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Strategic priorities for banking brand development in the context of digital transformation of the financial sector

Abstract. The digital transformation of the financial sector is turning the banking brand from a purely marketing category into a strategic intangible asset that directly affects a bank's financial performance, including customer acquisition costs, product margins, business value, and the stability of its customer base.

Problem statement. Banking institutions make substantial investments in the development of digital channels and digital brands; however, they generally lack a clearly defined system of strategic priorities linking brand development initiatives to expected financial outcomes and measurable performance indicators. Existing studies tend to examine either the marketing components of brand equity or purely financial indicators of bank digitalization separately, without systematically integrating these dimensions.

Unresolved issues. The prioritization and hierarchical structuring of strategic directions for banking brand development in the digital environment, their alignment with specific financial effects, and the development of indicators for monitoring their implementation remain insufficiently substantiated, particularly in the context of the structural transformation of Ukraine's banking sector.

Purpose of the article. The purpose of the article is to substantiate a system of strategic priorities for banking branding development in the context of the digital transformation of the financial sector that can generate positive and measurable financial effects for banking institutions.

Main material. Based on a systematization of international and Ukrainian academic literature, the study identifies groups of factors determining bank brand equity in the digital environment, establishes changes in the relative importance of traditional and digital components of brand quality, and develops a matrix comprising five strategic priorities for banking branding development and their corresponding expected financial effects. For each priority, a system of key performance indicators (KPIs) is developed that integrates non-financial and financial dimensions of performance. Differentiated practical recommendations are also proposed regarding the sequence of their implementation depending on bank size and level of digital maturity.

Conclusions. The proposed system of strategic priorities, supplemented by monitoring indicators and practical recommendations, enables banking institutions to systematically align investments in digital branding with their financial strategy, thereby improving the rationale and evidence base for managerial decision-making at all stages, from planning to performance monitoring, and providing a foundation for the further development of a methodology for quantitatively assessing the financial effectiveness of a bank's brand strategy.

Keywords: banking brand; digital transformation; brand equity; financial performance; strategic priorities; digital banking; customer loyalty; bank competitiveness; neobanking.

Formulas: 0; figures: 1; tables: 3; references: 18.

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Introduction. The digital transformation of the banking sector is fundamentally reshaping the nature of competition among financial institutions, shifting the focus away from traditional dimensions of competitiveness, such as the breadth of branch networks and the range of products offered, towards intangible assets, particularly brand equity, which is increasingly developed within the digital environment. Under these conditions, a bank's brand is no longer merely a marketing category but is evolving into a strategic financial asset capable of influencing business value, the cost of capital, customer loyalty, and the stability of the institution's financial performance.

At the same time, the accelerated adoption of remote service channels, the rapid expansion of neobanks and fintech companies, and intensifying competition for customer attention across mobile and online channels require bank management to rethink branding strategy – not as a supporting marketing function, but as an integral component of the institution's financial strategy. Research indicates that traditional components of bank brand equity, such as brand awareness and branch network accessibility, are gradually losing their decisive role in shaping customer satisfaction and loyalty, while the quality of the digital experience, customer orientation, and consistency of brand communications across digital channels are becoming increasingly important.

The relevance of this study stems from the fact that most Ukrainian banks still tend to regard expenditure on digital brand development primarily as an operating marketing expense, without systematically linking it to expected financial outcomes. This results in fragmented managerial decision-making, whereby investments are directed towards individual digital tools – such as mobile applications, chatbots, and personalized communications – without considering their cumulative impact on the overall financial effectiveness of the bank's brand strategy.

The structural transformation of the Ukrainian banking sector under martial law, amid limited investment resources and growing security risks, requires banks to adopt a more carefully considered approach to selecting digital brand development priorities, giving preference to initiatives capable of generating the greatest financial effect within existing resource constraints. Furthermore, the criteria used to assess the success of a banking brand in the digital environment differ substantially from those applied in the past. Whereas the strength of a bank's brand was previously determined largely by the number of branches, logo recognition, and the scale of advertising in traditional media, in the digital economy customers increasingly form their perceptions of a bank's brand based on their own experience of using its mobile application, the speed with which issues are resolved through customer support chats, and their sense of security when conducting remote transactions.

Therefore, identifying strategic priorities that enable a bank to develop a coherent and financially sound brand development strategy in the context of the digital transformation of the financial sector requires further research.

Literature review. Research on banking branding in the context of digital transformation, particularly with regard to the structure and measurement of brand equity, has been conducted by Gutiérrez Gutiérrez M. M. et al. [1]. Using the PRISMA methodology, the authors systematized approaches to the quantitative assessment of brand equity, ranging from financially oriented models to consumer-based concepts built around brand awareness, brand associations, and brand loyalty. The authors highlight the lack of consensus on a universal model for measuring brand equity, which is particularly relevant to the financial services sector, where the intangible nature of the product complicates the application of traditional valuation approaches.

Important findings specifically related to the banking industry were obtained by Kim S. H. and Yang Y. R. [2], who employed partial least squares structural equation modeling (SmartPLS) to examine the components of brand equity in Korean banks. Their study found that brand awareness and branch network accessibility, representing traditional components of brand equity, no longer had a statistically significant relationship with customer satisfaction. In contrast, brand image, customer orientation, the quality of the physical environment, and, most importantly, digital quality – including system, information, and service quality – had a statistically significant positive effect

on customer satisfaction and, consequently, on brand loyalty. These findings provide empirical evidence of a structural transformation in the determinants of bank brand equity driven by digitalization.

Similar findings were reported by Levy S. [3], who demonstrated, using a sample of Israeli banking customers, that consumers' psychological engagement with digital service platforms mediates the relationship between bank brand attachment and loyalty, while the strength of this relationship varies depending on the type of platform, namely a website or mobile application. The study emphasizes the need for banks to adopt a differentiated approach to the development of different digital channels as distinct brand touchpoints.

A substantial body of research has also examined the relationship between service quality and bank customer loyalty. Supriyanto A. et al. [4] confirmed that service quality positively affects bank customer loyalty through customer satisfaction, while Indrasari A. et al. [5] extended this model to the COVID-19 pandemic period, demonstrating that perceived usefulness, ease of use, and the security of digital channels are key determinants of e-banking user satisfaction and loyalty. These findings confirm that the digital dimension of service quality has become an integral component of the banking customer's brand experience.

Studies examining the impact of digital transformation on banks' financial performance include the work of Nguyen-Thi-Huong L. et al. [6], who found that the level of digital transformation has a positive and statistically significant effect on banks' net interest margin and return on assets, indirectly confirming the financial rationale for investment in digitalization. Drawing on evidence from the Greek banking sector during the COVID-19 pandemic, Boufounou P. et al. [7] demonstrated that banks' digital transformation is associated not only with operational efficiency but also with the overall sustainability of their business models. He S. et al. [8] confirmed that the extent of digital transformation positively affects banks' business performance, with this effect becoming stronger under greater competitive pressure within the industry and for larger banking institutions.

Studies by Ukrainian scholars have focused on the specific features of digitalization within Ukraine's banking sector. In particular, Andriushchenko I. S. and Skydan V. L. [9] conducted a comprehensive analysis of the digital transformation of the Ukrainian banking sector, emphasizing the acceleration of these processes under martial law and the growing role of neobanking, open banking, and the digital hryvnia. Akymenko N. V. and Mamontenko N. S. [10] examined the transformation of the banking system in the digital economy through the lens of changes in the business models of traditional banks. Kopylova O. V. et al. [11] identified the key challenges and prospects associated with the digitalization of Ukraine's banking sector, including disparities in the levels of digital maturity among banks of different sizes. Bereslavska O. [12] investigated the transformation of banking services under digitalization, highlighting the growing importance of personalized digital offerings based on big data analytics. Kasych A. and Naumkina I. [13] considered digitalization processes an integral component of modern banking management, emphasizing the need to align banks' technological and managerial strategies.

The synthesis of the reviewed literature indicates that, despite the substantial body of research addressing individual aspects of banking branding digitalization, the academic literature still lacks a comprehensive approach to establishing strategic priorities for bank brand development that integrates the marketing, technological, and financial dimensions of this issue into a unified managerial decision-making framework. This research gap provides the rationale for the present study.

Purpose, objectives and research methods. The aim of the article is to substantiate a system of strategic priorities for banking brand development in the context of the digital transformation of the financial sector, the implementation of which can generate a positive and potentially measurable financial effect for banking institutions.

To achieve this aim, the following research objectives were defined: to systematize academic approaches to identifying the factors that shape bank brand equity in the digital environment; to identify changes in the relative importance of traditional and digital components of banking brand quality based on a synthesis of empirical research findings; to develop a matrix of strategic priorities for banking brand development, specifying the expected financial effect associated with each priority; and to formulate practical recommendations regarding the sequence of implementing the identified priorities for banking institutions operating in the context of structural digital transformation.

The methodological framework of the study comprises general scientific research methods: analysis and synthesis, used to examine academic literature and identify the essential characteristics of digital banking branding; comparative analysis, applied to compare traditional and digital determinants of bank brand equity; systematization and grouping, used to develop the matrix of strategic priorities; logical generalization, employed to formulate conclusions and practical recommendations; and the tabular method, used to provide a clear and structured presentation of the research findings.

Research results. The synthesis of the findings from the studies analyzed reveals a structural shift in the determinants of bank brand equity driven by digital transformation. Empirical evidence reported in study [2] indicates that traditional components of perceived brand quality – brand awareness and branch network accessibility – are losing their statistically significant influence on customer satisfaction. In contrast, brand image, customer orientation, the quality of the physical environment, and digital quality (system, information, and service quality) either remain or are becoming key determinants of customer loyalty, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Transformation of Bank Brand Equity Determinants under Digital Transformation

Bank Brand Equity Component	Importance in the Traditional Service Model	Importance under Digital Transformation
Brand awareness	High	Statistically insignificant
Branch network accessibility	High	Statistically insignificant
Brand image	Moderate	High
Customer orientation	Moderate	High
Quality of the physical environment	High	Moderate
Digital quality (system, information, and service quality)	Not assessed	High

Source: systematized by the authors on the basis of [2, 3, 5]

Thus, the most pronounced changes are observed in brand awareness and branch network accessibility, which almost entirely lose their statistical significance, whereas digital service quality – which was not assessed at all in the traditional service model due to the absence of relevant digital channels – becomes one of the most significant determinants of customer loyalty. Brand image and customer orientation demonstrate a moderate increase in importance, indicating their universal relevance regardless of the service channel. At the same time, the quality of the physical environment retains moderate importance, suggesting that a bank's physical presence does not lose its value entirely but rather evolves into a supporting, rather than decisive, component of the brand experience.

Based on the synthesis of the factors examined and taking into account the specific characteristics of the Ukrainian banking sector, a matrix of strategic priorities for banking brand development in the context of digital transformation was developed. The matrix links the marketing dimensions of brand development with the expected financial effects for the bank (Table 2).

Table 2. Strategic Priorities for Banking Brand Development in the Context of Digital Transformation

Strategic Priority	Description of the Priority	Expected Financial Effect
1. Development of digital service quality	Enhancing the reliability, security, and usability of mobile and online channels as the foundation of the brand experience	Reduction in customer service costs; increase in transaction frequency
2. Personalization of brand communications	Using data analytics to deliver personalized offers and communications through digital channels	Increase in cross-selling; higher product portfolio margins
3. Building brand trust and security	Ensuring transparency of digital transactions, cybersecurity, and effective communication regarding the protection of customers' funds	Reduction in customer churn (churn rate); stabilization of the deposit base
4. Integration of offline and online brand experiences	Integrating physical branches and digital channels into a unified system of brand touchpoints	Increase in customer lifetime value (CLV)
5. Competitive positioning against neobanks and fintech companies	Differentiating the brand by combining the financial stability of a traditional bank with the technological agility of neobanks	Maintaining market share; reduction in customer acquisition cost (CAC)

Source: developed by the authors

The proposed matrix reflects the logic of progressively enhancing the financial effectiveness of a bank's brand strategy. The first two priorities – developing digital service quality and personalization – establish the fundamental conditions for a positive customer experience. The next priority, trust and security, reinforces this experience by reducing the risk of customer churn. Channel integration and competitive positioning, in turn, contribute to the long-term sustainability of bank brand equity amid intensifying competition from neobanks and fintech companies, whose share of the global banking services market is rapidly increasing.

It is important to note that the implementation of the identified priorities requires a differentiated approach depending on the size of the bank and its level of digital maturity. For systemically important banks with extensive branch networks, the fourth priority – the integration of offline and online experiences – is particularly important. By contrast, for banks developing digital divisions or standalone digital brands operating separately from the parent bank, the first and fifth priorities become paramount. The relationships among the identified priorities and their combined impact on the ultimate financial outcome are illustrated in Fig. 1.

The first level of the proposed approach comprises external factors that create an objective need to reconsider banking branding strategies under current conditions. Foremost among these is the rapid expansion of neobanks and fintech companies, which successfully compete for customers without relying on traditional branch networks. A prominent example is monobank, which surpassed 10 million customers in October 2025 while operating exclusively through a mobile application that had a rating of 4.9 based on more than 1.1 million reviews on Google Play [14].

The development of open banking also plays a significant role. In Ukraine, the relevant Regulation of the National Bank of Ukraine (NBU) No. 80 entered into force on August 1, 2025. According to the regulator's official implementation plan, open banking is expected to become fully operational by 2027, with banks gradually opening their APIs to fintech partners [15]. Equally important are changes in customer behavior and expectations, as customers increasingly form their perceptions of banks based on their own digital experiences rather than on traditional attributes of reliability.

Another important, albeit somewhat contradictory, factor is the combination of regulatory requirements and cybersecurity risks. In particular, the NBU requirements governing the authorization of open banking participants in relation to risk management and personal data protection simultaneously encourage banks to introduce new digital solutions while constraining the pace and scope of digital transformation due to the need to comply with the relevant security standards [16].

A key element in understanding the structure of bank brand equity is provided by existing academic approaches to conceptualizing this construct, which establish the theoretical foundation for further analysis. Financially oriented models conceptualize a brand as the discounted value of future cash flows associated with the use of the brand and focus primarily on its monetary and balance-sheet dimensions. Consumer-based models, by contrast, are built around such categories as brand awareness, brand associations, and customer loyalty, viewing brand equity through the lens of consumer perceptions and behavior.

A relatively new component of this theoretical framework is digital service quality, which, according to recent empirical research [2], is emerging as an independent and increasingly important determinant within the structure of bank brand equity, complementing traditional financial and consumer-based models.

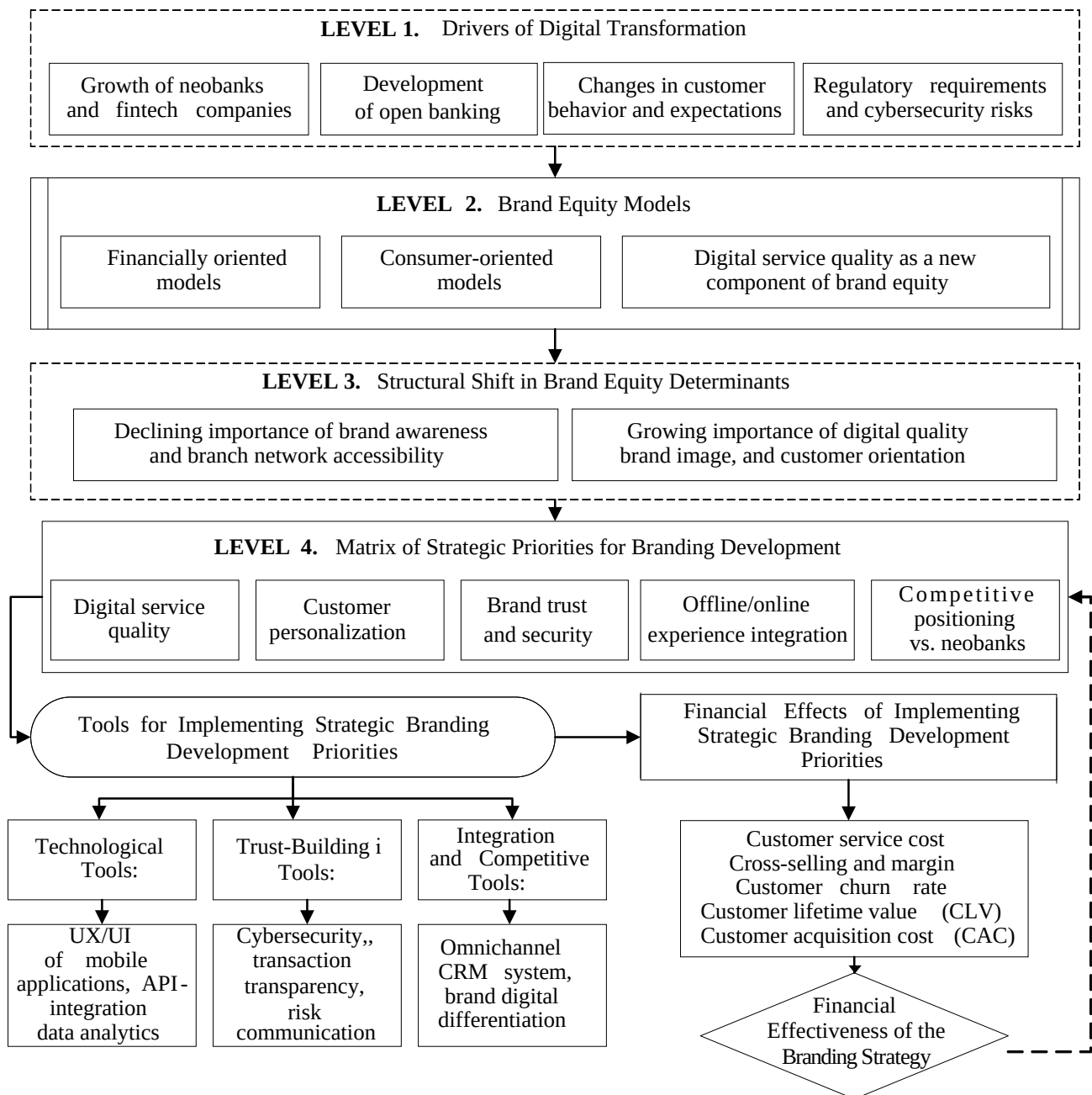


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework for the Formation and Implementation of Strategic Priorities for Banking Brand Development in the Context of Digital Transformation of the Financial Sector
Source: developed by the authors.

The structural shift in bank brand equity determinants, identified through a synthesis of recent studies on perceived brand quality, reflects a fundamental transformation in their role in explaining customer satisfaction and loyalty. Traditional determinants, such as brand awareness and branch network accessibility, are gradually losing their statistical significance in shaping customer loyalty. This trend is clearly supported by empirical evidence at the national level: the number of operating branches of Ukrainian banks decreased from 6,685 in January 2022 to 5,011 in January 2025, representing a 25% decline during the period of the full-scale war [17]. At the same time, digital service quality, brand image, and customer orientation are becoming increasingly important. According to official data from the National Bank of Ukraine, during the first nine months of 2024, cashless payment card transactions accounted for 94.5% of all transactions by number and 64.8% by value, compared with 93.5% and 65.4%, respectively, during the corresponding period of 2023 [18].

Based on this empirically established shift, five strategic priorities for banking brand development were identified: enhancing digital service quality, personalizing brand communications, building brand trust and security, integrating offline and online experiences, and strengthening competitive positioning against neobanks and fintech companies. This level constitutes the central managerial component of the proposed framework, as it marks the transition from establishing empirical evidence to formulating a practically applicable strategy for bank management.

Since strategic priorities themselves represent managerial guidelines rather than actions that can be directly implemented, they require further specification in terms of concrete implementation tools. These can be grouped into technological tools, including the development of mobile application UX/UI – with monobank’s application rating of 4.9 based on more than 1.1 million Google Play reviews serving as a relevant quality benchmark – API integrations with fintech partners within the emerging open banking model, and advanced customer data analytics; trust-building tools, including cybersecurity solutions, transparency of digital transactions, and targeted communication regarding the protection of customers’ funds; and integration and competitive tools, including the deployment of omnichannel CRM systems, coordination of physical and digital service channels, and the development of differentiated marketing campaigns.

This level of detail makes it possible to specify the concrete mechanisms through which banks can implement the strategic priorities identified above, thereby transforming them from declarative intentions into operationally manageable processes.

Each instrument implemented at the preceding level translates into a specific and separately identifiable financial outcome: a reduction in customer service costs (particularly through lower costs associated with maintaining the physical branch network – a process already underway in the Ukrainian banking sector, as demonstrated above); an increase in cross-selling volumes and product portfolio margins; a reduction in customer churn; an increase in customer lifetime value (CLV); and a reduction in customer acquisition cost (CAC). The latter is particularly well illustrated by the example of monobank, whose customer base had grown to 10 million by October 2025, largely through digital, branchless customer acquisition [14]. At the same time, the development of open banking in Ukraine (NBU Regulation No. 80, effective from August 1, 2025) [15] creates additional opportunities to reduce customer acquisition costs through API-based partnerships with fintech companies.

Distinguishing these channels as a separate level highlights a key methodological point of the study: the financial effect of a bank’s brand strategy should not be viewed as a single aggregate indicator but rather as a combination of several financial channels that differ in their economic nature, each of which can be measured and monitored independently. Taken together, the identified channels of financial effect contribute to an overall improvement in the financial effectiveness of the bank’s branding strategy, enabling the bank to allocate limited resources across different areas of brand development on a sound basis and to objectively assess the returns on its investments in

digital branding. The feedback loop incorporated into the framework reflects the cyclical rather than one-off nature of branding strategy: the results of regular monitoring of financial indicators should be used to periodically adjust the priorities of brand development initiatives. This is particularly important given the highly dynamic nature of digital transformation in the financial sector.

The proposed conceptual framework integrates the research findings into a coherent logical sequence: from the external drivers of digital transformation, through the theoretical foundations and the empirically established structural shift in brand equity determinants, to the practical matrix of strategic priorities, specific implementation tools, and measurable channels of financial effect. The feedback loop between the ultimate financial outcome and the level of strategic priorities emphasizes that the proposed framework is not a static, one-off recommendation but rather an adaptive management model that can be periodically reviewed in response to changing market conditions and the results of financial monitoring.

The practical implementation of the proposed matrix of strategic priorities requires not only the identification of specific courses of action but also a system of measurable indicators that can be used to monitor both the progress and effectiveness of their implementation. As noted above, since the financial effect of a bank's brand strategy comprises several distinct channels, each strategic priority should be accompanied by its own set of key performance indicators (KPIs) combining non-financial (behavioral and reputational) and financial dimensions of performance. An integrated system of such indicators for each of the five strategic priorities is presented in Table 3.

The proposed system of indicators further operationalizes the channels of financial effect within the conceptual framework for the formation and implementation of strategic priorities for banking brand development in the context of digital transformation of the financial sector, translating them into specific, operationally measurable metrics suitable for regular monitoring by bank management.

Table 3. Key Indicators for Monitoring the Implementation of Strategic Priorities for Banking Brand Development

Strategic Priority	Key KPIs (Monitoring Indicators)	Target Trend / Benchmark
Development of digital service quality	Mobile application rating; share of digital users; digital channel NPS; average time to resolve customer inquiries via chat/mobile application	Increase in the application rating and the share of digital users; reduction in inquiry resolution time
Personalization of brand communications	Conversion rate of personalized offers; share of cross-sales generated through recommendation algorithms; average number of products per customer	Increase in conversion rates and the number of products per customer
Building brand trust and security	Customer trust index; number of fraud incidents per 1,000 transactions; customer churn rate	Increase in the trust index; reduction in the frequency of fraud incidents and customer churn rate
Integration of offline and online brand experiences	Customer Effort Score (CES) for transitions between channels; share of customers using more than one channel; customer lifetime value (CLV)	Reduction in CES; increase in the share of customers using multiple channels and in CLV
Competitive positioning against neobanks and fintech companies	Market share by number of active payment cards/customers; customer acquisition cost (CAC); brand awareness index relative to competitors	Maintenance/increase of market share; reduction in CAC

Source: systematized by the authors based on [13, 16, 17]

It is important to note that the proposed indicators vary in terms of measurement complexity. While digital quality and trust metrics can be monitored using operational data already available within the bank, assessing competitive positioning requires additional marketing research into brand perceptions relative to competitors. This distinction should be taken into account when allocating resources for monitoring strategy implementation.

The implementation of the proposed matrix of strategic priorities requires a differentiated approach depending on the bank's size, level of digital maturity, and existing resource constraints. Accordingly, practical recommendations have been developed for different types of banking institutions and aligned with the corresponding strategic priorities and monitoring indicators. For systemically important banks with extensive branch networks, for which the integration of offline and online experiences has been identified as the primary strategic priority, the following measures are recommended:

1. conduct an audit of the end-to-end customer journey between physical branches and digital channels to identify points of discontinuity in the brand experience;
2. implement an integrated CRM system that synchronizes the history of customer interactions regardless of the channel used;
3. enable customers to initiate a transaction, such as a loan application or deposit opening, online and complete it at a branch without having to re-enter their data;
4. train branch staff in the bank's digital tools so that employees can effectively assist customers in using the mobile application;
5. measure the Customer Effort Score (CES) for transitions between channels at least once per quarter.

For medium-sized banks with a moderate level of digital maturity, where the short-term priorities are the development of digital service quality and the strengthening of brand trust and security, the following measures are recommended:

1. conduct an independent audit of the mobile application's UX/UI and benchmark it against leading digital banks in the market;
2. implement or enhance a real-time alert system for suspicious transactions;
3. develop a transparent communication policy regarding the protection of customers' funds, including a dedicated webpage and regular customer communications;
4. establish target values for digital channel NPS and monitor them on a monthly basis;
5. allocate the brand development budget across the selected priorities in proportions reflecting the current level of customer trust, as determined through customer surveys.

For banks' digital divisions and neobanks without extensive branch networks that prioritize digital service quality and competitive positioning, continuous monitoring of application ratings in the App Store and Google Play should be established as a proxy indicator of digital quality. It is also advisable to identify two or three key competitive differentiators from other neobanks and incorporate them into the brand communication strategy, as well as to develop an API partnership strategy within the open banking model to expand the product ecosystem without increasing in-house development costs. Regular monitoring of customer acquisition cost (CAC) across marketing channels would enable quarterly reallocation of the budget towards the most effective channels, while annual brand awareness research should be conducted relative to three to five major competitors.

The proposed recommendations should be regarded as an indicative tool for initial strategic planning and should be adapted to the specific operating conditions, organizational structure, and strategic objectives of each banking institution.

Discussion. The findings of this study are consistent with the conclusions drawn at earlier stages of the research concerning the financial determinants of bank brand equity formation in the digital environment and extend them towards practical strategic application. While the previous stage established the financial significance of the digital components of brand equity, the matrix of strategic priorities proposed in this article, supplemented by a system of monitoring indicators (Table 3) and practical recommendations, makes it possible to structure banks' managerial decisions according to implementation sequence, expected financial effects, and specific measurable performance indicators.

At the same time, certain limitations of the proposed approach should be acknowledged, primarily its predominantly qualitative assessment of the financial effect associated with each priority. Most of the empirical studies used [2, 3, 4] are based on structural modeling of relationships between non-financial indicators, such as customer satisfaction and loyalty, and are only indirectly linked to banks' financial performance. The proposed KPI system partially mitigates this limitation by translating qualitative priorities into operationally measurable indicators; however, it does not eliminate the limitation entirely. As noted above, the indicators differ in terms of measurement complexity: while digital quality and trust metrics can be monitored using banks' existing operational data, the assessment of competitive positioning requires additional marketing research into brand perceptions. This creates a methodological gap that requires the development of a separate quantitative methodology for assessing the financial effectiveness of a bank's branding strategy. Such a methodology should be based on the regular measurement of the proposed indicators over time and their comparison with the financial performance of a specific bank. Addressing this gap therefore represents a promising direction for further research within the broader dissertation study.

Furthermore, the specific operating conditions of the Ukrainian banking sector under martial law impose additional constraints on the application of the proposed matrix of priorities. As noted in study [9], the accelerated digitalization of Ukrainian banks is taking place amid heightened security risks, limited investment resources, and the need to ensure continuity of customer service. These circumstances increase the relative importance of the third priority – building brand trust and security – compared with the other priorities identified primarily on the basis of international empirical evidence. The experience of Ukrainian digital banking is particularly illustrative in this context: the rapid contraction of the branch network, from 6,685 branches in January 2022 to 5,011 in January 2025, has occurred alongside growing customer acceptance of fully digital banking products. This trend is indirectly evidenced by monobank surpassing 10 million customers while operating exclusively through a mobile application [18]. This supports the practical applicability of the proposed matrix of priorities even under conditions of heightened uncertainty, although the relative importance of individual priorities may differ from that observed under peacetime conditions.

Another issue that remains open to discussion concerns the optimal balance between investment in developing a bank's own digital brand and investment in partnerships with fintech companies under the Banking-as-a-Service (BaaS) model. This issue is becoming increasingly relevant in the Ukrainian context due to the gradual implementation of open banking. Further research should determine the conditions under which the integration of external fintech solutions strengthens a bank's brand identity and those under which it may dilute that identity in customers' perceptions.

The practical applicability of the proposed recommendations to banks of different sizes also warrants particular attention. Differentiating the recommendations across three types of institutions – systemically important banks, medium-sized banks, and digital banking divisions and neobanks – reflects a key premise of the study: there is no universal approach to implementing strategic priorities that would be equally effective for all banks. At the same time, this differentiation poses a methodological challenge for further validation. Empirical verification of the proposed recommendations would require a comparative analysis based on a sample of banks of different sizes, which lies beyond the scope of the present study and constitutes a separate avenue for future research.

Conclusions. The study has made it possible to substantiate a system of strategic priorities for banking brand development in the context of the digital transformation of the financial sector. The scientific novelty of the findings lies in identifying a structural shift in the relative importance of traditional and digital determinants of bank brand equity and, on this basis, developing a matrix

of strategic priorities that links marketing dimensions of brand development with the expected financial effects for banking institutions. The matrix is supplemented by a system of monitoring indicators (KPIs) for each priority and differentiated practical recommendations tailored to banks of different sizes.

The theoretical contribution of the study lies in systematizing fragmented academic approaches to conceptualizing bank brand equity in the digital environment and integrating the marketing and financial dimensions of this issue into a unified analytical framework. The practical contribution lies in the potential use of the proposed matrix of strategic priorities, together with the system of monitoring indicators and a checklist of practical actions, by bank management as a direct tool for the consistent planning, implementation, and monitoring of investments in digital brand development, taking into account the bank's size and level of digital maturity.

The socio-economic effect of implementing the proposed priorities lies in strengthening the financial rationale for banks' managerial decisions regarding brand development, which can indirectly contribute to enhancing trust in the banking system as a whole and improving its resilience amid digital transformation and ongoing security challenges. Future research should focus on developing methodological approaches to the quantitative assessment of the financial effectiveness of banking branding strategies based on the proposed system of indicators. This would enable a transition from a qualitative matrix of strategic priorities to a measurable framework for evaluating the performance of bank brand strategies using data from specific banking institutions.

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Стратегічні пріоритети розвитку банківського брендингу в умовах цифрової трансформації фінансового сектору

Анотація. Цифрова трансформація фінансового сектору перетворює банківський бренд із суто маркетингової категорії на стратегічний нематеріальний актив, що безпосередньо впливає на фінансові результати банку – вартість залучення клієнтів, маржинальність продуктів, вартість бізнесу та стійкість клієнтської бази.

Постановка проблеми. Банківські установи здійснюють значні інвестиції у розвиток цифрових каналів і цифрового бренду, проте здебільшого не мають чіткої системи стратегічних пріоритетів, яка б пов'язувала напрями розвитку бренду з очікуваним фінансовим ефектом і вимірюваними показниками результативності. Наявні дослідження переважно розглядають окремо або маркетингові складові бренд-капіталу, або суто фінансові показники цифровізації банку, без їх системної інтеграції.

Невирішені аспекти проблеми. Недостатньо обґрунтованими залишаються питання ієрархізації стратегічних пріоритетів розвитку банківського бренду в цифровому середовищі, їх зіставлення з конкретними фінансовими ефектами та розроблення індикаторів моніторингу їх реалізації, особливо в умовах структурної трансформації вітчизняного банківського сектору.

Мета статті. Обґрунтування системи стратегічних пріоритетів розвитку банківського брендингу в умовах цифрової трансформації фінансового сектору, що забезпечують позитивний і вимірюваний фінансовий ефект для банківської установи.

Основний матеріал. На основі систематизації зарубіжних і вітчизняних наукових джерел виокремлено групи чинників, що визначають бренд-капітал банку в цифровому середовищі, встановлено зміну значущості традиційних та цифрових складових якості бренду, сформовано матрицю з п'яти стратегічних пріоритетів розвитку банківського брендингу з відповідним очікуваним фінансовим ефектом. Для кожного пріоритету розроблено систему ключових індикаторів моніторингу (KPI), що поєднують нефінансові та фінансові виміри результативності, а також диференційовані практичні рекомендації щодо послідовності їх реалізації залежно від масштабу банку та рівня його цифрової зрілості.

Висновки. Запропонована система стратегічних пріоритетів, доповнена індикаторами моніторингу та практичними рекомендаціями, дає змогу банківським установам системно узгоджувати інвестиції у цифровий брендинг із фінансовою стратегією, підвищуючи обґрунтованість управлінських рішень на всіх етапах – від планування до контролю результатів – та створюючи підґрунтя для подальшої розробки методики кількісного оцінювання фінансової ефективності бренд-стратегії банку.

Ключові слова: банківський брендинг; цифрова трансформація; бренд-капітал; фінансова ефективність; стратегічні пріоритети; цифровий банкінг; лояльність клієнтів; конкурентоспроможність банку; необанкінг.

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