Visa Consulting & Analytics (VCA)

Bridging execution gaps for banks:

How modern technology stacks can help banks turn theory into practice

Executive Summary: Key insights

Banks face a critical execution gap: the divide between strategic ambition and the ability to deliver transformation at scale. This gap is widening as customer expectations accelerate and fintech competition intensifies.

Global remittances represent a US$24.5 trillion opportunity, yet many institutions lack the agility to capture it.[1] At the same time, 60% of the global population is expected to use digital wallets by 2026, a fundamental shift toward frictionless, mobile-first experiences.[2]

This execution gap arises from three interrelated challenges:

Complex technology landscape:

Financial institutions often operate within a complex technical environment characterized by legacy platforms, siloed systems, and integration challenges.

Lack of delivery playbook:

Without structured governance, large-scale implementations risk delays, compliance breaches, and inefficiencies. Clear milestone tracking and early risk mitigation are essential.

Difficulty defining target architecture:

A clear, achievable architectural blueprint is critical for initiatives like real-time payments or core modernization.

Addressing these challenges requires the right expertise, strong governance, and extensive implementation experience.

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1. Visa Money Travels: 2023 Digital Remittances Adoption, this report outlines the topline findings from a survey conducted amongst over 14,000 consumers across 10 countries
2. Juniper Research, Digital Wallet Users to Exceed 5.2 Billion Globally by 2026, 2022

The business impact: Why this matters for financial institutions

Without addressing the execution gap, banks can face mounting competitive, operational, and strategic threats that can erode market relevance and profitability.

Closing the execution gap enables institutions to move from strategic intent to tangible outcomes. By building the capabilities to deliver complex transformations reliably, banks can expand into new markets, unlock innovative product offerings, and enhance long-term competitiveness. The following areas: **Money Movement**, **Digital Enablement**, and **Emerging Technologies** illustrate where these capabilities can create the greatest impact.

Money Movement

Businesses and consumers demand speed, transparency, and cost efficiency, especially in global transfers. A recent study found 53% of consumers turn to digital apps for sending or receiving funds.

One of the largest challenges is the investment infrastructure needed for multi-rail, global real-time payments. Aligning capital spend to a clear architectural roadmap ensures scalability, interoperability, and regulatory compliance. Integrating multiple payment rails improves interoperability, expands reach, and enables innovative settlement options, which can potentially drive higher volumes and lower costs.[3]

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3. Visa Money Travels: 2023 Digital Remittances Adoption, this report outlines the topline findings from a survey conducted amongst over 14,000 consumers across 10 countries

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Digital Enablement

Digital payments are no longer just a transaction method; they are shaping how consumers make decisions. This digitalization fuels alternative payment methods, resulting in regulatory shifts and changes in consumer expectations.

To win in a digital-first world, issuers and acquirers should deliver hyper-personalized, frictionless payment journeys, enabled by the right technology, strong governance, and proven innovation. Examples include instant digital card issuance and integrated rewards tracking to improve satisfaction, loyalty, and market competitiveness.

Emerging Technologies

Developments in AI and Stablecoin are reshaping payments and may influence modernization priorities.

Stablecoins offer the benefit of faster transactions, lower costs, greater transparency, and broader financial inclusion. Although they account for less than 1% of the global money movement, their circulation has doubled over the past 18 months, and this trajectory is likely to continue.[4]

AI is transforming the payments landscape, largely driven by the availability of detailed data from real-time payment platforms. These structured datasets enable AI to uncover actionable insights, detect behavioral trends, and deliver personalized services. In fraud prevention, AI excels at identifying anomalies and adapting to evolving tactics, with some AI models demonstrating more than a 50% improvement in fraud detection accuracy compared to traditional systems.[5]

Emerging technology adoption depends on the same capabilities vital to closing the execution gap: expertise to assess fit, governance to manage compliance, and implementation experience for interoperability.

4. McKinsey & Company, The stable door opens: How tokenized cash enables next-gen payments, 2025.
5. Olowu, Olawale et al, AI-driven fraud detection in banking: A systematic review of data science approaches to enhancing cybersecurity, 2024.

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The three pillars of payments modernization

Closing the execution gap requires a deliberate, structured approach anchored in three critical capabilities.

PILLAR 1

Right Expertise

Modernization efforts succeed when guided by professionals with both technical mastery and deep payments ecosystem knowledge. The right expertise ensures solutions are designed for scalability, interoperability, and compliance from the outset, and bridges the gap between strategic ambition and practical delivery.

- Technical architects with deep payments ecosystem knowledge to design scalable, future ready solutions.
- Strategic advisors who understand the operational, technical, and regulatory dimensions of payments transformation.
- Specialists capable of integrating complex payment methods and modernizing legacy infrastructure.

PILLAR 2

Strong Governance

Even the most advanced technology initiatives can falter without strong governance.

- Structured delivery frameworks that coordinate cross functional transformation initiatives.
- Governance mechanisms to ensure regulatory alignment across jurisdictions.
- Rigorous milestone tracking and risk mitigation to keep complex programs on time and compliant.

PILLAR 3

Extensive Implementation Experience

Execution at scale demands teams with proven delivery track records.

- Skilled teams for API development, middleware integration, and secure data architecture.
- Proven ability to execute large-scale system integrations without disrupting operations.
- Dedicated resources for post launch optimization, ensuring solutions remain competitive and compliant.

When applied together, these three capabilities form a repeatable delivery model for payments modernization.

Why Visa Consulting & Analytics

Visa Consulting & Analytics (VCA) helps institutions bridge the execution gap through strategic advisory and hands-on implementation expertise. Through our VCA Implementation Services (VIS), we provide the technical depth and delivery discipline needed to turn modernization strategies into operational reality.

Our VIS Tech capabilities span the transformation lifecycle:

- End-to-end Embedded Teams for alignment and momentum.
- Technical architects to design and integrate scalable, future-ready solutions.
- Delivery Leads for governance, risk mitigation, and milestones.
- Specialist Developers to connect systems, modernize infrastructure, and build APIs.

Direct connection to the Visa ecosystem ensures seamless deployment of products such as Visa Direct and Visa Card Program Enrollment, optimally configured to global standards. By combining industry knowledge with solution experience and accelerators, VIS can reduce product time-to-market by up to 50%, enabling greater speed-to-revenue for our clients.[6]

The execution gap is a strategic inflection point. Banks that align vision with delivery through the right expertise, strong governance, and extensive implementation experience will lead in a payments landscape defined by speed, efficiency, and trust.

6. VCA experience with clients

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To explore how your institution can accelerate modernization and capture emerging opportunities, contact your Visa Account Executive or visit **Visa.com/VCA.**

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