

HORIZONS REPORT

### The Best Service Providers for Commercial Banks, 2025

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As commercial banks strive to meet the broad B2B needs of small and medium enterprises, commercial clients, and corporates, they need to seriously up their digital game. This means something totally different and far more complex in the B2B arena. A sexy app does not win the day in commercial banking. Commercial banks must balance foundational modernization initiatives between practical platform solutions and custom builds—all in the name of enabling 360 visibility of working capital and real-time everything. Service provider partners have a critical role to play in enabling this future reality.





### **Elena Christopher**

Chief Strategy Officer and Financial Services Leader, HFS Research

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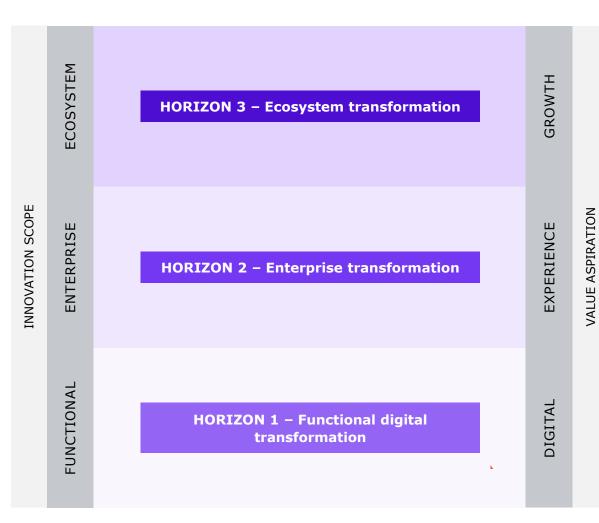


# Introduction and the HFS commercial banking value chain

### Introduction

- Commercial banking customers want a digital experience: Commercial banks own the high-value relationships within their firms, but they must play catch-up with their retail banking siblings, shifting from manual processes and a people-led engagement running on legacy tech to seriously up their digital CX game. The competition is intense, with commercial clients diversifying their relationships across banking institutions and non-bank lenders and nimble fintechs gaining ground. Congruent priorities around customer experience, new business models, and enablement of better business transactions necessitate modernization to secure the bank's future—goals that commercial banks can achieve with the help of their service provider partners.
- HFS Horizons: The Best Service Providers for Commercial Banks, 2025 report assesses how well service providers help commercial banks across the globe embrace innovation and realize value across <u>three distinct Horizons</u>.
  - Horizon 1 is functional digital transformation: The ability to drive digitized processes to improve business outcomes such as cost reduction, speed, and efficiency across elements of the commercial banking value chain.
  - Horizon 2 is enterprise transformation: Horizon 1 + enablement of the OneOffice model of end-to-end organizational alignment across the front, middle, and back offices to drive unmatched stakeholder experience and enterprise modernization.
  - Horizon 3 is ecosystem transformation: Horizon 2 + ability to drive the OneEcosystem impact via collaboration across multiple organizations with common objectives around driving completely new sources of value.
- The report evaluates the capabilities of 22 service providers across the <u>HFS commercial banking</u> value chain based on a range of dimensions to understand the why, what, how, and so what of their service offerings.
- It highlights the value-based positioning for each participant across the three distinct Horizons. It
  also includes detailed profiles of each service provider, outlining their provider facts, strengths,
  and development opportunities.
- The report is global in scope and offers critical insights for commercial banks, service providers supporting commercial banks, and ecosystem partners.

### **HFS Horizons for commercial banking**



#### Horizon 3–Ecosystem transformation

Horizon 3 service providers demonstrate:

- Horizon 2 + the ability to drive the **OneEcosystem** impact via collaboration across multiple organizations with common objectives around driving completely new sources of value
- Innovation scope at the ecosystem level with the resulting value delivered focused on growth through new business and collaboration models

### **Horizon 2–Enterprise transformation**

Horizon 2 service providers demonstrate:

- Horizon 1 + enablement of the **OneOffice** model of end-to-end organizational alignment across the front, middle, and back offices to drive unmatched stakeholder experience
- Innovation scope at the end-to-end enterprise level with the resulting value delivered focused on enhanced stakeholder experience—inclusive of customers, advisors, partners, and regulators

#### Horizon 1–Functional digital transformation

Horizon 1 service providers demonstrate:

- The ability to drive digitized processes to improve business outcomes such as cost reduction, speed, and efficiency across elements of the commercial banking value chain
- Innovation focus, generally at the function level, with the resulting value focused on the digitization of domain-specific processes

### The HFS commercial banking value chain, 2025

	Commercial banking					
	Deposits	Commercial Lending	Cards and Payments	Treasury Management	Trade Finance	Complementary capabilities
Industry specific	<ul> <li>Customer acquisition and onboarding</li> <li>Customer management and operations</li> <li>Integration and digital platforms</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Asset-based financing</li> <li>Lines of credit</li> <li>Capital financing</li> <li>Origination</li> <li>Underwriting</li> <li>Loan fulfilment</li> <li>Loan servicing</li> <li>Default management</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Card services</li> <li>Payment processing</li> <li>Merchant services</li> <li>Fraud management</li> <li>Infrastructure services</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Payables</li> <li>Receivables</li> <li>Lockbox services</li> <li>Liquidity management</li> <li>Integration and digital platforms</li> <li>Value-added services (for e.g., tax)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Import payable solutions</li> <li>Export receivables solutions</li> <li>Finance solutions (factoring, securitization)</li> <li>Foreign exchange</li> <li>Integration and digital platforms</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Mergers and acquisitions</li> <li>Wealth management/ employee services</li> <li>Industry solutions</li> <li>Corporate banking</li> <li>SMB banking</li> <li>Real estate</li> <li>Investment banking</li> </ul>
	Cross-functional BFS processes					
	Bills and statements	Risk management and mo	onitoring   Regulatory com	pliance   Audit and reporti	ng   Fraud management	Legal   Treasury   ESG
Enabling technologies						
Horizontal	Cloud   GenAI   Predictive analytics   Machine learning   Blockchain   Data platforms   Process automation   Intelligent document processing   SaaS platform-based applications					t processing   SaaS and
	Horizontal business processes					
	Customer care   Human resources   Procurement and sourcing   Finance and accounting   Data management					
	Horizontal IT processes					
	Software engineering   Application development and management   Applications modernization   Cybersecurity   Data modernization   IT operati					ization   IT operations

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### The HFS commercial banking value chain defined

HFS developed the industry value chain concept to graphically depict our understanding of the processes and functions that specific industries engage in to operate their businesses. The industry value chain for commercial banking is a subset of our broader banking and financial services value chain. The elements of the commercial banking value chain include:

### Commercial banking lines of business and functional processes

Deposits, commercial lending, cards and payments, treasury management, trade finance, and complementary capabilities such as investment banking represent the range of unique processes commercial banks undertake to conduct their core business.

### Cross-functional banking processes

Commercial banks have various functions that are industry-specific yet run across all lines of business, such as regulatory compliance, fraud management, and ESG.

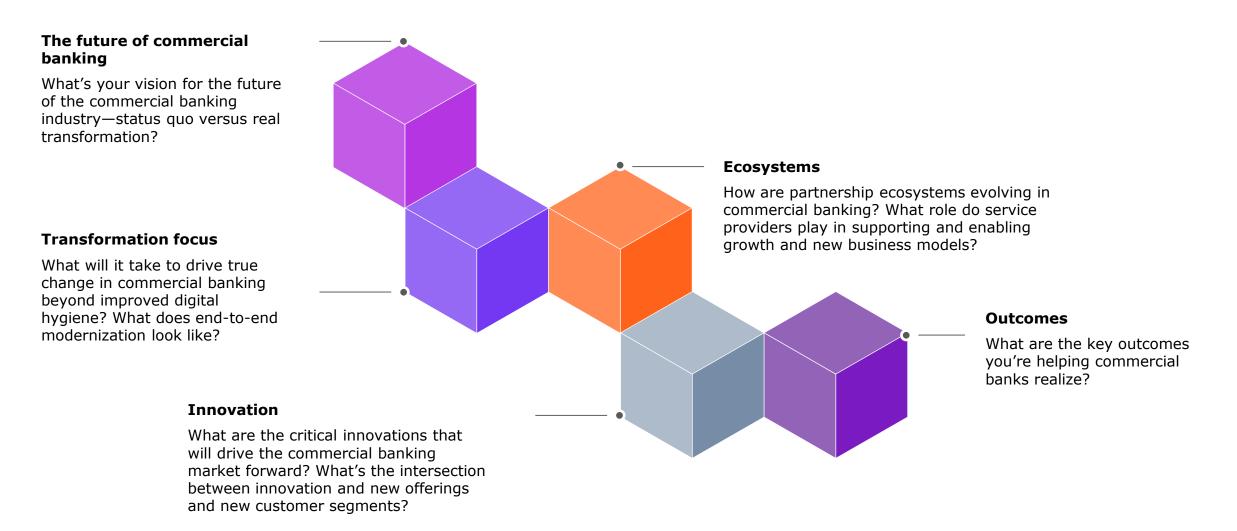
### Enabling technologies

Much of the innovation and change taking place in commercial banking is driven by enabling technologies. They include elements such as cloud, generative AI (GenAI), data platforms, and SaaS and platformbased applications.

### Horizontal IT and business processes

Enterprises in all sectors have a range of consistent business and IT processes that are essential to running their businesses but are executed similarly regardless of the industry. We refer to these as horizontal processes and have segmented them by IT and business functions. Our industryspecific coverage of these areas will focus on instances where something unique has been developed for the industry, such as GenAI-enabled trade finance or commercial lending modernization.

### **Major themes of the Commercial Banking Horizons study**



# Research methodology

The 22 service providers covered in this report



Note: All service providers are listed alphabetically

### **Sources of data**

This Horizons research report relies on myriad data sources to support our methodology and help HFS obtain a well-rounded perspective on the service capabilities of the participating organizations our study covers. Sources are as follows:



### Briefings and information gathering

HFS conducted detailed **briefings** with commercial banking leadership from each vendor.

Each participant submitted a specific set of **supporting information** aligned to the assessment methodology.

### **Reference checks**

We conducted reference checks with **36 active** clients and **29 active** partners of the study participants via surveybased and telephone interviews.



### **HFS Pulse**

Each year, HFS fields multiple demand-side surveys, which include detailed vendor rating questions. For this study, we leveraged our fresh-from-the-field HFS Pulse Study data, which features **225 service provider ratings from banks.** 



### **Other data sources**

**Public information** such as news releases and websites.

### **Ongoing interactions, briefings, virtual events**, etc., with in-scope vendors and their clients and partners.

# Horizons assessment methodology: The best service providers for commercial banks, 2025

This research evaluates the capabilities of service providers across a range of dimensions to understand the **why, what, how**, and **so what** of their service offerings supporting commercial banks. Our assessment is based on input from clients and partners and augmented with analyst perspectives. The following illustrates how we assess your capabilities.

Assessment dimension	Assessment sub-dimension	Horizon 1 service providers	Horizon 2 service providers	Horizon 3 service providers
Value proposition: The Why?	Strategy for the commercial banking market and vision for the future of the industry	Ability to drive digitized processes to improve business outcomes such as	<ul> <li>Horizon 1 + enablement of the "OneOffice" model of end-to-end organizational alignment across the front, middle, and back offices to</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Horizon 2 + ability to drive the "OneEcosystem" impact via collaboration across multiple organizations with common</li> </ul>
(25%)	Offerings aligned to top problem statements for the sector	cost reduction, speed, and efficiency across elements of the commercial		
	Differentiators—why commercial banks work with you banking value chain	drive unmatched stakeholder experience	objectives around driving completely new sources of value	
Execution and innovation	Breadth and depth of services across the commercial banking value chain and associated delivery capabilities	<ul> <li>Functional domain expertise for segments of the commercial banking</li> </ul>		<ul> <li>Comprehensive coverage across the commercial banking value chain and beyond</li> <li>Strong industry-specific talent pool across consulting, IT, and operations domains</li> <li>Comprehensive industry-specific partnerships with strong PX</li> <li>Strong industry-specific IP + JVs</li> </ul>
capabilities: The What?	Strength of industry-specific talent—hiring, training, and ongoing development	<ul> <li>value chain</li> <li>Industry-specific talent focused on key process domains or tech</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Strong industry-specific talent across IT and operations domains</li> <li>Range of industry-specific</li> </ul>	
(25%)	Approach to and strength of ecosystem partners	Focused partnerships and strong PX	partnerships and strong PX	
	Industry-specific technology innovation		Strong industry-specific IP	
Go-to-market strategy:	Nature of investments in your commercial banking business (M&A, non-M&A, R&D)	<ul> <li>Investments aligned to functional digital optimization outcomes</li> <li>Optimization and point solutions</li> <li>Target-focused roles and personas, mid-tier focus, geo-specific</li> </ul>	Horizon 1 + investments aligned to enterprise experience and	<ul> <li>Investments aligned to Horizons 1, 2 + ecosystem enablement and impact</li> <li>Horizon 1, 2 + co-creation with customers and partners</li> <li>Horizon 1, 2 + new value creation</li> <li>C-suite coverage across roles, personas, and geos for tiers 1 and 2</li> </ul>
The How? (25%)	Co-innovation and collaboration approaches with customers and partners, including creative commercial models		<ul> <li>modernization</li> <li>Optimization and end-to-end transformation</li> <li>Target range of roles and personas, tiers 1 and 2, broad geo coverage</li> </ul>	
	Customer targeting approach—roles, segmentation, and geography			
Market impact: The So What?	Scale of commercial banking business—revenue, clients, and headcount	<ul> <li>Proven scale and growth driven by functional digital optimization</li> <li>Top CX and PX marks as an optimization partner across key</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Proven scale and growth driven by Horizon 1 + stakeholder experience</li> </ul>	Top CX and PX mark a global growth
(25%)	Growth of commercial banking business—revenue, clients, and headcount		<ul> <li>Top CX and PX mark an enterprise transformation partner emphasizin</li> </ul>	
	Proven outcomes showcasing value delivered to commercial banks	commercial banking functions	stakeholder experience	
	Voice of the customer			

#### — Distinguishing service provider characteristics



# Executive summary and commercial banking market dynamics

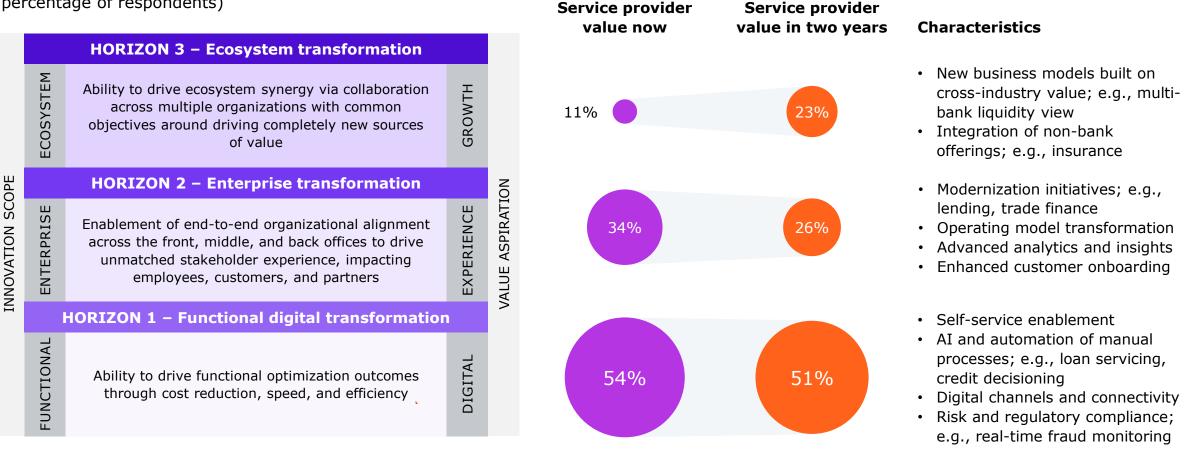
### **Executive summary**

1	Horizon 3 service providers revealed	We assessed <b>22 service providers</b> across their value propositions (the why), execution and innovation capabilities (the what), go-to- market strategy (the how), and market impact criteria (the so what). The <u>seven (7) Horizon 3 leaders</u> are Accenture, Cognizant, Deloitte, EY, HCLTech, Infosys, and TCS in alphabetical order. These service providers have demonstrated their ability to support commercial banks across the journey—from functional digital transformation through enterprise-wide modernization to creating new value through ecosystems. Their shared characteristics include deep industry expertise across the <u>commercial banking value chain</u> , a full-service approach across consulting, IT, and operations, a strong focus on innovation internally and externally with partners, co-innovation with clients and partners, and proven impact and outcomes with commercial banking clients around the world.
2	What commercial banks need from service providers	The HFS Horizons model aligns closely with enterprise maturity. We asked commercial banking leaders interviewed as references for this study to comment on the primary value their IT and business service provider partners deliver today and are expected to deliver in two years. Respondents indicated that the primary value realized today is largely Horizon 1—functional digital transformation focused on digital and optimization outcomes (54%). In two years, the focus will continue on digital and optimization outcomes (51%), as the industry strengthens its digital hygiene to better serve large customers while also expanding to effectively cater to small and medium enterprise (SME) clients. About a third of commercial banks are currently tapping their service providers to support enterprise transformation (34%). While modernization needs abound, this focus will be downplayed in 2025. The biggest value shift in the next two years is to Horizon 3 initiatives. Commercial banks want to leverage their modernization initiatives to help them expand their footprint and increase their relevance to commercial customers with broader liquidity offerings, non-banking services, and other ecosystem plays. Commercial banks must choose their partners based on the value they seek; incumbents may be the convenient choice, but they must demonstrate updated and relevant value.
3	How service providers are meeting the needs of commercial banks	As commercial banks evolve and mature across the Horizons, service providers are on point to support these ever-changing needs. In our study, we found strong alignment between commercial banks' digital and modernization initiatives (Horizons 1 and 2, respectively) and the <u>fastest-growing service offerings from providers</u> . Modernization, CX, and risk and regulatory compliance ranked as the top solutions meeting the needs of commercial banks. Modernization initiatives take many forms, but there is a strong focus on platform implementations for functions such as commercial lending and trade finance. CX in commercial banking is a B2B focus and requires more than great interactions—it includes elements such as faster customer onboarding, real-time payments, better cash management to enable real-time liquidity views, and faster credit decisions for lending. Enhanced customer onboarding was a top case study, as were nCino implementations for lending modernization. Risk and regulatory compliance is perpetual, and there's still work to be done on optimizing these functions, particularly with AI. We see what the incoming American federal government administration has in store for regulations in 2025.

### **Commercial banks prioritize improving digital hygiene to reduce costs,** improve operations, and elevate customer experience

### Which of the following statements best represent the primary value delivered by your service provider today and in the next two years?

(percentage of respondents)



Sample: N = 36 commercial bank respondents Source: HFS Research, 2024

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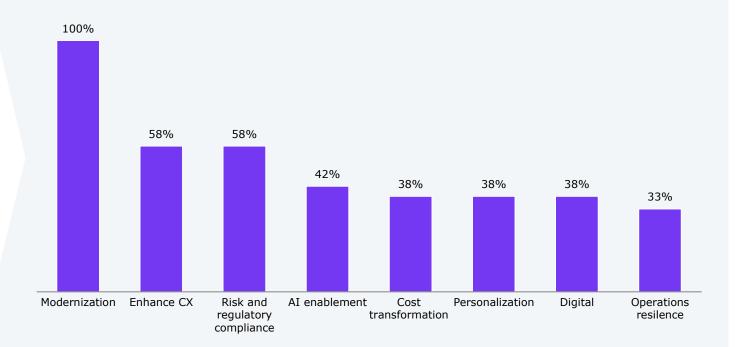
# Service providers respond to the major trends in commercial banks with modernization, tech, and transformation

### Major trends in commercial banks

Macroeconomic Inflation and high interest rates have yielded good news/bad news scenarios in commercial banking. mixed bag The good news has been that there was money to be made in the first rising interest rate economy in the past 15+ years. However, volumes were down as the cost of loans was high. Combine this with the steep competition for deposits, which forced commercial banks to offer attractive interest rates, thinning their net interest margins. CX in Retail banking CX is flashy B2C. In commercial commercial banking, it's a B2B paradigm that requires banking is 365x24x7 capital clarity. Commercial clients want simplified, connected access and straight-through unique transactions. Banks are meeting this need by balancing digitalization with personalized service—using digital tools to enhance in-person interactions, enable self-service, and deliver bestin-class onboarding among others. The 2025 wish list includes 360 liquidity across banks and realtime everything. **Build and buy** No commercial bank wants to build a custom or to modernize highly customized lending platform for treasury or trade finance among other functions. Witness the rise of COTS (commercial off-the-shelf) in commercial banking. However, for modernization needs-where there is no easy platform upgrade—commercial banks are building various digital, API-enabled solutions to extend the functionality of legacy systems that are not ready to be retired.

### Service providers' top commercial banking offerings

What problems are you solving for commercial banks? (open-ended question, percentage of respondents)



Sample: N = 22 providers of services to commercial banks Source: HFS Research, 2024



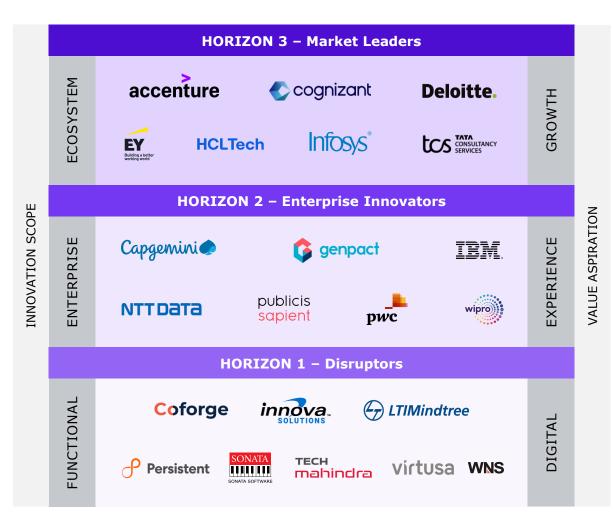
### HFS Horizons: The Best Service Providers for Commercial Banks, 2025 summary of providers assessed in this report

Providers (alphabetical order)	HFS point of view
Accenture	Integrated capabilities to transform end-to-end commercial banking lifecycle
Capgemini	Helping commercial banks modernize and transform, led by core banking and payments with a side of fintech collaboration
Coforge	Enabling commercial banks to modernize, optimize, and comply to embrace digitized business models
Cognizant	Driving enhanced CX and cost optimization in commercial banks through tech modernization
Deloitte	Consulting-led execution focused on helping commercial banks elevate CX and build future-ready capabilities
EY	Strategizing, engaging, and building future operating models for commercial banks
Genpact	Unlocking revenue, efficiency, and CX for commercial banks through data, technology, AI, and operational excellence
HCLTech	Engineering DNA and innovation-led approach help commercial banks enhance CX, reduce costs, and prepare for AI
IBM	Driving business and technology innovation to help commercial banks optimize, grow, and comply
Infosys	An end-to-end transformation partner for commercial banks, helping them modernize and monetize for the future
Innova Solutions	Bringing a solution-led approach to digitally transform commercial banking

Providers (alphabetical order)	HFS point of view		
LTIMindtree	Amplifying commercial banks' core capabilities to drive competitive differentiation and efficiency		
NTT DATA	A newly globalized transformation partner for payments and lending in commercial banking		
Persistent	Bringing engineering excellence to help modernize commercial banking		
Publicis SapientDigital business transformation partner for commercial leveraging its SPEED approach			
PwC         A Big 4 consultancy helping commercial banks overce           tech debt and launch new business models			
Sonata Software	An engineering partner with deep Microsoft experience		
TCS	Driving iterative value realization in commercial banks' transformation journeys		
Tech Mahindra	Leveraging deep tech skills and CX capabilities to help commercial banks of all sizes modernize		
Virtusa	Achieving digital parity with retail banking through platform modernization and enhanced CX for commercial banks		
Wipro	Strategy-led execution to support digital change in commercial banks		
WNS	Bringing domain and digital to help transform commercial banking operations		

Note: All service providers are listed alphabetically

### **HFS Horizons: The Best Service Providers for Commercial Banks, 2025**



#### Horizon 3 is growth through ecosystem transformation

Horizon 3 service providers demonstrate:

- Horizon 2 + the ability to drive the **OneEcosystem** impact via collaboration across multiple organizations with common objectives around driving completely new sources of value
- Innovation scope at the ecosystem level with the resulting value delivered focused on growth through new business and collaboration models

### Horizon 2 is experience through enterprise transformation

Horizon 2 service providers demonstrate:

- Horizon 1 + enablement of the **OneOffice** model of end-to-end organizational alignment across the front, middle, and back offices to drive unmatched stakeholder experience
- Innovation scope at the end-to-end enterprise level with the resulting value delivered focused on enhanced stakeholder experience—inclusive of customers, advisors, partners, and regulators

### Horizon 1 is optimization through functional digital transformation

Horizon 1 service providers demonstrate:

- The ability to drive digitized processes to improve business outcomes such as cost reduction, speed, and efficiency across elements of the commercial banking value chain
- Innovation focus, generally at the function level, with the resulting value focused on the digitization of domain-specific processes

Note: All service providers within a Horizon are listed alphabetically.



### **Cognizant profile: The best service providers for commercial banks, 2025**

### **Cognizant: Driving enhanced CX and cost optimization in commercial banks through tech modernization**

	Strengths	Development opportunities
Market Leader	<ul> <li>Value proposition: Cognizant helps commercial banks enhance CX and cost optimization through technology modernization and innovation, yielding new business models that help the firm expand into markets.</li> <li>Growth proof points: Cognizant's \$1 billion GenAI investment has produced NEURO, a modular AI platform, now skinned for</li> </ul>	• What we'd like to see more of: Cognizant's enhanced advisory capabilities are a solid development, but we'd like to
HORIZON 2 – Enterprise Innovator	<ul> <li>commercial and mid-tier banks. Nearshore investments (Canada, Mexico, and Eastern Europe) enhance its ability to offer cost-effective engineering talent. The firm is expanding in Europe and APAC through deeper partnerships and co-innovation with Temenos. It is also enabling new banking models such as Chello with its platform approach.</li> <li>Key differentiators: Cognizant's focus on ecosystem partnerships delivers platform-based capabilities and assets that enhance CX and cost optimization for commercial banks needing digital hygiene. With its strong BPO expertise, especially in lending, and as a trailblazer for digital, the firm driver experimental and comprise led transformation.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>see more cases where strategic advisory initiates end-to-end transformation deals.</li> <li>What we'd like to see less of: The Cognizant Integrated Commercial Banking Suite is a positive step, but the firm should focus more on delivering tangible</li> </ul>
HORIZON 1 – Disruptor	<ul> <li>for digital, the firm drives operational and experience-led transformation. Its domain consulting supports modernization in areas such as supply chain finance and SMB offerings.</li> <li><b>Outcomes:</b> Notable outcomes include a 30% revenue increase for a Japanese bank's supply chain finance segment through new products such as dynamic discounting. A leading US Midwest bank cut the loan processing time from weeks to days through an end-to-end loan origination and servicing platform.</li> <li><b>Customer kudos:</b> Customers value Cognizant's partnership, accountability, flexibility, culture, and global reach.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Outcomes and proven value beyond the initial promise.</li> <li>Customer critiques: Clients seek innovative ideas and domain-specific thought leadership.</li> </ul>

Clients by major geography	Revenue mix	Mergers and acquisitions (2021–2024)
<ul> <li>North America</li> <li>UK</li> <li>Europe</li> <li>APAC</li> </ul>	Consulting     IT services	<ul> <li>2024: Thirdera, ServiceNow-focused enterprise service management capabilities</li> <li>2022: AustinCSI, premier digital transformation consultancy</li> <li>2021: Devbridge, data engineering and cloud transformation; Magenic Technologies, custom software development; Linium, ServiceNow-focused capabilities; Servian, end-to-end transformation capabilities; Hunter, digital engineering and project management</li> </ul>

Partnerships	Key clients	Global operations and resources	Flagship internal IP
<ul> <li>Cube</li> <li>Fenergo</li> <li>FICO</li> <li>Finastra</li> <li>MuleSoft</li> <li>nCino</li> <li>Plaid</li> <li>ServiceNow</li> <li>Temenos</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Number of commercial banking clients: 120+</li> <li>Key clients:</li> <li>One of the largest financial institutions in the US</li> <li>Leading financial institution in Japan,</li> <li>Leading banks in Denmark, the UAE, Australia</li> <li>Large US regional bank</li> <li>Global financial company in APAC</li> <li>Major commercial bank in the UK</li> </ul>	Commercial banking headcount: 11,500 Number of delivery centers: 100+ Locations of centers by major geos: Innovation labs in San Francisco, Missoula, New York, Riga, Barcelona, Bangalore, Pune, Chennai, London, Berlin, Singapore	<ul> <li>Cognizant Integrated Commercial Banking Suite: Digital banking platform</li> <li>Reference Architecture: BIAN-compliant framework for business capability models, architectural blueprints, API libraries, deployment</li> <li>Bank-in-a-box Platform and One-click Deployment: Pre-configured solution for cloud deployment of ISV platforms</li> <li>Messaging Converter: Versatile ISO20022 adapter that is independent of any specific product</li> <li>Real-Time Payment (RTP) Fraud Prevention</li> <li>Temenos Bluebook: Repository of Temenos implementations toolkits</li> </ul>



### HFS Research authors

### **HFS Research authors**



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Elena Christopher is chief strategy officer for HFS Research. She sets the strategic research focus and agenda for the firm, understanding and predicting the needs of the industry and ensuring HFS's unique "analyst advisory" capabilities drive thoughtprovoking impact across enterprises and their associated emerging technology and services ecosystems. Elena also leads the firm's industry research coverage, with a specialization in banking and financial services.

She brings more than 25 years of technologyenabled IT and business process services expertise to HFS, having served as either an advisor or vendor partner for major clients in industries such as financial services, high-tech, communications, retail, automotive, and energy.



Divya Iyer is a practice leader for HFS Research, leading industry analysis of banking and financial services and covering the intersection of technology, business, and financial services. She works closely with service providers, financial services enterprise clients, and the broader supporting ecosystem to actualize their goal of articulating the business impact and unlocking value in these relationships. In her two decades of experience, Divya has gained expertise in IT and business services and researched emerging and established digital business models, technologies, startups, and business solutions suppliers.

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Niti Jhunjhunwala is a senior analyst for HFS Research. Her coverage areas include banking and financial services and GenAI. She also regularly contributes to competitive intelligence across IT and business process services and the HFS Market Index, a quarterly report that analyses the performance and major developments of top service providers over the past quarter.

Niti joined HFS with more than six years of experience in market research. Previously, she worked with Kantar (a leading data, insights, and consulting company). Her responsibilities included leading end-to-end research studies and delivering client presentations.

## HFS

### **About HFS**

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