

Bridging the gap between legacy hardware and a digital era

In the past, the traditional banking model followed a bricks and mortar approach with physical branches and tellers for personnel to serve customers. However, as digital transformation gained traction, the birth of mobility banking changed the game for the customers' experience. This delivered a new level of convenience and better efficiencies, enabling customers to communicate and transact via digital devices such as notebooks, tablets and smartphones.



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“Conversely, while some banks are closing branches and moving increasingly online, others are opening more branches and combining the online experience with a human element. For example, making self-service devices available in-branch but having bank personnel available for customer assistance. Apps have been introduced to varying degrees of success, with some players aggressively pursuing this approach. Each bank will have their own approach keeping in line with their target market needs.” says Hannes Steyn, ICT manager for First Technology National.

Understandably so, according to My Broadband 53% of people are utilising digital banking and the other 47% still prefer traditional banking and the face-to-face customer experience.

Bridging the gap between legacy infrastructure and digitalisation

One of the biggest challenges for traditional banks is the legacy infrastructure they have invested in. Integration with new technology solutions can be challenging and as a result innovation and agility is typically not evolving quickly enough. The recommended path is to consolidate infrastructure, standardise applications and platforms and then virtualise to enable a move into the cloud.

“This is an enormously complex task, as often applications that were customised need to be reinvented for the cloud. This requires Architectural skill to understand the legacy systems and then deliver this functionality in a new modality. It is also essential to standardise hardware in order to reduce infrastructure complexity and consolidate operating systems and hypervisors onto the same type of hardware. New applications need to be cloud-ready, and the hardware must support this,” says Gerhard Olivier, enterprise solutions consulting manager at First Technology National.

“Unfortunately, there is no uniform solution, as each bank has its own unique infrastructure and therefore its own set of challenges. In order to embark on a digital transformation strategy, it must be viewed as a journey. Having a sound understanding of the existing environment, the challenges involved, and the desired future state is a critical foundation. Importantly, the role of cloud should be recognised as a key enabler of digital transformation and is instrumental in bridging legacy hardware with a digitised future” Olivier says

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