

7 Priorities for digital success in financial services.

Exclusive research and analysis by 7DOTS

Drive competitive advantage through digital experience

Today, financial companies are no longer just defined by their people, products, and services—they are increasingly defined by their digital experiences.

Digital disruption is transforming financial services and defining future success. Industry leaders know they must drive digital innovation or risk being left behind.

This whitepaper includes **exclusive research by 7DOTS** revealing that **43%** of finance brands were found to be non-compliant with regulations, with some sectors as high as **70%**. This is cause for concern as many finance companies are unknowingly exposing themselves to legal, financial, and reputational damage.

The expert solutions in this whitepaper offer practical guidance for elevating digital experiences.

With nearly 90% of competitive advantage coming from customer experience¹, the companies that thrive are those that deliver seamless, intuitive, and engaging digital interactions for prospects and existing clients alike. According to recent research from Salesforce² (February 2025), 46% of consumers would remain with a financial services company that provides an excellent customer experience even if it raised its rates or fees. 91% of senior executives recognise the importance of the digital experience for growth, according to Adobe Digital Trends³ report.

Your client expects the best experience they've ever had.

Crucially, clients compare their experiences with other industries, not just other financial institutions. Therefore, you're not just competing with your direct competitors, you are also competing with leading brands such as Apple, Salesforce, Monzo.

Traditionally this has been viewed as a B2C challenge. However, that's no longer the case.

90% OF COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE COMES FROM CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

46% OF CONSUMERS WOULD REMAIN WITH A COMPANY EVEN IF IT RAISED FEES

91% OF SENIOR EXECUTIVE RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

Reference links

1 Forbes

2 Salesforce

3 Adobe Digital Trends

McKinsey’s latest Pulse survey¹ found that more than half of B2B customers are willing to switch suppliers due to poor digital experience and we’re increasingly seeing clients select new providers based on their digital experience.

The cost of inaction is too high for digital experiences not to be a critical priority for financial services.

Yet few financial companies are getting this right. Why?

The financial services industry faces unique challenges—complex products, strict regulations, and diverse client needs. Technology is rapidly evolving and there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

Companies often lack the internal expertise and capacity to take these types of projects on.

Identifying the true value clients seek can be challenging from an internal perspective. Start-ups are able to be more agile and launch to market quicker. Therefore, outperforming the competition requires a strategic and agile, customer-centric approach to digital experience.

This whitepaper explores seven essential priorities that will help financial companies not only meet but exceed client expectations—future-proofing their success in the digital world.



References

1 McKinsey’s Pulse survey

Lead the future of financial services through digital experiences with these 7 priorities:

Each section unpacks essential insights, exploring the challenges, the top three key questions and, importantly, the expert solutions, with real-world examples and insight.

Getting your digital experience right isn't just a key differentiator, it's essential for business growth, competitive advantage, and brand elevation.

- 01 Align your strategy to capture audience insights
- 02 Integrate data and technology effectively
- 03 Stand out in a crowded market
- 04 Make it personal to enhance engagement
- 05 Build trust through regulatory compliance and security
- 06 Deliver seamless omnichannel experiences
- 07 Adopt an agile and adaptive mindset

“We live in a world where delivering an exceptional digital experience is no longer a luxury—it’s a necessity. Businesses that do it better than their competition will thrive; those that don’t will be left behind.”

— Sam Page, CEO and Co-Founder, 7DOTS

Align your strategy to capture audience insights

01

“Businesses that discover and apply customer insights are more likely to grow revenue, acquire more customers, and differentiate from their competitors.”

— Forrester

Essential insights

Understanding your audience is essential to delivering a superior client experience. This isn't simply about data—it's about unlocking deep customer insights that fuel engagement, loyalty, and revenue growth. This ensures that you deliver real value to your prospects and clients.

With all the competing options that B2B companies now have, it's more important than ever to capture audience insights and align your strategy to your clients.

McKinsey research¹ found that **71% of clients expect companies to deliver personalised interactions and 76% express frustration** when this expectation is not met.

Aligning to audience insights goes beyond traditional market research. It's about identifying your clients' pain points and embedding solutions seamlessly into their daily lives through digital touchpoints. This deep audience understanding allows you to resonate on a personal level, provide solutions to their problems, and ultimately add real value to their lives.

Understanding the challenges

It is challenging to find the right actionable insights in the haystack of data and research. Yet too many digital experience projects are rushed; it takes time to conduct interviews, data analysis, and an in-depth exploration of user motivations. We need to blend human-centric thinking with data-led insights.

Without a cohesive, expert-led approach, businesses risk shallow data that fails to drive meaningful engagement. A specialist approach can navigate these complexities, ensuring cohesive strategies and deep audience understanding.

71% OF CLIENTS EXPECT COMPANIES TO DELIVER PERSONALISED INTERACTIONS

76% EXPRESS FRUSTRATION WHEN THIS EXPECTATION IS NOT MET

References

1 McKinsey's Pulse survey

Three key questions and expert solutions:

01

How can we align our teams towards a unified client experience goal?

Solution: Establish cross-departmental collaboration with regular strategy meetings and shared KPIs focused on user experience metrics. Ensure departments are aligned around insight and are using data to continually improve, refine, and optimise.

02

What methods can we use to gain deeper insights into our audience?

Solution: Use a blend of qualitative and quantitative research. Speak to your clients (directly or indirectly) to find out what they really want. Leverage advanced analytics and AI to extract patterns from data, alongside qualitative research to uncover pain points, needs, and behavioural triggers. Analyse and gather comprehensive insights on users journeys to understand the unspoken truths of your clients.

03

How do we translate audience insights into actionable strategies?

Solution: Develop customer personas and journey maps to inform personalised marketing and service strategies, ensuring insight-driven decision-making. The goal is an experience framework based on insights and evidence, constructed and refined to align with user needs.

Case Study

Casper

7DOTS worked with Casper, an insurance broker, to improve its market presence.

By conducting a series of immersive interviews across a diverse stakeholder group, we gained crucial insights that challenged the existing business conventions. This helped inform a new positioning statement of “Exceptional judgement, ensuring confidence” helping differentiate them from their competitors and provide a bold theme for their new visual identity.



“By uncovering deep audience insights, we helped Casper redefine their market position with clarity and confidence. The right insights don’t just inform strategy—they transform business outcomes.”

— Gabby Coroa, Strategy Director, 7DOTS

Integrate data and technology effectively

02

“89% of companies compete primarily on the basis of customer experience.”

— Gartner

Essential insights

Data and technology are the engines powering personalised, efficient, and scalable client experiences. Data fuels decision-making with actionable insights, while technology enables the delivery of those insights at speed and scale. When leveraged effectively, they enhance efficiency, client satisfaction, and ultimately, business growth.

For financial services, this is particularly critical. Every transaction, risk assessment, compliance record, and customer interaction generates vast amounts of data. At the same time, strict regulatory requirements demand airtight data privacy, security, and reporting processes.

The challenge isn't just about having the right tools—it's about making them work together in a way that delivers real competitive advantage.

Understanding the challenges

Without a clear integration strategy, even the most advanced technology can become a liability rather than an asset. Many financial organisations struggle with:

Rapidly evolving technologies constantly changing

Data silos that prevent a unified view of the client

Outdated or fragmented technology that slows innovation

Security and compliance risks when handling sensitive data

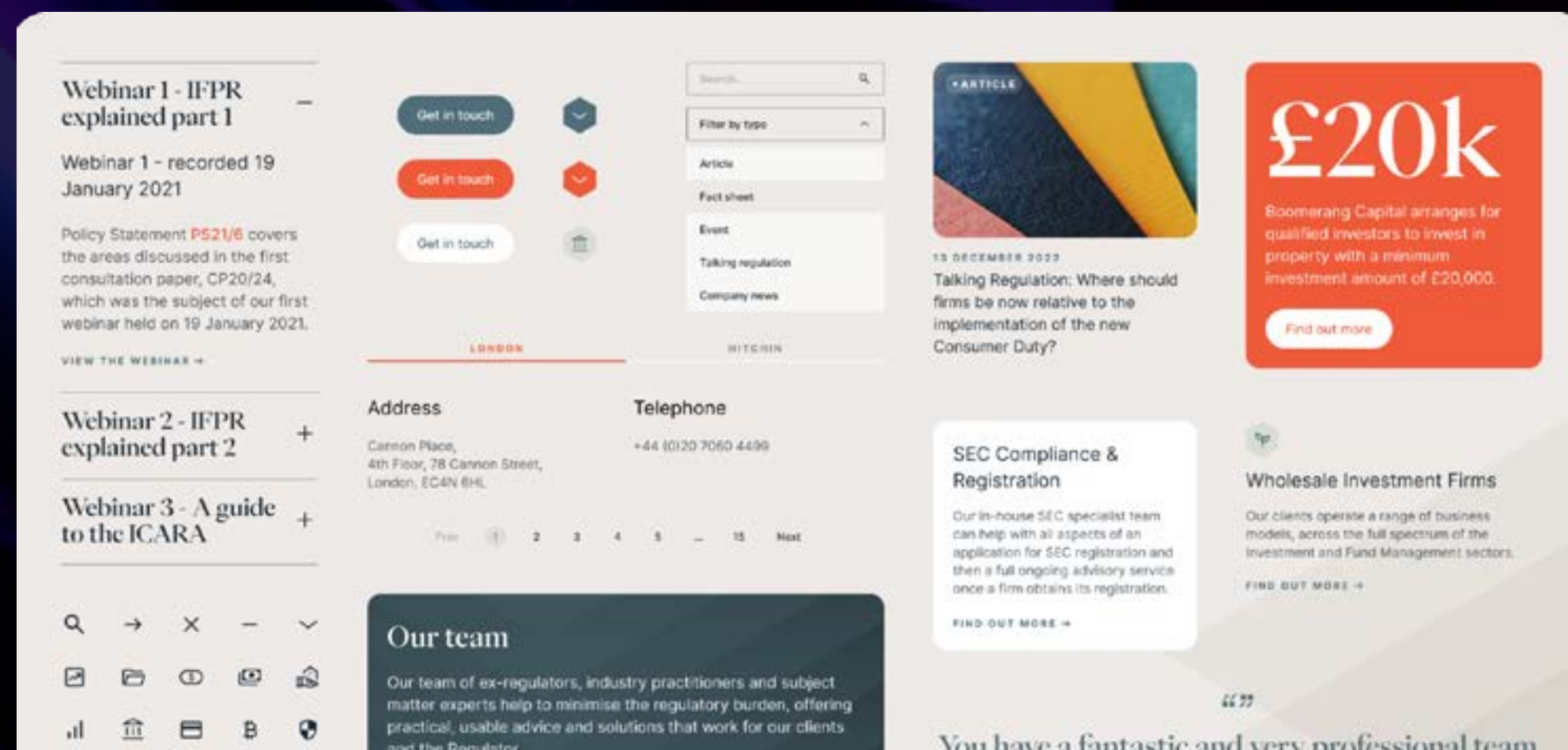
Choosing the right tech stack to future-proof the business

Case Study

Cosegic

7DOTS partnered with Cosegic, a leading compliance consultancy, to solve a critical challenge: attributing the impact of its digital marketing efforts. They wanted greater visibility into how digital interaction translated into business outcomes.

By creating a connected ecosystem and implementing full data attribution modelling, Cosegic gained a clear view of ROI across all activities, from the first touchpoint to contract closure. This not only validated marketing investments but also laid the foundation for increased conversions and greater brand visibility.



“Think of data like a puzzle. The right technology helps to assemble the pieces, revealing a clear picture, the insights, that informs strategic decisions. AI can be critical in extracting the insights at scale, assembling the pieces faster.”

— Sam Page, CEO and Co-Founder, 7DOTS

Stand out in a crowded market

03

“Among all customers, 73% point to experience as an important factor in their purchasing decisions, behind price and product quality.”

— PWC

Essential insights

The UK is a global leader in financial services and fintech innovation. However, in a saturated market, differentiation is everything. Clients aren't just choosing between financial products; they're choosing between brands that feel relevant and trustworthy. The winners are those that don't just offer great products, they deliver an exceptional, memorable experience to set them apart.

Your brand is built (or eroded) at every interaction. A strong, distinctive identity isn't just about visuals, it's about how your brand makes clients feel. From UX design to messaging, every touchpoint should reinforce why you're different and why that matters. Competitor analysis helps identify gaps and opportunities to innovate.

Understanding the challenges

Many financial products are inherently complex. Communicating their distinct value in a clear and engaging way requires creativity and a deep understanding of the target audience. Many are formulaic with indistinct branding that blends into the noise. The challenge is twofold:

How do you [make complex financial products feel simple and engaging?](#)

How do you [ensure your brand experience is unforgettable?](#)

Creating a distinct brand experience requires creativity and a deep understanding of both your brand and the competition. Without expert guidance, brand strategies can become disjointed, failing to resonate with the right audience or create real competitive advantage.

Three key questions and expert solutions:

01

How can we differentiate our brand in a crowded market?

Solution: Brand identity development. Identify your unique value propositions and communicate consistently across every channel. Every interaction should reinforce why clients should choose you.

02

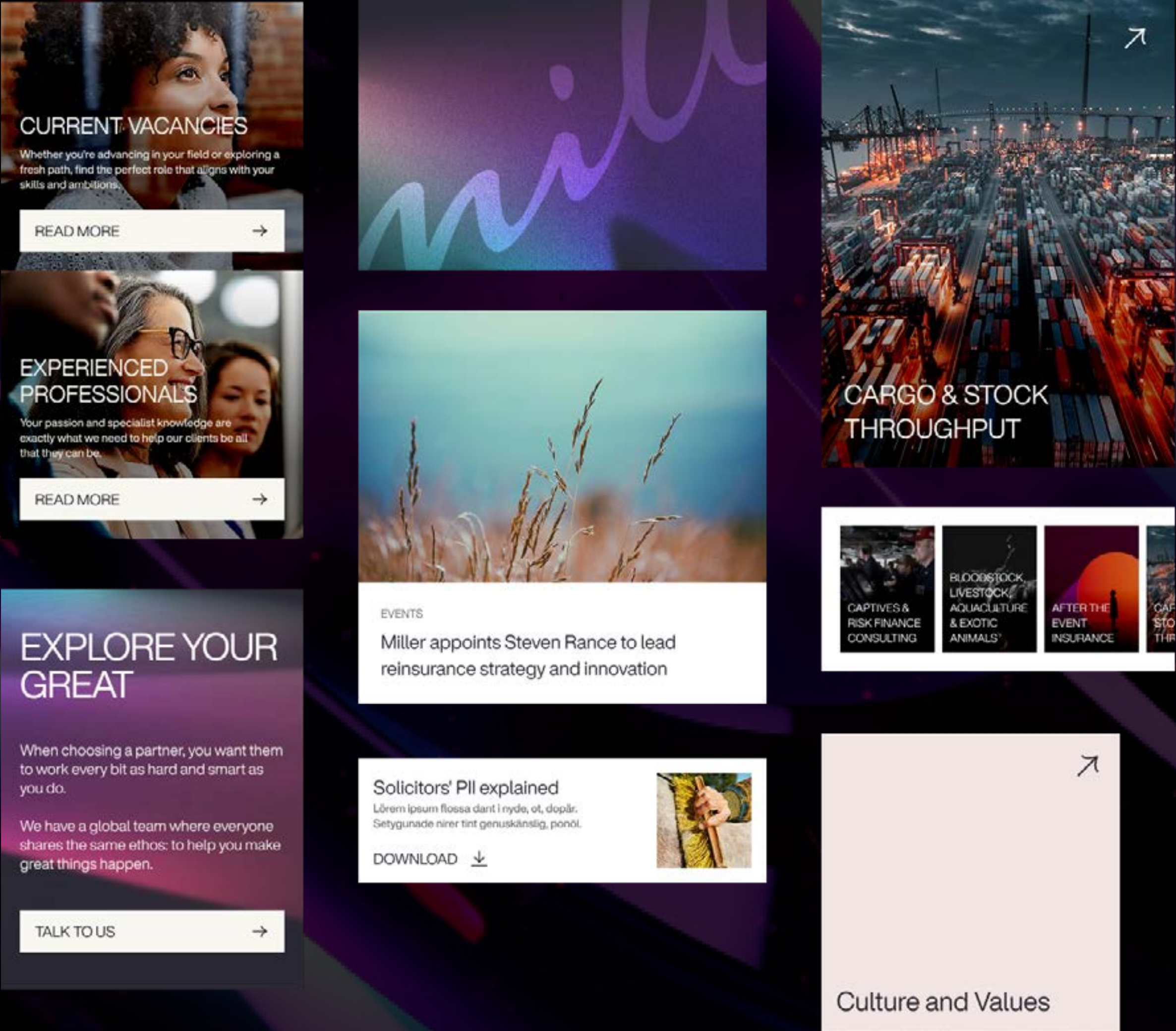
What can we learn from our competitors to improve our user experience?

Solution: Competitive analysis. Conduct insight assessments to uncover gaps in the market, identifying where you can innovate and exceed customer expectations.

03

How do we create experiences that build lasting loyalty?

Solution: Customer-first digital experience. Go beyond industry norms—create digital interactions that are supremely relevant, intuitive, and frictionless. A seamless, human-centred experience drives engagement and loyalty.



Case Study

Miller Insurance

The insurance industry is drowning in a sea of sameness—and 7DOTS pushed Miller Insurance to break free. As specialists in financial and professional risks, Miller needed a bold identity. Enter “Go be great”—redefining insurance as a catalyst for ambition.

7DOTS crafted a striking new identity. A brand device inspired by the synchronised movement of a murmuration reflects a team that moves as one—adaptive, agile, and in sync with clients’ goals.

The logo nods to Miller’s founder, reinforcing the trust and commitment that built lasting relationships.

Miller’s revamped digital presence is sleek, immersive, and unmistakable. Elegant layouts, bold visuals, and compelling storytelling ensure they stand apart.

“In the finance sector, many banking apps suffer from overly complex menus and poor navigation. This unintuitive experience makes it difficult to manage your finances efficiently, often leading people to give up, something few can afford to do today.”

— Brad Finlay, Creative Director, 7DOTS

Make it personal to enhance engagement

04

“80% of consumers are more likely
to purchase from a brand that
offers personalised experiences.”

— Epsilon

Essential insights

Personalisation transforms client relationships from transactional to long-term and deeply engaging. In finance, this is especially critical and unique to other industries. Banks and financial institutions have the potential to maintain relationships with customers for decades, offering a suite of products and services that evolve with their lives.

According to McKinsey¹,
"Personalisation marketing has real advantages for companies: it can reduce customer acquisition costs by as much as 50 percent, lift revenues by 5 to 15 percent, and increase marketing ROI by 10 to 30 percent."

A well-executed personalisation strategy increases customer satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy, making it a competitive differentiator in an industry where trust is paramount.

Reference links
[1 McKinsey](#)

Understanding the challenges

To deliver personalisation at scale, financial brands must leverage:

[Advanced data analytics](#) to understand customer behaviours and preferences

[AI-driven automation](#) to tailor experiences in real time

[Robust CRM systems](#) to create seamless omnichannel experiences

However, without the right expertise, personalisation efforts can feel generic and fail to resonate. With strict regulations surrounding data privacy and security, financial brands must also navigate transparency concerns carefully.

Three key questions and expert solutions:

01

How can we personalise experiences without infringing on privacy?

Solution: Use anonymised data and be transparent about data usage, ensuring full compliance with financial regulations.

02

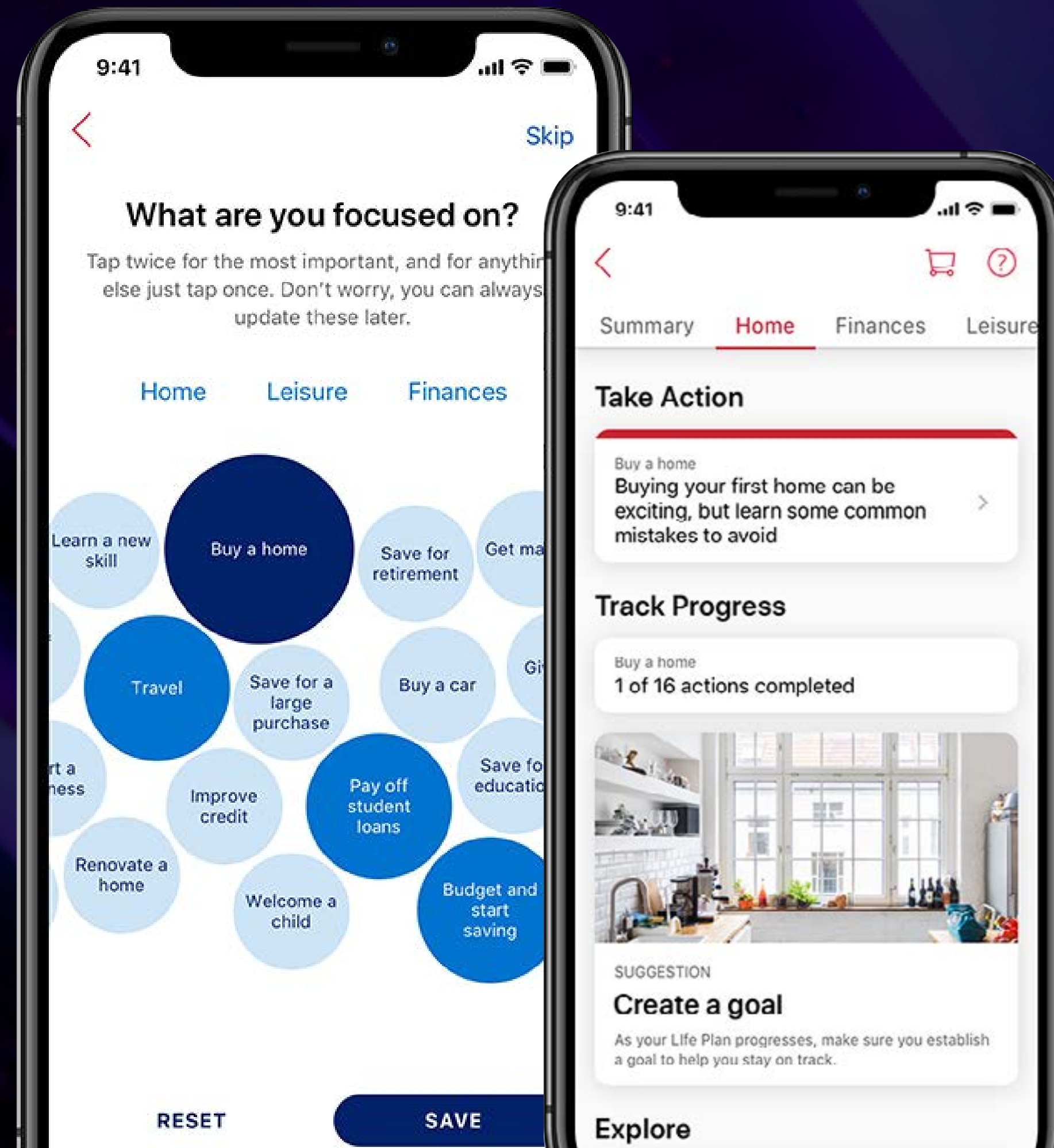
What tools can enhance client engagement on digital platforms?

Solution: Implement AI-driven real-time content, chatbots, and interactive content to create a more engaging, responsive digital experience.

03

How do we measure the effectiveness of our personalisation efforts?

Solution: Track key performance metrics such as engagement rates, conversion rates, and customer satisfaction scores. Build a client insights engine to fuel continuous improvement in personalised experiences.



Case Study

Bank of America

Bank of America's Life Plan transforms financial planning into a personalised, real-time experience. Built into the mobile app, it analyses spending, savings, and life events—like buying a home or starting a family—to deliver tailored advice.

Users can set, adjust, and track financial goals seamlessly, staying in control at every step. Privacy remains a priority, with secure encryption and full transparency on data usage, ensuring trust.

By blending smart insights with rock-solid security, Bank of America makes financial planning simpler, smarter, and safer—deepening engagement and confidence.

“The future holds the tantalising promise of AI tailoring truly personalised digital experiences in finance, prioritising people over transactions. After all, this game-changing technology boasts a far greater capacity for information consumption and utilisation than humans.”

— Sam Page, CEO and Co-Founder, 7DOTS

Build trust through security and regulatory compliance

05

“The global average cost of a data breach in 2024 was \$4.88M—a 10% increase over last year and the highest total ever.”

— IBM Security Report

Essential insights

Trust is the cornerstone of financial services, especially in the digital era, where clients expect their sensitive financial data to be protected at all costs. With the finance industry subject to stringent regulations, security and compliance are not just legal obligations, they are critical to building customer confidence and avoiding costly legal penalties.

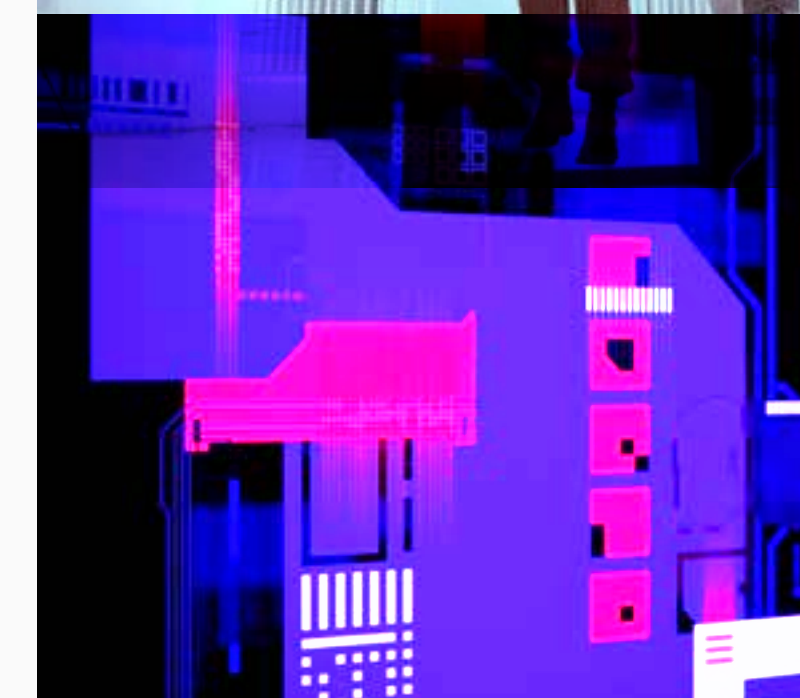
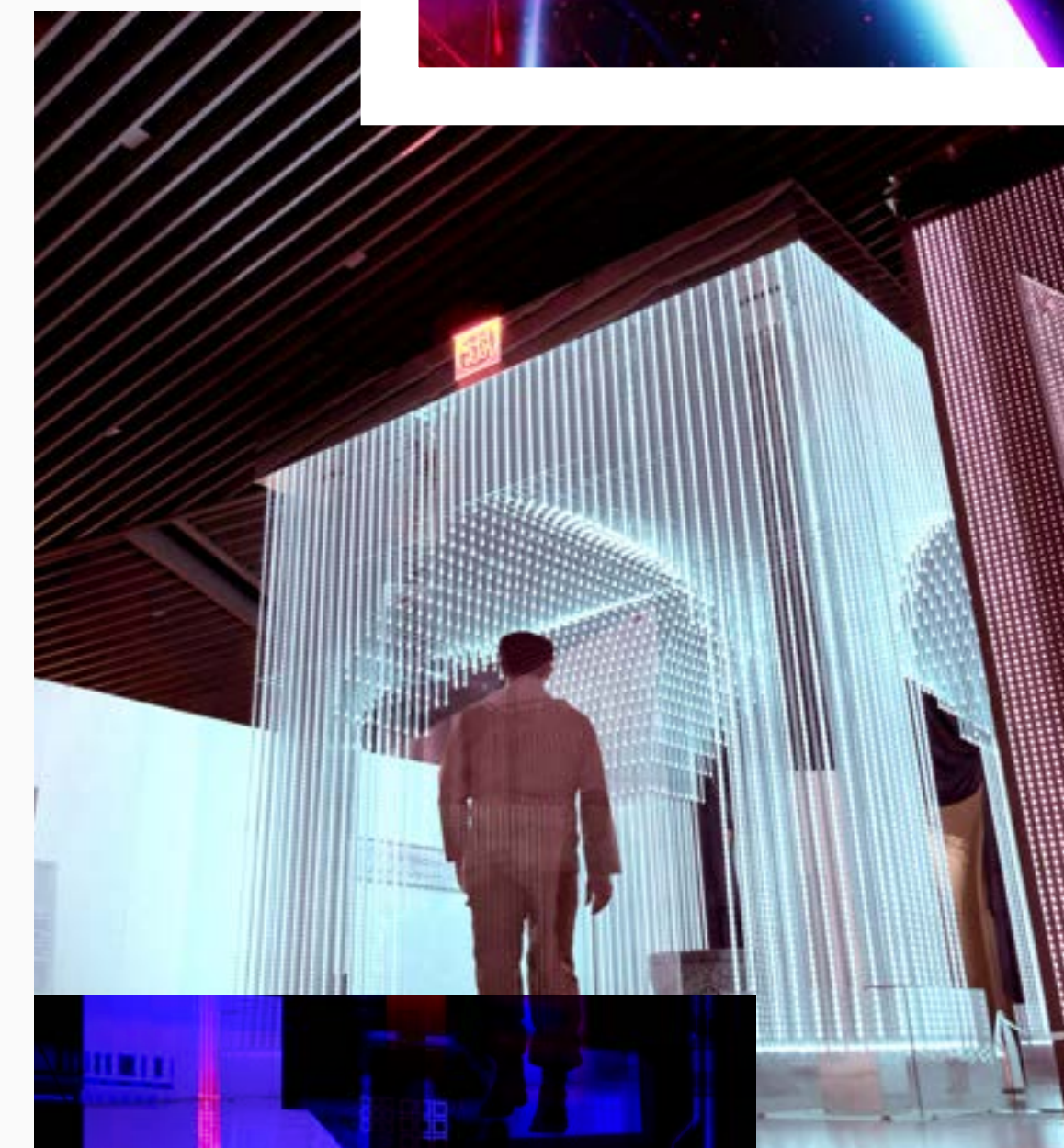
However, protecting client data is about more than just avoiding fines. Strong security and transparency enhance customer loyalty, creating a strong competitive advantage.

Understanding the challenges

The regulatory landscape has been in constant flux since the 2008 financial crisis, with new legislation evolving alongside the rise of a privacy-first internet. The complexity of GDPR, PSD2, and other compliance frameworks makes expert guidance essential.

Balancing security, compliance, and user experience requires specialised expertise. Widespread misunderstanding of GDPR's data capture requirements makes expert guidance essential for financial services firms.

This need is all the more pressing based on some exclusive research 7DOTS carried out for this Whitepaper. It found that 43% of finance brands were non-compliant with data protection laws because they accessed browser storage for advertising and/or analytics (e.g. cookies) without obtaining consent from the user.



Exclusive research by 7DOTS uncovered cause for concern:

With the ICO issuing record-breaking fines for GDPR breaches, many finance brands are unknowingly exposing themselves to legal, financial, and reputational damage.

The study analysed the websites of 24,475 financial services brands, registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) covering the full spectrum of financial services. The research was carried out using a custom cookie compliance testing tool developed by 7DOTS.

1

Funeral plan providers and payday lenders were especially at risk, with non-compliance rates around 70%.

2

43% of finance brands were found to be non-compliant with data protection laws, accessing browser storage (e.g., cookies) without user consent.

3

Banks, building societies, and pension fund administrators fared better, with compliance rates exceeding 60%, but significant risks remain.

Three key questions and expert solutions:

01

How can we keep up with changing regulations?

Solution: Build trust through transparency. Ensure compliance is embedded into the client experience through clear language, branding, and consent mechanisms. Partner with experts who actively monitor regulatory updates.

02

What steps can we take to enhance cybersecurity?

Solution: Create your solution from the ground up with security at its core. Implement multi-factor authentication, end-to-end encryption, and regular security audits to mitigate risks.

03

How do we balance security with user convenience?

Solution: Use seamless security solutions (e.g. biometric authentication, passwordless logins) and educate customers on how security protects their financial well-being.

“Our study reveals a concerning pattern of non-compliance in finance, raising serious concerns about clients’ data protection. This is particularly troubling given the sensitivity of the data these organisations hold. Trust is the foundation of positive digital experiences, and customers rightly expect their data to be safeguarded.”

— Nick Williams, Demand Generation Director, 7DOTS

Deliver seamless omnichannel experiences

06

“Marketers using three or more channels in any one campaign earned a 287% higher purchase rate than those using a single-channel campaign.”

— Omnisend

Essential insights

Omnichannel integration ensures clients receive a seamless experience across all touchpoints, whether through mobile apps, investment portals, robo-advisors, social media, or in-person consultations. In finance, where long-term customer relationships are key, a frictionless experience builds trust, engagement, and retention.

Implementing an effective omnichannel strategy is crucial for enhancing cross-selling and upselling opportunities.

Research indicates¹ that “companies with omnichannel customer engagement strategies retain on average **89% of their customers**, compared to **33% customer retention rates** for companies with weak omnichannel strategies.”

Reference links
¹ Invesp

Understanding the challenges

The financial sector faces unique omnichannel challenges, from fragmented audiences and an ever-expanding range of platforms to complex data synchronisation. Ensuring consistent messaging and branding across all channels demands advanced technology, strategic alignment, and expert execution. Without a coordinated approach, disjointed experiences can frustrate customers and erode trust.

89% OF CUSTOMERS ARE RETAINED WITH OMNI-CHANNEL STRATEGIES

33% AVERAGE RETENTION RATE FOR COMPANIES WITH WEAKER STRATEGIES

Three key questions and expert solutions:

01

How can we provide a seamless experience across all channels?

Solution: Implement integrated CRM systems that update client data in real time, ensuring continuity across platforms.

02

What technologies facilitate omnichannel integration?

Solution: Leverage platforms with robust API integrations and centralised data management to enable smooth connectivity.

03

How do we measure the effectiveness of our omnichannel strategy?

Solution: Use customer journey analytics to identify drop-off points, engagement levels, and areas for improvement.

“True omnichannel success means anticipating customer needs across every touchpoint, not just being present on multiple channels.”

— Stephen Firth, Growth Director, 7DOTS

Adopt an agile and adaptive mindset

07

“Organisations with agile practices
increase their revenue 37% faster than
non-agile counterparts.”

— McKinsey

Essential insights

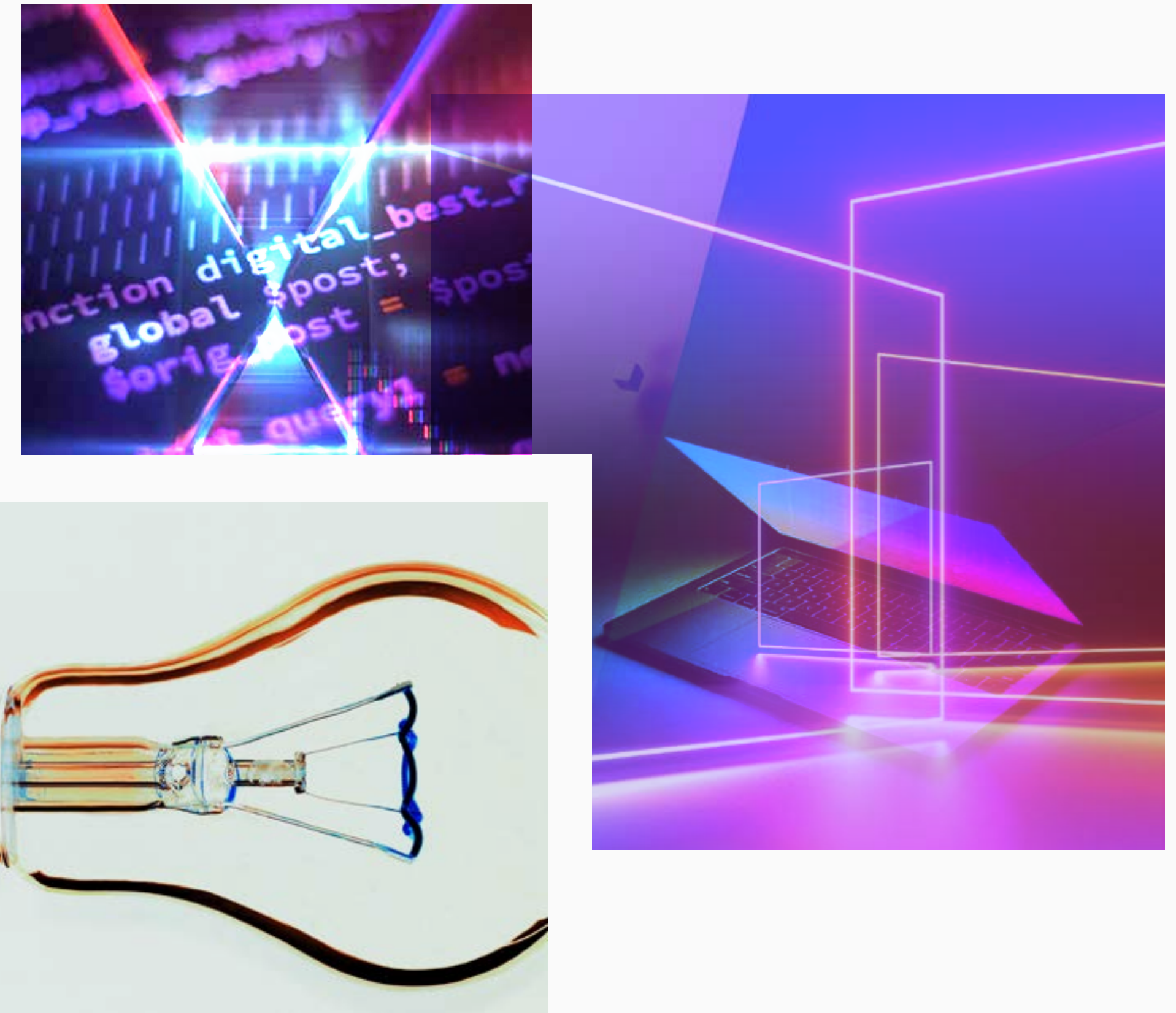
An agile strategy allows organisations to quickly adapt to market changes and client's needs. It's about being flexible, responsive, and proactive in strategy implementation. Within a rapidly changing digital context, it is crucial to be set up to iterate at pace and scale.

To survive and thrive, established companies need to think and act more like start-ups.

Understanding the challenges

Adopting an agile approach requires cultural shifts and changes in traditional processes.

Without guidance, organisations may struggle with implementation and fail to realise the benefits. Research from McKinsey has highlighted the challenges faced by traditional industries, including finance, in adapting to the rapidly changing business landscape.



Three key questions and expert solutions:

01

How can we transition to an agile strategy effectively?

Solution: Provide training and adopt agile methodologies like Scrum or Kanban, and start with pilot projects. This will empower teams to make quick decisions.

02

What are the signs that our strategy needs adaptation?

Solution: Monitor KPIs closely and gather user feedback to identify areas needing change.

03

How do we foster a culture that supports agility?

Solution: Encourage open communication, reward innovation, and reduce bureaucratic hurdles.

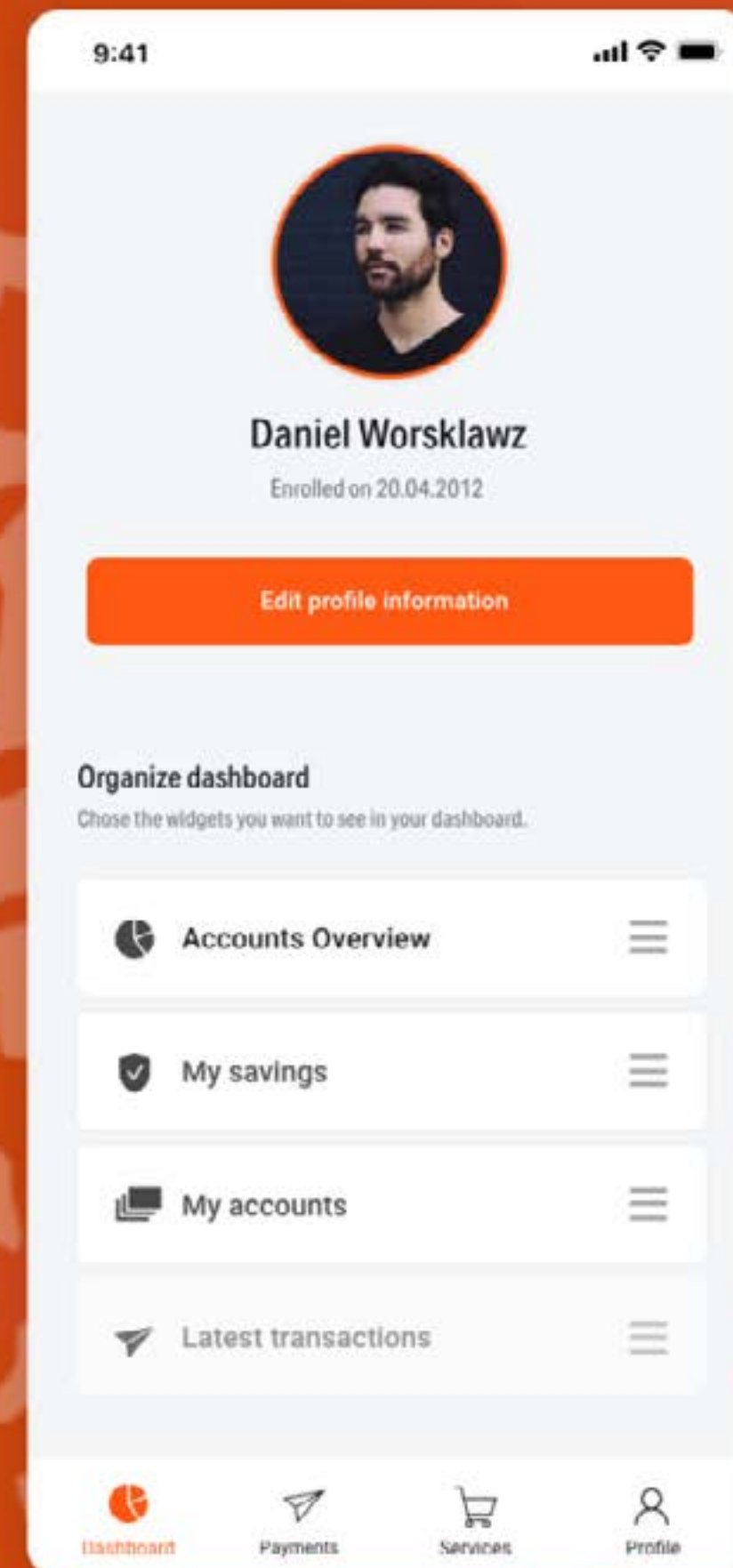
Case Study

ING Bank

ING Bank successfully transformed its operations by embracing agile principles.

Facing challenges with slow decision-making and rigid hierarchies, the bank restructured its workforce into small, cross-functional 'squads.'

This innovative approach empowered teams to work more autonomously, resulting in a remarkable 30% reduction in the time-to-market for new banking products.



“To be truly innovative, we need to look at the human experience and use data-driven insights to create personalised meaningful impact.”

— Missy Clements, Client Experience Director, 7DOTS.

Conclusion

The financial services landscape is evolving faster than ever and a client's experience is now digital. This makes the quality of digital interactions one of the most critical factors in building trust, differentiation, and long-term success.

Exclusive research by 7DOTS revealed that 43% of finance brands fail to comply with data protection laws by accessing browser storage without user consent.

High-risk sectors, such as funeral plan providers and payday lenders, showed non-compliance rates of around 70%. With the ICO issuing record-breaking fines for GDPR breaches, many finance companies are unknowingly exposing themselves to significant legal, financial, and reputational risks.

Navigating the complexities of digital experience in financial services requires a strategic, multifaceted approach. By focusing on these seven priorities, your organisation can stay ahead

of evolving expectations and secure a competitive advantage, both now and in the future.

7DOTS specialises in transforming digital experiences through strategy, technology, and creativity. We offer expert solutions that help financial service brands navigate complexity, enhance engagement, and accelerate growth.

Want to elevate and future-proof your digital experience?

[Contact 7DOTS](#) for an expert assessment and discover how we can help you gain a competitive edge through digital experiences.

www.7DOTS.com

43% OF FINANCE BRANDS FAIL TO COMPLY WITH DATA PROTECTION LAWS

70% MAY UNKNOWINGLY BE AT HIGH RISK THROUGH NON-COMPLIANCE

7DOTS is a digital innovation agency creating extraordinary client experiences to help businesses grow and thrive.

Approach

7DOTS' strategic approach combines creativity, innovation, and data-driven insights to deliver solutions tailored to your specific goals.

Commitment

Clear communication, transparency, collaboration, trust and respect, with a relentless commitment to excellence.

Partnership

Unlocking growth together to elevate brands and create meaningful digital experiences that resonate.

This is achieved by focusing on three key areas:

01

Understanding the audience:

7DOTS' unique methodology for uncovering key insights drives digital strategy and execution through human-centric research and data, enabling holistic and effective client strategy.

02

Creating better experiences:

The proprietary attributes framework elevates digital experiences beyond expectations, to move from transactional to meaningful relationships.

03

Driving better results from digital:

The growth team wraps all core expertise to drive continuous performance and constantly improve and optimise, through key measurables and outcomes, to deliver value at each step.

Let's connect

If you would like to talk about how 7DOTS can help improve business performance through digital experiences please get in touch.

Website: www.7dots.com

Email: hello@7dots.co.uk

Phone: +44 (0)203 848 4860