

# Case Study

Encompass Lending Group Gives Borrowers 'White Glove' Service with LiteSpeed

## BACKGROUND:

Encompass Lending Group is a mid-size full service mortgage group and LendingTree Certified Lender based in Katy, Texas. Founded in May 2008, the company was originally a community broker with ambitions to expand nationwide. Today, Encompass Lending is licensed in 46 states and the District of Columbia, has about 100 employees nationwide, and specializes in home equity loans, FHA loans, VA loans and conventional mortgages.

In 2021, the company was acquired by Fathom Holdings Inc. (Nasdaq: FTHM), which provides its loan officers with access to a proprietary marketing portal to the 12,000 plus real estate agents that provide the loan officers (LOs) with leads. In 2023, about 1,200 meetings took place thanks to this connection. Encompass Lending also differentiates itself with referral partners and customers with a few unique programs, including a rebate program called Hometown Heroes that allows the lender to incentivize the agents, a credit-repair program to help borrowers qualify for a mortgage, and a 36-month retention program that reminds borrowers about the lending team they worked with.

## CHALLENGE

As its business model and processes evolved over its 16 years in business, Encompass Lending has always kept its priority on building customer relationships by providing them with the kind of experiences that lead to repeat and referral business. While their loan officers prefer face-to-face customer meetings to get a feel for who they'll be working with, in today's busy world they know that's not always possible. And with military homebuyers, who may be moving from across the country or overseas, it's often impossible.

To make it easier for customers to apply for loans online, in 2020 Encompass Lending moved to a loan origination system (LOS) with a built-in point-of-sale (POS) system. However, there were frustrations in using the technology, both from consumers and internal leadership. "That POS fell short of the customer experience we were hoping to provide," says Wayne King, EVP of Corporate Relations and a cofounder of Encompass Lending.

And while the lender experienced an initial uptick in the number of applications coming in without having to increase the number of loan officers on staff, the legacy POS was falling short in providing the lender with other, actionable intelligence. "We could see data on the number of completed applications and those were rising, but what we couldn't see was the abandonment rate — the number of borrowers who started the application and left part way through because they'd become frustrated with the clunky interface and multiple steps," says Paul Marsh, Chief Financial Officer and also a co-founder of Encompass Lending.

“Those experiences were the catalyst that got us looking at what was available on the market and what might better match up with our needs,” King adds.

## SOLUTION:

The lender’s leadership researched POSs and came across LiteSpeed, a mortgage POS system from LenderLogix. “We immediately knew LiteSpeed and LenderLogix would check all the boxes for us as far as ease of use, price point, efficiencies, and having a full and interactive technology partner,” King says.

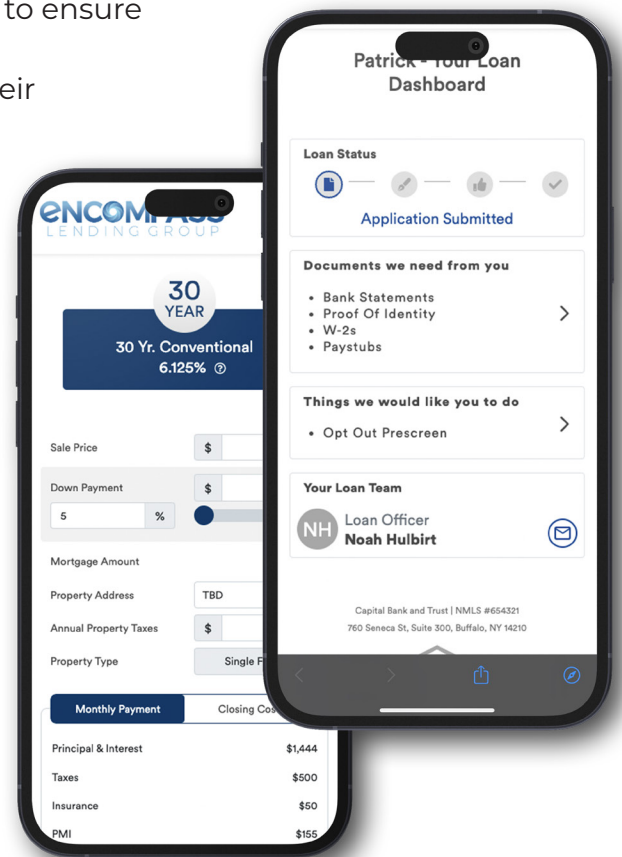
LiteSpeed is intended for mortgage lenders of all sizes and is easy to implement and use with minimal internal support. It has a clean and intuitive user interface that leads borrowers through filling out loan applications. Also important to King and Marsh, LenderLogix has built a direct integration between LiteSpeed and the Encompass LOS to ensure they could operate in a seamless environment from the first point of contact through closing to maximize their LOS investment. Data is passed back and forth with Encompass, in real time, creating a permanent loan file.

“It’s been super slick the way it integrates with Encompass to provide us with a dynamic and clean workflow. It’s completely transformed the way we can work internally and provide value-added service to customers,” notes Marsh.

Once a borrower begins to fill out an application, their progress is recorded in the Encompass LOS and available to loan officers. Once the application has been submitted, the borrower receives a pre-programmed response on next steps and a single point of contact. If an application is started but not submitted in a reasonable time, the loan officer can follow up to see if they can be of assistance or if the borrower has chosen to work with another lender. Either way, they’re kept “in the loop.”

LiteSpeed also offers full integration with LenderLogix’s QuickQual, the industry’s only LOS add-on that gives homebuyers and real estate partners access to a hyper-focused, borrower specific, payment calculator that offers closing cost scenarios, side-by-side comparison of loan products and the ability to update letters as they shop for their dream home. “QuickQual was a huge bonus for us in being able to offer more value to our borrowers and their agents at a very low-cost point,” says Marsh.

Currently, the lender is working with LenderLogix to add video and text to loan milestones. “That’s become an exciting project that we’re getting all of the LOs involved in.



For a lender like ours, that prides itself in providing a great customer experience, the milestone capability will become a differentiator with customers and our staff,” Marsh says. “That’s the kind of feature that helps us build relationships for life with our mortgage customers.”

“I think you could safely say we’re raving fans of LenderLogix, LiteSpeed and QuickQual,” adds King. “We love the features and the collaboration in moving forward with new features and capabilities.”

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## RESULTS:

### High-touch Workflow, Better Pull-Through

LiteSpeed has the look and feel the lender wanted to provide to its customers from the time they first make contact until they close on their loan. The platform is fully customized with the lender’s branding and guides prospective borrowers through singular, auto-advancing application questions that boast animated iconography and dynamic messaging. They then receive confirmation emails with the next steps, a secure document upload link, and more from their selected loan officer.

Lenders across the country using LiteSpeed receive initial application information from over 50% of the visitors to their LiteSpeed page.

### Customized Docs-Needed Lists

LiteSpeed includes a customized document Needs List for each borrower application. The LiteSpeed Needs List uses smart, dynamic document names and behavioral psychology to encourage borrowers to upload the right documents when their loan officer needs them, keeping borrowers engaged and committed from the beginning to the end of the mortgage process. Lenders using LiteSpeed see 75% of their LiteSpeed files receive an uploaded document via the secure upload link within 24 hours.

### ‘Cleaner’ Files for Loan Officers

“Files coming in through LiteSpeed have cleaner data and are more complete”, says King. “The LiteSpeed files are easier for processing to identify and for our setup team as well to look through. As a result, you’ve got a cleaner product coming in which allows for faster organization and better input to underwriting,” he adds.

### Increased Customer Satisfaction

LiteSpeed’s custom-branded responsive web application works seamlessly on desktops, tablets, and mobile phones to provide a simple user experience for homebuyers and streamline operations for lenders and real estate partners. “We used to hear from our loan officers that borrowers were having a tough time getting through the application, but we had no way to measure how much that impacted our business. We simply don’t hear feedback like that anymore, and it’s something we can measure with LiteSpeed,” says King. “We’re seeing minimal attrition. Because our application is so smooth it puts customers in a mindset where they anticipate having a great experience throughout the process.”

“In that way, LiteSpeed matches up beautifully with our mission of providing white-glove concierge customer service.”

### **A True Working Partnership**

While other technology vendors may follow an install and forget approach, LenderLogix is proving its dedication for the long haul. “We frequently meet and talk through what’s going on and collaborate on how we might improve our processes,” says King. “That’s just been amazing. I feel like we’re on the same page and pulling together to make each other better.”

“The flexibility of LiteSpeed and its features rival anything we saw from more expensive and complicated POS platforms,” Marsh says. “That’s why we love it and it’s been such a great solution for us. Then you add in that we get to be part of the product-improvement ‘talk throughs’ with LenderLogix, and that’s just icing on the cake. Working with LenderLogix feels like a true partnership.”