Asia-Pacific Edition

Executive brief

The state of commercial banking

Differentiating through platform-led modernization and product innovation

Regional findings from the 2026 Global State of Business Banking Transformation



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Executive summary

Asia-Pacific is a collection of diverse countries, each with its own market structure, regulations, banks and culture. However, the region's banking markets have one thing in common: innovation. From digital banking to real-time payments, what appears first in Asia-Pacific often signals a broader global advancement.

Drawing on findings from the **2026 Global State of Business Banking Transformation** survey, fielded in April 2026 by TechStudio™, an Energize Marketing® company, this executive brief reveals the current state of commercial banking in Asia-Pacific and what might lie ahead for the regional landscape.

In many ways, the market is moving in lockstep. Having already invested in unified digital banking platforms, most banks are looking to business banking for new revenue growth. In other regions, these banks might be considered competitive in terms of their technology infrastructures. However, this masks an underlying weakness; while many banks in Asia-Pacific believe their banking platforms are effective, a third acknowledge segment-specific service gaps.

So, with many banks targeting the same audience, they can't afford to ignore any vulnerabilities. Institutions that can't deliver the most modern, integrated digital experiences for business customers risk losing these relationships to more agile competitors and regional challengers.

Nearly every bank is taking action by investing in platform modernization and new product development. To differentiate themselves, banks will need a competitive and compelling digital banking platform that can give them the agility, innovation, and visibility they need to capture and keep business clients.



"Asia-Pacific banks lead the world in introducing new products and innovation. But that puts pressure on your organization to offer the best of products. So, if you start falling behind in Asia-Pacific, you're not going to fall behind by a little bit. You're going to fall behind by a lot."

Brad Hanna, APAC Product Lead, Digital One Commercial, FIS

*Unless stated otherwise, all data is sourced from the **2026 Global State of Business Banking Transformation** survey, which was conducted by TechStudio™, an Energize Marketing® company, in partnership with FIS®.

10 markets, one direction

Despite diverse environments, Asia-Pacific banks are converging around the same priorities: revenue growth, product innovation, and platform modernization.

The opportunities

96% view business banking as a key source of revenue growth

100% view SMBs as driving the most incremental growth

98% are modernizing digital banking platforms

94% are introducing new products

The markets

- Australia
- Hong Kong
- Indonesia
- Malaysia
- New Zealand
- Philippines
- Singapore
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- Vietnam

The barriers

100% view real-time payments and cross-border capabilities as a critical or high priority

80% cite regulatory complexity as the biggest challenge

72% cite acquiring new business customers as their biggest challenge

"To stay competitive, banks need to demonstrate that they're in the forefront of delivering features and functionality. If they don't, not only will they not win clients – they'll slowly start to lose them as well."

Brad Hanna, APAC Product Lead, Digital One Commercial, FIS

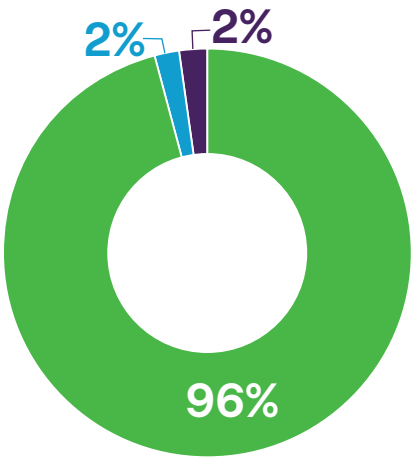


Business banking is the new growth battleground

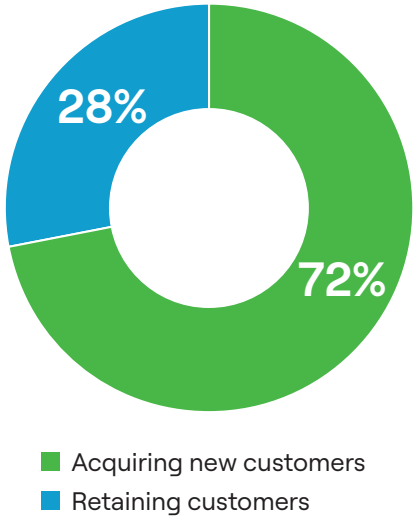
Business banking is overwhelmingly viewed as the primary revenue growth driver for banks in Asia-Pacific. It's driving the highest-value deposits, payments revenue and multi-product relationships.

Customer acquisition dominates the Asia-Pacific growth agenda. Asia-Pacific institutions appear significantly more focused on winning new business customers than defending existing relationships.

What is the primary strategic value of serving business clients for your bank?



What is the single biggest challenge your bank faces in growing or serving business clients today?





believe SMBs will drive the most incremental growth in the next 2-3 years

But these customers' expectations for digital tools have risen sharply, shaped by the consumer apps and fintech platforms they use every day. Even though most banks are focused on attracting new customers, the risk of losing them shouldn't be discounted.

With every respondent targeting SMBs, the stakes are especially high. This segment expects an innovative and high-touch experience, and broader industry research shows that SMBs won't hesitate to switch financial institutions (**Global State of Business Banking 2026**, Datos Insights, 2026). The banks that lose those relationships don't always know why until it's too late.

Voices from the market

What is the biggest unmet need when serving business clients today?

> Services are not always personalized based on the size or industry of the business

Chief Information Officer, large financial institution, Australia

> Mobile banking apps for businesses still need to become more user-friendly

Head of Branch, regional bank, Hong Kong

> Startups often struggle to find solutions that grow with them

VP of Digital Marketing Channel Strategy and Development, large financial institution, Thailand

> There isn't enough use of data to provide meaningful growth recommendations

Digital Products Head, large financial institution, Philippines

> Managing multiple business entities in one place is still complicated

Chief Information Officer, regional bank, Australia



How is your bank evolving its approach to serving micro, SMB, and commercial clients over the next 2-3 years?

> We are scaling data-driven personalization for SMB and commercial clients

Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Chief Technology Officer, community bank, Singapore

> We are leveraging machine learning to optimize pricing and product recommendations

Head of Strategy and Performance, community bank, Malaysia

> We are keeping experiences consistent across channels to enhance customer satisfaction

Branch Head, large financial institution, Hong Kong

> We are enhancing API capabilities to integrate with third-party platforms

Branch Audit Unit Head, community bank, Philippines

> We are accelerating the adoption of real-time payments infrastructure

Chief Operating Officer, community bank, New Zealand

> We are developing agile operating models to respond quickly to client and market changes

Head of Growth & Performance Marketing, community bank, Indonesia



The challenge of a diverse market

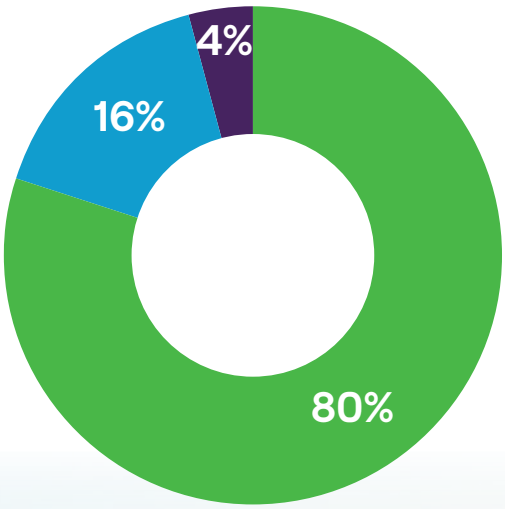
Asia-Pacific's regulatory and payment landscape is among the most diverse in the world. Regional banks operating across multiple Asia-Pacific markets face enormous complexity in managing different payment rails, languages and currencies, often with separate systems and teams for each country. This makes it expensive and slow to expand into new markets or roll out new capabilities regionally. But banks' biggest concern about the business banking experience is regulatory complexity.

As business customers demand consistent, cross-border digital experiences, many banks are trying to solve this by running separate modernization programs in each country, or by adding middleware to connect systems that were never designed to work together. The result is more complexity, not less, and a growing gap between what technology can deliver and what business customers expect.

Banks that stay on this path face rising IT costs, slower product launches, and an inability to offer the integrated, cross-border banking experience that business customers need. Over time, that gap becomes a competitive disadvantage that's very hard to close.

The better choice is to manage multi-country commercial banking operations from one platform that combines centralized governance, shared services, and localized configurations for each market. That delivers the kind of scale and efficiency that turns regional complexity into a competitive advantage.

What is the biggest challenge your bank faces in delivering consistent business banking experiences across segments or regions?





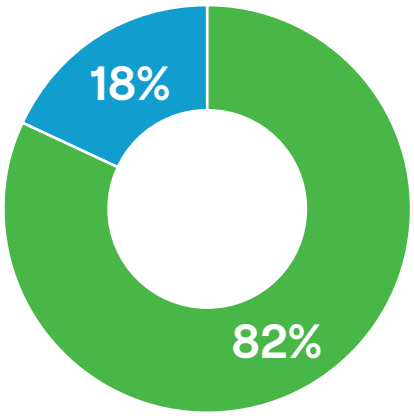
Unified platforms, but with a critical gap

Asia-Pacific institutions have largely consolidated around unified platforms, with eight in 10 relying on a single platform to serve all business clients.

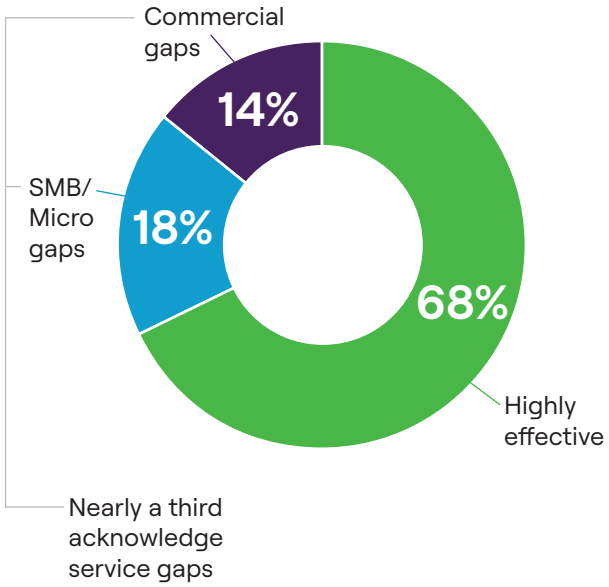
This is a wise choice. Regional banks operating across multiple countries need a platform that can handle organizational complexity without duplicating infrastructure. Running separate instances per country drives up costs and makes consistent governance nearly impossible. With a single platform, banks can manage multi-country, multi-entity commercial banking operations from one platform, lowering total cost of ownership and strengthening governance.

However, while more than two-thirds of respondents call their platforms effective, three in 10 acknowledge service gaps – including in their offerings to those sought-after SMBs.

How does your bank currently deliver digital banking capabilities across micro, SMB, and commercial segments?



How effective is your current approach in meeting the needs of each business segment?



"As business customers demand seamless, real-time digital experiences, siloed legacy systems are becoming a structural barrier to growth, not just an IT inconvenience. Business customers with multi-product needs are consolidating their banking relationships with banks that can offer an integrated digital experience."

Brad Hanna, APAC Product Lead, Digital One Commercial, FIS



Real-time payments and open banking are raising the bar

Real-time payment schemes and open banking initiatives continue to expand across Asia-Pacific markets, from Singapore's PayNow to Thailand's PromptPay and beyond. But for business clients, the conversation has moved beyond speed alone.

Corporate customers are starting to expect the same programmable, instant payment capabilities in their banking relationships that they're seeing in the broader market. They want banks to support a broader range of payment capabilities through a seamless experience, including domestic and cross-border payments, account-to-account transfers, embedded finance experiences, and integrated treasury services. As payment ecosystems become more interconnected, these expectations around visibility, interoperability, and ease of use continue to rise.

Respondents clearly recognize the opportunity. Every Asia-Pacific institution surveyed views real-time and cross-border capabilities as a strategic priority, while nearly all are modernizing digital banking platforms to better serve distinct business segments.

However, the challenge for banks is no longer simply enabling a payment rail. It's orchestrating an expanding network of payment options while maintaining a consistent client experience across products, channels, and markets.

A unified, API-enabled platform can help institutions integrate new capabilities without creating operational fragmentation. This, in turn, helps banks accelerate their time-to-market, simplify integration requirements, and deliver the seamless payment experiences business customers increasingly expect.



view real-time and cross-border capabilities as a critical or high priority



are modernizing or enhancing digital banking platforms by segment

Key insight

Asia-Pacific banks are investing in modern platforms to support a growing range of payment types, rails, and customer expectations.

Voices from the market

What is the biggest unmet need when serving business clients today?

> Handling cross-border payments still comes with reliability concerns

Chief Technology Officer, community bank, Singapore

> Payroll and banking are rarely combined into one simple solution

Chief Technology Officer, regional bank, Australia

> Insights across loans, payments, and investments are usually scattered

Vice President - Strategic Marketing, Business Banking, regional bank, Malaysia



Modernization is no longer optional

Legacy platforms can't support modern features like real-time payments, API banking or integrated cash management, and they make it nearly impossible to launch new products quickly – all of which are critical capabilities in today's competitive market.

The digital transformation road map stalls because the underlying platform can't support the pace of innovation the business needs. Typically banks deliver a disjointed experience across web, mobile and API channels, with different interfaces for different products or segments. This erodes trust and drives customers toward more digitally capable competitors.

So, when it comes to attracting business clients, modernization dominates investment priorities. Virtually every institution surveyed is investing in segment-specific digital banking modernization, reflecting the need to better serve the distinct needs of micro, SMB and commercial clients.

This finding reflects other industry research. For example, Celent* says the share of Asia-Pacific bank tech budgets going to "change the bank" initiatives rose from 39% in 2024 to 49% in 2025. It also calls out corporate digital banking platforms as a top 2025 product investment area.

The payoffs are clear. The conversation is no longer whether commercial banks will modernize but whether they can do it without adding more fragmentation. A core-agnostic, unified platform helps banks modernize business banking across segments and markets without a rip-and-replace.

"Banks that modernize their commercial digital channels can attract and retain higher-value business relationships, deepen cross-sell across treasury, foreign exchange (FX) and trade finance, and expand their commercial banking footprint across Asia-Pacific markets with a differentiated digital experience."

Brad Hanna, APAC Product Lead, Digital One Commercial, FIS



*Celent, **Dimensions: Corporate Banking IT Pressures & Priorities: Asia-Pacific 2025 Edition**, May 2025

The future of banking in Asia-Pacific

Asia-Pacific's unique mix of innovation and diversity is a challenge to any bank. As many institutions turn to business banking to drive revenue growth, they'll need a technology infrastructure that can keep up with the rising demands of business customers, as well as the market's inherent regulatory and localization complexity.

The future belongs to connected, intelligent, and scalable banking ecosystems. The institutions that unify data, workflows, payments, and client experiences fastest will define the next generation of business banking leadership.



"With a unified, core-agnostic platform in place, banks can launch new digital capabilities across all business segments and markets from a single system, without waiting for a core replacement or managing complex integrations between legacy tools. By offering consistent, integrated experiences across all business segments, they can also support cross-selling and compete more effectively."

Brad Hanna, APAC Product Lead, Digital One Commercial, FIS

Survey methodology

The **2026 Global State of Business Banking Transformation** survey was conducted by TechStudio™, an Energize Marketing® company, in partnership with FIS®. The global study gathered insights from 350 banking leaders across North America and Asia-Pacific, representing a cross-section of community, regional, and large financial institutions.

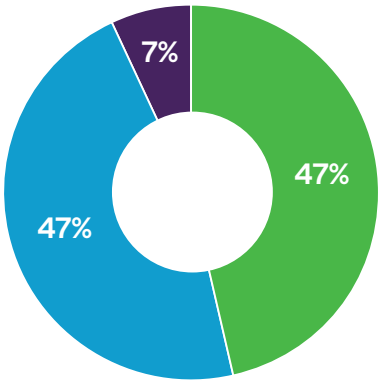
The research captures both strategic and operational perspectives from institutions evolving their approach to business banking, with a focus on growth, segmentation, platform strategy, modernization priorities, and the transition toward more flexible, integrated digital ecosystems.

This executive brief focuses on the Asia-Pacific findings. It draws on responses from 50 banking leaders across 10 markets.

The global study carries a margin of error of ±5.2% at a 95% confidence level.

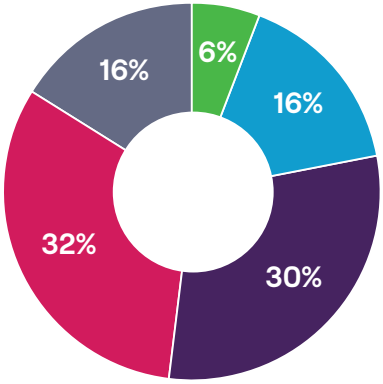
Segment

- Community bank (less than $10B in total assets)
- Regional bank ($10B–$100B in total assets)
- Large financial institution (more than $100B in total assets)



Assets under management

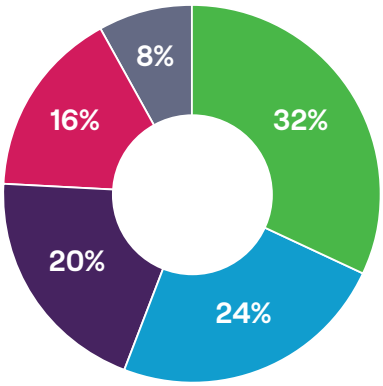
- Under $1B
- $1B–$10B
- $10B–$50B
- $50B–$250B
- Over $250B



*Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding

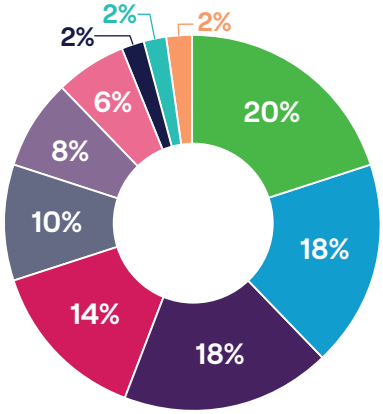
Job title/role

- Digital/technology executive (e.g. CIO, Chief Digital Officer)
- Treasury, product and functional leadership
- Lending and credit leadership
- Executive – Head of business/ SMB banking
- Customer experience/ Operations



Countries

- Malaysia
- Thailand
- Australia
- Hong Kong
- Philippines
- Indonesia
- Singapore
- Vietnam
- Taiwan
- New Zealand

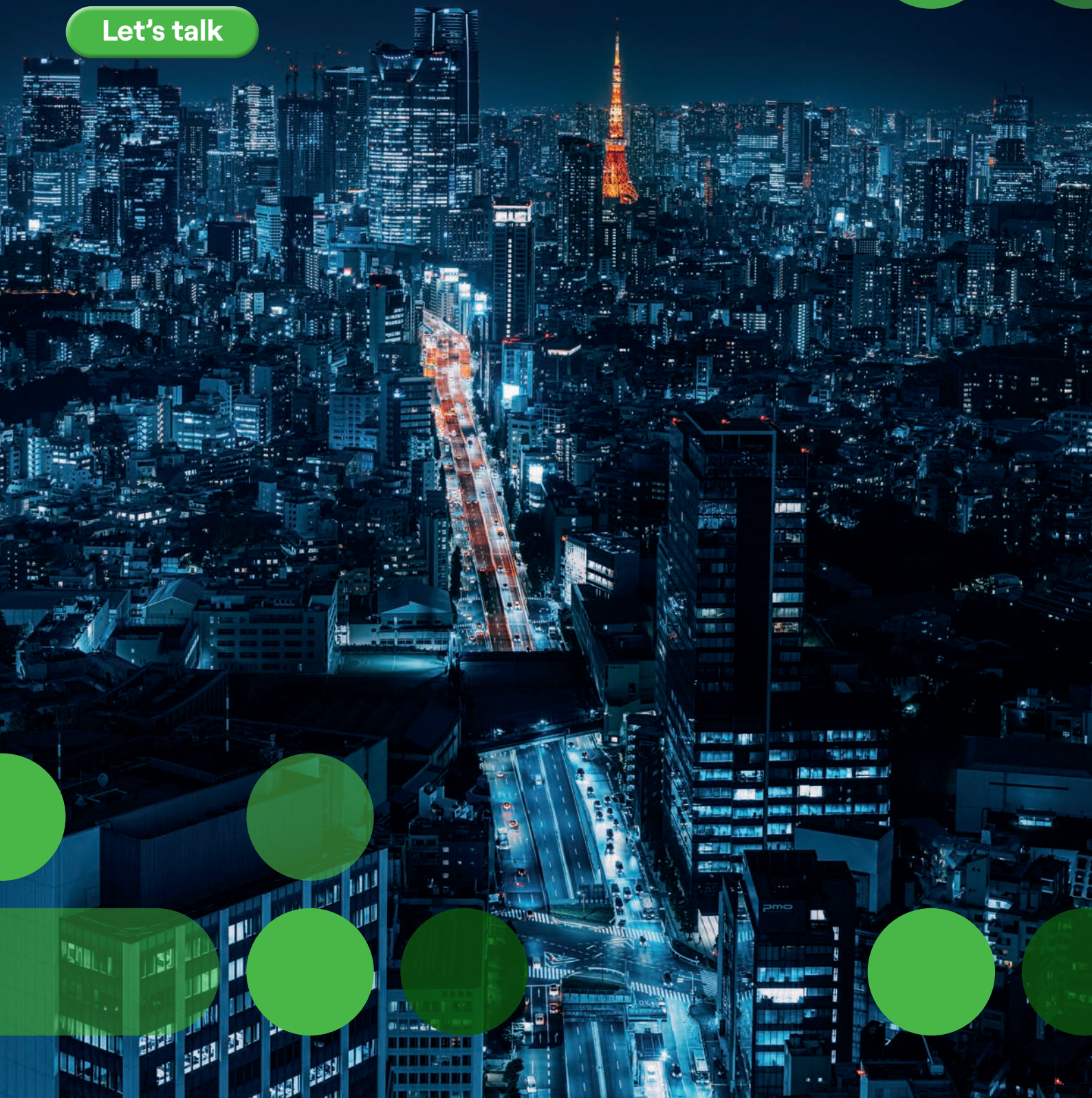


About FIS

FIS supports financial institutions with scalable, flexible platforms designed to enable growth across business, commercial, and enterprise banking segments.

Through FIS® Digital One™ Commercial, FIS helps banks modernize, integrate, and scale without large-scale system replacement.

Let's talk



Money at rest. Money in motion. Money at work.™

Our technology powers the global economy across the money lifecycle.

Money at rest

Unlock seamless integration and human-centric digital experiences while ensuring efficiency, stability, and compliance as your business grows.

Money in motion

Unlock liquidity and flow of funds by synchronizing transactions, payment systems, and financial networks without compromising speed or security.

Money at work

Unlock a cohesive financial ecosystem and insights for strategic decisions to expand operations while optimizing performance.

About FIS

FIS is a financial technology company providing solutions to financial institutions, businesses and developers. We unlock financial technology that underpins the world's financial system. Our people are dedicated to advancing the way the world pays, banks and invests, by helping our clients confidently run, grow and protect their businesses. Our expertise comes from decades of experience helping financial institutions and businesses adapt to meet the needs of their customers by harnessing the power that comes when reliability meets innovation in financial technology. Headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida, FIS is a member of the Fortune 500® and the Standard & Poor's 500® Index. To learn more, visit FISglobal.com. Follow FIS on LinkedIn, Facebook and X (@FISglobal).

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