The Banking Expectation Gap: US Consumer Edition

From customer expectations to competitive advantage: How US banks can earn relevance, trust and loyalty.

temenos

Celent.
a GlobalData company

The Banking Expectation Gap: US Consumer Edition

From customer expectations to competitive advantage: How US banks can earn relevance, trust, and loyalty

Michael Bernard and Alenka Grealish

August 25, 2026

This report was commissioned by Temenos at whose request Celent developed this research. The analysis, conclusions, and opinions are Celent’s alone, and Temenos had no editorial control over the contents.

A part of GlobalData

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

US banks have a clear opportunity to win market share: Three-quarters of consumers are only moderately satisfied or less with their primary financial institution, according to Celent's recent regional consumer survey. Many say critical features are missing—from personalization and digital experience to fraud protection and financial guidance—and would consider switching to get them. Winning banks will be those that deliver personalization and leverage trusted AI to help customers feel more secure, recognized, and financially in control.

To understand this opportunity more deeply, Celent has analyzed both demand and supply. On the demand side, we surveyed US consumer customers about factors that drive satisfaction/dissatisfaction, bank switching attitudes, personalization, and AI utility and trust (see the Appendix for survey details). On the supply side, we examine our Celent 2026 Dimensions Survey of bankers and spoke with a variety of bank leaders in customer engagement and technology strategy.

We have divided our analysis into "Understand" the customer and "Act" (i.e., what strategic actions banks should undertake). The "Understand" sections examine general and product/channel specific satisfaction for consumers. The "Act" sections articulate two strategic responses: deliver personalization, and harness AI while building trust.

Figure 1: Report Take-Aways

1 Understand Consumers

- Globally, consumers view their banks as adequate, not exceptional.
- Payments, fraud protection, value, and digital experience emerge as weak spots.
- A "Switchable Middle" exists. A majority of consumers are willing to consider switching banks to receive better value.

2 Act: Harness AI while Building Trust

- Customer preferences for AI in banking are higher for informational assistance, including financial wellness and conversational banking.
- But consumers have reasonable security and privacy concerns regarding AI-powered engagement and tools.
- Banks that can build trust in AI-powered engagement will outperform.

3 Act: Break Legacy Constraints to Deliver on Customer Expectations

- Banks must align their "supply" with customer "demand"—not only on the top of the tech stack but also within the core foundation.
- Banks' ability to close the gap between their offerings and evolving customer expectations for product and service personalization is impeded by legacy systems and other factors.
- Banks who respond will capture the "switchable middle."

Source: Celent 2026 Global Consumer and Small Business Survey June-July 2026; Celent Dimensions Banker Survey and interviews

1

Understand Consumers

Traditionally banks have focused on customer retention factors such as fees, loan pricing, and competitive deposit rates, but Celent finds that digital reliability, human support, and trust (hard to build, easy to lose) are also very important to retention. More specifically, payment features, fraud protection, and credit origination are most important. Banks have an opportunity to compete for the “switchable” customers.

2

Act: Harness AI While Building Trust

Banks have an opportunity to differentiate themselves in customer engagement by effectively harnessing AI on multiple fronts: consumer messaging, conversational interfaces, and financial wellness. Competitive differentiation will depend on banks’ ability to deliver AI-powered customer communications and tools that consumers want, while avoiding some of the specific pitfalls that can undermine trust, such as misused customer data or errors or inaccuracies in AI content.

3

Act: Break Legacy Constraints to Deliver On Customer Expectations

Banks must focus on building the foundations for next-generation banking. Banks saddled with legacy core systems could be hard-pressed to meet customer expectations for more personalized and intelligent services and products. Consumers want more choice, flexibility, and personalization in bank products and delivery. Limited product flexibility for banks is already affecting customer satisfaction, with personalized digital products and financial guidance emerging as key priorities for consumers.

Banks must respond to a new era of customer engagement, shaped by AI, agentic capabilities, and rising expectations for faster, more advisory, personalized service. At the same time, “trust” is highly impactful on a consumer’s decision to stay or switch banks. The challenge is not simply to modernize digital apps or to automate existing processes; it is to combine human support with technology to make banking feel more relevant, responsive, and trustworthy.

When examining its proprietary data sources from the annual Celent Dimensions Survey of 50 US retail banking leaders, Celent finds a striking disconnect between demand and current supply. Most relevant is that 62% of North American retail banks say it has become more challenging to win and retain customers in the past year. In that context, we find evidence of several disconnects between what consumers are asking for and what banks are focused on delivering, specifically in the area of personalized experience. Among US banks, fewer than 10% say that ‘personalization of the customer experience’ is a Top 3 priority for them in 2026.

Yet we find in this study that customers expect to have *more* personalized experiences. More than half feel their bank is not tailoring products and services well enough for their needs.

Larger US banks are disproportionately investing in customer experience overall, and nearly 40% say ‘personalization of the customer experience’ is one of their top 3 technology priorities. However, those banks tend to be larger nationals—medium- and small-sized US banks are not nearly as focused on the personalization opportunity, with hardly any of them naming it among their top priorities.

Personalization of products and services will need to become commonplace in short order, which must drive new thinking about both product design and traditional bank organizational structures. Structuring products around real customer expectations rather than the constraints of internal silos has become increasingly important.

Celent Proprietary Research Database

To help bankers excel at delighting their consumer and small business customers, Celent has undertaken a two-part analysis. First, we have surveyed bank customers to provide a strong understanding of their expectations and concerns. Second, we have analyzed our proprietary banker survey (Celent Dimensions Survey) and interviews with bank leaders to provide recommendations on actions banks should use to differentiate and win market share.

Consumer survey

Celent surveyed 2,500 US consumers aged 18-65+ in June, July, and August 2026. Respondents were invited to answer questions related to satisfaction with their current primary banking institution, their expectations for services, features, and costs, their branch needs, and their attitudes toward AI-powered assistance in banking.

Celent Dimensions survey

Celent's annual survey of 433 global banking leaders provides insights on product, business and technology priorities, including strategy and spending forecasts by area. We provide these insights to our clients in a suite of reports for tracking financial institution IT priorities and spending. The reports examine and benchmark the drivers for spending by business lines and regions. Celent clients can access the full report here: *Celent Dimensions: Retail Banking IT Pressures & Priorities 2026; North America*

Bank Leadership interviews

Celent analysts conducted in-depth 1:1 interviews with select banking leaders, concentrated among banks with US$10 billion–$500 billion in assets in the US and other countries/regions. The conversations explored core modernization plans, customer engagement, AI in banking, and the general topic of consumer trust in banking.

For further details see the **Appendix**.

Understand Consumers

Retail banks face both opportunity and risk from a sizeable group of customers who are willing to switch institutions. Celent refers to this group as the “switchable middle”—the three-quarters of our respondents who are only moderately or less than satisfied with their current primary financial institution. Their decision is less likely to be driven by the ease of self-service experiences, where satisfaction is relatively strong, and more by the quality of high touch support, fraud protection, payments, and personalization. Banks that understand customers and value loyalty can capture this switchable middle, while those that fall short risk losing market share.

Traditionally banks have focused on customer retention factors such as fees and competitive rates. Celent finds that digital reliability, human support, and trust (hard to build, easy to lose) are also very important for retention. More specifically, payment features and credit origination are two major pain points. Banks have an opportunity to win those customers willing to switch for the right reasons.

Consumers View Banks as Adequate, Not Exceptional

Averaged together, consumer sentiment toward bank performance is lukewarm—not exceptionally positive or outright negative. This creates a retention risk for banks that meet basic expectations but fail to build stronger loyalty. And it underscores the importance for banks to address this “switchable middle”—before it’s too late.

Over 30% of customers report being “not at all satisfied” or “only slightly satisfied.” Regional banks have the highest percentage of “not at all satisfied” at 16% compared to national and community banks with less than 5%.

Nearly half are only moderately satisfied — suggesting many customers see their bank as adequate but not especially differentiated.

Bankers are experiencing heightened competition (Dimensions Survey and Bank Leadership Interviews)

The Celent Dimensions Survey makes clear that competition to win and retain new customers is increasing. Close to two-thirds of North American banks reported that competitive intensity had increased for 2026 (compared to 54% in 2025), led by medium (regional) and large US banks. At smaller US Banks, the concern has slightly declined this year, to 30%. Notably, these banks report that the specific threats from fintechs and other digital-native challengers are also rising.

Qualitative insights from Celent interviews with bank leaders echo our Celent Dimensions findings. Leaders express their strong focus on acquiring and retaining customers in face of shifting demand. Multiple leaders specifically emphasize the competitive threat from digital-only banks, especially new entrants into the US market such as Revolut. One leader describes this as “one of the existential threats” their bank is facing, along with the rise of AI assistants, or answer engines.

Payments, Fraud Protection, Value, and Digital Emerge as Weak Spots

From the Celent 2026 Global Consumer Survey (Figure 2), customers are dissatisfied because banks are underperforming in several areas that matter directly to their everyday experience: payment services including real-time availability and reliability, security and fraud protection, and value for money (including useful offerings).

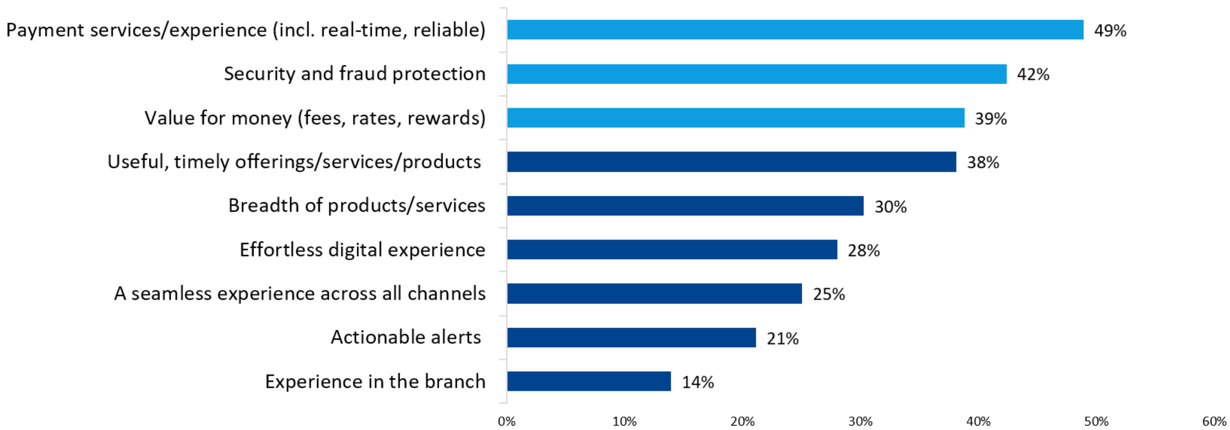
Nearly half of consumers are dissatisfied with their **payment services.**

42% cite dissatisfaction with **security and fraud protection**, pointing to a real risk for building trust.

Over a third are least satisfied with **value-based offerings** (fees, available rates, and pricing of products, useful offerings, products available in a timely manner).

Figure 2: Many Consumers Are Dissatisfied with Value and Utility

Q: What are the Top 3 items you are least satisfied with?



Source: Celent 2026 Global Consumer and Small Business Survey June-July 2026; All consumer respondents

Celent found interesting differences when customers are **segmented by primary bank type**.

Regional bank customers point to **payment services** as the most acute area of **dissatisfaction**.

Regional bank customers tend to be **net satisfied** with their **digital experience**. However, those regional bank customers report nearly the same level of dissatisfaction with digital experience as the digital-only bank customers, presumably the most digitally demanding of all the customer groups. This should alert regional banks that their customers expect high-quality digital experiences as much as the digital-only customer group.

Community bank customers point to **digital experience** as the most acute area of **dissatisfaction**.

Digital-only bank customers have a heavy **concern** (over half) about **security/fraud protection**.

One area for which there was **dissatisfaction consensus across customer segments** was **value-for-money**, dissatisfaction with around a third ranking it in the Top 3 sources of dissatisfaction.

Capturing The Switchable Middle

Consumers are willing to consider switching banks when competitors offer clearer financial value and stronger digital capabilities (Figure 3). Four out of the top six switch drivers are related to value or trust (fees and credit rates, rewards based on relationship, higher interest on savings, and trust in the bank). The bottom line here is that consumers want banks to reward them for their business.

51% would consider **switching for rates and fees** on credit products.

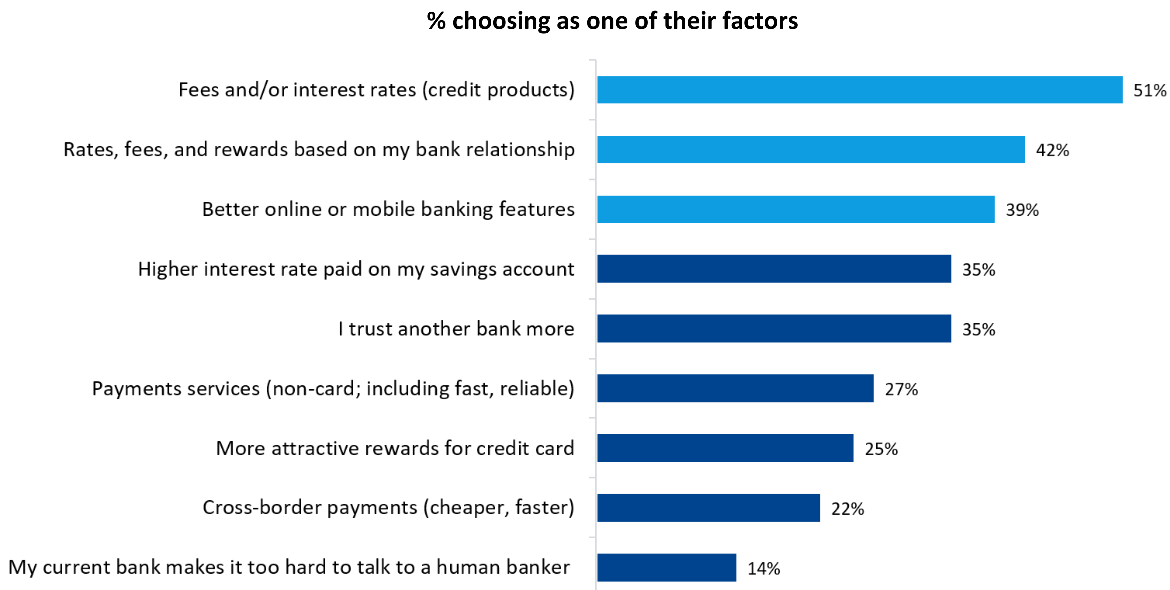
42% say **fee structure or rewards** that better reflect the size or length of their relationship would attract them to another bank, underscoring the link between personalization and the switchable middle.

39% cite **better online and mobile banking features** as a reason to switch. More personalized fees and rates on credit products would be an attractor for 44% of consumers, while more than a third say a higher savings rate alone could prompt them to switch.

Over a third say simply having a **higher interest rate for savings** accounts is enough to switch.

Figure 3: Value, Digital Experience, and Personalization Drive Switching

Q: What would be most important factors in your decision to select a different primary provider?



Source: Celent 2026 Global Consumer and Small Business Survey June-July 2026; All US consumer respondents

Celent found interesting **variations by customers segmented by primary bank types and age**. Among the top three highest ranked factors in switching banks, customers of different sized banks indicated some clear variation in what would attract them the most.

Regional bank customers say they'd be most attracted by **better fees or rates on credit products** (56% ranked this in Top 3; excluding cards), followed by better digital banking features (46%).

Community and national bank customers were most highly focused on **benefits reflecting the value of their relationship** with the bank (46% and 47%, respectively). This presents a very interesting opportunity for regional and community banks to focus on relationship banking, a core strength of both.

Digital-only bank customers ranked both **online and mobile experience** and **better fees or rates on credit products** equally high (47%).

Younger to middle-aged customer groups (18–49-year-olds) can be won over with **better fees and rates on credit products** as they are in the life stages when they are borrowing for assets like homes.

Older groups (40+ year olds) place value on **relationship-based benefits**, likely reflecting a longer average tenure with their current bank.

Overall, better digital features are universally valued across age groups, with hardly any decline within the older age groups.

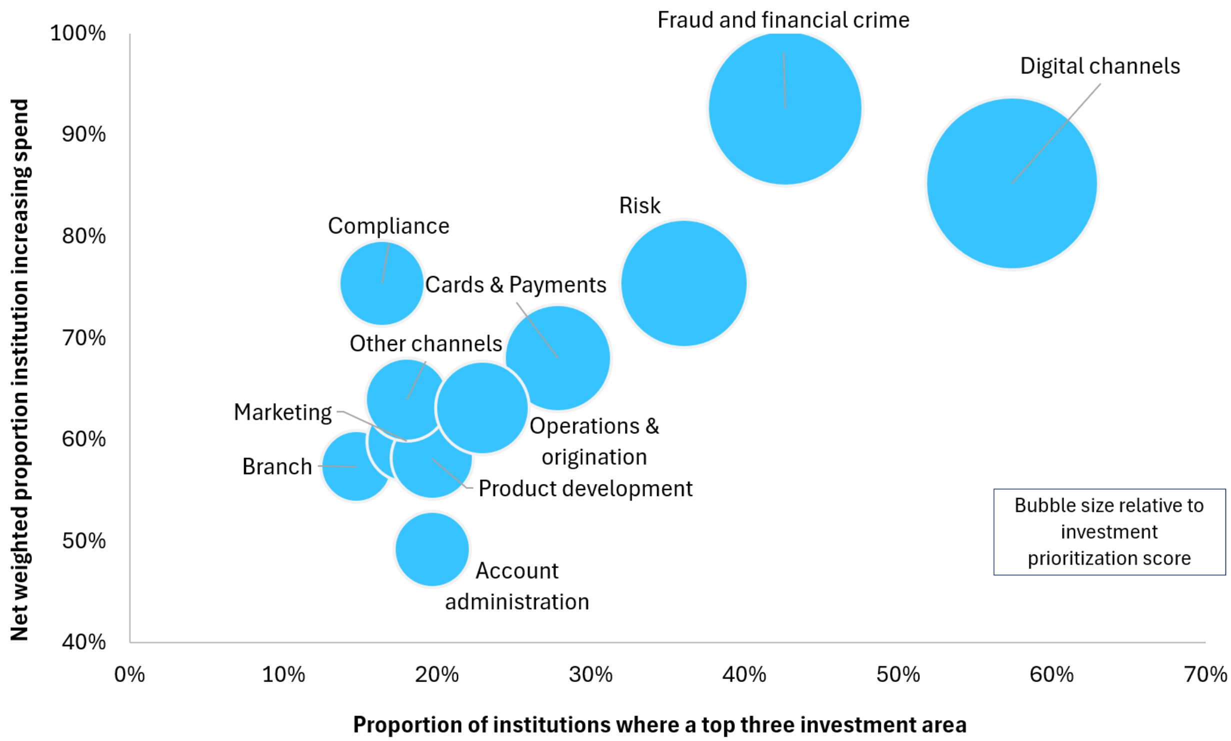
Celent thought it worthwhile to examine further **trust as a switch factor**, ranked a close fourth at 38%. We found that a higher share of young (18—29-year-olds; 43%) and older customers (50+ year olds; 42%) cited “trusting another bank more” (43% and 42%, respectively; a 10 p.p. difference from 30—49 year olds). We also found that digital-only bank customers stood out with 47% citing “trusting another bank more” as a reason to switch compared to regional bank customers at 37%.

Bankers recognize they are facing retention risk and are prioritizing digital capabilities

US banks report that it is more challenging to win and retain customers than it was 12 months ago. Sixty-two percent (62%) agree with that statement, and large banks were much more likely to say so. The percentage of regional sized banks finding it more challenging in 2026 has increased from 55% to 62% since our last survey. An equivalent percentage of banks see the threat from fintechs and digital-only challengers growing in 2026. Large US banks feel the threat has been growing; other US bank sizes cited the risk at about the same level as 2025.

Banks are well aware of the value of a high functioning digital channel to attract and retain customers. The importance of digital as a top area for product/service enhancement is clearly reflected in prioritization of IT investment by retail banks, with digital channels dominant as the top investment area and as a strong spend growth area (Figure 4). The caveat is that this is a much lower overall priority for small US banks.

Figure 4: Banks Are Prioritizing and Increasing Spending on Digital Channels More Than Any Other Area



Base: North American retail banking respondents (sample: 61)
Questions: Where are your largest technology investment projects for 2026? (X-axis); Please indicate the percentage change in IT spend expected in 2026 (vs. 2025) for the following categories (Y-axis)
Source: Celent Dimensions Survey 2026

Our bank leadership interviews found that regional banks are extremely worried about losing customers en masse to digital challengers, and to larger national banks with colossal budgets for technology improvement. One leader called the growing digital gap between his bank and new digital-only US market entrants as "existential, today." There was also a growing theme in our conversations that the digital channel *is* the bank, which is why Celent has observed digital channels consuming so much investment across banks globally for several years.

> "Deposit products and digital are now under one leader at our bank. This will improve strategic product and delivery decisions… But we don't have the flexibility of infrastructure to do this easily."
>
> -- Head of Digital Strategy at a Superregional North American Bank

Implications for Banks

The switchable middle provides both a threat and an opportunity for banks. Consumer demand is shifting from access and convenience toward personalization, trust, and guidance. Banks that can combine modern digital experiences with relationship-aware personalization and credible human support will be best positioned to retain customers and win share from both traditional competitors and digital-only challengers. Regional banks, given their slightly higher customer dissatisfaction levels, should pay particular attention to adapting their growth strategy to meet emerging consumer demand.

Celent recommends:

- **Treat dissatisfaction as a market share opportunity.** Regional, community, and national bank customers are all potentially winnable if banks address the gaps that matter most.
- **Defend against digital-only challengers.** Improve digital ease, speed, and usability while preserving the trust and support advantages of traditional banking.
- **Accelerate personalization.** Use data and AI readiness to deliver tailored products, pricing, guidance, and experiences based on life stage, goals, relationship size, and loyalty.
- **Compete on trust and advice.** Position human support as a differentiator for complex needs such as home lending, financial planning, and major life events.
- **Target younger customers before complexity increases.** Build trust and loyalty before younger consumers reach life stages where they need broader financial guidance and advice.
- **Make engagement permissioned and transparent.** Use customer data responsibly and avoid engagement models that feel overly automated, opaque, or reductive.
- **Connect digital convenience with relationship banking.** Deliver intuitive digital experiences supported by empathetic human assistance when customers need it.

Act: Harness AI while Building Trust

As banks strive to close the gap between their offerings and customer expectations, AI will play an important role in not only delivering on personalization but also in transforming customer engagement overall. Bankers recognize this with over half expecting GenAI—of all technological advances—to have the most impact on their business over the next five years. As a result, competitive differentiation will depend on a bank's ability to deliver trusted AI-powered customer engagement and tools. The critical element is "trust" because most customers have concerns about AI capabilities in banking.

Bankers Enthusiastic About the AI Opportunity

During Celent's bank leadership interviews, bankers provided extensive insights on AI, expressing more excitement than concern about the potential of large language models (LLMs) and related AI tools, while emphasizing that human oversight remains a prerequisite for responsible adoption. This is particularly important when banks are considering enterprise-wide access to LLMs or deploying AI capabilities developed by external technology providers.

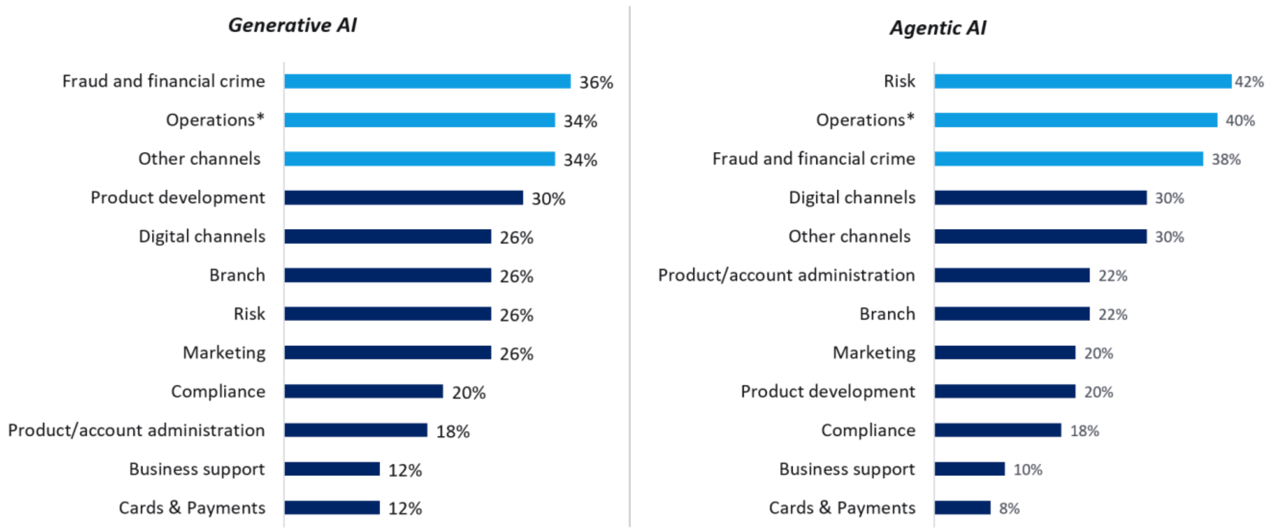
While bankers' overall tone was positive, several areas of caution remain. Rising token costs are emerging as a practical concern as AI usage scales, creating questions around long term cost management and return on investment. One bank noted that it is actively monitoring LLM providers to understand how provider strategies, pricing, capabilities, and ecosystem developments could affect its own AI roadmap. Bankers are viewing AI adoption as not only a technology decision, but also a vendor, cost, and risk management challenge.

Bankers emphasized human-led personalization as a central part of their customer engagement strategy. Rather than viewing AI primarily as a tool to replace human interaction, they see it as powering better, more relevant engagement between employees and customers and strengthening the quality and timeliness of human-led advice, support, and guidance.

> "We're using AI for efficiency and personalization. Not to automate our way out of a relationship."
>
> --Chief Digital Officer at a Regional US Bank

The Celent Dimensions Survey reveals how bankers' enthusiasm about the AI potential translates into investment. We found that bankers are prioritizing middle office areas, specifically fraud/compliance risk mitigation and operational areas like onboarding (over a third of respondents; Figure 5). Front-office areas fall closely behind with channels and product development being cited by around a third of respondents.

Figure 5: US Banks' Expected Deployment of GenAI and Agentic AI Technologies 2026-2027



*Includes account, loan origination and customer onboarding.
Source: Celent Dimensions Survey 2026; US respondents, Sample = 50.

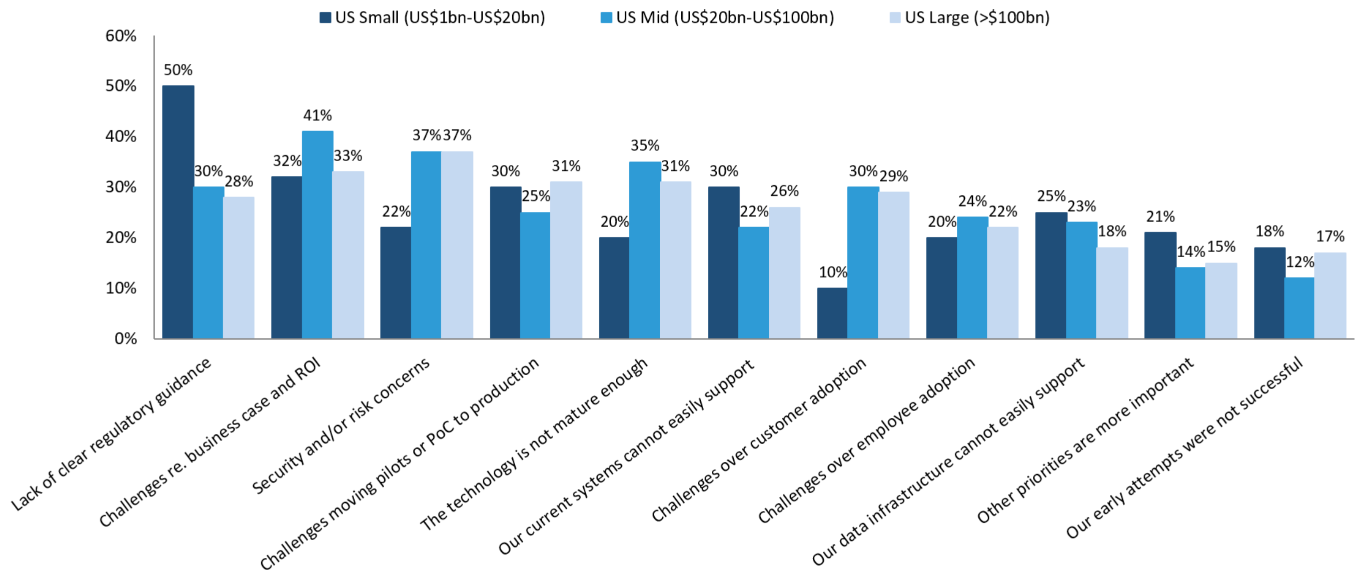
Celent found differences in expected deployment **by bank size**. Large banks (banks with assets \$100 billion—\$500 billion+) had the strongest conviction regarding deploying generative AI in digital banking channels: 38% said they expect to do so, the highest of all ranked priorities. Mid-sized banks (\$20 billion—\$100 billion) followed at only 21%.

Celent's bank leadership interviews found that bankers tended to cite employee-facing use cases that can improve efficiency and productivity which is consistent with the top ranking of operations above. Several described looking across internal processes to identify workflows where AI can reduce manual effort, accelerate task completion, and improve employee effectiveness. One bank described reviewing as many as 400 workflows to determine where AI could deliver the greatest benefit. A key benefit cited by bankers is the reduction in administrative, routine tasks enabling bankers to spend more time understanding customer needs, offering guidance, and building stronger relationships. A key take-way is that AI is not substituting from human interaction but rather is a foundation for enabling humans to deliver more personalized and effective customer engagement.

Banks are challenged to realize their AI ambitions

The Celent Dimensions Survey finds that banks identify myriad barriers to deploying AI (Figure 6) with leading ones being risk-related (lack of clear regulatory guidelines, security concerns) and return-related. We were surprised by the relatively high share of large banks (30%) saying that current systems are a constraint. We discuss further the implications of this constraint in the section Act: Break Legacy Constraints.

Figure 6: Barriers Bankers Cite in Deploying Generative AI, by Bank Size



Source: Celent Dimensions Survey 2026; US respondents, Sample = 50.

Customers Positive about “Tell/Help Me,” Cautious on “Do it for Me”

While bankers have tended to focus on employee-facing use cases, Celent’s consumer survey findings serve as a call to increase investment in customer-facing use cases. US consumers express rising enthusiasm for AI-driven improvements in specific banking features, such as financial wellness. Consumers are highly receptive to outreach by banks with products for unmet needs, conversational interfaces, alerts on savings opportunities and personalized financial advice (Figure 6). They have, however, important privacy and accuracy concerns and are cautious about delegating purchases.

Consumers’ key **interests** include:

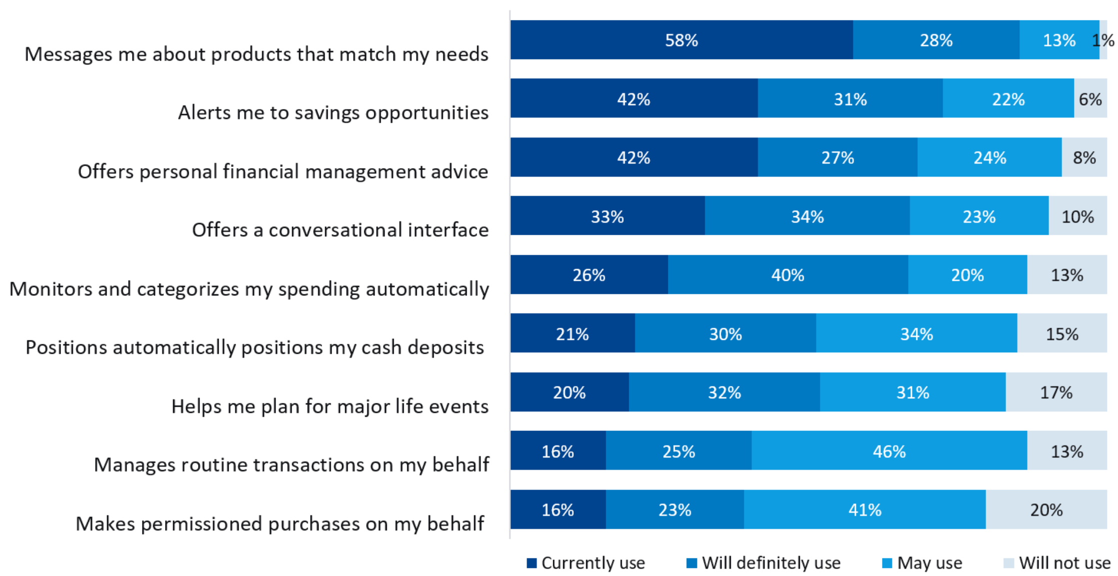
86% of consumers report using or say they would definitely welcome proactive messaging from their bank about products that match their needs.

69% are using or would definitely use personalized financial management advice.

67% welcome conversational interfaces.

Figure 7: Consumers Are Very Willing to Use Certain AI Driven Features in Banking

Q: Choose your willingness to use each AI-powered service if offered in the next 12 months



Source: Celent 2026 Global Consumer and Small Business Survey June-July 2026; Consumer respondents only

Conversational Interfaces Rising in Popularity

Celent believes that conversational interfaces will be a distinguishing feature over the next couple years. Consumers agree (Figure 8). Banking customers are becoming increasingly comfortable with conversational AI-enabled digital experiences, particularly when those tools help them ask questions in a more natural, open-ended way. The most interesting insight here is the widespread comfort and demand for conversational interfaces across age groups—this comfort is not restricted to the 'digital-native' younger generations.

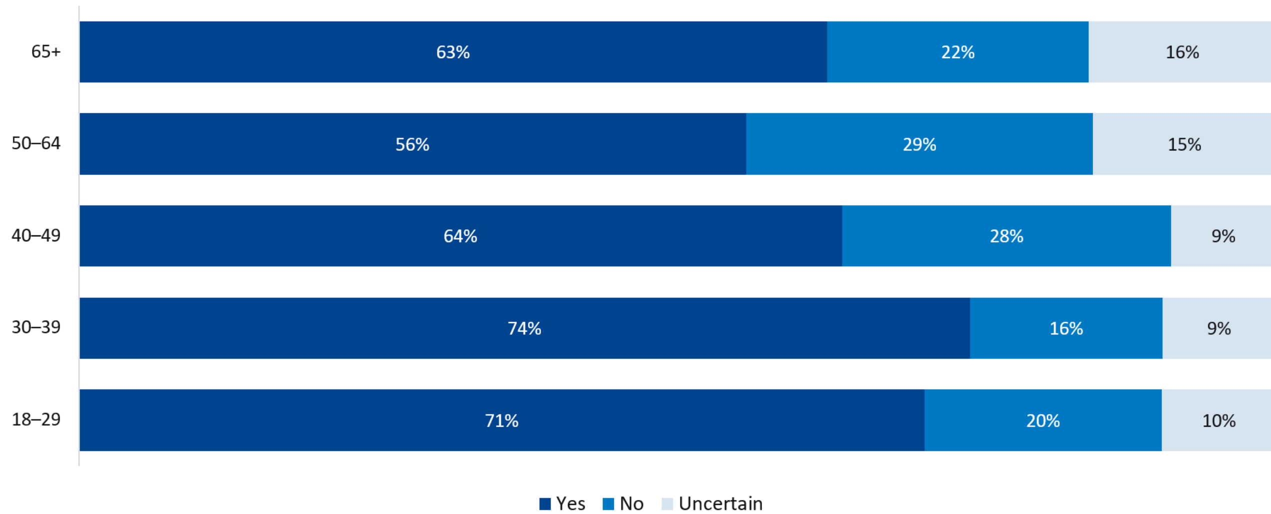
Two-thirds of consumers said they would **use a conversational interface** for open-ended questions, while 23% said they would not and 11% were uncertain.

Younger cohorts (18–39-year-olds) were the most enthusiastic with **73%** (average) stating they would use it.

Around **six-in-ten** of the **older cohorts** (over 50) are open to using it.

Figure 8: Consumer Customers are Largely Willing to Use Conversational Interfaces, Across Age Groups

Q: Would you trust an AI-powered banking service that offers a conversational interface? (by age)



Source: Celent 2026 Global Consumer and Small Business Survey June-July 2026 and analysis; consumer respondents only

Celent's bank leadership interviews reveal varying visions for how AI will reshape customer-facing experiences, with expectations ranging from near-term interface improvements to more transformative long-term models of personalized banking. In the near term, several bankers were optimistic on conversational interfaces that can make digital interactions more intuitive, responsive, and easier for customers to navigate. These tools are viewed as a way to improve engagement without necessarily replacing human support.

Celent finds that longer-term ambitions are more expansive. Some banks envision AI enabling a "segment of one" model, where products and guidance are tailored to the individual customer rather than broad demographic or behavioral segments — for example, a bespoke home equity loan structured around a customer's specific financial situation. Others anticipate AI agents acting on behalf of customers, such as identifying a better mortgage rate and initiating the application process. These examples point to a future in which AI moves beyond answering questions to actively supporting customer decisions and financial outcomes.

The Imperative: Earning Trust

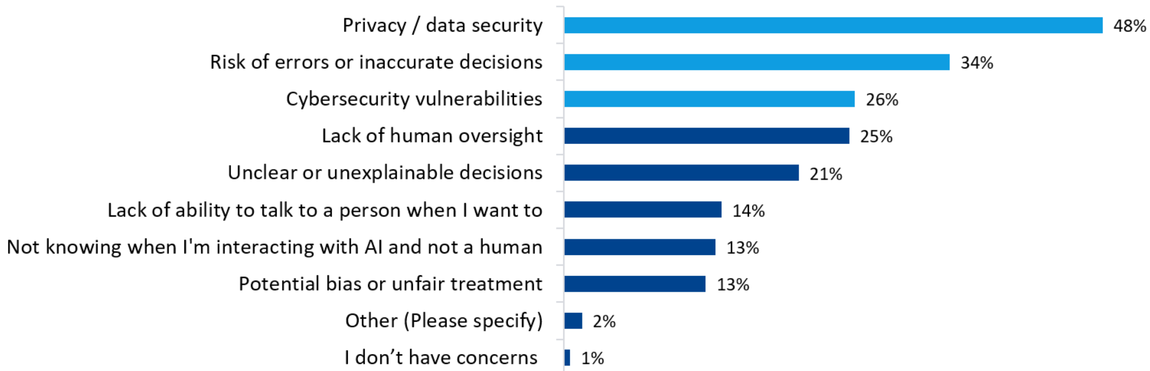
Critical to the success of banks' AI initiatives is building both employee and customer trust. Celent finds that consumers have realistic AI concerns: privacy/data security, cybersecurity risks, and errors/inaccuracies (Figure 9). In response, banks must address these concerns through robust AI governance and transparency regarding their use of customer data.

Privacy and data security is by far number one, cited by **48%.**

Errors and inaccuracies (including unclear or unexplainable decisions) follows at **34%**.

Figure 9: Consumers Have Realistic AI Concerns

Q: What concerns you most about AI in banking?



Source: Celent 2026 Global Consumer and Small Business Survey June-July 2026

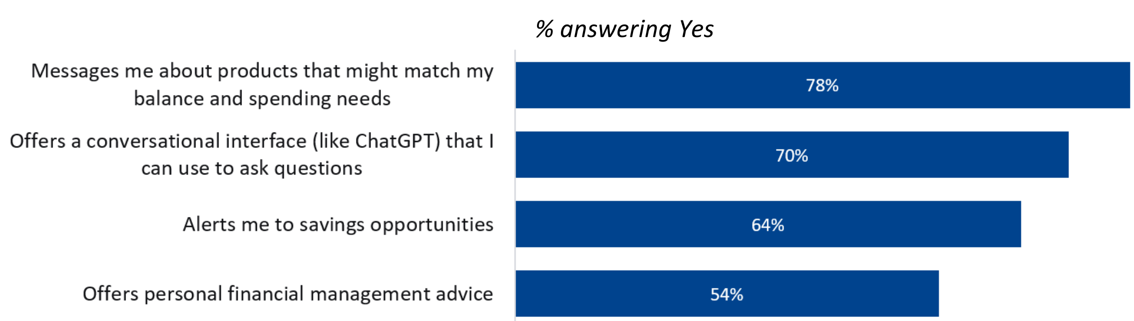
The good news for bankers is that consumers already trust key AI-supported features (Figure 10).

78% trust AI-driven relevant product messaging.

70% trust a conversational interface (as noted above).

Figure 10: Consumers have Developed Trust in Select Capabilities

Q: Would you trust an AI-powered banking service that...?



Source: Celent 2026 Global Consumer and Small Business Survey June-July 2026

Bankers are investing in trust building.

As we saw in our Dimensions Survey results (Figure 5), the good news is that banks are already deploying AI to deliver better security and protection for customers. Fraud and financial crime detection/mitigation functions are seeing significant IT prioritization this year and next, second only to digital channels as the top business areas of investment. They are also the largest area of AI investment, especially among US medium- to large-sized banks. The emphasis on resilience and security will see many banks continue to strengthen the foundations of their product systems and underlying tech stack.

Strategic Guidance

Banks should not let AI remain only an internal productivity story. The near-term priority has been to use AI safely inside the bank, but the strategic opportunity is to turn AI into a trusted conversational layer for customer engagement—one that improves guidance, strengthens security, and preserves human support when it matters most.

Celent's Recommended Strategic Priorities

- **Balance internal AI with customer-facing AI.** Continue investing in fraud, risk, efficiency, and banker support, but begin translating AI into customer-visible improvements.
- **Deploy conversational interfaces for complex needs.** Prioritize use cases such as cash flow forecasting, financial guidance, product comparison, payments support, and issue resolution.
- **Design for "tell me", not "do it for me."** Use AI to explain, guide, and recommend — not to take consequential actions without customer understanding and customer consent.
- **Keep humans in the loop for high-trust moments**. Escalation to bankers or specialists should be built into AI journeys for advice, lending, fraud, exceptions, and emotionally sensitive interactions.
- **Understand that expectations are reset by large nationals and external AI tools.** Customers will not wait for every bank to be ready; their expectations will be shaped by the best digital and AI experiences they encounter.
- **Make trust and governance visible**. Customer-facing AI should be transparent, permissioned, auditable, and clearly bounded in what it can and cannot do.
- **Use AI to strengthen security and fraud prevention**. Fraud protection is a high-value use case where AI can improve customer confidence if alerts, explanations, and resolution paths are clear.

Act: Break Legacy Constraints to Deliver on Customer Expectations

Banks must focus on building the foundations for next-generation banking. A bank's ability to align its "supply" with customer "demand" rests not only on the top of its tech stack but also its core foundation. Celent's study finds that customer demand is based on a broad definition of "personalization" in products and services. Banks saddled with legacy core systems could be hard-pressed to meet customer expectations for more intuitive and intelligent products and services.

Defining "Personalization" in Banking: Intelligent Products and Services

Personalization enables the delivery of a unique and valuable experience to each customer at every interaction. Important information, insights, actions, and options are brought front and center. The customer is provided with what is most important to them at that moment.

New technologies and ever-increasing customer expectations should prompt financial institutions to rethink how they approach product and customer experience design. The traditional offerings of banks (e.g., checking/savings accounts, debit/credit cards, loans) are beginning to blur, as retail banking is moving toward offerings aimed at meeting specific customer needs at different points in time.

Examples include:

- Accounts with features tailored to specific customer segments (e.g., families, frequent travelers, freelancers, underserved communities)
- Instant credit at the time of purchase, decisioned based on whole relationship and outside data
- Individualized pricing (e.g., interest rate dependent on number of transactions or products held)
- Non-traditional retail banking propositions in financial services (e.g., crypto-trading, investing) and beyond (e.g., booking accommodation)
- Products designed for open distribution through embedded finance partnerships

Together, this and more is what personalized banking looks like.

Celent strongly believes that banks can accelerate a reframing of product and service innovation around the customer, rather than traditional product templates and silos, to create competitive differentiation. To do so, financial institutions must proactively draw from the customer's past behavior, transaction history, product mix, known goals, life stage, and any number of other attributes that combine to deliver ongoing engagement-based value. Proactive engagement, respecting pre-set communication preferences, delivers value whenever the bank discovers an opportunity.

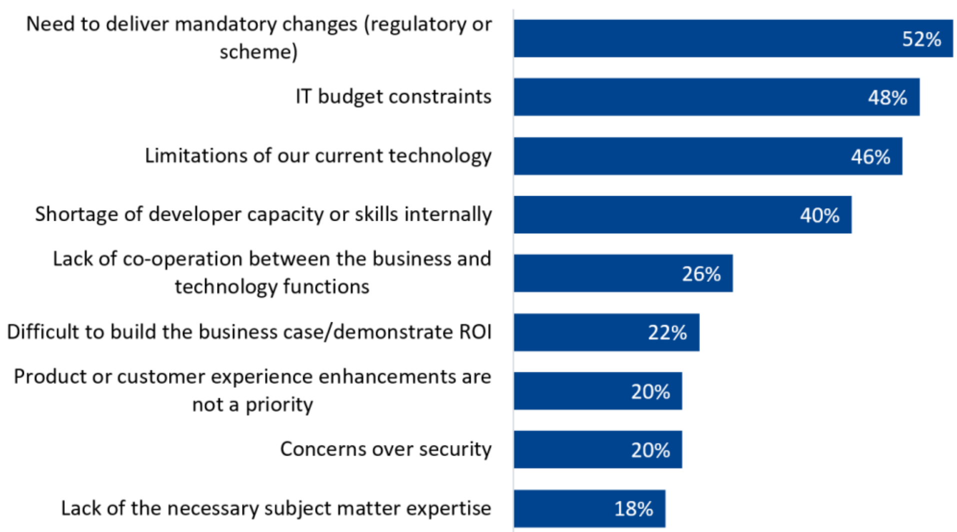
It is here that our study reveals another potential disconnect: Banks are prioritizing highly visible digital customer experience improvements, while core-dependent capabilities such as product development and new business model exploration are slipping down the agenda. The risk is that near-term channel enhancements will outpace the underlying platform flexibility needed to sustain personalization, faster product innovation, and long-term competitive differentiation.

Banks Face Core Modernization Challenges

A near majority of US banks (46%) acknowledge the limitations of their current technology and legacy platforms, and that sentiment has increased since our 2025 survey. After resource allocation for mandatory projects (regulatory, compliance), and overall IT budget scope constraints, “limitations of current technology are a close third in the barriers to delivering customer-facing innovation (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Limitations of Current Technology and Platforms are Among Top Barriers to Innovation

Q: Which are the biggest barriers to delivering enhancements to your products and customer experiences?



Base: US retail banking respondents (sample: 50)
Source: Celent Dimensions Survey 2026

Challenges abound. IT budget constraints continue to be significant barrier to customer-facing enhancements, but the top hindrance for US retail banks is the need to deliver mandatory change, which is crowding out funding for innovation projects, including platform modernization. These mandatory costs are higher for US banks than global averages.

Banks also cite limitations of current technology as a major barrier to agile innovation, with legacy platforms at many banks restricting the ability to enhance quickly and cost effectively. A shortage of developer capacity has also become a significant issue. Both are driving a focus on legacy modernization and platform replacement to reduce long-term spend on maintenance.

(Celent Dimensions Survey and Leadership Interviews)

Most banks are considering but delaying core banking investment. Core modernization may be acknowledged as a strategic requirement, but it is not translating into near-term investment urgency for most US banks. Many are choosing incremental updates over full replacement and treating the effort as a medium-term priority.

Over 60% of banks are at least "considering" a transformation of their core banking systems.

A majority of those plan to modernize the existing stack rather than take on a full system transformation.

But core modernization has declined as an *immediate* investment priority in 2026 from a year prior and now sits quite far down the list of IT investment rankings, especially for smaller banks. Today it is not among most banks' top ranked technology investment priorities—only 22% of US banks overall say it is in their top three. Smaller and medium-sized banks place it even lower.

10% of US small banks ($1 billion—$20 billion) and **21% of medium-sized banks** ($20 billion—$100bn) place "core platform investment (migration, modernization or enhancement)" **within their top three** technology investment priorities for 2026-2027.

While **38% of large banks** ($100 billion—$500 billion+) prioritize core platform investment in their top three.

At the same time, strategic areas that are *indirectly related to core capabilities*, such as product development and exploring new business models, have declined in priority among banking leaders in 2026 vs 2025. These now sit behind several other priorities (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Community Banks Prioritize Internal Optimizations; Larger Banks Focus on Customer Experience

	US Total	US Large	US Medium	US Small
Improving IT security and operational resilience	68%	73%	57%	70%
Enhancing the customer experience	62%	69%	71%	30%
Replacing or modernizing end-of-life systems and platforms	48%	58%	43%	30%
Gaining speed and agility as an organization	34%	35%	29%	40%
Meeting compliance and regulatory requirements	26%	19%	36%	30%
Reducing expenses and improving operational efficiency	32%	19%	43%	50%
Product innovation or enhancements	20%	15%	14%	40%
Exploring new business and operating models	10%	12%	7%	10%

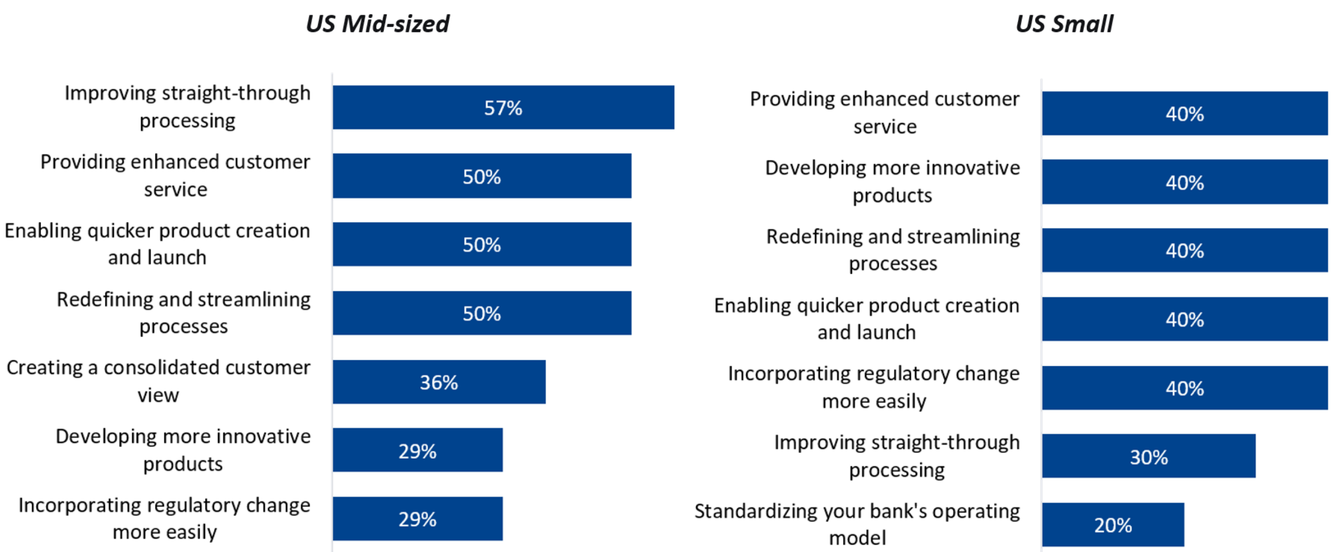
Top Priority | Second Priority | Third Priority

Base: US retail banking respondents (sample: 50)
Question: Which of the following are your leading technology/process investment priorities in the next 18 months?
Source: Celent Dimensions Survey 2026

Along with the above de-prioritization, large and small sized banks have largely not included core banking within their plans to migrate platforms to SaaS or public cloud architectures this year or next. Mid-sized banks are an exception, with nearly half still focused on core as a priority for migration and more than 1-in-5 of those banks place it as their top priority for migration.

Of those banks who are planning an investment in core banking, the strategic drivers vary (Figure 13). For mid-sized banks, quicker product creation is an important driver for half, but the specific ability to innovate is not as high a priority—less than a third cited that reason. Large banks (not pictured) selected 'innovative products' as even less of a driver (15%). For smaller community banks, both product innovation and quicker creation were tied for the top reasons.

Figure 13: Core Banking Investment Drivers Differ Slightly Among Bank Sizes



Sum of top 3 priority rankings shown for each driver
Question: What are your top three drivers for investment in core banking systems in your institution? US respondents. Sample: 50
Source: Celent Dimensions Survey 2026; US respondents. Sample: 50

Less than 25% of large and small US banks are **planning cloud migration for core banking** in the next 18 months.

Medium-sized banks are more active here: **43% plan cloud migration of core**. Still far behind other platforms like digital channels, assisted channel support systems (branch, ATM, contact center), card payments, and financial crime related solutions.

One area where most banks do align on platform priorities is the need to achieve better resilience and security. Banks continue to strengthen the foundations of their product systems and underlying tech stack, mainly to reduce technical debt and support innovation. Through this effort, reducing or modernizing legacy/end-of-life systems and platforms (which includes core banking) has become a significant IT spending driver, especially for medium and large US banks.

Taken together, these trends indicate that banks will remain limited in their ability to re-architect in the way that they need to meet changing customer expectations.

In our interviews, bank leaders understood the need to add flexibility in products, but it is unclear if they grasp the opportunity to actively attract new customers who are so willing to switch banks for these features. Few banks are pursuing product personalization as a strategic lever to gain market share in the short term. They view product and core modernization as a relatively longer-term project while focusing on more immediate targets for improving customer engagement and harnessing AI.

Leaders also talked about the near-term goal of data modernization, largely in support of AI-related ambitions. Data modernization is viewed by these banks as a continuous journey and paramount to success.

Many of these institutions have spent years building workarounds around their core platforms, particularly through APIs and integration layers, to reduce the operational and customer-facing limitations of legacy infrastructure. These approaches have helped banks extend the life of existing systems while enabling incremental improvements in digital services.

Improving customer experience, strengthening digital channels, and harnessing AI are frequently seen as more urgent near-term objectives than full-scale core replacement. For these institutions, modernization is not being ignored, but it is often sequenced behind initiatives that can produce faster and more visible, but shallower gains.

> “We know we need to deliver rich mobile experiences. But limitations include an old core, and innovation (at the product level) takes a long time. Core modernization seems to be a necessary future project.”
>
> -- Head of Digital at a Super-Regional North American Bank

Celent observes that near-term channel enhancements may overshadow the underlying platform flexibility needed to sustain personalization, faster product innovation, and long-term competitive differentiation.

Banks that *are* progressing with core modernization increasingly view it as a potential source of competitive advantage. However, interviewees emphasized that modernization alone is not enough. The value of a modern core depends on whether banks can use it to accelerate product development, improve personalization, enhance customer journeys, and respond with more agility to market change. In other words, the competitive benefit comes not simply from replacing legacy systems, but from using the new technology foundation to outperform competitors in customer engagement, personalization, and innovation.

> “A real drawback for us is the inability to deliver partitioned accounts… we can’t subsegment deposit accounts to where client can ‘bucket’ for different goals.”
>
> -- Head of Digital Intelligence at a Regional North American Bank

Decision-making around core modernization remains challenging. Banks recognize the long-run benefits: a simpler technology estate, lower run costs, faster development cycles, and greater organizational agility. Yet the path to modernization is complex, expensive, and carries significant execution risk. Leaders are under pressure to make decisions that will remain valid for many years, even as technology continues to evolve rapidly.

Several priorities shape these banks' modernization decisions. Vendor health and long-term viability are critical considerations, as banks want confidence that their chosen partners will remain strong, innovative, and well-supported throughout a multi-year transformation. Technology architecture is also a key factor, with growing preference for native microservices and API-enabled platforms rather than bolt-on capabilities layered onto older systems. Cost, implementation timeline, operational resilience, and speed to market are also central to decision-making, according to these leaders.

A recurring concern in the conversations was whether the core platform selected today will still be best-in-class by the time it goes live. This question has become more acute as AI-driven technology advancement accelerates. Many of these bank leaders described the challenge as not only choosing the right platform for current requirements but also selecting partners and architectures that can adapt to an uncertain future. The definition of "best-in-class" is likely to change as AI, automation, data infrastructure, and customer engagement technologies continue to advance.

> "Speed of product innovation will be primary. We have to compete against neobanks that are built on modern stacks."
>
> -- Executive Vice President of Digital at a Regional US Bank

Call to Action: Consumers Feel that Banks Are Falling Short on Personalization

Consumers want a more personally tailored banking experience than they currently receive. Half rate their bank's personalization as no better than moderate (Figure 14), pointing to a clear gap between expectation and delivery. And, consumers define "personalization" broadly, as how well a bank understands and meets their wider financial needs.

Only half of consumers say their banks are doing "very" or "extremely well" at personalizing products and services to their needs.

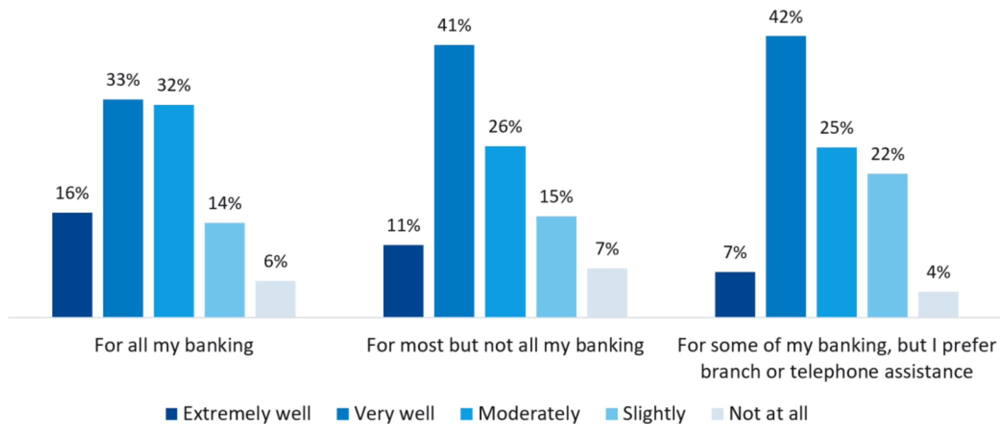
Across all traditional bank types, customers have roughly the same sentiment.

Digital-only bank customers were **more satisfied** than others, with **zero percent** saying their bank does not tailor its products and services at all (vs approximately ~7% of traditional bank customers saying the same).

Interestingly, customers who use digital banking less and do more of their banking in person or by phone were more likely to report a lack of product and service flexibility (Figure 14). One in four say their bank tailors offerings only 'slightly' or not at all, vs only 20% of customers who use digital for all their banking. This should alert banks that the digital channel is not the only place to personalize services and products. In-person customers are most likely to say these features are missing from their experience.

Figure 14: Differences by Customers' Digital Usage

Q: How well does your bank tailor its products and services to your needs?



Source: Celent 2026 Global Consumer and Small Business Survey June-July 2026; All US consumer respondents

Another pattern that emerges is perceived flexibility by age groups. Older customers were least likely to agree that the bank was tailoring products and services well enough for them, and younger consumers had about the same level of dissatisfaction as middle-aged customers.

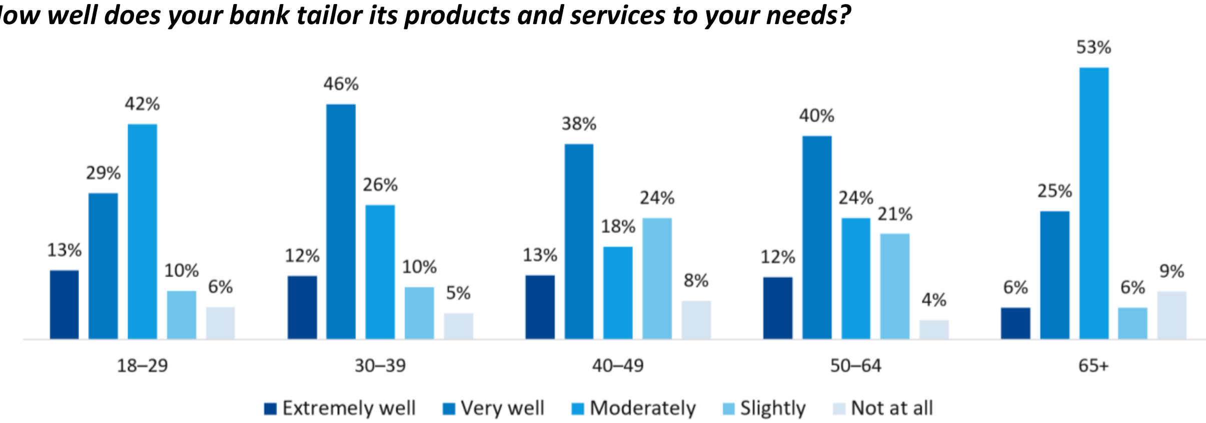
Younger customers were **not any more dissatisfied** than middle-aged customers.

Middle age groups indicated their product and service needs are being met by their banks 'extremely well' or 'very well' at a similar or higher rate than older age groups.

The 65+ age group was **least likely to agree** that their bank was tailoring products and services to their needs, with more than half answering only 'moderately' and nearly one in 10 saying 'not at all.'

Figure 15: Differences by Customers' Age Group

Q: How well does your bank tailor its products and services to your needs?

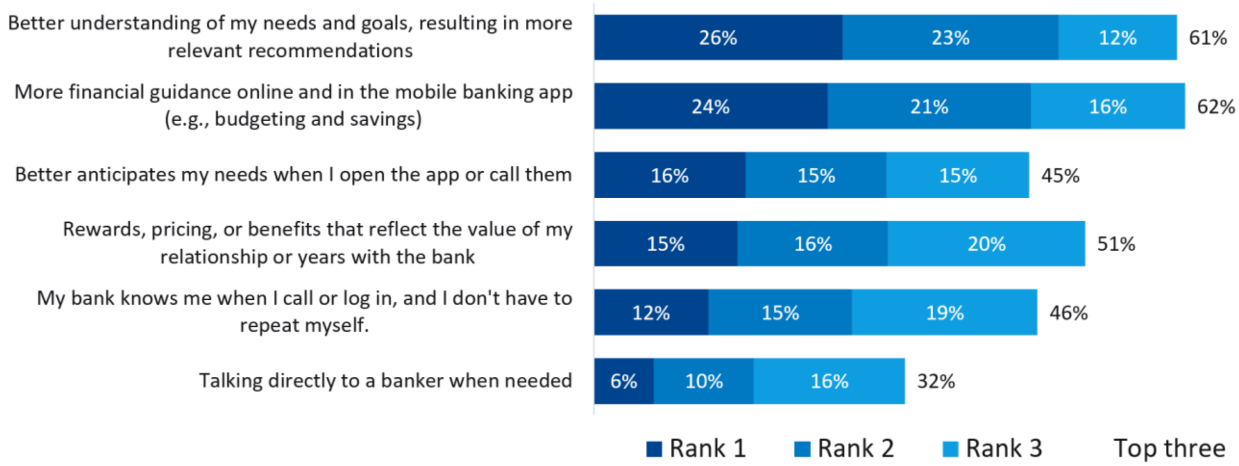


Source: Celent 2026 Global Consumer and Small Business Survey June-July 2026; All US consumer respondents

Consumers are seeking financial guidance that reflects their individual needs, goals, and relationship with the bank. Over 60% of all consumers want their bank to demonstrate a better understanding of their needs and goals and provide digital financial guidance to match, and over half want benefits that reflect the size or length of their relationship with the bank. Interestingly, consumers indicate that personalization does not often require a human banker—banks must figure out how to deliver digitally and at scale.

Figure 16: Customers Want Personalized Experience and Products

Q: How can your primary bank deliver a more personalized experience?



Source: Celent 2026 Global Consumer and Small Business Survey June-July 2026

Celent found it instructive to look at the Top Four most requested personalization areas by customer's primary type of bank. While personalization expectations vary by customers segmented by primary bank type, the underlying message is consistent: Customers want banking relationships that feel more relevant, supportive, and responsive.

For regional bank customers, the leading priority is rewards and pricing that better reflect the depth of their relationship. Across all bank types, the ability to speak directly with a banker when needed remains a persistent and important expectation, underscoring the continued value of human support alongside digital innovation.

Regional bank customers prioritized 'rewards and pricing to reflect my relationship' very highly

Customers of traditional banks, particularly community and national, feel the strongest about 'better understanding my needs and goals'

92% of digital-only bank customers ranked 'more financial guidance as a Top 2 need

Talking to a human banker when needed is a **lower but persistent** priority for all bank types

Celent found slight variations in personalization priorities across customers segmented by digital usage (preference to use digital for all, most, or only some of their banking. Across all digital usage segments, "Better understanding of my needs and goals, more relevant recommendations," and "more financial guidance online and in mobile banking" were the two most selected items.

Customers who prefer branch or telephone were most likely to ask for "more financial guidance online and mobile", somewhat surprising for the group who prefers to do their banking in person or by telephone.

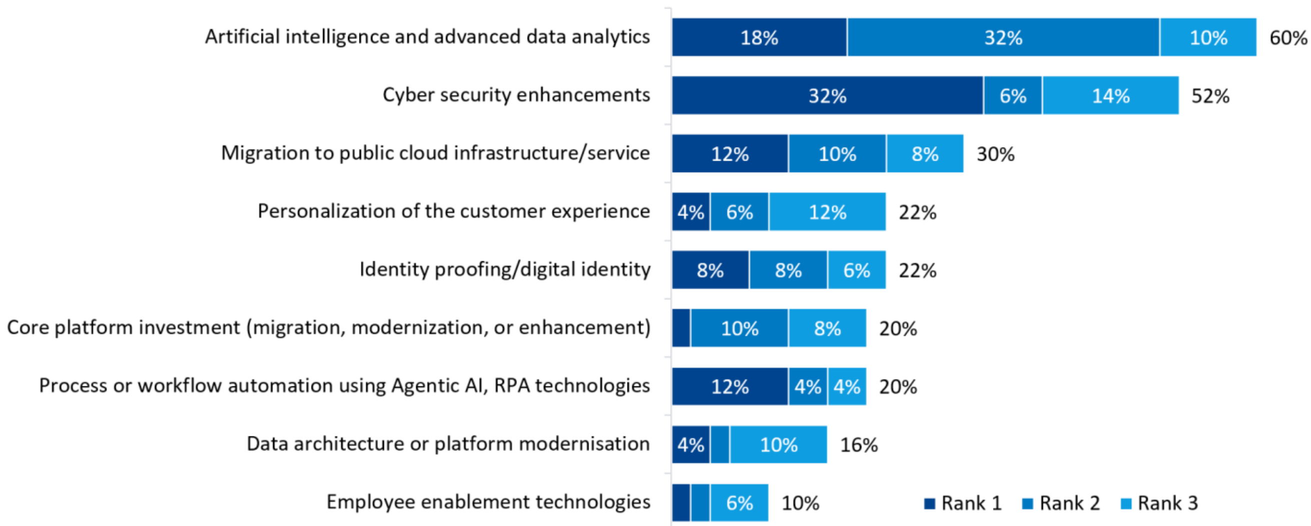
Digital-only bank customers are more likely to want stronger financial guidance through online and mobile channels.

Bank "Supply" Disconnect with Consumer Demand (Dimensions Survey and Bank Leadership Interviews)

Celent's research suggests that personalization of customer experience is the fourth highest technology priority for retail banks in the US in 2026 and 2027. Only 4% of banks rank "personalization of the customer experience" as their top priority, and fewer than one in four rank it at all (Figure 17). This particular investment has declined in priority from 2025.

Figure 17: Technology Investments Planned by Banks, next 18 Months

Q: Which of the following are your leading technology/process investment priorities in the next 18 months?



Base: US retail banking respondents (sample: 50)
Source: Celent Dimensions Survey 2026

Split by size of bank, the focus on personalization is almost entirely within the largest national and superregional banks (assets of $100 billion and above). While those banks rank personalization as their third highest investment priority, zero mid-sized/regional banks ($20 billion—$100 billion) and only 10% of small banks (under $20 billion) have personalization anywhere on their priority list (Figure 18).

Figure 18: Personalization is Not a High Priority for Small- and Medium-Sized US Banks

	US Total	US Large	US Medium	US Small
Artificial intelligence and advanced data analytics	60%	54%	64%	70%
Cyber security enhancements	52%	50%	50%	60%
Migration to public cloud infrastructure/service	30%	23%	64%	0%
Identity proofing/digital identity	22%	31%	7%	20%
Personalization of the customer experience	22%	38%	0%	10%
Process or workflow automation using Agentic AI, RPA technologies	20%	23%	21%	10%
Core platform investment (migration, modernization, or enhancement)	20%	38%	21%	10%
Data architecture or platform modernisation	16%	19%	7%	20%

Top Priority | Second Priority | Third Priority

Based on % top three priority; where tied based on % ranked first
Question: Which of the following are your leading technology/process investment priorities in the next 18 months?
Source: Celent Dimensions Survey 2026. Base: US retail banking respondents (sample: 50)

Celent's bank leadership interviews reveal that while banks recognize the value of improving customer engagement through personalization, they acknowledge that personalization is hard to achieve. Some of the challenges cited include the ability to identify suitable products at the customer level, and developing intuitive mechanisms for obtaining consent to personalize where needed. Leaders tied this challenge closely to the concept of "trust."

> "Our customers don't like surprises. Personalized is OK but do not take advantage of trust."
>
> -- Chief Technology Officer at a Mid-sized US bank

Some leaders pointed out that actionable alerts are one solution—allowing a customer to take appropriate action "before bad things happen." These alerts would be promoted to customers as supportive of overall financial wellness.

One leader pointed out that personalization of services can "backfire" if the bank "gets it wrong," leading the customer to feel taken advantage of and a subsequent loss of trust or loyalty. Another leader cited this as a moment where trust can be lost—taking advantage of customer data or the relationship for gain to the bank that doesn't benefit the customer.

Strategic Guidance

Banks should stop treating core modernization as a distant infrastructure project and start treating it as a strategic response to changing customer demand. The institutions most likely to benefit will be those that modernize with a clear commercial purpose: simpler operations, lower run costs, stronger resilience, faster product development, better data access, and more personalized customer engagement. The risk for banks that defer too long is that digital and AI initiatives will outpace the platforms needed to support them — leaving competitors better positioned to convert customer dissatisfaction into switching.

Full core replacement is not the only path. Many banks will continue to modernize progressively, using APIs, integration layers, component replacement, cloud migration, and data modernization to reduce constraints while managing cost and risk. The key is to avoid creating another layer of temporary workarounds that limits future flexibility. Banks should prioritize architectures that are API-native, modular, cloud-ready where appropriate, and able to support microservices, real-time data access, and faster product configuration.

Celent's Recommended Priorities for Core Strategy

- **Use core modernization to strengthen personalization.** Customers increasingly expect products, pricing, and service experiences that reflect their needs, life stage, relationship value, and loyalty. Banks should ensure modernization programs accomplish personalization as an end state across digital and human channels.
- **Restore product development as a strategic priority.** Declining priority for product development is a warning sign. If banks want to meet rising expectations for personalization, pricing flexibility, and tailored offers, they need platforms and operating models that support rapid product creation and modification.
- **Use modernization to reduce the tax of legacy systems.** Legacy platforms consume budget, developer capacity, and management attention. Banks should quantify how much innovation is being delayed or abandoned because of maintenance burden, technical debt, and integration complexity.
- **Prioritize modular, API-native, and microservices-enabled platforms.** Banks should favor solutions that provide native extensibility rather than bolt-on capabilities. This will be critical as product innovation, AI, data integration, and digital engagement requirements continue to evolve.
- **Make data modernization inseparable from core modernization.** AI ambitions depend on accessible, governed, high-quality data. Banks should treat data modernization as a core transformation requirement, not a parallel initiative. Better data access is essential for personalization, risk management, fraud detection, and customer insight.
- **Treat resilience and security as modernization accelerators.** Banks already agree on the need for resilience and security as platform priorities. These should be used to justify broader modernization, especially where legacy systems increase operational, cyber, fraud, or compliance risk.
- **Create protected investment budget capacity for innovation.** Address mandatory change crowd-out directly. Regulatory and compliance work will continue to consume budget, particularly in the US. Banks should protect against mandatory changes permanently deferring strategic transformation.

- **Select vendors for adaptability, not just current functionality.** Given the pace of AI-driven technology change, banks should evaluate whether a core provider will remain innovative and viable throughout a multi-year transformation. Vendor health, roadmap credibility, ecosystem strength, implementation capacity, and openness should be central selection criteria.

Banks should not think of personalization as simply better targeting, adjustable dashboards, or more refined marketing. The strategic opportunity is to build banking experiences that recognize the customer's relationship, anticipate their needs, and deliver relevant support across digital and human channels. Regional banks, in particular, have a strong opportunity to win if they can pair trust and advice with digital experiences that meet rising customer expectations.

Celent's Recommended Priorities for Winning the Switchable Middle:

- **Make personalization a growth priority.** Treat personalized products, pricing, guidance, and fee structures as drivers of acquisition, retention, and relationship depth.
- **Use digital-only banks' gaps as an opening.** High demand for financial guidance among digital-only customers gives traditional banks a chance to differentiate through advice, trust, and support.
- **Align digital investment with switching triggers.** If banks expect digital channels to attract new customers, investment should prioritize the features customers say would make them switch.
- **Build for specific customer outcomes.** Data and AI readiness should result in visible improvements such as tailored offers, relationship-aware pricing, proactive guidance, and faster servicing.
- **Keep human support available and make it purposeful.** Access to a banker may not be the most requested improvement overall, but it remains relevant, especially for complex needs and higher-value relationships, and banks need to improve personalization for their in-person customers as much as in digital channels.

Concluding Thoughts

Banks must respond to a new era of customer expectations for faster, more advisory, personalized service, shaped by AI, agentic capabilities, and mobile engagement. The challenge is not simply to modernize digital apps or to automate existing processes; it is to combine human support with technology to make banking feel more relevant, responsive, and trustworthy.

But the formula only works when grounded with human assistance as needed. Customers may welcome proactive outreach, tailored guidance, and faster digital service, but they still want access to a person when the issue is complex, sensitive, or high stakes. "Human assisted" ensures that AI and other technology layers don't replace the relationship; they strengthen it.

The same principle applies inside the bank. Employees need to be empowered with the right AI tools, agentic partners, training, and governance so they can deliver better engagement experiences with confidence. When employees understand how AI is being used, have easy access to tools, and operate within explainable governance frameworks, they become better equipped to support customers and build trust.

The goal for banks is to abstract all the complexity into the background. AI, automation, data, and agentic capabilities should not "fog up the glass" for customers or employees. Instead, they should make banking feel intuitive, simpler, more responsive, and more human. In this model, technology becomes a force multiplier for trust — not by removing people from banking, but by delivering the experiences that customers expect, and helping bankers show up at the moments that matter most.

Customers have made their needs and expectations clear: a balance of more personalized banking and self-service. They want their banks to make them feel more financially secure and protect them from ever-present fraud. To respond, banks need to have a strong core foundation on top of which they overlay superior digital banking and trusted AI capabilities.

Retaining Trust Is an Everyday Challenge

Customer trust is hard to build and can be lost in a single moment.

Bank leaders say trust is built when customers understand how the bank uses their information, believe their privacy is being protected, and feel confident that the institution will not exploit the relationship for short-term gain. Fraud protection was also viewed as central to trust: Customers expect their bank to safeguard their money, detect suspicious activity, and respond quickly when something goes wrong.

Trust can be damaged quickly when banks fail in moments that matter. An undetected fraud event, data breach, or privacy incident can immediately undermine confidence. Emerging AI-enabled interactions introduce another risk: inaccurate, incoherent, or "hallucinated" advice can erode trust if customers believe the bank's digital tools are unreliable or unsafe. Availability is equally important: If digital channels, payment services, or human support are unavailable during a critical customer moment, the bank risks being seen as unreliable.

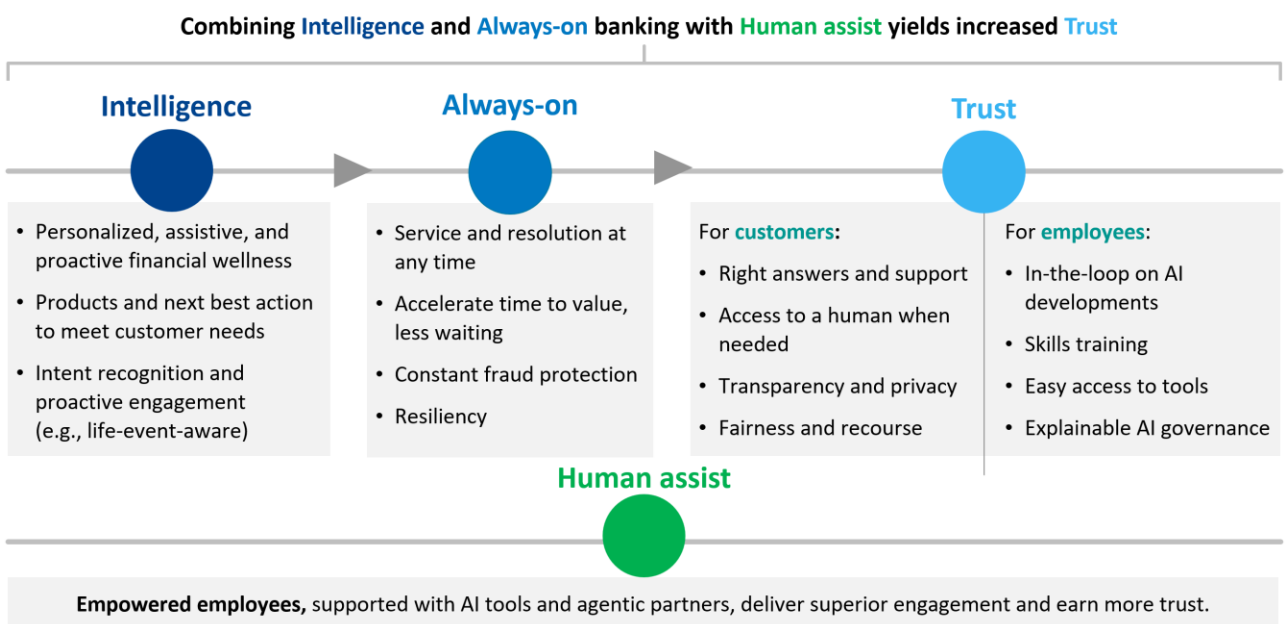
Leaders also highlighted the everyday trust risks, including failing to recognize the value of a long-standing relationship, offering generic treatment where personalization is expected, or creating unnecessary friction through low limits, cumbersome processes, or poorly designed digital journeys. In this sense, trust is not only a matter of brand reputation or security controls; it is reinforced—or weakened—through every interaction where the customer expects the bank to be secure, transparent, responsive, resilient, and fair.

A Framework for Delivering Trust in Banking

Celent research has led us to develop a simple framework for customer engagement today (Figure 19). Banks can use this model as a guide for meeting the changing expectations of consumers. This framework includes a new central formula: ***Intelligence + Always-on Banking + Human Assist = Trust***

Intelligence enables banks to better understand customer intent, anticipate needs, recommend next-best actions, and support proactive financial wellness. Always-on banking ensures customers can receive service, resolution, fraud protection, and support whenever they need it, with less waiting and faster time to value.

Figure 19: The New Banking Engagement Formula Is a Force Multiplier



Source: Celent Research

We've worked directly with major banks from around the world to understand how this framework comes together, producing real bank benefits and exceptional customer outcomes. Two of those banks were recognized as Celent Model Banks for 2026, Banco do Brasil and Techcombank of Vietnam. These financial institutions have deployed technology as a means, with customer-centricity as the end. We invite clients to read both case studies at celent.com.

For questions or to continue the conversation from this report, please contact us:

Alenka Grealish

Principal Analyst

agrealish@celent.com

Michael Bernard

Principal Analyst

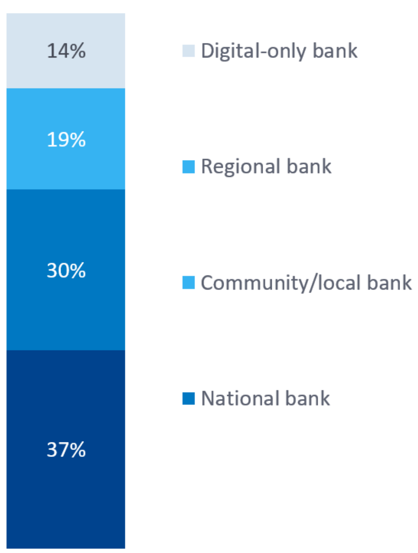
mbernard@celent.com

Appendix

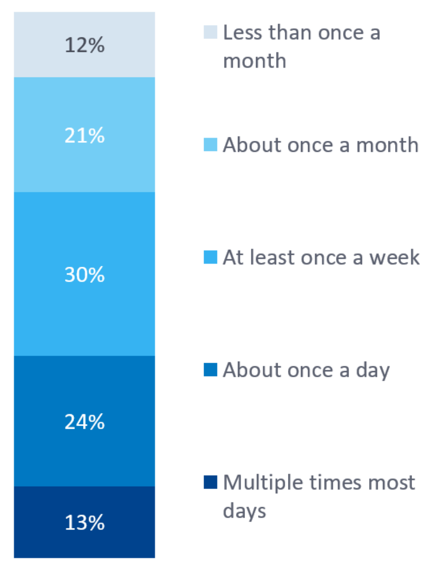
Findings in this report are drawn from a consumer banking customer survey conducted globally from June-July 2026. **Total US respondents were 586**.

Figure 20: US Consumer Survey Demographics

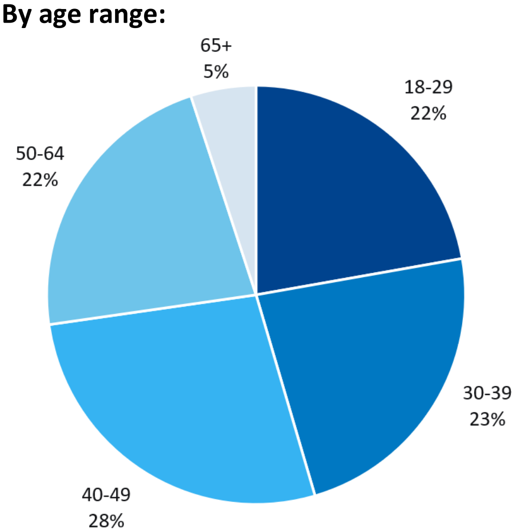
By primary institution type:



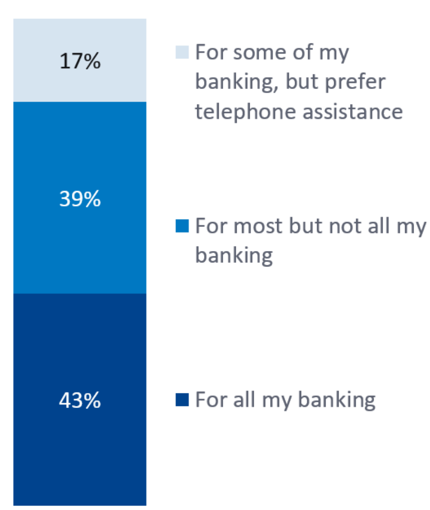
By digital banking usage:



By age range:



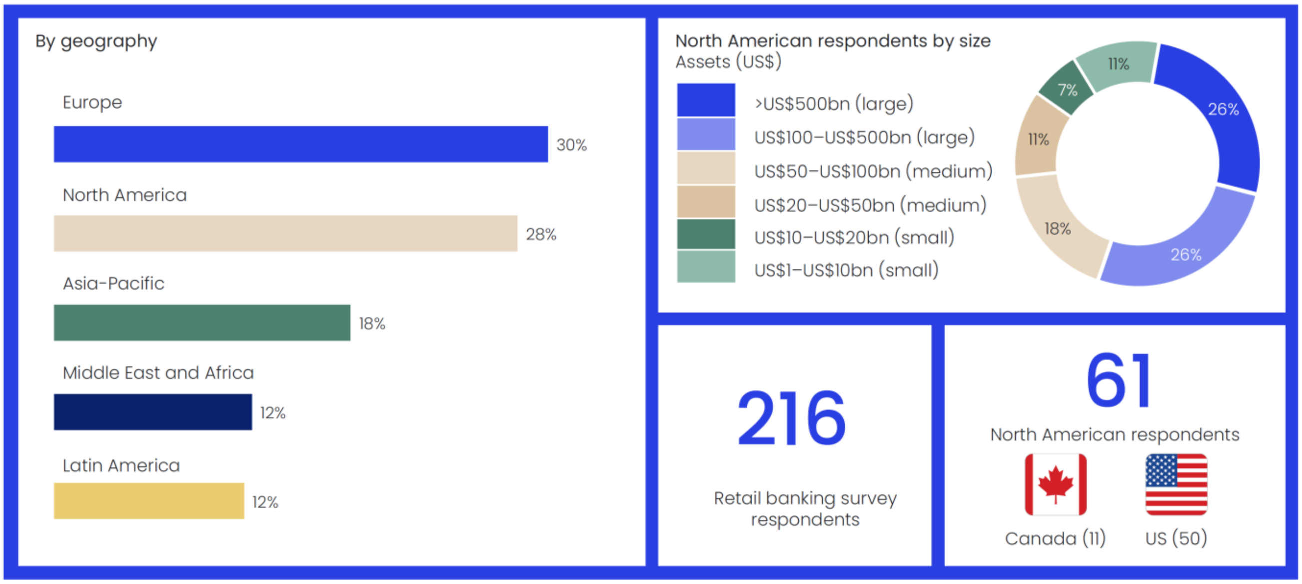
By channel preference:



Source: Celent 2026 Global Consumer and Small Business Survey June-July 2026

Additional insight in this report is drawn from the Celent Dimensions Survey.

Figure 21: Demographics for Celent Dimensions IT Pressures and Priorities Survey, 2026



Source: Celent Dimensions Survey 2026

Leveraging Celent's Expertise

If you found this report valuable, you might consider engaging with Celent for custom analysis and research. Our collective experience and the knowledge we gained while working on this report can help you streamline the creation, refinement, or execution of your strategies.

Support for Financial Institutions

Typical projects we support include:

Vendor short listing and selection. We perform discovery specific to you and your business to better understand your unique needs. We then create and administer a custom RFI to selected vendors to assist you in making rapid and accurate vendor choices.

Business practice evaluations. We spend time evaluating your business processes and requirements. Based on our knowledge of the market, we identify potential process or technology constraints and provide clear insights that will help you implement industry best practices.

IT and business strategy creation. We collect perspectives from your executive team, your front line business and IT staff, and your customers. We then analyze your current position, institutional capabilities, and technology against your goals. If necessary, we help you reformulate your technology and business plans to address short-term and long-term needs.

Support for Vendors

We provide services that help you refine your product and service offerings. Examples include:

Product and service strategy evaluation. We help you assess your market position in terms of functionality, technology, and services. Our strategy workshops will help you target the right customers and map your offerings to their needs.

Market messaging and collateral review. Based on our extensive experience with your potential clients, we assess your marketing and sales materials—including your website and any collateral.

Related Celent Research

AI Everywhere for Value
July 2026

AI Governance: Trends, Drivers, and Best Practices
April 2026

Dimensions: Retail Banking IT Pressures & Priorities 2026; North America
March 2026

Banking on Resilience: Building a Resilient, Intelligent Bank in the AI Era
March 2026

Conversational Banking: Understand & Act
January 2026

DBS: Ethical GenAI at Scale
June 2025

GenAI Driving Next-Gen Front Office in Banking
January 2025

Win the fight for US banking customers

Consumers are raising the bar for US banks. They expect relevant products, more personalized guidance, trusted AI and banking experiences that work across digital and human channels.

The opportunity is clear: your customers may not be ready to leave, but they are ready to be won. Competing for those relationships now depends on modern core platforms, connected journeys, scalable payments and trusted intelligence.

Temenos helps US banks modernize with confidence. As a provider of core banking software and broader banking technology, Temenos supports banks across core, digital, payments, wealth and financial crime mitigation, helping institutions evolve at their own pace while improving speed, resilience and customer engagement.

With Temenos, banks can:

Modernize core banking for growth

Progressively modernize core banking foundations to reduce complexity, move faster and support the products and services retail customers expect.

Connect digital and human journeys

Deliver consistent, personalized experiences across mobile, online, branch and contact center to strengthen customer relationships and retention.

Deliver faster, safer payments

Support rising transaction volumes, new payment rails and real-time expectations with control, resilience and protection built in.

Put trusted AI to work

Use embedded, explainable AI to improve product innovation, service, efficiency and decision-making while keeping humans-in-the-loop.

Turn insight into action

Explore how Temenos helps banks modernize across core, digital, payments and AI to compete for today’s retail and small business customers.

Talk to Temenos

---

temenos