americans, when they need them. Marqeta provided us with both the technology and adaptability that could incorporate our preferred partners and better serve the needs of our users."

Atif Siddiqi, founder and CEO of Branch

*<https://www.paymentsjournal.com/branch-platform-general-availability-pay/>



About Marqeta

Marqeta powers modern payment solutions for companies, innovating new services and process flows in a digital world.

Our platform, open API, and advanced analytics provide unprecedented control for companies to issue cards, authorize transactions, and manage payment operations with ease. Highly configurable, secure, and reliable, Marqeta built its technology from the ground up to help companies bring products to market faster, design seamless user experiences, streamline purchase flows, and reduce fraud risk.

We enable modern payment solutions for:

- Instant card issuing of virtual, tokenized, and physical cards
- Real-time funding using our exclusive Just-in-Time (JIT) Funding feature
- In-app provisioning to digital wallets and customizable webhooks
- Full program management resources and PCI compliance tools
- Actionable data insights, reporting, and advanced analytics tools with our applications

Marqeta is the global standard for modern card issuing.

» **Additional resources**

- > Get started with your sandbox
- > Discover hands-on tutorials in our developer guides
- > Learn about our work in digital banking
- > Contact us to request a demo