

First State Bank soon will be Legence Bank

ELDORADO — First State Bank of Eldorado on Friday announced the firm will begin operating as Legence Bank following the change of its name effective Aug. 1, 2008. Kevin Beckemeyer, president of First State Bank, soon to become Legence Bank, said the move was made to accommodate future growth outside Southern Illinois, to end customer confusion with similarly named banks, and to build a strong, unique brand.

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Work on the branding effort began more than a year ago, culminating in the new name.

"We started this business in Eldorado, where we were the only First State Bank. That name has served us and our customers well for over 100 years," said Beckemeyer. "But as we've grown into the surrounding counties and Evansville, Ind., we've found that there is overlap in the markets we now serve and certainly around the country.

"If you search for First State Bank on the Internet, nearly 20 million entries may come up.

"A business needs to be top of mind, one in a million in the hearts and minds of its customers — certainly not one in millions with the same or a similar name," he said.

"We decided on a name we could get behind with pride. Legence brings to mind two very strong words—legacy, which stands for our legacy of service, and allegiance, which means loyalty," he said.

"With Legence Bank, we bring both to our customers. There's only one Legence Bank," said Beckemeyer.

Bank signage will change around Aug. 1. Customer accounts will not be affected by the name change, and no customer action is required.

Customers may use their existing checks, payment books and debit cards until they expire.

After Aug. 1, customers who have saved the bank's previous Web site as an internet favorite will want to log into the bank's new Web site, www.legencebank.com, for future banking transactions and free online bill payment services.

Two regional marketing communications agencies have been at work for over a year on the bank's new brand. Fire & Rain of Evansville, Ind., worked with the bank on brand development, the name change process and the creation of logo and tagline options.

Cummiskey Strategic Communications of Harrisburg is at work on the brand launching.

CSC conducted customer and market research to ascertain the logo and tagline that most communicates trust and resonates strongly with the bank's intended audience.

The bank launched its new tagline, "Friends You Can Bank On" in April, and will continue to use the tagline with the Legence Bank brand.

"What we do and how we do it are important, and our tagline 'Friends You Can Bank On' captures that message.

"Customers need to know that at Legence Bank they'll find the same family ownership, management, board leadership and employees they've always counted on to provide caring, helpful service for their personal or business banking needs. We welcome, appreciate and respect our customers, and we succeed when we help them meet their goals," said Martin Rowe, a bank co-owner and president of First Eldorado Bancshares, the bank's holding company.

The holding company name will remain the same.