

Digital Innovations in Banking & Fintech That Really Moves the P&L

Practical patterns from European banks and fintechs
that turn digital into business results

Who I am – and the lens for this talk

25 years
in fintech, digital
banking & IT

Former C-level
strategy / digital
leader in banking



Now **CEO of WislaCode** – fintech software studio in Warsaw
10+ years, 200+ specialists; mobile/web banks, superapps,
PWAs, middleware for banks, fintechs & leasing firms
(<https://wislacode.com/>)

Our automation supports more than **25 thousands people**
Our apps are installed on more than **3 mln phones**



WISLACODE SOLUTIONS

**We see patterns across projects –
what really moves metrics vs. what looks good only in decks**

Principle 1: Start With Business Outcome, Not With “We Need an App/Automation”

Credit-led products

target metrics might be % of applications completed fully digitally, time-to-decision, and digital drawdown share

Transactional banking

focus on DAU/MAU, number of payments per active user, and shift of routine tasks from branches/call centres to self-service

Youth / image-led apps

success looks like growth in active users in the target age band, engagement and referrals – not necessarily immediate lending volume

Depending on the business KPI, solution/application design and implementation may be completely different

Principle 2: Design Each Journey Around One Clear Job

WislaCode leasing portal:

24/7 access to contracts, schedules, invoices and documents in one place → routine calls dropped by ~68% and repeat leasing deals grew because campaigns were based on real behaviour

Revolut

* Sacra: <https://sacra.com/research/revolut-at-4b-year-growing-75-yoy/>

started as a focused solution to one job – avoiding FX fees with a travel card – and grew into Europe’s largest neobank with ~52.5M customers by 2024, becoming the #1 finance app by downloads in 19 European countries before adding many other products

In both cases, success started with doing one thing exceptionally well – not with trying to be everything to everyone from day one

...But prioritisation is usually the most difficult task in large organisations 😊

Principle 3: Treat Legacy Core as a Fact – Win With an Orchestration Layer

Outdated technologies cost banks >\$36 billion in 2022 (>\$57 billion in 2028)

* <https://www.bai.org/banking-strategies/rip-and-replace-is-outdated-progressive-modernization-is-key-to-transforming-the-banking-core/>

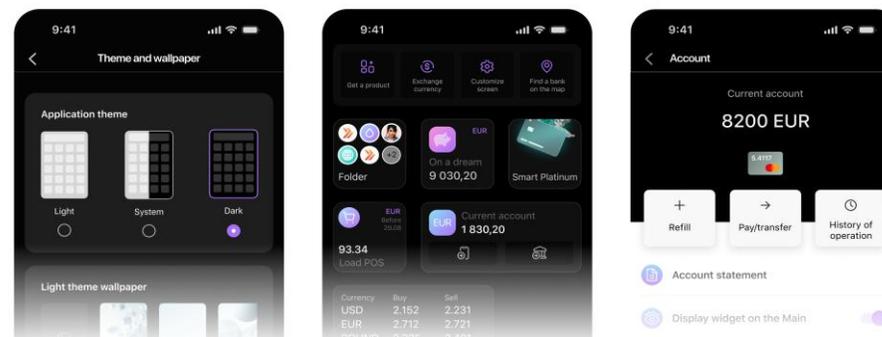
Banks underestimate the TCO of legacy systems by 70-80%, and the actual expenses can be up to 3.4× higher than planned

* DigitalBankExpert «The True Cost of Legacy Systems» (2025) <https://digitalbankexpert.com/2025/08/the-true-cost-of-legacy-systems-a-deeper-dive-into-banking-it-modernisation/>

Even more modest core-modernisation programmes at mid-sized banks run into tens of millions over multiple years

example in McKinsey case: US\$15m over two years – <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/financial-services/our-insights/banking-matters/modernizing-core-technology-without-breaking-the-bank>

Externalise customer-information functions, wrap legacy with stable APIs, and put an orchestration layer in the middle instead of ripping out the core.



Case: parallel development of a new digital channel (retail & SME) with a gradual replacement of the old interface

Principle 4: Use SuperApp Logic When You're Ready for a Platform Strategy

- In SuperApp project for a leading private bank in Eastern Europe, banking and telecom services were combined in one app → over 1M installs in ~2 years, and the app became the #1 digital channel for consumer lending.
- This is essentially a platform strategy: multiple sides (bank customers, telecom subscribers, merchants, partners) interacting through one entry point, with **cross-side network effects**

SuperApp makes sense when you can become the default platform for several daily tasks and build real network effects – without that, a focused single-purpose app usually wins

Research on multi-sided platforms shows that adding financial services to a platform can accelerate its growth flywheel and create new network effects

*Citi "Strategies for Three-Sided Markets":

<https://www.citigroup.com/global/insights/strategies-for-three-sided-markets>

Klarna reports that 63% of UK consumers prefer a single shopping app where they can do multiple actions instead of many separate apps

* Klarna press release: <https://www.klarna.com/international/press/klarnas-app-and-growth-solutions-drive-record-high-traffic-of-301-million-clicks-to-retail-partners/>

Principle 5: Use PWA When Speed, Reach and Cost Matter



- In a WislaCode lending project, we launched a fully digital credit journey as a Progressive Web App (PWA) – one codebase for web and mobile, with install-to-home-screen, push and offline support
- The first production release went live in about 4 weeks and the full MVP in around 5 months, with **development costs roughly 30-35% lower than building separate native apps**

Starbucks' PWA is ~99.84% smaller than its iOS app and doubled the number of web users placing orders each day

Pinterest's PWA increased time spent on mobile web by 40%, user-generated ad revenue by 44% and core engagement by 60%

[*https://www.linkedin.com/posts/vkostin_pwas-nativeapps-fintechinnovation-activity-7170682098406662144-Qozn](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/vkostin_pwas-nativeapps-fintechinnovation-activity-7170682098406662144-Qozn)

Principle 6: Make Embedded Finance Standardised – build SDK, think B2B2C

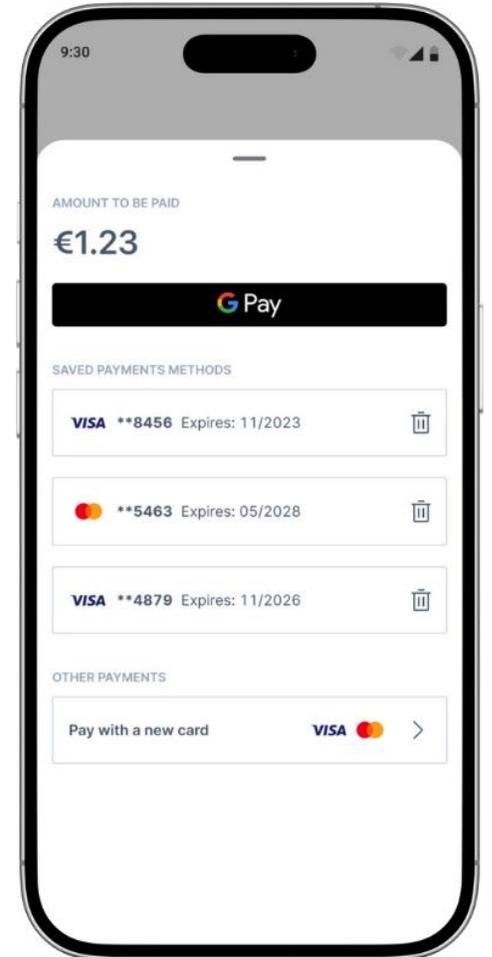
Vertical SaaS and platforms that embed financial features often see **2-5× higher revenue per customer** than pure software models

*a16z: <https://a16z.com/fintech-scales-vertical-saas/>;
Unit: <https://www.unit.co/guides/revenues-in-financial-features-a-complete-guide-for-tech-companies>

WislaCode's project: instead of bespoke Android integrations for each partner, we built a standard payments SDK with consistent UX, security controls and documentation

Result:

➔ typical **integration time reduced by 60-80%** vs custom integration, while the number of active partners grew much faster



Embedded finance scales only when it is packaged – clean APIs and SDKs. Think of B2B2C usage

Principle 7: Don't Buy Hours – Buy Outcomes, and Mix In-House with Partners

Core differentiators (risk models, key pricing logic, customer analytics) **should stay strongly in-house**; many delivery capabilities around them can be built with partners

External teams work best when they are "stream-aligned" to a product or journey, not as a separate "ticket factory" – they own outcomes along with the bank's internal product owners

Elite software teams measured on DORA metrics (deployment frequency, lead time, change fail rate, MTTR) massively outperform low performers on business outcomes

Large banks increasingly use multi-sourcing: 1-2 strategic build partners plus smaller specialist vendors, while keeping architecture, security and core product vision in-house

In-house gives you strategy and differentiation;
good partners give you speed and capacity.
Winners use the mix.

Let's Continue the Conversation



WISLACODE SOLUTIONS



We help banks and fintechs design and build digital products that move real metrics.



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