



26 November 2018

FDP DESIGNS FIRST DIGITAL BANK BRANCH IN DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

FDP – part of leading London-based practice LOM architecture and design – has unveiled its design for the first wholly-digital bank branch in the Dominican Republic.

Banco Popular Dominicano – the country's largest bank with over 200 branches serving a national population of around 10 million people – has launched 'Centro Digital' in Downtown Mall, Santo Domingo.

FDP worked with the bank to define a new digital service offering for its customers. Its approach presents the bank's products and services to customers in an integrated format and demonstrates Banco Popular Dominicano's commitment to innovation by encouraging and educating customers in using interactive technology.

The Centro Digital branch will serve as prototype for other digital branches as the bank continues, over time, to invest in new technology that meets changing customer requirements. Centro Digital – which utilises the latest full-function ATMs – is the bank's first without tellers and forms a key component in its omni-channel network. The branch employs up to 12 people in a location where footfall is high throughout the day and is open seven days a week for up to sixteen hours a day (7.00am – 11.00pm). Banco Popular Dominicano is leading the digital transformation in Dominican financial services. It has more than a million digital users and 77.5 per cent of its transactions are made through digital channels.

The design approach has sought to create an environment that expresses the bank's user-friendly digital channels and is designed to be friendly and easy to use. Customers are encouraged to migrate from traditional banking to digital channels and staff are on hand to assist and offer advice. Staff are enabled by wireless devices to allow them to walk the floor with customers, demonstrate technology and consult in an informal setting.

The interiors preserve the blue and white colour scheme of Banco Popular Dominicano's distinctive branding, while updating it for the digital age. Timber elements have been introduced to give the space a natural and warmer feel than is usual in a typical retail banking outlet. FDP's design creates a strong sales and marketing environment which allows casually-dressed staff to mix with customers and engage them in conversations about the bank's products and service offers. There is also an event space – incorporating a large screen on one wall and integrated digital cameras for streaming events – which provides opportunities to launch technological innovations as well as host seminars and undertake educational activities. A key aim is removing barriers between the bank and customers and the branch has a highly transparent shop frontage designed to be open and welcoming to customers using Downtown Mall.

Simon Bird, FDP's Project Director says: "The bank's ethos is 'By Your Side', encapsulating Banco Popular Dominicano's welcoming and friendly approach towards its customer base. We have given a lot of thought to way in which branch staff interact with customers using digital consoles. We approached the design as if it were an app, requiring constant review and updating over time like a software program. This allows it to respond to changing needs.

“Everything in our approach is designed to emphasise openness and a lack of barriers”, Bird continues. “The only physical ‘barrier’ in the branch itself is the reception desk which provides a destination at the back of the branch. At every stage in this project – from conception to roll-out – the user experience has been at the focus of our thinking. The look and feel of the branch has been sensitive to – and respectful of – the Banco Popular Dominicano brand, especially in its use of colour. We have sought to deliver a physical manifestation of what customers are able to access via the bank’s website and apps. It is simple, straightforward and jargon-free. The screen and presentation area allow the bank to communicate its involvement with social initiatives, demonstrating ways it interacts with the wider community and environment across all areas of its activities.”

It is hoped that the success of this branch will allow the format to be applied to other branches across the Dominican Republic, each becoming a ‘platform’ which supports an omni-channel banking strategy and aims at enhancing customer experience.

-ends-



Centro Digital – an open retail environment without barriers



The bank's friendly environment with 'By Your Side' customer service



Interactive table with tag recognition



The event and promotion space



Meeting booths to encourage private conversations



Creative lab

Note to editors

FDP

FDP is a design consultancy specialising in branch design, network strategies and branding for banks. Our design solutions are unique to each client, based on rigorous data analysis, high quality design and thirty years of experience. We have delivered network strategies, rebranding projects, branch design initiatives and business transformation programmes for many international retail banks and we currently delivering next generation digital branches for a number of banks globally.

www.financial-retail.com

[@financialretail](https://www.instagram.com/financialretail)

Banco Popular Dominicano

Banco Popular Dominicano is the principal private bank in the Dominican Republic and the leading financial institution in the country. It forms part of the parent company Grupo Popular. The bank has played an important role in strengthening the Dominican Republic's financial system and has been a catalyst for the success of thousands of individuals and companies over the past half century that has transformed the Dominican Republic. The bank offers customers expertise in personal, commercial and corporate banking services through innovative products and high value-added solutions. Banco Popular Dominicano adopts a strong approach to corporate governance and a successful leadership model based on ethical principles and values.

www.popularenlinea.com

[@Popularenlinea](https://www.instagram.com/Popularenlinea)

For further information please contact:

Maria Papayannakis
mariap@lom-fdp.com
 T: +44(0)20 8444 2999

Paul Stelmaszczyk
ps@belford-communications.com
 T: +44(0)20 7706 6292

