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What About the Fate of CUSOs?

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LAS VEGAS — *Credit Union Journal* asked attendees how diminished bottom lines and the need to pay into the corporate stabilization plan were affecting CUs' investment in their CUSOs. Were conditions driving increased interest in CUSOs, which often provide income? Or were there simply no funds available for CUSO development/investment?

"There has been no affect on our CUSO. Our credit union is in a great position and our CUSO is holding its own, so we have not had to go back to the credit union for more contributions. Our CUSO does mortgage services, investment services and insurance."

"I don't think it is less or more. We still are committed to the credit unions we are partnered with. Mountain America Credit Union is our parent, but we work with credit unions across the country in payday lending, life insurance, and property and casualty insurance."

"Our credit union relies on the CUSO for net income, so there is a greater attempt to network for us and raise the profile of our business, but there is less money available. Our model is to provide a cost-saving service for members-they can spend \$25 on a cell phone instead of \$50 or \$60. Money-saving services find this a great environment."

"We have a unique CUSO in that it is involved in international investments. Our management and board are committed to having a first-class CUSO in terms of meeting the needs of our members wherever they are in 205 countries and territories. Generally, the board continues to invest in the CUSO, particularly in providing members with financial planning and services, especially retirement services. Of course, given the economy we are managing carefully and prudently."

"We have been reasonably successful in aggregating credit unions together so businesses become interested in serving them. In this environment, credit unions should take steps to demonstrate to their members they are the source for a lifetime relationship, including retirement, so people don't pull their money out of the credit union when they retire and take it over to a brokerage."