



## User-Friendliness — the Great Differentiator?



By  
**Daniel Marovitz**  
Head of Product Management, Global Transaction Banking  
[daniel.marovitz@db.com](mailto:daniel.marovitz@db.com)

Transaction banking providers worldwide have the same problem — differentiation in a crowded marketplace. With many banks now providing similar products, the strength and intuitiveness of their proprietary systems will be the determining factor in their competitive position. More and more providers are realising that delivering excellence is merely a prerequisite — innovation, ease-of-use and client dialogue can take you much further.

The pursuit of differentiation and client enrichment are both catalysts for continual improvements in the business-to-business (B2B) space. Clients are now demanding a level of usability and quality of experience from their platforms of the kind that has become the premise of retail and consumer systems. It is now widely acknowledged that "user friendliness" will be critical in determining the industry's winners in the future.

What's helping to drive this? It's simple. We live in an age where consumers carry sophisticated and powerful computer systems in their pockets — often much slicker than some B2B providers can hope to offer. Deutsche Bank has long recognised the threat — and opportunity — that this presents, and in response we are building a leaner infrastructure that will compete with consumer-oriented systems in terms of the quality of the user experience. We have examined what represents best practice in the retail banking space and consumer-facing industries to develop intuitive interfaces that do not require extensive training to use. The key to the success of

many of the world's leading technology companies is the ability to mask complex processes with user interfaces that are simple — and even fun — to use.

An important element in developing such systems is the need for open communication with clients. To take our own interaction with our customers to a new level, we are developing new channels such as social media, aimed at bringing the client into the product development process and asking them what do *they* want their provider to be developing. This has exciting possibilities for the Bank and for its clients.

But it is also a time to look at the business model and ask yourself if the structure is best serving the client base. At Deutsche Bank, this is epitomised by the ongoing integration of the Corporate & Investment Bank (CIB), which is all about delivering greater benefits for clients.

Partnerships and joint ventures between different divisions of the Bank are constantly being developed in order to offer a more integrated approach to treasury and liquidity management, reducing complexity and generating efficiencies across a client's entire value chain.

For example, a more coordinated approach will allow clients to better consolidate liquidity positions across regions and provide improved transparency and control when mitigating risk exposures. The goal is to provide a fully integrated suite of information and planning tools that includes active investment services, foreign exchange trading and hedging capabilities, enabling clients to manage their end-to-end treasury workflow through a single e-commerce platform.

Essentially, banks need to look beyond their immediate peers when seeking to improve access channels and deliver more usable solutions to their clients. And they also need to carefully consider how their own internal structure impacts the way products and services are delivered. The banks that successfully boost engagement and leverage synergies across their organisation will distinguish themselves in the market by introducing a new level of differentiation between providers. We aim to be firmly among them.