

What do customers expect from VAS?

The potential of Value-Added Services in banking report

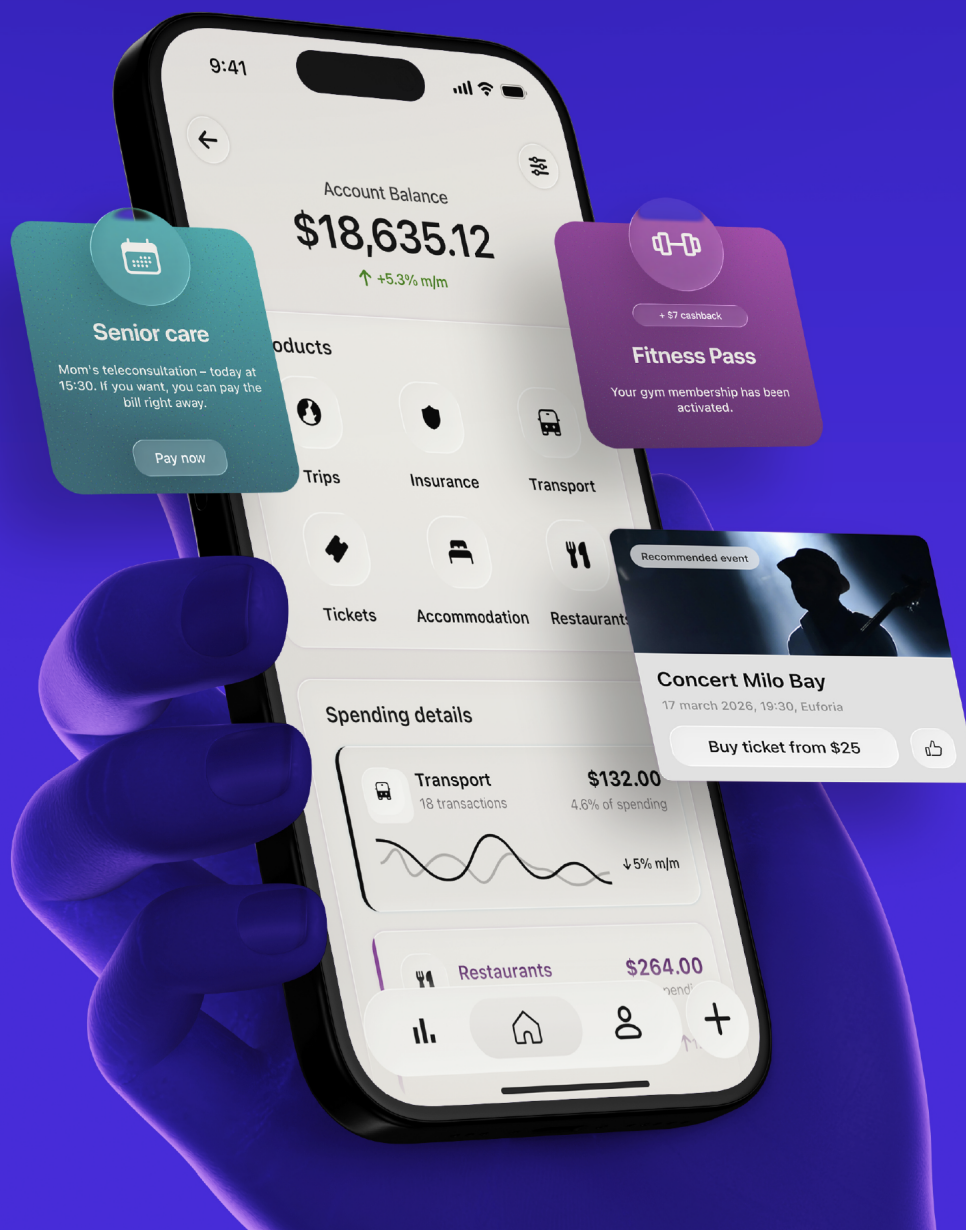
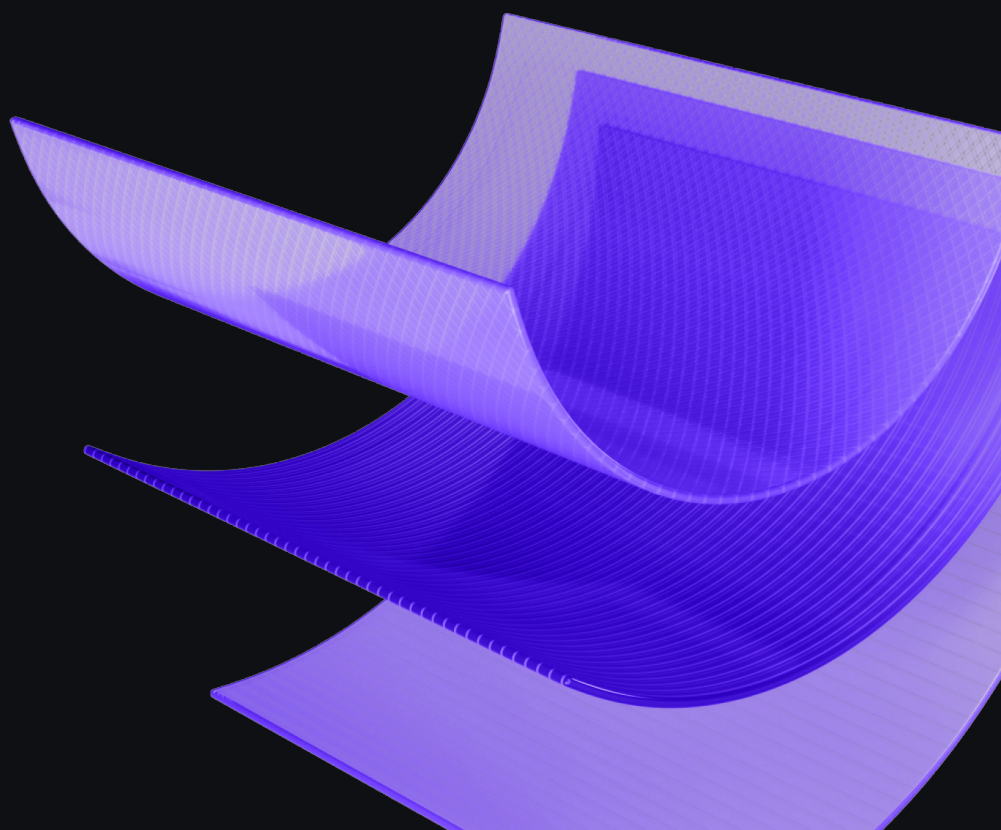


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Introductory interview to the report

Tomasz Bawelkiewicz (Miquido) – We are meeting at a time when Polish mobile banking has probably hit a glass ceiling in terms of traditional features. Bartek, from your perspective – as someone observing the entire market through the prism of the banking technology forums – does the thesis contained in it, that VAS is no longer a „marketing add-on” but an essential element of business architecture, find confirmation in reality?

Bartłomiej Nocoń (ZBP/FTB) – Definitely yes. After reading the report, I must admit that you have accurately diagnosed the turning point. The offer of traditional products available on the banking market has undergone drastic standardization. Rivalry between banks has therefore begun to shift to the level of the so-called „share of wallet” – the attention and time of the customer spent within the entire application ecosystem. You rightly note in the analysis that leaders such as PKO BP (Poland’s largest retail bank, commanding a significant share of the domestic market) already offer almost 20 different non-banking services (as of Q1 2026), and this is, among other things, a way to break the mold in order to ensure long-term customer loyalty.

T.B. – In the publication, we devote a lot of space to operational models. We indicate that for many banks, external aggregation, e.g., through solutions like ServiceHub, is the shortest path to scaling without building up a massive tech debt. As someone who has worked directly in the banking sector for over 20 years and has unique knowledge of its development, do you think Polish banks are ready for such an „externalization” of innovation?

B.N. – This is a key point of this report. Banks are beginning to understand more widely that the model of cooperation with external integrators, combined with agile technological adaptation, brings tangible benefits. For example, the aggregator model, which takes on formal, legal, and integration issues with dozens of providers, is a powerful business argument. In the report, this is visible in the segmentation – from e-government to the Pet Economy. The bank becomes a kind of service curator here, not just its provider.

T.B. – Speaking of curation – in the report, we put forward the thesis that the greatest challenge is no longer the lack of technology, but the „curse of wealth” and the risk of application overload (the so-called feature fatigue). How do you assess our findings regarding user experience design?



B.N. — This is one of the strongest fragments of the publication. The statistics you cite – including that over 70% of customers fear chaos in the application – should be a warning signal and a stopping point for those responsible for application design and development. I particularly appreciate drawing attention to the need for proper use of hyper-personalization services. a VAS product should not be just another tile in the menu; it must appear as a contextual response to a need, e.g., a proposal to insure equipment at the moment a payment in an electronics store is detected.

T.B. — Finally – the report looks into the future, analyzing trends such as the Silver Economy or support for mobility. In your opinion, are local technology providers and startups able to meet these requirements that we write about?

B.N. — The potential is huge, which this report additionally documents perfectly. This publication is a roadmap for bankers to know how to maintain customer loyalty, and for technology companies to better understand what standard of integration and security the financial sector expects today.

T.B. — Thank you for the conversation and valuable comments during the work on the report. I hope it will become a catalyst for many new implementations at the intersection of banking and everyday life.



Tomasz Bawełkiewicz

Business Architect,
FinTech Advisor

FinTech advisor with extensive experience in creating innovative banking products for leading financial institutions across Europe, Asia, and Africa. He has independently developed unique solutions that bridge the worlds of fintech and banking, including the HALZ project – Poland's first comprehensive family finance ecosystem.

Tomasz combines expertise in software engineering, product development, and business management to create modern financial technologies that tangibly improve service quality and customer experience.



Bartłomiej Nocoń

Director, Polish Bankers
Association in Warsaw

Board Member of the
European Payments Council
(EPC) in Brussels

A graduate of the Cracow University of Economics (Foreign Trade) and a scholarship recipient at the Hanken School of Economics in Helsinki, Bartłomiej Nocoń has been involved in digital banking and financial management in remote channels for over 20 years.

Since 2020, he has headed the Payment Systems and Electronic Banking areas at the Polish Bank Association, and since 2021, he has served on the Board of the European Payments Council in Brussels. He is the author of numerous innovations influencing the development of the payment system and digital banking, as well as a member of various industry bodies, including the Electronic Banking Council, the Bank Card Issuers Council, and the Polish SWIFT Users Committee.



Strategic VAS trends:

From standardization to niche diversification



**Dominika
Będkowska**
Market Researcher

The following analysis is based on the Polish banking sector, recognized globally as one of the most advanced and dynamic fintech hubs in Europe. Due to its high digital adoption and maturity, the Polish market serves as an excellent operational matrix and predictive model for value-added services (VAS) trends across the continent.

⤴ Market standardization and the required minimum

My market analysis reveals that services in the area of mobility and basic convenience have today become de facto the required minimum in the offer of large banks. Functionalities such as highway toll handling (Autopay), parking (via external municipal service providers such as SkyCash/moBilet – local MaaS, Mobility-as-a-Service platforms), and the purchase of public transport tickets are widely available.

However, the integration of these solutions takes place through the same technological path (identical partnerships), which drastically reduces the potential for differentiation. The customer perceives these features as an expected convenience rather than a unique value add. Similarly, FX currency exchange marketplaces have already reached the status of a market standard, minimizing the possibilities of creating a competitive advantage in this regard. The differentiation of the offer is therefore shifted to strategic niches.

👤 Strategic vectors: Super-app vs. unique hook

Banks have chosen two fundamentally opposing strategy vectors in VAS development, moving towards a financial-first super-app model where banking security forms the core:





Hubs of everyday life

SUPER-APP STRATEGY

PKO BP is strategically closest to this vision, having the largest number of implementations (~19/31 identified VAS categories). This bank actively combines mobility (videotolling, tickets), entertainment, and merchant offers, consciously building a digital ecosystem aimed at maximizing customer engagement.



Single differentiators

UNIQUE HOOK

Some players focus on developing single, strong differentiators that constitute the main anchor for cross-selling and retention. Examples include mOkazje (data-driven loyalty programs and personalized offers/ cashback) in mBank, Okazje z Żubrem in Pekao, or VeloKorzyści in VeloBank.



Entertainment and lifestyle – The risk of “hype decay”

The analysis of implementations in the entertainment and lifestyle category suggests high vulnerability to fluctuations and the phenomenon of “hype decay.” I am already observing withdrawals from services that did not anchor deeply in finances, such as ride-hailing or telemedicine. This constitutes a strategic warning: if a VAS does not affect engagement in core banking, and the service is seasonal and prone to costs, the ARPU vs. maintenance cost ratio can drift apart. In the streaming/subscription area, banks optimize costs by delivering value mainly in the form of a marketplace for codes and cashbacks, which avoids the burden of maintaining their own content.



eGovernment and identity: Local anchors of domestic banks' advantage

Services related to public administration and digital identity constitute a permanent and real competitive advantage for domestic banks. Mechanisms such as handling government social benefit applications, integration with state digital identity platforms and national digital ID nodes (similar to Poland's Profile Zaufany or the pan-European eIDAS framework implementation), and the execution of transfers to tax authorities and social security are widely available and strongly embedded in the local ecosystem. Since key global players, including Revolut, are not part of the local state identity network, the advantage of domestic banks in this strategic area is real and difficult to copy.



Between trust and feature overload:

How users perceive banking super-apps



Dominika Będkowska
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Nina Kozłowska
Sociologist

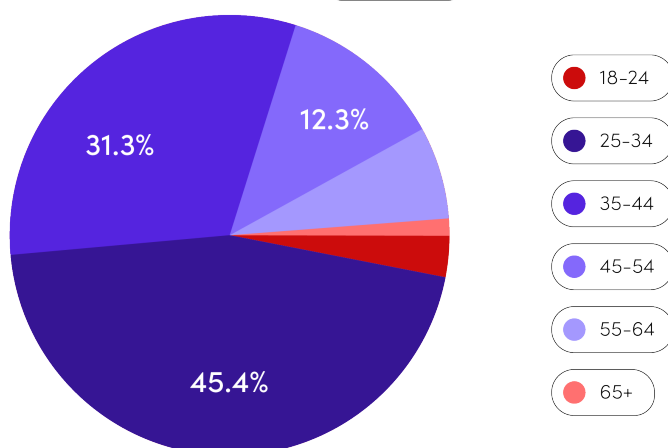
While the consumer survey specifically targets Polish bank users, whose VAS preferences are shaped by regional digital infrastructure, the underlying behavioral patterns reflect broader European trends. The tension between the desire for app consolidation and the fear of feature fatigue is a universal challenge for financial institutions across the EU as they transition toward digital ecosystems.

To better understand consumer preferences, we conducted an online survey on the potential of VAS in banking. Its goal was to check how users perceive banking „super-apps” and which non-financial services are most valuable to them.

A total of **163 respondents participated in the study**. The largest group consisted of respondents aged **25–34** and **35–44**, i.e., people who are most digitally and professionally active. The sample also included representatives of other age groups, which allows for taking into account diverse user perspectives.

Your age

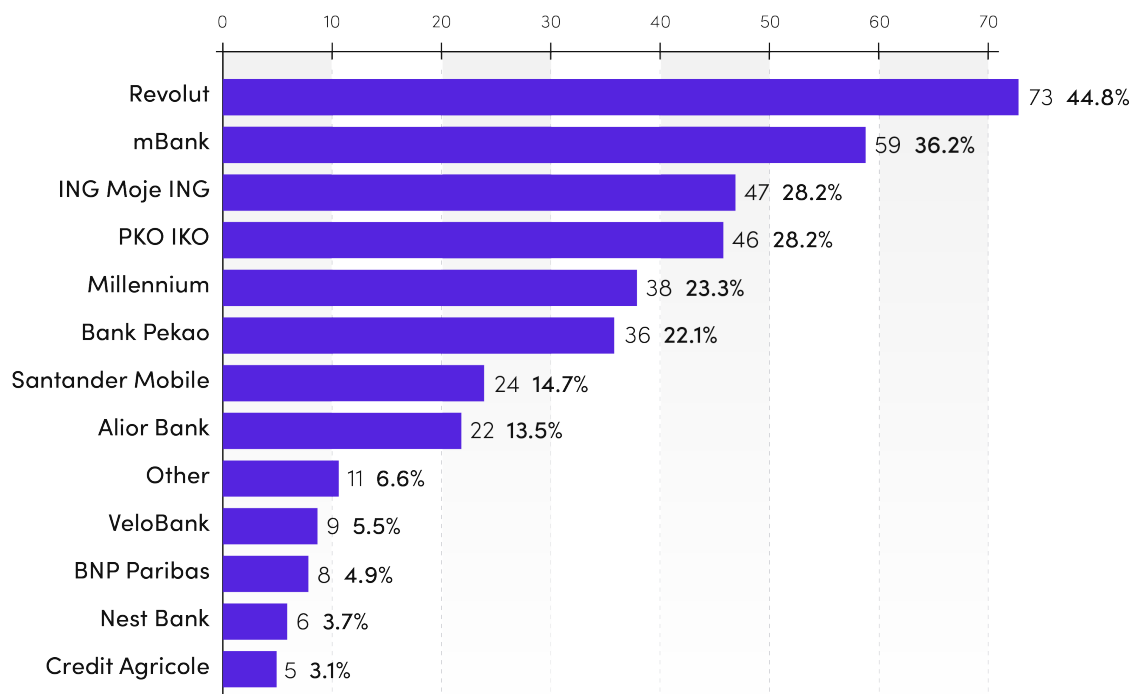
163 answers



Which banking apps do you use on a daily basis?

163 answers

Multiple options may be selected

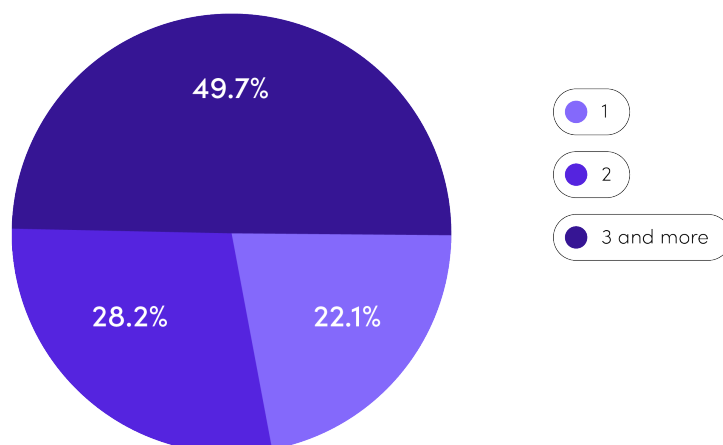


At the beginning, we asked consumers which banking applications they use on a daily basis. In this list, **Revolut** strongly dominates, indicated by 44.8% of respondents. The next places are taken by **mBank** (36.2%) and **ING** (28.8%). Just behind the podium was the **PKO IKO** application (PKO BP mobile app), with a score of 28.2% of indications.

Almost half (49.7%) of the respondents **own accounts in several banks**, which indicates a high familiarity with the market and experience in using various banking applications.

Number of banks where you have an account

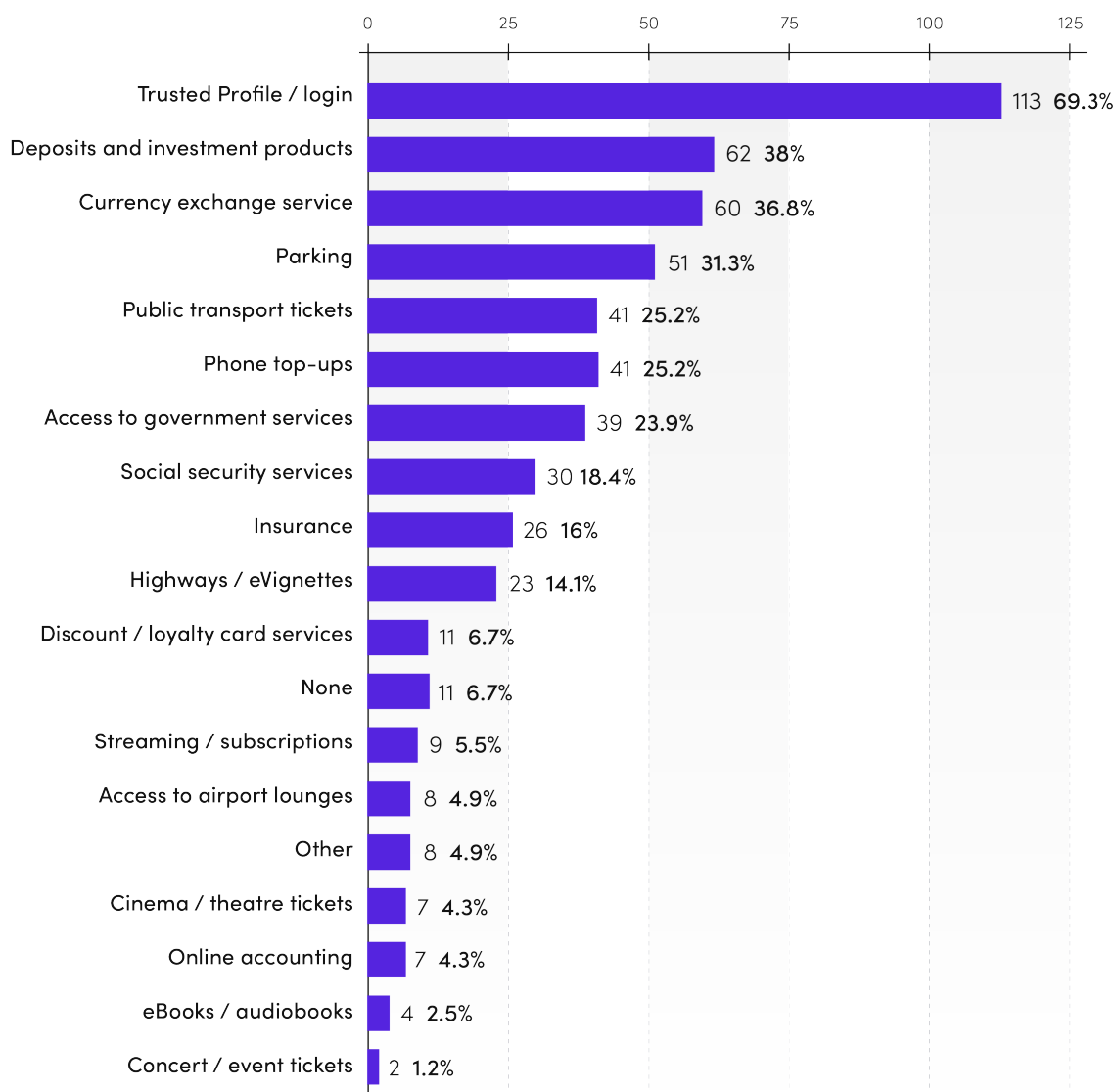
163 answers



Which additional services do you currently use in your banking app?

163 answers

Multiple options may be selected



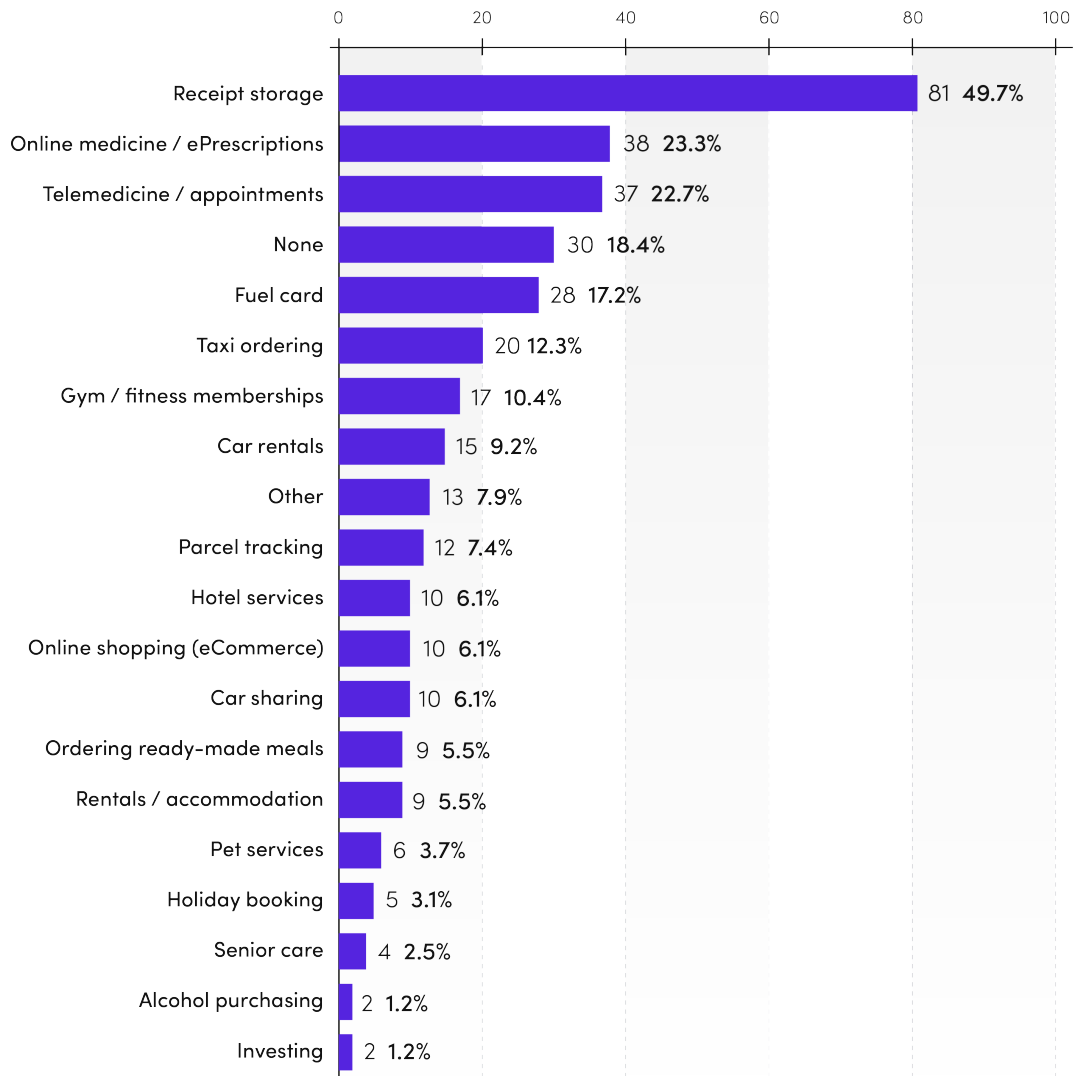
The most frequently used non-banking service in banking applications is **digital identity and logging into eGovernment portals**, used by 69.3% of respondents. This result clearly indicates the strong role of banking applications as an access point to public services and digital identity. Respondents also relatively often use financial and investment services as well as solutions supporting **daily mobility**. **Deposits and investment products** were indicated by 38% of respondents, and the currency exchange marketplace – by 36.8%. In the area of urban mobility, parking was declared by 31.3% of respondents, while the purchase of **public transport tickets and phone top-ups** received 25.2% of indications each.



What additional services would you like to have in a banking app that are not currently available?

163 answers

Multiple options may be selected



We also asked respondents what additional services they currently miss in banking applications. The results show clearly that expectations focus around **practical services supporting the daily management of finances and documents**, rather than extensive lifestyle features. By far the most frequently indicated need is **storing receipts and purchase documents**, which was declared by 49.7% of respondents.

This is the strongest signal in the study, showing the demand for functions that organize financial data and support expense control. Further down the line, services of a health and shopping nature appear.

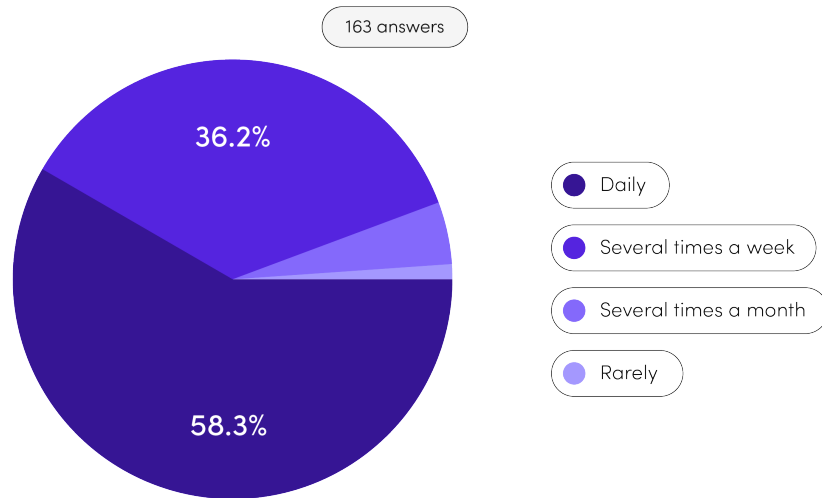
Online medicine purchases and e-prescriptions were indicated by 23.3% of respondents, and **telemedicine and booking medical appointments** – by 22.7%.



A relatively high level of interest concerns **fuel cards** (17.2%) and **ordering taxis** (12.3%). The remaining categories, such as **sports passes, car rentals, hotel services, e-commerce, carsharing, or parcel tracking**, obtained a significantly lower percentage of indications (usually below 10%).

These answers suggest that strictly lifestyle services are niche in nature and do not constitute a mass expectation towards banking applications. It is also worth noting that a small group of respondents declared no need for additional services, which confirms that **VASs (Value-Added Services) are perceived as an essential element of a banking application's value, provided they genuinely support daily financial management.**

How often do you use a banking app for payments, checking balance, or viewing transaction history?



CONCLUSIONS

The majority of users use banking applications every day, which shows how deeply banking has been integrated into their lives.



Most popular applications used on a daily basis

An analysis of open-ended answers shows that respondents use a wide set of specialized applications, each of which performs a clearly defined function in daily life.

The tools mentioned can be grouped into several dominant categories:



Transport and urban mobility constitute the most heavily represented area. The most frequently mentioned local MaaS applications are SkyCash, Jakdojade, Google Maps, mPay, Mobilet, and Autopay.



In the category of **food delivery and shopping**, platforms such as Pyszne.pl, Wolt, Glovo, Uber Eats, Bolt Food, and Lisek dominate.

In the area of **general shopping and logistics**, market standards are set by Allegro and InPost (automated parcel locker networks, similar to Amazon Hub Locker).



Ride-hailing trips are dominated by two players (Uber and Bolt), which almost always appear in parallel, suggesting low loyalty to a single platform and choices driven by availability or price.



Among state and health services, respondents most frequently indicated digital access applications like mObywatel or mojEKP, showing growing acceptance for **digital access to public administration**.



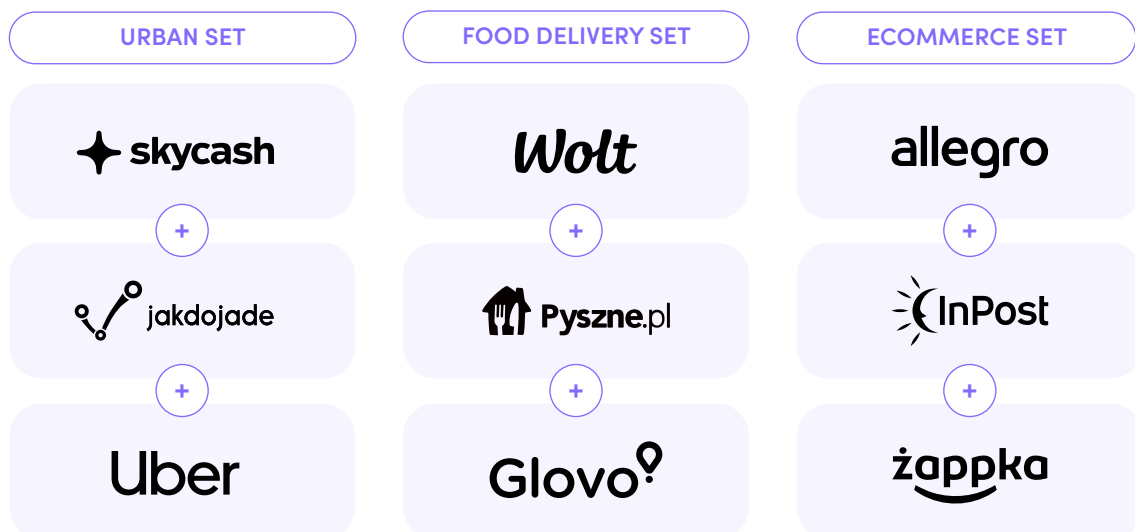
Key findings and observed behavioral patterns

From the answers, a user functioning model emerges based on an ecosystem of dedicated tools. Respondents use several specialized applications, assigning a specific task to each of them (e.g., parking, tickets, food delivery, rides). This indicates a **strong attachment to known interfaces and proven solutions**.

At the same time, users exhibit a **high level of digital multitasking**. In many answers, the number of mentioned applications exceeds five or six tools, which suggests the absence of a cognitive barrier associated with switching between platforms.

Some respondents, when answering the question about daily activities, indicated banking applications. This means that in isolated cases, banking **value-added services are starting to function as a first choice**, competing directly with dedicated applications of specialized providers.

An analysis of the answers also allows for identifying recurring sets of applications corresponding to specific user needs:



CONCLUSIONS

These sets show that users build their own stable application microsystems, which constitutes an important challenge – but also an opportunity – for banks developing a VAS and super-app strategy.

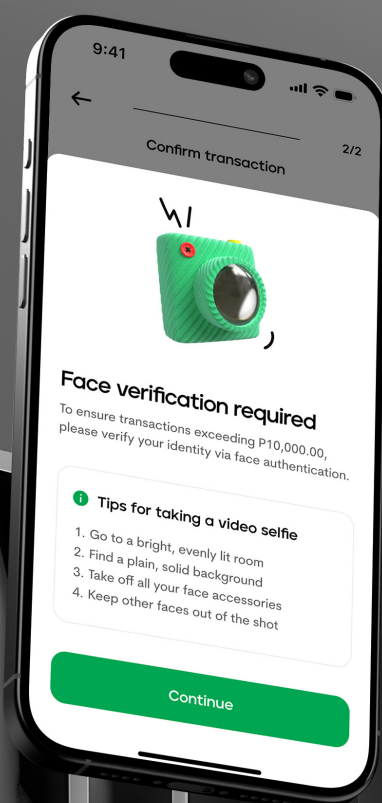
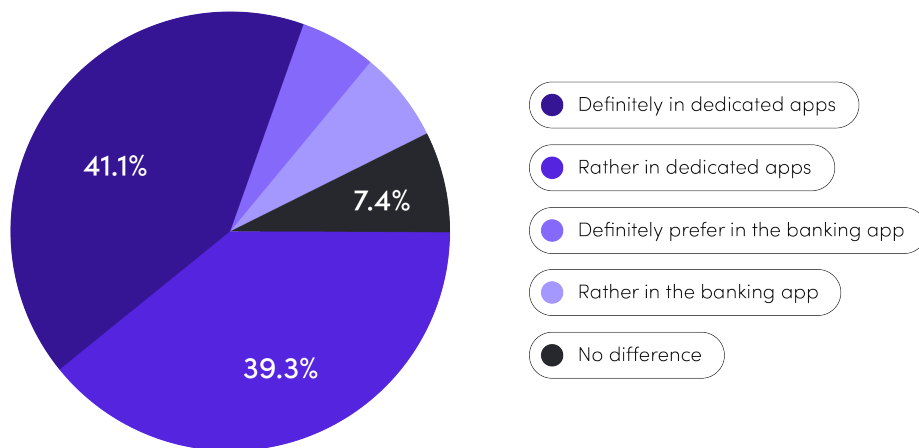


Respondents clearly prefer using value-added services in dedicated applications rather than in banking applications. a total of 80.4% of respondents declare that they **definitely or rather choose dedicated applications**. The preference for **using services directly in a banking application** is declared by only 13.5% of respondents. Additionally, 7.4% of respondents indicate that the **form of access does not matter to them**.

These results show that despite the growing number of VAS implementations, banks are not the first choice today in the execution of non-financial services.

Do you prefer using additional services within your banking app or through dedicated apps?

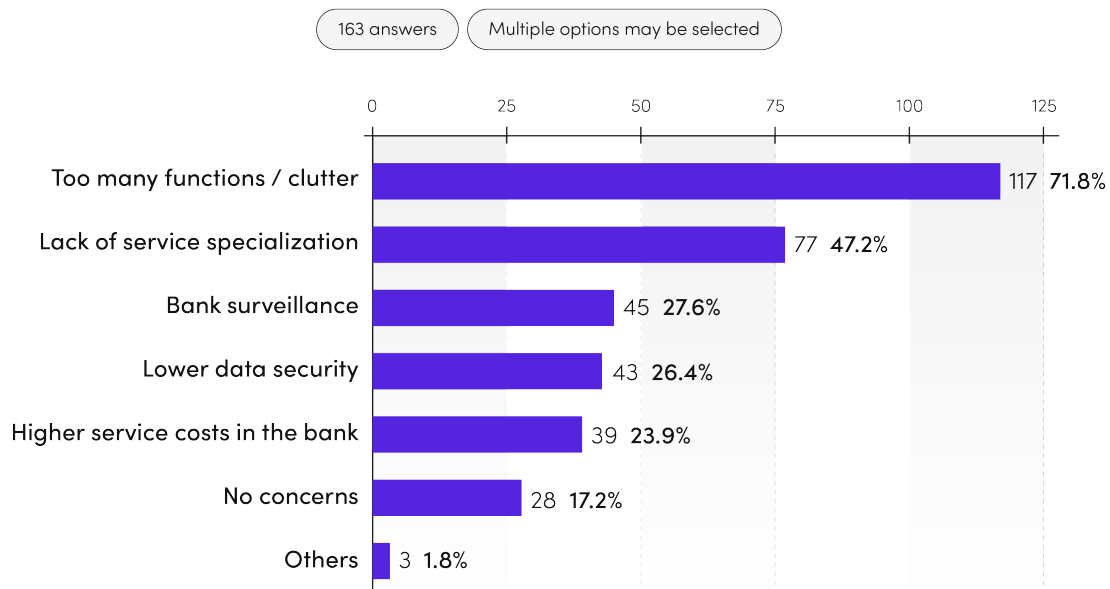
163 answers



Concerns related to the banking “super-app” model

Respondents show strong concerns about the concentration of many services in a single banking application. The most frequently indicated risk is an excessive number of functions and the resulting chaos in the application, which was declared by 71.8% of respondents (117 people). The result of the question confirms the strong sensitivity of users to interface overload and the associated drop in the clarity of the banking application.

Do you have any concerns about having multiple services integrated into a single banking app ("super-app")?



The second important concern is the **lack of specialization in services**, indicated by 47.2% of respondents (77 people). Users fear that a bank, trying to offer too wide a range of functions, will not be able to match the quality of specialized external applications.

A significant part of respondents also draws attention to **data security and privacy issues**. 26.4% of respondents fear a lower level of data security, and 27.6% indicate the risk of excessive surveillance by banks.

Relatively often, concerns also appear about **higher costs of services performed by the bank**, which was indicated by 23.9% of respondents. Only 17.2% of respondents declare a lack of concern towards the super-app model.



Key patterns and findings from open-ended answers

The analysis of open-ended answers unequivocally shows that respondents have high and clearly defined expectations regarding the role of the bank in the context of value-added services. The most strongly outlined pattern is perceiving the bank as an **institution of trust**, rather than a platform aggregating random commercial services. Users accept VAS on the condition that they are **logically and substantively linked to finances or public administration**. This way of thinking is very clearly reflected in one of the statements of the respondents:

“A bank is an institution that should inspire trust, be associated with data security and stored deposits, and not a bazaar where I can buy sandals, a bathroom faucet, and pasta. Added services make sense if their domain is related to the bank. Therefore, insurance yes, buying bleach and a trip to Rhodes no.”

The second key thread is the criticism of the **execution quality (UX)** of value-added services available in banking applications. Respondents often compare them with dedicated applications and point out their lower functionality and technical issues.

“Sometimes things are added to banking apps as an afterthought—for example, there’s been an obvious bug in IKO for over a year with the parking duration feature, and nobody has fixed it. Or buying transit tickets is clunky compared to other apps (why can’t you just scan a QR code?).”

There is also an ambivalent need for consolidation. Some users would like to reduce the number of applications on their phone and transfer selected functions to the banking application, but at the same time, they fear interface overload and loss of transparency.

“I already have too many apps. I’d love to have city bikes and train tickets right inside my banking app just to cut down on the number of apps I have to give my card details to or top up in advance.”

At the same time, respondents highlight a need for **simplification**, especially in payments and card management, and suggest banks should **focus on core functions** like secure money management. They also raise concerns about centralizing too many functions in one app, as outages could block access to essential services.

“If everything is in one app, its failure poses a huge risk of losing many functions at the same time. I prefer for the banking app to focus mainly on finances, maybe storing bills, etc. Additional services should be quite closely tied to finances + perhaps transport.”



Key conclusions:

Mobile banking and Value-Added Services



The study shows that users of banking applications are digitally mature consumers who use mobile banking intensively but are simultaneously very selective towards value-added services (VAS). The banking application is perceived by them primarily as a tool for secure money management and an access point to public services and digital identity, rather than an all-in-one platform.



The greatest value for them lies in services closely related to finances, documents, and daily duties, while lifestyle functions remain niche and do not meet mass expectations.



Respondents use an ecosystem of specialized apps in their daily lives and clearly prefer them over banking solutions, pointing to concerns such as feature overload, reduced clarity, lower execution quality, data security risks, and the centralization of risk within a single application. At the same time, the study reveals a moderate and conditional potential for the development of VAS in mobile banking, provided that services are selected very carefully, UX quality is excellent, and solutions remain consistent with the bank's core role as a trusted financial institution.

The new role of the bank:

Stability as the foundation of VAS ecosystems



Dominika Będkowska
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Nina Kozłowska
Sociologist

Uncertainty as the new equilibrium

The financial sector has entered a phase of permanent risk accumulation. Today's global crises – volatile geopolitics, cyber threats, technological transformation, climate change, and social tensions – no longer occur sequentially, but simultaneously, reinforcing each other. As the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report 2025 indicates, **the world is not heading towards stabilization after a period of disturbances** – it is entering a prolonged state of heightened uncertainty.

For banks, this means a change in basic strategic assumptions. The planning horizon is shortening, and the ability to absorb shocks is becoming a condition for further development. Operational, technological, and organizational resilience ceases to be a supporting function or a regulatory cost. It becomes a strategic competence, deciding on the bank's ability to scale business in an unstable environment.

Stability as a Service: From regulatory cost to market service

In conditions of permanent uncertainty, stability ceases to be solely an internal regulatory requirement – it becomes a market value. Banks, as part of critical infrastructure, possess a unique ability to ensure business continuity, data security, and service predictability, which forms the basis of the strategic framework of stability as a service.

Regulations such as **DORA (Digital Operational Resilience Act)** and **NIS2 (Network and Information Security Directive)** make this stability measurable and verifiable. Despite being EU regulations, their impact is global. DORA imposes strict operational resilience and cybersecurity frameworks on financial institutions and their critical third-party tech providers, closely mirroring US standards like NIST or SOC2. NIS2 broadens cybersecurity mandates across essential infrastructure.

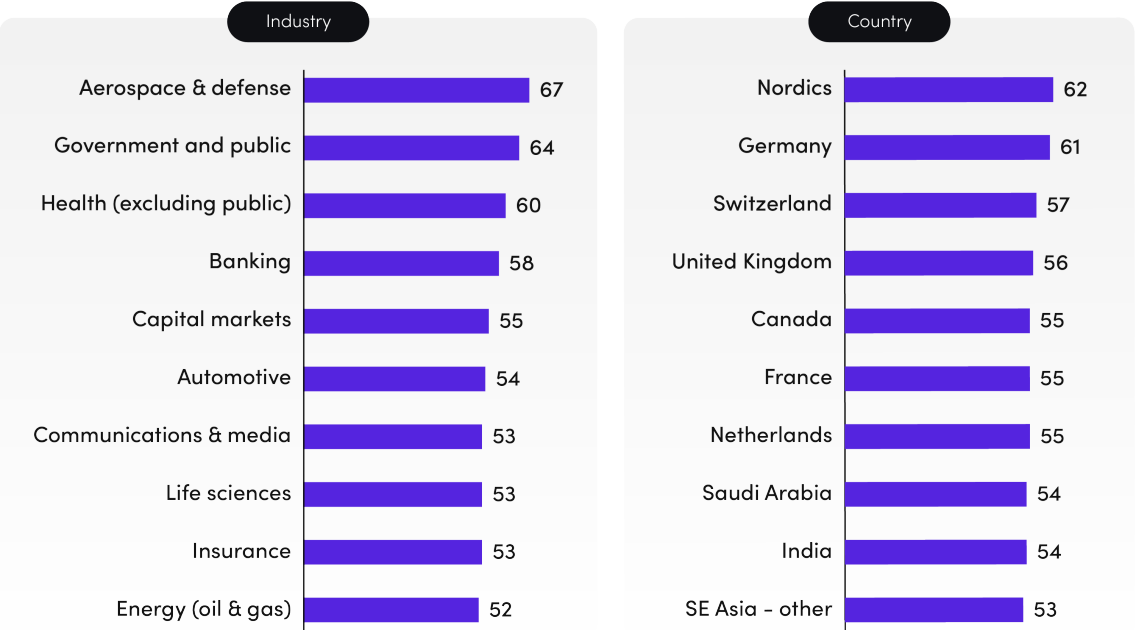


As a result, trust ceases to be a declaration and becomes a confirmed operational competence that customers experience as control, security, and continuity of access to services. In this model, the bank does not sell security as a product but ensures it by securely embedding the customer’s daily activities in a regulated environment.

Sovereignty Maturity Index

Question: Which of the following layers have you applied sovereignty or residency requirements on?

1,928 respondents



Source: 'Sovereign AI: Own your AI future' report, Accenture Research

According to Accenture’s Sovereignty Maturity Index – **measuring the actual implementation level of sovereignty controls across hardware, data, cloud, and AI model layers** – the banking sector scores 58/100, placing it below aerospace & defence (67), government & public sector (64), and healthcare (60). High declarative readiness (76% of banking organisations report seeking sovereign solutions) has not yet translated into operational maturity – and **it is precisely this gap that represents the greatest regulatory risk as full AI Act enforcement comes into effect from August 2026.**



↖ ↗ ↘ ↙ VAS ecosystems as a mechanism for scaling stability

Value-added services (VAS) are a **natural mechanism for monetizing stability as a service**. They do not perform the role of a product add-on or a tactical cross-sell tool. Their function is to embed the bank in real life scenarios of the customer and increase the number of valuable touchpoints in a secure environment.

Integrating daily activities with the banking application moves them under the umbrella of stability, responsibility, and continuity of operations. For the customer, this means a simplified experience and reduced risk. For the bank – more frequent contact, a deeper relationship, and access to high-quality behavioral data, collected in contexts extending beyond the financial transaction itself.

VAS (Value-Added Services) enable banks to **shift their customer relationship from sporadic financial interactions to a continuous presence during key moments of everyday life**. This shift enhances relationship value, data quality, and business model resilience, making the ecosystem the primary driver of competitive advantage.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Adopting a stability as a service perspective requires a **change in the way of thinking about strategy**. Stability and cyber resilience should be treated as part of the value proposition, not solely as operational backup. VAS development should be designed as an **investment in the relationship and ecosystem, not as a collection of separate features**.

Changing the approach to success metrics is equally important. The success of the strategy is decided not by the number of implementations or users, but by indicators showing real value: frequency of service use, customer retention, depth of relationship, and impact on the resilience of the entire operational model.



Social trends as a compass for VAS development in banking



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Socjolożka

In this chapter, we have gathered social trends that significantly affect how users use applications, but above all, what services they may expect in the future. The following list can serve as a compass that will direct decision makers to problems and needs to which they want to respond with an adequate offer of value-added services in the coming years.

Senior care – a response to the Silver Economy

The aging of society is one of the key demographic megatrends affecting the structure of customer needs and the way financial services are used. Along with the increase in the number of people aged 60+, the demand for solutions that combine financial security, health, and support in daily functioning is growing. Senior care does not mean exclusively medical services. It covers a wide ecosystem of needs related to independence, cost predictability, security, and relationships with family and caregivers. In this context, banks can perform the role of a trusted service integrator, extending beyond traditional transactional functions.



Additional trends shaping the area of senior care:



Wellaging over mere longevity

This approach centers on maintaining high quality of life and independence in old age. It emphasizes the importance of preserving personal autonomy and control over daily decisions.



Regenerative medicine and personalization

The rise of personalized healthcare increases medical complexity and overall costs. This shift drives growing consumer demand for flexible, adaptive financing models.



The digital shift and risk of isolation

Seniors are increasingly online, raising the importance of accessible digital channels. The key value lies in pairing simple digital tools with genuine human connection.



Mental health crisis and the role of trust

As an institution of public trust, a bank can play a critical role in reducing user anxiety. It achieves this through predictable processes, clear communication, and intuitive design.



Collective intelligence in senior care

While artificial intelligence excels at early risk detection, technology cannot replace human empathy. The most effective models combine automated analysis with direct oversight from caregivers.



Integrated management for chronic illness

Rising rates of chronic disease force seniors to manage complex webs of expenses, therapies, and appointments. There is a clear need for tools that unify health and financial management.



Potential Value-Added Services (VAS) in senior care:

The strategic direction of VAS development in the area of senior care focuses on the integration of financial services with care and health.

Telecare and health management modules:

These modules form the foundation for integrating finances with daily care and safety.



Integration with telecare

Implementing an SOS function linked directly to the senior's account enables quick contact in crisis situations (leveraging local provider apps).



Intelligent hybrid reminders

Automatic notifications combining health and financial aspects (payment deadlines for medicines, medical appointments).

Financial caregiver

A service reinforcing intergenerational trust and limiting the risk of fraud or financial confusion.



Transparent support in financial management

With explicit consent, family members can monitor selected aspects of finances (passive observation of transactions, alerts).



Anomaly detection module

A solution based on artificial intelligence and behavioral analytics that identifies deviations that may indicate fraud or extortion.



EV finance and electromobility integration

The development of green transport and electromobility leads to dynamic growth in the use of electric vehicles (EV). Electromobility changes not only the way of moving but also the model of incurring transport costs, which increasingly have a scattered, cyclical character handled digitally. Applications become the main tool for managing mobility. As a result, the expectation grows that the banking application will be integrated with this ecosystem and assume the role of a central point for managing the customer's mobility finances.

Key electromobility trends



Decarbonization (Financing low-emission transport)

Systemic reduction of CO_2 emissions drives regulatory and social support for EVs. However, high entry costs and complex financing remain major barriers for consumers.



Reindustrialization (Developing new mobility tech)

Modernizing industry around EV manufacturing, charging infrastructure, and fleet management creates entirely new categories of consumer spending and financial needs.



Regenerative cities (Transforming urban transit)

Designing eco-friendly urban spaces elevates the role of EVs and micromobility (bikes, scooters), leading to a high volume of short, frequent transit transactions.



Hybrid society (Integrating humans and tech)

As people coexist with autonomous systems (charging apps, telematics-based insurance), payments and financial decisions are becoming increasingly automated and seamless.



Potential value-added services in the area of electromobility:

The strategic direction of VAS development in the area of electromobility lies in the integration of financing, payments, and partner services (integrating micro-mobility vendors such as Lime/Bolt or smart-metering maps like PlugShare) within a single banking application.

Electromobility financing

These modules address the need for fast and accessible financing of vehicles and infrastructure related to electric mobility.



EV loans and leasing in the application:

Simplified credit and leasing paths dedicated to electric vehicles, available in a digital end-to-end model.



Mobility insurance in a short purchase path

Possibility to purchase immediate protection for electric vehicles and micro-mobility services in a 2-click model.

Integration of payments and mobility services

These modules focus on automating settlements and enabling deep integration with partners across the electric mobility ecosystem.



Payments in the background for charging and mobility services

Integration of the banking application with charging station systems and shared mobility services.



New definition of family and financial hub – pet services

Demographic changes lead to the redefinition of the family model. Increasingly, domestic animals perform the role of full-fledged members of households, creating a new area of financial needs (Pet Economy). Services dedicated to animals can become a natural element of expanding the functions of the banking application towards a hub of everyday life.

New family models – emotional capital and loyalty

The trend of new family models refers to the growing importance of emotional relationships beyond the traditional family structure. In practice, this means that expenses related to pets are no longer viewed as discretionary costs, but rather as a regular and significant component of the household budget.

For banks, this creates an opportunity to build relationships with customers in an area characterized by a high level of emotional engagement. Pet-related services can become a natural extension of banking app functionality, transforming it into a daily life hub that combines financial needs with the management of everyday expenses and services.



Potential value-added services (VAS) in the pet services segment

The strategic direction for the development of VAS in this area focuses on integrating financial management with the needs associated with pet ownership. The banking app can serve as a central access point for savings, payments, and partner services.

Financing and saving for the needs of pets

These modules address both recurring and unexpected expenses associated with pet care.



“PetFund” savings account

A dedicated account with an automatic micro-payment mechanism, extended by promotional offers from partners.



Marketplace of services for animals

An integrated marketplace (similar to pet platforms and niche digital health books like PetDiary) covering insurance (Pet Insurance) and subscriptions.

Veterinary and care services

They integrate healthcare and financial services within a single digital environment.



Veterinary teleconsultations and installment payments

The possibility of executing emergency consultations and making BNPL solutions available to cover sudden, unplanned veterinary treatment costs.



Installment payments

Providing BNPL (Buy Now, Pay Later) solutions or microloans that enable customers to finance high, unexpected veterinary treatment costs without the need to rely on external financing providers.



Culture of immediacy and the sharing economy

The culture of immediacy refers to the growing expectation that services and products will be available „here and now,” especially in the area of on-demand services and the sharing economy (such as global delivery networks e.g., Glovo, Uber Eats, or home-sharing platforms like Airbnb).

Component trends within the culture of immediacy



Labor market instability (Financing flexibility)

The rise of the gig economy and flexible employment leads to irregular income streams. Workers in this model need financial solutions that let them react quickly to current needs, regardless of when their paychecks arrive.



Hyperlocality (Integrating with the local ecosystem)

Hyperlocality means fulfilling needs in a specific time and place, often through local providers. On-demand services like transit, cleaning, or food delivery are inherently local, which increases the importance of simple, trusted access channels.



Potential VAS for the culture of immediacy

The strategic direction for VAS development in this area is to position the banking app as a gateway to on-demand services and a tool that simplifies payments and settlements within the sharing economy.

Instant services marketplace



One-click booking and payment

On-demand services such as cleaning, minor repairs, childcare, or senior care should be available for booking and payment directly within the banking app, with the number of transactional steps reduced to a minimum.



Trust curation

The bank can act as a trusted curator by verifying and validating on-demand service providers available through the marketplace. This is particularly important for local and less formalized services, where trust plays a critical role.



Group and instant settlements

- **Native group payment functionality**

A feature enabling fast settlements between users for shared expenses, such as transportation, food orders, or short-term rentals.

- **Integration with P2P payments**

Full integration with Person-to-Person (P2P) payment mechanisms, enabling instant cost-sharing and fast transfers between users of the banking app.



Wellbeing – VAS supporting longevity

Wellness and the pursuit of longevity have become an element of daily practices. Mobile applications and wearable devices enable continuous monitoring of physical activity (integrating trackers or local diet-planning software).

Key wellness and longevity trends:



Well-being (A holistic approach to quality of life)

The well-being trend focuses on overall life quality, encompassing physical health, mental health, and daily habits. It prioritizes long-term prevention and balance over mere reaction, making finances a tool to support stability and daily control.



Eliminating old age (The financial dimension of longevity)

This trend involves scientific and technological advancements aimed at delaying aging and extending an active lifespan. It leads to rising costs for future therapies and healthcare, requiring earlier and more conscious financial planning.



Human-like AI (Personalization and motivation)

Human-like AI focuses on developing artificial intelligence capable of more natural, contextual user interactions. In health and finance, this enables personalized recommendations and engaging communication tailored to individual goals and lifestyles.



Potential value added services (VAS) in the wellbeing area

The banking app can combine financial management with health-focused motivation, creating a unified touchpoint for activities related to everyday well-being and long-term planning.

Financial incentive mechanisms

Solutions that integrate financial activity with health and wellness-oriented behaviors.



Health cashbacks

Refunds or bonuses for expenses related to prevention and a healthy lifestyle, such as gym memberships, fitness classes, or products supporting healthy habits



Pay & track integration

Linking a banking account with fitness apps or activity trackers, where achieving specific health goals can be rewarded with loyalty points or financial bonuses.

Targeted saving and longevity goal

Modules supporting long-term financial planning for health and longevity-related needs.



Longevity goal savings accounts

Automatic fund accumulation designated for future medical expenses, advanced therapies, or care in later stages of life.



Insurance and health recommendations

Tailoring insurance offers to the customer's lifestyle using activity data (with user consent) to ensure better long-term security.



Era of deficit – VAS in energy cost optimization

Rising energy costs introduce households into the so-called era of deficit. It becomes key to actively manage costs, optimize resource consumption, and strive for greater energy self-sufficiency. Banks can embed themselves in this process as utility integrators.

This trend includes the following areas:



Self-sufficiency – Driving energy autonomy

Energy crises and volatile prices accelerate the push toward independence from external suppliers. Homeowners and small communities are increasingly adopting renewable energy sources like photovoltaics and heat pumps.



Deindustrialization – Pressure to reduce costs

Rising resource and energy costs directly translate into higher household utility bills. Consequently, consumers are analyzing their utility spending, identifying excessive consumption, and seeking tools to help optimize these expenses.



Potential value added services (VAS) in energy cost optimization:

The banking app can serve as a central hub for managing household finances, expanding its functionality into the area of monitoring and optimizing energy costs.

Smart bills and consumption monitoring

Modules integrating utility consumption data with banking transaction history enable customers to better understand the structure of fixed expenses.



Smart Bills integration

Provides access to bills, payment history, and consumption comparisons across different periods, including monthly or seasonal views.



Savings analytics

Helps identify patterns of increased consumption and forecast future costs, supporting decisions aimed at reducing expenses.

Financing and renewable energy motivation

Financial services can support investments in solutions that improve household energy efficiency.



Simplified renewable energy loan (OZE credit)

Enables fast financing of renewable energy installations without the need for complex formal procedures.



Eco loyalty programs

Can reward actions related to improving energy efficiency, such as energy audits, purchasing smart home solutions, or investing in energy-saving technologies.



Financial inclusivity – VAS responding to economic gaps

Financial inclusion refers to actions aimed at reducing economic inequalities resulting from social, income, and demographic factors. As socio-economic disparities deepen, the importance of tools that enable broader groups of customers to access knowledge, products, and mechanisms for building financial security continues to grow.

Banks, aspiring to become a hub for everyday life, can address these challenges by developing value-added services that support financial education, long-term planning, and the gradual increase of customers' economic empowerment.



Socio-economic inequalities and income gaps

Growing disparities limit access to resources, financial knowledge, and technology for vulnerable groups. Persistent wage gaps result in lower capital accumulation and reduced financial resilience.



Democratic crisis and individualized security

Declining trust in public pension systems forces individuals to secure their own financial futures. This shift drives the need for tools that support independent, long-term saving and planning.



Investment hurdles and decision-making confidence

Groups at risk of financial exclusion avoid investing due to risk aversion and a lack of market understanding. The main barriers are limited financial confidence and a preference for conservative savings.



Potential VAS supporting financial inclusivity:

The banking app can act as a tool supporting the gradual development of financial autonomy by combining education, simple operational mechanisms, and access to new forms of capital accumulation.



Personalized financial education

Gamified educational modules developed by specialized partners (similar to gamified financial literacy platforms like YourJuno) focusing on career planning and investment basics.



Democratization of access to assets

Participation in asset accumulation at a low entry threshold through fractional ownership of assets (models like Homeshare, which fractionally divide real estate assets into accessible micro-shares).



Digital Euro – Regulatory change or a new platform for innovation?



Sebastian Malczyk

FinTech Solutions Lead

The Digital Euro is a central bank digital currency (CBDC) project developed by the European Central Bank since 2020. Its goal is to create an electronic equivalent of cash issued directly by the Eurosystem, which could be used by citizens and businesses in daily payments.

The idea emerged as a response to several parallel trends: the declining use of cash, the growing popularity of digital payments, the development of private stablecoins, and the need to preserve European payment sovereignty. Following the completion of the investigation phase in 2023, the project entered a preparatory stage aimed at developing the target architecture, standards, and cooperation model with banks and payment service providers.

Although the final decision to implement the Digital Euro has not yet been formally made, most financial market participants assume that within the next few years, it will become an integral part of the European payment ecosystem.

What does the Digital Euro mean for banks and FinTechs?

Unlike many previous regulatory initiatives, the Digital Euro is not just a new payment channel. It is potentially a new layer of financial infrastructure that could change how competitive advantage is built in the financial services market.

For financial institutions, this means the necessity of preparing new user service processes, integrating with the Eurosystem infrastructure, adapting payment systems, and creating new digital experiences around the digital currency. At the same time, there is a risk that core functions related to storing and transferring funds will become increasingly standardized and harder to use as an element of competitive advantage.

However, the history of digital banking shows that infrastructure alone rarely builds an advantage. Customer value is determined by how it is used to solve specific user problems.



For the past two decades, banks have competed primarily through their product offerings – accounts, cards, loans, or savings. The Digital Euro could accelerate the trend where core payment services become increasingly standardized, and the differences between providers become less visible to the end user.

In such a world, competitive advantage shifts from infrastructure to customer experience and services built around payments.

The Digital Euro is no longer a theoretical scenario

The ECB assumes readiness for a potential launch of the Digital Euro around 2029, and according to estimates presented by the ECB, the implementation of the new infrastructure could cost European banks between EUR 4 billion and EUR 6 billion within the first four years.

This means that most large financial institutions will have to treat the Digital Euro as an element of their technology strategy in the coming years.

If the banking sector has to bear multi-billion dollar costs for infrastructure adjustment, the natural question becomes not only “how to implement the Digital Euro?”, but also “how to leverage this investment to build new revenue streams and customer engagement?”. Source

Why can VAS play a key role?

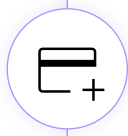
Paradoxically, the success of the Digital Euro may increase the importance of value-added services.

The more standardized the payment layer becomes, the larger the share of business value that will be generated by services built around payments. This is a phenomenon observed multiple times in the history of technology – when infrastructure becomes universally available, competition moves to the higher layers of the ecosystem.

We observed a similar process after mobile banking became widespread. Access to the app itself stopped being a competitive advantage, and what became key was what additional services the bank offered to its customers.



In the case of the Digital Euro, potential areas of development may include:



Financial wellbeing

- Smart expense management
- Automated savings
- Personalized financial recommendations



Commerce & loyalty

- Next-generation loyalty programs
- Digital receipts
- Cashback and merchant rewards



Public services

- Payments for public transport
- Administrative fees
- Integration with the European Digital Identity Wallet



Embedded & contextual payments

- Micropayments
- Machine-to-machine payments
- Automated payments executed in the background of digital services

For banks and FinTechs, this means that the Digital Euro should be viewed not only as a regulatory compliance project but also as an opportunity to redefine their role in the customer's digital life.

What does the ECB itself say?

“The digital euro could serve as a platform for payment service providers to develop value-added services, such as conditional payments or loyalty programmes.”

— European Central Bank



Digital Euro in numbers

INDICATOR / METRIC	SOURCE	DETAIL
2029	ECB	Potential launch date of the Digital Euro in the euro area.
EUR 4–6 billion	Reuters	Estimated cost of implementation for the European banking sector within the first 4 years.
70+ organizations	Banque de France	The number of banks, fintechs, and merchants participating in innovation initiatives led by the ECB.
VAS as an official direction	ECB	The ECB points to value-added services, such as loyalty or conditional payments, as one of the areas for building value around the Digital Euro.

Author's insight

From Miquido's perspective, the most interesting aspect of the Digital Euro is neither the technology itself nor the regulations.

In Southeast Asian countries, we observed how the development of new payment infrastructure became a catalyst for the emergence of service ecosystems reaching far beyond traditional banking.

Although Europe will follow its own regulatory path, we believe that a similar mechanism may emerge here as well – and the Digital Euro will become not only a new way to execute payments but also the foundation for the next generation of digital services.



A day in the life of a user:

Full integration of VAS services

The schedule presents how a financial-first super-app combines finance, health, mobility, care, and investments, increasing engagement and ARPU through contextual VAS.

INTERACTION IN THE SUPER-APP AND VAS BENEFIT

7:00

SENIOR CARE

The user checks the account balance. The AI assistant contextually reminds about mom's teleconsultation and enables immediate payment of her bill.

7:30

WELLBEING

Booking a dietary teleconsultation within the framework of banking benefits. Payment is executed automatically and securely from the account.

8:15

EV FINANCE

Purchase of a monthly ticket for public transport. The application proposes a mobility alternative: an integrated subscription (tram + scooter) within EV Finance.

8:40

ESG/EV FINANCE

Renting a city scooter; payment takes place in the background. The application displays statistics of saved CO2 relative to driving a car.

10:00

ERA OF DEFICIT

Context alert: Your energy bill has just been issued – would you like to pay it now? You can approve the payment instantly with a single click, without leaving the app.

11:30

PET ECONOMY

The dog goes to the groomer (booking made in the super-app). The bank proposes launching a PetFund sub-account and contextually reminds about the upcoming vaccination deadline.

12:30

WELLBEING/ESG

Push notification from an eco-food partner: -20% on lunchboxes. The user finalizes the order, and the cashback is posted on the account.

16:00

IMMEDIACY

The user is buying shoes online. The super-app offers a BNPL (Buy Now, Pay Later) option: pay for your purchase later in 4 interest-free installments.

16:05

FINANCIAL STABILITY

The AI assistant immediately adjusts the savings plan: it automatically moves \$50 less to the Vacation goal to balance the current expense.



18:00

WELLBEING

Entering the gym using the banking app's integration with a fitness pass. The activity is automatically recorded in the system, and the data supports the personalization of benefits.

19:00

INCENTIVE MECHANISMS

Reward notification: For today's activity, you've earned +20 longevity points – exchange them for cashback or cinema tickets.

20:30

ERA OF DEFICIT

Receiving an energy consumption report for the week in the super-app: Your bills have increased by 12%. Do you want to check how to reduce costs?

20:45

ESG/ERA OF DEFICIT

The user joins the EcoRewards program: collects points for buying ecological products and exchanges them for cashback in the application.

21:00

FINANCIAL INCLUSIVITY

The user goes through an investment module and collects more points in the financial education application.

21:15

INVESTMENT DEMOCRATIZATION

The user is exploring investment opportunities in fractional real estate shares, analyzing potential returns and an entry threshold adapted to lower capital requirements.



AI as a catalyst for VAS development in mobile banking



Jerzy Biernacki
Chief AI Officer

The development of value-added services in banking has led mobile applications to a point where further expansion of the offer becomes difficult from both the user and operational sides.

Artificial Intelligence responds to this challenge as a catalyst. AI can be implemented in the existing structure without revolutionizing the entire architecture, and its task is to facilitate the management of VAS. **The role of AI does not lie in creating new categories of services, but in enabling banks to develop current strategies, lower costs, and improve user experience.** AI therefore operates on two levels: in the user layer, where it simplifies service use, and in the operational backend, where it automates processes and increases organizational scalability.

Interface simplification and better service visibility

Banking applications are growing faster than users are able to learn them. AI changes this dynamic by introducing mechanisms that relieve clients cognitively. **Large language models allow users to describe their needs in their own words** (e.g., in a chat), intuitively and without knowing the structure of the application.

Personalization ceases to be a collection of rules assigned to demographic segments. Next Best Action (NBA) algorithms, which are the heart of personalization, analyze current and historical behaviors and then prompt the „next best step” for the customer, which translates into higher conversion in the categories of near-banking and lifestyle services.

AI opens alternative ways of using services through conversational interfaces (voice, image, chatbots, and micro-agents). Voice allows executing many tasks without touching the screen (e.g., while driving), and image recognition accelerates the handling of applications based on a photo of a document. **As a result, the significance of the classic menu, which is inherently difficult to scale, ceases to be dominant.**



Operational backend: efficiency, automation, and operational resilience

In the operational backend, we see the main application of AI in these important areas:

- **Automation of internal processes:** Machine learning models and large language models streamline document analysis, assessment of data completeness, and identification of anomalies and potential abuses.
- **Customer service in a Human in the Loop model:** AI takes over a large part of repetitive interactions, while employees handle only more difficult or non-standard cases.
- **Content production and multilingualism:** AI shortens the cycle of creating announcements, educational content, and FAQs in multiple languages, which especially reinforces the Mobility and Lifestyle categories, characterized by high seasonality.

Managing AI implementation risks: Accountability and transparency

The growing role of artificial intelligence in financial services raises a number of concerns among customers. The lack of transparency of algorithms breeds distrust. The key strategic response to these risks is the adoption of the philosophy and tools of Explainable Artificial Intelligence (**XAI – Explainable Artificial Intelligence**), which transforms the „black box“ into a process possible to audit.

Practical tips for decision makers:

- **Ethical audit of algorithms:** Introduce regular, independent XAI audits for all critical models (e.g., credit scoring, NBA recommendations) to eliminate systemic biases.
- **Customer's right to explanation:** Ensure that every customer has access to a simple explanation of a decision made by AI built into the application interface (Explainability by Design).
- **Human in the Loop in critical processes:** Ensure human oversight and the possibility of employee intervention in non-standard situations.
- **Investment in post-hoc methods:** Invest in advanced XAI techniques, such as SHAP (which measures the weight of each input data element to identify biases in the risk model) and LIME (which focuses on local interpretation, explaining why a single, specific recommendation was made for a given customer).

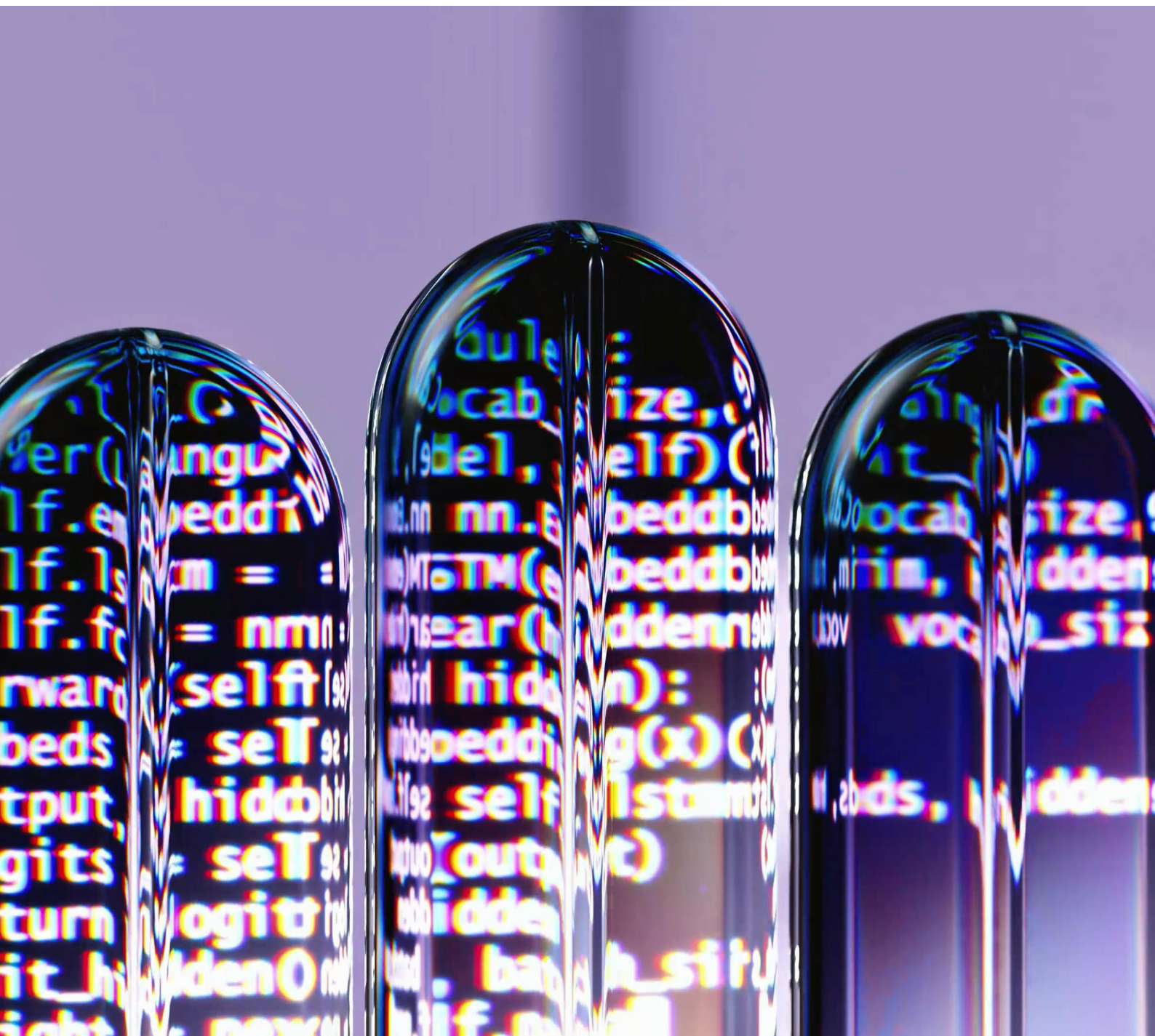


Summary:

AI as an enabling technology for further growth

AI is not a standalone product or module, but rather an amplifying layer for the entire VAS ecosystem. It lowers the entry barrier for users, reduces costs for the organization, accelerates deployments, and stabilizes the growing complexity of applications.

Just as a catalyst in chemistry does not change the direction of a reaction but allows it to occur faster and with less energy, AI allows banks to execute their VAS strategy in a way that is more agile, economical, and tailored to the actual needs of users.



Strategies for implementing and scaling Value-Added Services (VAS) in mobile banking ecosystems



Tomasz Bawełkiewicz
Business Architect

The new role of the financial institution in the digital economy

The contemporary banking sector is evolving from the role of a public trust institution executing financial operations to the role of a trusted partner in the customer's digital life cycle. Traditional banking products are losing their uniqueness, forcing banks to look for new sources of non-interest income and build exit barriers through high retention. Below I present an analysis of the evolution of operational models for implementing VAS, drawing from the experiences of Polish market leaders and rapidly developing Asian markets, where Miquido has extensive experience.

Extended operational model of VAS implementation

The choice of an implementation path for a Bank is a strategic decision that defines the initial cost (CAPEX) and operational flexibility (OPEX).

In-house model:

Dedicated and vertical integration

The bank independently performs the role of architect, integrator, and relationship manager with the service provider. The main problem is tech debt and low scalability, which drastically extends time-to-market. The in-house model should be treated as a tool for building an advantage in narrow, critical areas closely linked to core banking (e.g., proprietary embedded insurance).



Ⓑ Platform model:

Building an internal marketplace

A strategy used by leaders such as PKO BP (via its subsidiary PKO BP Finat). The bank builds a universal technological bus (API Gateway), to which external partners connect (e.g., in the areas of Pet Economy or Silver Economy). Building one's own marketplace makes sense only when the bank aspires to the role of a market standard architect, and not just a service aggregator.

Ⓒ External aggregation model:

Aggregator as ecosystem operator

The most modern approach, visible in the ServiceHub strategy. The bank executes a single technological integration with an aggregator that holds a portfolio of ready-made VAS, ceding to it formal, legal, settlement, and operational issues. The aggregator model is currently the most effective way of testing and scaling VAS, especially in categories with a high frequency of use and low unit margin (tickets, top-ups).

Asian perspective:

Super-app benchmarking

Asian markets have overtaken Europe in building complementary ecosystems. An analysis of local models provides valuable insights for business analysts:

THE TOTAL MODEL

WeChat (Tencent) and Alipay (Ant Group)

In China, banking has become an embedded function thanks to Mini-Programs – light applications inside the main platform. Success lies in creating an environment in which the user executes the entire need without leaving the ecosystem.

FROM LOGISTICS TO FINANCE

Gojek (Indonezja) and Grab (Singapur)

These platforms proved that high frequency of interaction (taxi, food) is more important than traditional brand trust. European banks must look for high-frequency VAS so as not to become merely a “wallet” for external applications.



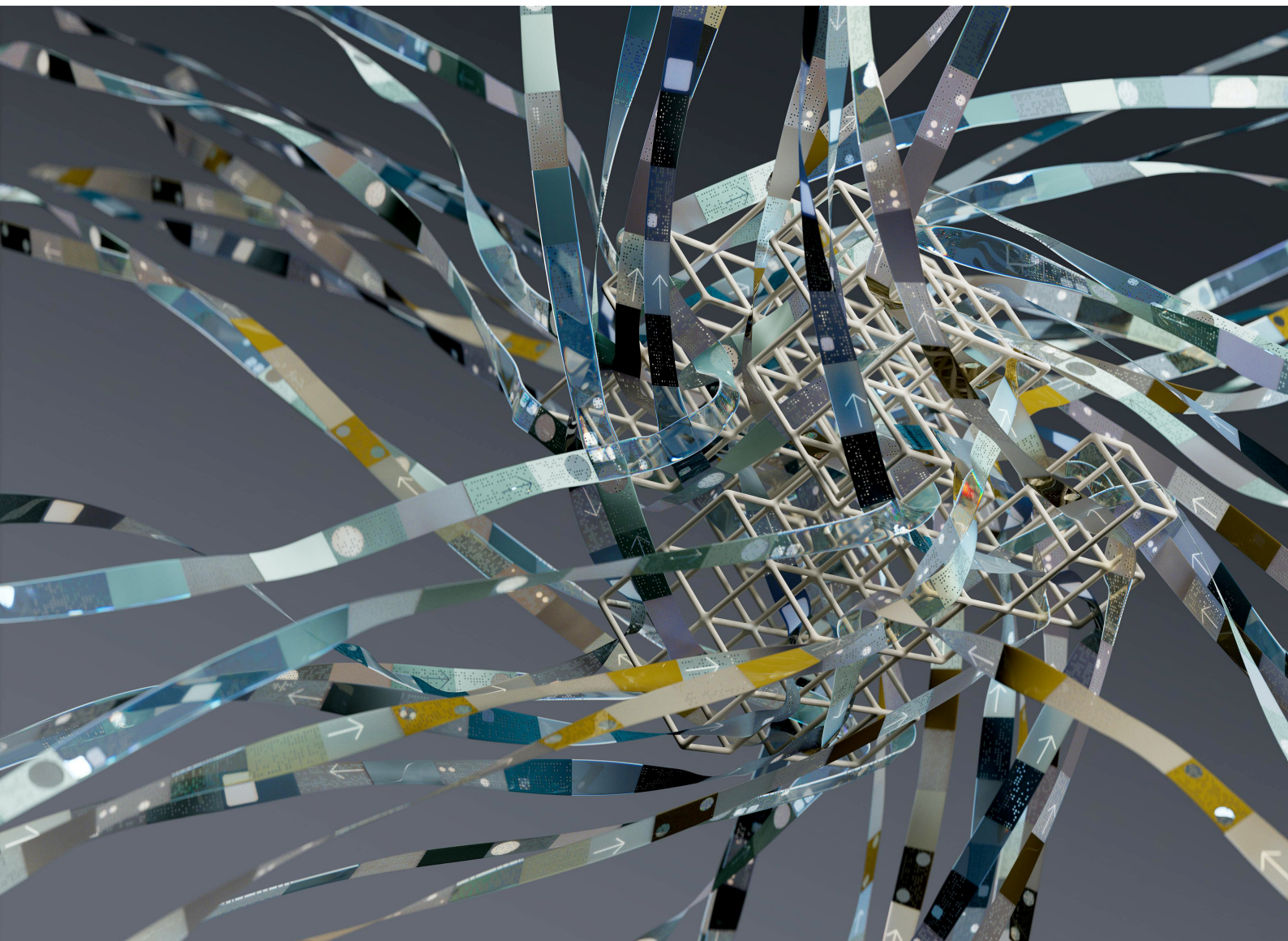
Paytm (Indie)

Success through aggressive integration of QR payments and utility services. The user cannot feel the difference between paying for electricity and a transfer to a friend.

Strategic value analysis and monetization

Implementing VAS in an aggregator or marketplace model must be economically justified through four pillars: Margin (direct commission), Engagement (increase in login frequency), Data (credit scoring in a contextual banking model), and Reduction of operational costs.

In my opinion, it is key for financial institutions aspiring to the role of a digital ecosystem leader to adopt a **hybrid operational model**, combining aggregation (ServiceHub) for mass services with low margins, dedicated integration for strategic local partnerships, and continuous benchmarking of global solutions.



A strategy of moderation in a world of excess

The conclusions from the market are clear: the future of banking is not a race for the number of features, but mastery in understanding the context of a customer's life. The key to success is shifting from a broad portfolio of services to precise user support through selectivity, intuitive interfaces, and AI-driven personalization. The banking of tomorrow is an ecosystem that appears exactly when it is needed and remains discrete the rest of the time.

Let's talk about your app's potential.



Sebastian Malczyk

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in

Let's talk