

POSitivity)))

berlin

calling



cbdcs, digital euro & stablecoins # ai in payments # new pos experience # new regions & cross - border payments

digital wallets # regulatory vigilance # the future of open banking & open data # b2b payments # innovation hub

Editorial	3
mpe 2024 conference updates	4
Interviews: “diversity & inclusion” speakers & industry experts	8
Interviews: People in merchant payments & talent management	16
Regulation update: Rewriting the Script for European Merchants in 2024	42
2024 predictions by industry experts	44
Industry reports	47

Dear POSitivity readers!

We are just a few weeks before we meet at the mpe 2024 conference, and we can't wait to see you at our biggest community event. We are happy to bring you hot conference news, program recommendations & community insights.

The world of merchant payments is changing rapidly, and we no longer see it as monochromatic and dull. mpe 2024 conference agenda reflects these changes and transforms them into new colours. Check out the new colours of mpe agenda in the POSitivity magazine and get ready for a more colourful experience this year!

The new issue of POSitivity is focused on the core asset of payment companies: human capital, which is not merely a labour input; people are the payment company's core asset.

We are bringing you interviews with our community experts to help you better understand new HR trends. You will learn more about the current challenges, like how hybrid workspace impacts people management. By reading this section, you will learn from other industry peers their tips and advice on attracting and retaining talent more effectively. We will discuss this topic in detail at the mpe 2024 conference if you want to learn more.

Get cosy, grab a cup of your favourite coffee, dive deep into the reading, and enjoy the new information from the world of merchant

payments.

We are looking forward to meeting you all in Berlin! soon

Warm regards,

Natalia Ivanis



**Like our magazine?
Share it!**

**Follow us on social media for
more updates & news about mpe
conference & community**



What's new at the **mpe 2024** conference?

Hotel - closed to the public!

InterContinental Berlin is the event venue exclusively reserved for mpe 2024; thus, only registered participants can make room reservations. >>> [Make a hotel room reservation.](#)



Hot off the press... agenda & colours of mpe 2024

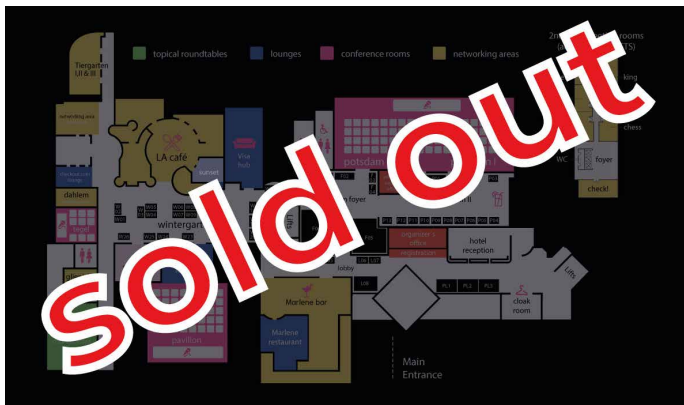
- **An unparalleled perspective:** delivered by a diverse group of senior-level industry experts.
- **High-quality talks:** covering every angle of merchant payments.
- **Fresh insights:** a majority of speakers are new to mpe.
- **A trusted source of innovative ideas** and inspiration for your business.

[Check the mpe 2024 agenda](#)

mpe tip! The 2024 program is featuring brilliant speakers & minds! Don't miss the chance to meet and learn from amazing speakers. [See the whole list of speakers confirmed so far!](#)

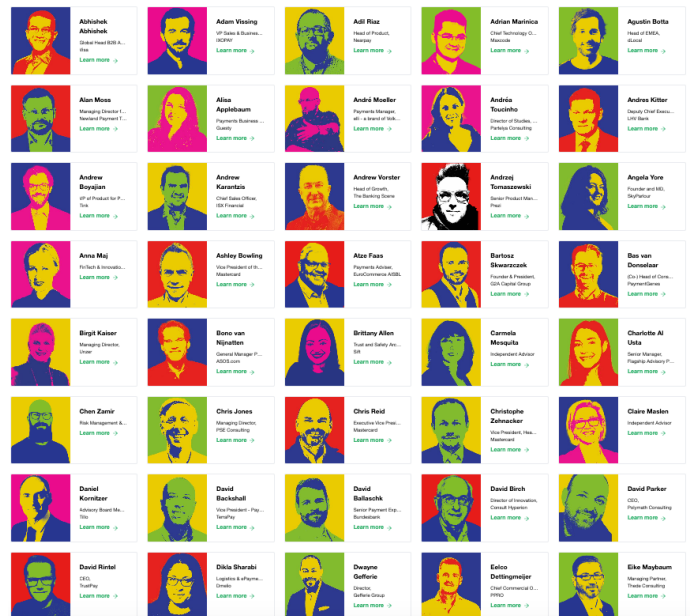
Exhibition sold out!

Over 88 merchant payment leaders & trend setters SAY YES to mpe 2024.



[see the full list of sponsors here!](#)

[see the full list of participants here!](#)



Merchant-hosted program SOLD OUT!

The entire European merchant payments ecosystem will be at the mpe 2024 in Berlin!



Chair invitation to mpe 2024

Watch our famous moderators, Dave and Anna, explaining why you can't afford to miss it



[merchants/brands confirmed to participate @ mpe 2024](#)

Side & community program @ mpe 2024

mpe 2024 makes it easier for you to connect with the right people from our ecosystem. You'd be able to network & relax according to your preferences and meet your community. Explore our new fun, community & networking options... and make **your dopamine menu!**

starters - day 1

energy: topical roundtables: free networking based on topic of interest! Between 6:00 - 7:00 pm, roundtables will be moderated by industry experts!

Topics:

- 'people in payments - career advice'
- 'diversity & inclusion'
- 'payment optimisation & orchestration'
- regulation, PSD2 & SCA'
- 'open banking'
- 'alternative payment methods'
- 'fraud prevention & security'
- 'retail payments & POS'
- 'cross-border payments & emerging markets'

new experience: fireside chat 'marketing to merchants'

■ **happy hour** drinks in marlene bar. Sponsored by Trustly.

■ **evening networking:** networking dinner & cocktail reception!

main course - day 2

■ **sport: 5K run**

■ **meditation & sound bath:** good morning, mpe - a soothing sound bath to set your day

■ **community: diversity & inclusion** - meet powerful women, breakfast & fireside chat

■ **energy:** topical roundtables: free networking based on topic of interest!
Between 6:00 - 7:00 pm, roundtables will be moderated by industry experts!

Topics:

'people in payments - career advice'

'diversity & inclusion'

'payment optimisation & orchestration'

regulation, PSD2 & SCA'

'open banking'

'alternative payment methods'

'fraud prevention & security'

'retail payments & POS'

'cross-border payments & emerging markets'

■ **new experience:** fireside chat: 'getting noticed by investors'

■ **happy hour** drinks in marlene bar. Sponsored by Trustly.

■ **evening networking:** pre-awards cocktail reception

■ **specials:** mpe awards ceremony & gala dinner. Celebration of the best of the best in merchant payments.

dessert - day 3

■ **meditation & sound bath:** good morning, mpe - a soothing sound bath to set your day

■ **community: diversity & inclusion** - meet powerful women, breakfast & fireside chat

Registered attendees, for more details & options, check out the program in the conference app!

LHV Bank

**Fueling your
growth** with
our technology

lhv.com

LHV Bank Limited (13180211) is registered in England and Wales, at 1 Angel Court, London, United Kingdom, EC2R 7HJ. Authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and Prudential Regulation Authority under FRN 993767.

LHV

Diversity & inclusion sessions

powered by Unzer & EWPN

We are excited to announce our new program connecting women at #mpe2024, Berlin, March 12-14. And we want you to be a part of this networking, discussion & supportive community!

Across all three conference days, our amazing speakers & industry experts will meet & discuss current diversity & inclusion questions and challenges that need to be fixed in various sessions:

- **topical roundtable** with Melanie Ockerse, board member, EWPN & Svenia Hilbig, Unzer & EWPN, Claire Maslen, NED & payment expert, (day 1)
- **fireside chat** with Claire Maslen, Ugne Buraciene, group CEO, payabl. & Birgit Kaiser, MD, Unzer, (day 2)
- **EWPN networking**, with Melanie Ockerse, board member, EWPN & Svenia Hilbig, Unzer & EWPN ambassador, Germany (day 3)

On day 1, the topical roundtable is an ideal opportunity to meet our moderators, influential women leaders & like-minded peers. Join us in an informal icebreaking networking and raise issues and topics in one-to-one & roundtable group debates.

Get inspiration, insights & valuable lessons directly from influential women leaders Claire Maslen, Ugne Buraciene, & Birgit Kaiser on day 2 in a morning fireside chat & networking breakfast.

Join EWPN on day 3 in a morning networking & breakfast (powered by Unzer). Start your morning with a fresh dose of inspiration, engage with peers & thought leaders, bring home new

connections and foster diversity and inclusion in the merchant payments ecosystem.

Don't miss out on the EWPN partnering event, **"Navigating Transitions in a Unified Commerce Landscape"**, on a pre-conference day, March 11. The EWPN networking event (hosted by Unzer) will dive into the dynamic evolution of retail, examining how the fusion of online and in-store experiences demands innovative, seamless payment solutions. [Register HERE!](#)

Claire Maslen, moderator of D&I Session, fireside chat on day 2, says:

"At MPE 2023, we took time to discuss the importance of creating a desirable environment to work in and explored how the merchant payment ecosystem could attract new and diverse talent. This year we continue to shine a light on the topic of Diversity & Inclusion and welcome active participation in the programme as we explore 'People in Payments'.

Are most diversity and inclusion programmes just ticking the box? Has progress stalled? What role do role models play? And how conscious are we of creating a fairer playing field?

On day 1 we offer all attendees the opportunity to meet our moderators and sponsors in an informal setting with an icebreaker to raise issues or topics for debate.

Then over the course of the mpe event, you will have the opportunity to listen to insight and experience from leaders across the ecosystem and meet our colleagues from the EWPN at diversity & inclusion morning networking session on day 2 & day 3.

Interview with diversity & inclusion speakers

Svenia Hilbig, Senior Technical Key Account Manager @ Unzer

What are the main challenges for women in the merchant payments in 2024?

2024 will bring various challenges, but also opportunities in the payment industry. New regulations, changes, innovations ... In some areas, it will continue to be a male-dominated sector in which women are underrepresented and may have to fight harder for professional dialogue at the same level as others. It takes time for role perceptions to change, but I see us on the right track.



What main challenges did you have to face as a woman evolving in the financial industry?

As a woman in the financial industry, some of the main challenges I've faced include gender bias, limited representation in leadership roles and navigating a traditionally male-dominated environment. Overcoming these challenges requires resilience, determination and actively

seeking out opportunities for growth.

I fondly remember a customer meeting that I attended with two other female colleagues. We were greeted at the door by a surprised male counterpart with "Where have you left your men?". Later, the female decision-maker emphasized that she was very pleased to "finally" have had an all-female team at the table. ;)

In general, however, I experience very positive interactions in the fintech sector as a woman.

What are the most effective ways to leverage a woman's business support network to achieve professional goals?

I know many women who are strong in communication, empathy, and understanding people. If you can then convince with your expertise, being a woman should be only considered an advantage. In my opinion, it's crucial to actively engage in networking activities, maintain an open-minded approach, and confidently articulate professional goals. If you avoid self-imposed limitations and engage proactively within the network, I'm confident that it should lead to greater success in achieving professional goals.

How has the shift towards a remote work culture affected you and other women in merchant payments?

The shift towards remote work has made it harder for women in merchant payments, including myself. In-person interactions, such as entering a room as a woman, making eye-contact, and interpreting body language have been valuable tools for making connections. In remote work life, it's much harder to make a first impression and bond right away in online

meetings.

Given that the merchant payments industry and payment as such are a very people-centered business, it is essential that we not only work remotely but also exchange in real life. In the office, with merchants, at trade fairs and conferences, etc.

Is remote working an opportunity or a threat for women?

In my opinion, remote working presents both opportunities and challenges for women. It offers flexibility and potential for work-life balance but can also lead to isolation and difficulties balancing work with caregiving responsibilities. It's essential to address these challenges to ensure remote work policies are inclusive and supportive of all employees.

What initiatives did your company undertake to keep women in your company?

There are various initiatives to promote and protect diversity. Unzer, a company providing payment and software solutions, is a melting pot of many different cultures, age groups, personalities and even payment sectors - embodying the essence of diversity. Personally, I am delighted that Unzer, as an employer, responded so positively when I proposed getting involved with the European Women Payments Network (EWPN). They not only sent me to the annual conference in Vienna last year but also actively cooperated in hosting an EWPN networking event. I truly appreciate that Unzer took this initiative.

Can you tell us more about the EWPN D&I activities & plans for 2024?

I'll gladly leave this response to Mel. However, I've heard about some exciting plans for 2024. able

Melanie Ockerse, sr. director channel partnerships Europe @ Entersekt - EWPN board

What are the main challenges for women in the merchant payments in 2024?

The strides made towards gender equality within the industry are evident, with an increasing number of women being part of it. However, persistent disparities in wages, senior-level representation, and technical roles underscore the ongoing challenge of achieving true gender equality, all of which is partially driven by gender bias. It remains an ambition rather than a reality. Increasing representation of women on stage and in senior-level positions is crucial as it provides vital role models; after all, "You can't be what you can't see." Additionally, female entrepreneurs continue to face significant hurdles in securing venture capital funding compared to their male counterparts. Research by global fintech think tank findexable (2021) shows that 1.5% (16) of 1,032 best funded private fintech firms globally are founded solely by women and receive just 1% of total fintech venture funding.



What main challenges did you have to face as a woman evolving in the financial industry?

Navigating the financial industry as a woman has presented me with numerous challenges. One recurring obstacle has been the experience of frequently finding myself as the sole woman in professional settings, which can be isolating and exhausting, particularly when contending with the entrenched “Old Boys’ Club” mentality.

Before becoming a mother, I had significant concerns about how starting a family might negatively affect my career. Fortunately, I did not personally encounter big challenges. However, the mere fact that I had such concerns underscores the broader issue. I’m acutely aware of the existence of the motherhood penalty, a challenge faced by many of my female colleagues in the industry. Collectively, we have to take a look at how the fintech industry can evolve to break down the barriers that limit working mothers from fulfilling their career aspirations.

What are the most effective ways to leverage a woman’s business support network to achieve the professional goals?

Leveraging a woman’s business support network can be highly effective in achieving professional goals by providing relevant contacts, expertise, and potential career advancement opportunities. There are various women’s business support networks available, such as the European Women Payment Network (EWPEN) in our industry. My advice is to attend local meet-ups to familiarize yourself with the network’s members and offerings. Depending on your needs, these networks offer benefits such as mentorship programs, skill-sharing opportunities, peer support, and visibility and recognition. However, it’s important to recognize that such networks are a two-way street; to maximize their benefits, you must actively engage with peers, mentors, and other mem-

bers to access resources, support, and opportunities for growth and advancement.

How has the shift towards a remote work culture affected you and other women in merchant payments?

The shift to remote work has brought both advantages and challenges for women in payments. On the positive side, it offers flexibility and accessibility, especially for those with caregiving responsibilities. It can also provide opportunities for women to access job opportunities that may have been geographically inaccessible before. However, it can also lead to feelings of isolation, difficulties in managing work-life balance, and increased stress. Finding solutions to these challenges requires addressing the diverse needs of every individual in the workforce and implementing supportive policies for well-being and professional development in a remote work environment.

Is remote working an opportunity or a threat for women?

Ultimately, whether remote working is viewed as an opportunity or a threat for women depends on various factors including access to resources, supportive policies, individual preferences, circumstances, and company culture, whether it’s remote-first or office-based. Addressing the challenges associated with remote work and implementing strategies to support women’s well-being and professional development can help maximize the opportunities it offers while mitigating potential threats, ensuring that women can thrive in any work environment.

What initiatives did your company undertake to keep women in your company?

Entersekt recognizes that the strength of its workforce lies in the diversity of expertise, personalities, experiences, and approaches among its people. Entersekt has implemented

various programs to foster an inclusive working environment, such as supporting flexible work options, including remote work and flexible hours.

Additionally, Entersekt prioritizes the well-being of its staff, providing well-being programs such as employee assistance programs and paid study leave. Also, Entersekt demonstrates a commitment to diversity and inclusion by supporting all my various activities in this context without hesitation.

Can you tell us more about the EWPN D&I activities & plans for 2024?

In addition to prioritizing gender equality, we are looking into broadening our focus to encompass other aspects of diversity and inclusion beyond gender. To achieve this, we are actively recruiting new members to both the executive and advisory boards who can contribute to shaping this new direction. Some key initiatives include organizing even more in-person networking events (EWPN meet-ups), throughout Europe, and collaborating with event organizers to increase female representation on stage. Furthermore, leveraging the expertise of the many skilled women within our network, we aim to create learning and training opportunities for our members on topics that are relevant for the payments industry.



goal of simplifying commerce. Our team spans a wide spectrum of experience, from veterans who have dedicated over a quarter-century to our mission, to newcomers embarking on their first professional endeavor with us. This blend of perspectives and backgrounds establishes us as a genuine melting pot of ideas and innovation. Despite our diverse composition, we recognize the need for greater gender balance. We have set ourselves the ambitious target of achieving equal representation of women and men in our workforce by 2027. As a company specializing in technology and payments, we understand the challenges ahead. Nevertheless, we are committed to implementing every possible measure to realize this goal.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

Company culture is an elusive concept, one that is not easily defined or developed. At Unzer, it is the people who shape our unique culture. When you come to our Hamburg office, the atmosphere is different, from, let's say, Vienna or Aarhus. And we feel it is a good thing to have some local flair. But of course we all share a commitment to our long-term objectives, our values and our code of conduct that define how we work together. One of these guiding principles is a strong speak-up and

Stefanie Hohenstatt, Vice president, HR @ Unzer

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

At Unzer, we are immensely proud of our culturally diverse workforce that represents 55 nations, all collaborating to achieve our unified

feedback culture, and we have zero tolerance for discrimination or harassment. We pride ourselves on our flat organizational structure, ensuring that every voice is heard and every contribution valued.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

We at Unzer believe in the positive effects of a vivid learning culture. Therefore, our employees have a significant annual budget to spend for learning formats. This year, Unzer plans to implement detailed career paths and expand our existing training programs also for leadership.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

We see a hybrid workplace as a positive development because it allows for much-needed flexibility. At Unzer, we offer our employees the option to work remotely for up to 60% of their time, whether from home or another location. However, we also believe in the importance of personal contact and collaboration, which is why we ask all employees to come to the office two days a week. Face-to-face meetings and the spontaneous conversations that occur over a coffee break are irreplaceable. Plus, enjoying a well-brewed coffee together beats a virtual coffee date any day.

Claire Maslen, independent advisor

What are the main challenges for women in the merchant payments in 2024?

I think the challenges for women are often the same in any industry. Ranging from lack of funding for female founders, to fewer role



models and even feeling your voice isn't heard and suffering from imposter syndrome.

For those who are mothers or carers, restricted hours and time constraints can mean missing out on traditional networking opportunities that might be held out of hours at the end of the day.

What main challenges did you have to face as a woman evolving in the financial industry?

I came through the ranks from a technology perspective and ended up working in payments as an adjacent industry. I learnt from the ground up but on occasion, that meant a lack of understanding of the financial sector and the movement of money. Being an introvert doesn't help that thirst for knowledge – not wanting to embarrass myself by asking the stupid question!

What are the most effective ways to leverage a woman's business support network to achieve the professional goals?

The best piece of advice I was given as a young mother with a senior role was to find other busy mothers and share the load.

How has the shift towards a remote work culture affected you and other women in merchant payments?

This is a really interesting point. The natural in-

clination is to think 'great – freedom from the office grind, less worries about being late for school run/nursing home visits/the daily commute' and we all saw productivity increase during the pandemic. But at what cost? Are we just becoming experts at extending our working hours from 0900-1800 to 0730-2100? It's not easy for many. Women entering the industry after University or straight from college might not have space at home to work comfortably. We can't make a blanket assumption it's the right or wrong thing for everyone.

Is remote working an opportunity or a threat for women?

For me it works. I would not be able to work for multiple clients across different time zones, without working remotely. But it doesn't suit everyone. I still dress for the office (my kitchen table) and schedule breaks for walks/coffee etc otherwise it would be too easy to sit ... and sit ... and sit. All day!

What initiatives did your company undertake to keep women in your company?

I will speak generically here – things that I've been part of previously or seen work for many.

1. Across the board at all levels we need more women. When you have role models in an organization, we know it inspires others to grow within an organization rather than look elsewhere.
2. We need policies to support women at different stages of their careers and their lives – through parenting, dealing with female specific health issues and caring for elderly parents/relatives. Direct action to address the gender paygap is crucial to supporting more women at different stages – taking maternity leave or a sabbatical for menopause health, often means a dent in pension contributions or has an impact on your performance related bonus etc.
3. Cross industry collaboration and sharing of best practice; as mentioned earlier, payments is no different to automotive or law. These are evolving industries that need diverse workforces.
4. Safe spaces to voice opinions – networking opportunities, coaching, mentoring and sponsorship initiatives. Acknowledgement that we're dealing with men and women who are motivated or behave differently.

Join mpe community @ LinkedIn
follow [#mpecosystem](#)
[#mpe](#) [#mpe2024](#)
[#ilovempe](#)

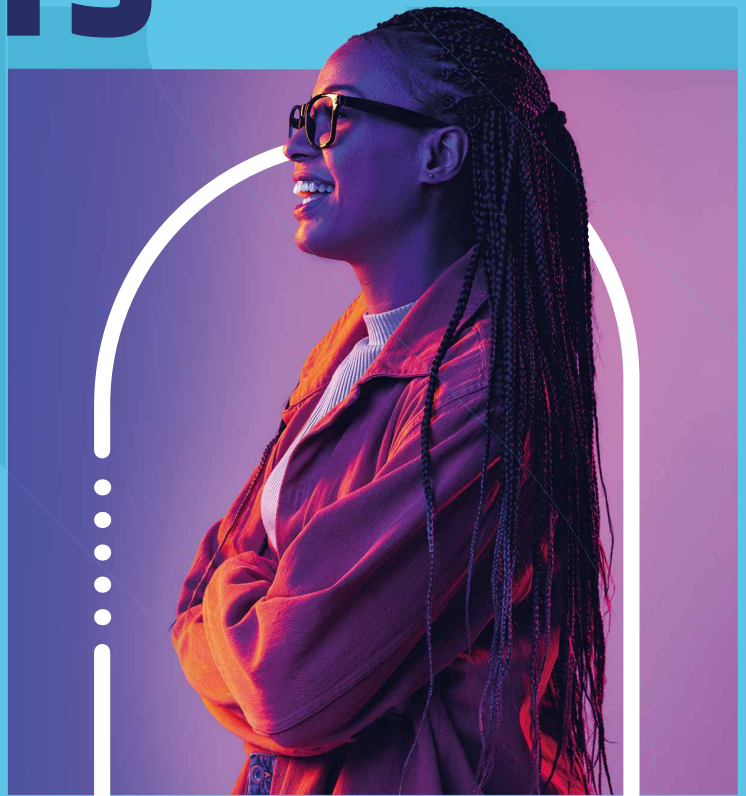


worldpay

We're your **PAYMENTS PEOPLE.**

At the heart of great commerce experiences

No matter the channel, you can take, make and manage payments with Worldpay. We also help merchants optimise authentications, fight fraud, get real-time business insights and more. We're the people-centric payments partner of choice for many of the biggest brands in the world.



30+

**A leading
global acquirer
for 30+ years**

225

markets

135

currencies

40+

**BILLION
transactions
processed
per year**

Let's talk.

Worldpay.com

[linkedin.com/company/worldpay/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/worldpay/)

People in merchant payments & talent management

Navigating Talent Challenges in the Evolving Payment Industry: A 2024 Perspective

By Neill Butcher, Chief Strategy/Expansion Officer, Conexus Group

As we step into 2024, the payments industry is faced with several challenges that have been building over the last decade. The digitalisation of payments has driven incredible advances in technology, and vice versa. Innovations that have transformed the payments landscape offering merchants and their customers convenience, speed and accessibility.

But, as the payments industry has evolved and more players have entered the market, it has become increasingly difficult to compete, innovate and protect consumers and revenues from the risks associated with cybersecurity threats and fraud.

One of the most critical amongst these challenges is the need to acquire and retain talent with the specialised skills demanded by the ever-evolving payments landscape. So, through the lens of talent management, these are the trends to watch.

1. New Tech Skills Required

New technologies, particularly API technology and open banking, are revolutionising payment products, making transactions more efficient and fast. Solutions such as Account-to-Account (A2A) payments cut out the middleman, credit and debit cards, and facilitate direct payments

from a consumer's bank account.

As a result we're seeing increased demand for specialised technical skills, as payments companies invest heavily in talent capable of developing and integrating these innovations. With a finite talent pool of candidates with experience in these technologies, it's a competitive market. Retaining this talent is a challenge, making it vital to offer competitive packages, flexible work models and other enticing benefits.

Over the last few years, we've also seen some strategic acquisitions to obtain these technologies and skills in-house. However, owning your own technology, and the talent to use it, is expensive - as a result there are a growing number of B2B solution providers partnering with payment players. We expect to see this trend of strategic acquisitions and partnerships with B2B solution providers continue, influencing talent acquisition and retention strategies.

2. Demand for Cybersecurity Talent

Innovation is not just confined to technology developments in the payments space. Fraudsters and cybercriminals are also innovating, increasingly leveraging social engineering through tactics such as Authorised Push Payment (APP) fraud.

At the same time, the rise of real-time payments creates more challenges. Fraudulent transactions can't be reversed when they happen in real-time. As the industry increasingly moves towards real-time

payments, finding and retaining cybersecurity talent becomes paramount to combat the evolving threat landscape.

3. Focus on UX Skills and Data Analytics

Customer experience and personalisation are a key trend in the payments space, increasingly the only differentiating factors between different solutions. In this environment, the user experience (UX) and the overall payment journey have become critical for both attracting and retaining new customers for both payments companies and merchants.

Payment companies are also expected to play a pivotal role in providing data and analytics, on customer behaviour and payment trends, helping merchants to personalise offers and enhance the overall customer journey.

We see high demand for UX skills and data analysts, with candidates attracting very competitive salaries.

4. Driving Efficiency to Reduce Payment Costs

Rising interest rates, volatile credit markets and the cost of compliance controls have increased payment costs. Automation is emerging as a solution within payments service providers to drive efficiencies, reduce failed payments and prevent fraud. But automation often rings alarm bells amongst employees, with many equating it with job losses.

Contrary to concerns, automation is more often about optimising human capital, allowing employees to focus on more strategic tasks while automation technology picks up the mundane and time-consuming tasks, and those prone to human error.

Therefore, when introducing automation, I strongly recommend that you implement

some robust change management strategies. Otherwise you risk creating uncertainty amongst your workforce, which can have a detrimental impact on morale and retention.

5. B2B Payments are Taking Centre Stage

The digitalisation of B2B payments has been slow compared to B2C payments, but I expect this to change in 2024. Solutions such as A2A payments are part of this trend, providing merchants with ways to pay suppliers as well as refund or, in sectors such as iGaming and Forex, deposit funds in their customers' accounts.

Merchants are also bringing payments operations in-house to enhance control and customer experience, utilising Corporate Treasury Management Systems and other SaaS platforms. However, the challenge lies in acquiring and retaining skilled talent to implement and manage these technologies and achieve the expected ROI.

Striking a balance between in-house capabilities and third-party providers will be crucial as the focus on B2B payments builds.

6. Account-to-Account payments

A benefit of using Account-to-account (A2A) payments is that it allows money to be transferred with no middle man from one account to another in real time. Meaning a fast and very convenient way and a lot more cost effective than other more traditional bank transfers.

This may not be new technology, however new technology with API's and the shift and adoption into open Banking is providing the infrastructure for A2A payments to thrive. It is expected that there will be rapid growth in this area as there is a wider global adoption of instant digital payment solutions for both Corporate and retail use.

7. Banking-as-a-Service (BaaS)

Transformation is happening within banks, they are revolutionising their payment service operations. By offering real-time payments Capabilities to Customers and Corporates through API's, this allows banks to ultimately become a channel partner who can then re-sell payment routing solutions to its own end customers.

This allows companies to navigate the complexity of payment routing, by providing a comprehensive solution. With an impressive 15% CAGR rate it is expected that there will be strong further adoption over the coming years.

Talent Strategies for 2024

While it remains to be seen whether the trends and challenges above will evolve further, talent management will be key to capitalising or mitigating against them.

My recommendations include building your employer brand, which in turn will help build your talent pipeline; proactive skills development to increase internal capabilities, as well as improving talent acquisition and retention; and developing strategic partnerships, whether that's with technology or human capital solution providers.

Building Tomorrow's Resilient Payments Teams

By Lusatsin Ghazelyan PCN

It's no secret that the payments landscape is changing rapidly, with digital transformation, workforce diversity and AI playing pivotal roles in shaping the future of the industry. In this article, we will look at some of the key questions surrounding the industry trends and challenges in the area of talent management and hiring.

Bridging the Digital Skills Gap

The digital skills gap surely remains a key challenge for payments companies striving for growth and innovation in 2024. Embracing a diverse workforce is both a moral responsibility and a strategic step to future-proof against the gap. Diverse teams offer a range of perspectives and skills that can be crucial for solving complex problems and fostering innovation.

Overcoming Barriers to Workforce Diversity

Despite the increasing recognition of the importance of diversity and inclusion in teams, creating a diverse workforce is often hindered by numerous barriers. Some of the most common hurdles include unconscious biases in recruitment practices and the lack of representation at leadership levels. Overcoming these obstacles requires proactive measures, such as conducting regular D&I trainings for employees, establishing mentorship programs for supporting underrepresented talent, offering employees more flexibility and as Alex Gessner, one of our recent podcast guests on In Check with Fintech suggested on an episode, introducing diversity as a KPI that companies can measure.

The Role of Company Culture

Success in the payments space does not solely rely on the products and services, but also on the people driving innovation. Therefore, apart from diversity, company culture also plays a critical role in a company's success. A positive and inclusive culture attracts top talent, setting the foundation for future growth, while also creating a motivating environment in which employees feel valued.

Investing in Employee Development

With the ever-evolving technological trends and innovation, it is key for payments companies to continuously invest in employee development programs. This won't only help

the company stay ahead of the competition, ensuring a workforce that is adaptable to the rapidly changing demands of the industry, but it would also create an inspiring culture and retain talent, providing the team opportunities for skill enhancement and career progression.

AI in Learning & Development

Thanks to the current technological advancements, AI's role in Learning and Development (L&D) has also evolved. Leveraging AI, L&D practitioners can enhance their practices by using the technology to provide tailored learning paths, personalize training programs and identify skill gaps.

However, while the role of AI increases in the L&D landscape, practitioners must also maintain a balance between automation and human interaction. The human side of things remains essential for creating a supporting environment and addressing the unique personal needs of each employee.

By addressing the challenges head-on and strategically using emerging trends to their advantage, payments companies can foster a resilient and forward-looking workforce capable of driving success in the ever-changing payments landscape.

Interviews

Not only is the payment method landscape challenging, but navigating HR & talent management challenges is one of the most critical topics in the evolving payment industry.

It's a high-value task but not an easy one. So, to help you make better decisions, we decided to ask the community for help. mpe interviewed industry experts & mpe sponsors about this interesting subject and here is what they had to say about it.....enjoy!

Ranjeet Kapur, Global FinTech Lead @ Citi Commercial Bank

How to bridge the digital skills gap with a diverse workforce future proofing growth and innovation?

I think one of the things to always keep in mind is that a diverse work force brings more creativity and different ways of thinking in any organization. So, getting everyone to be the same should not be the goal. But providing everyone access to the same tools should, of course, be the aim for any organization. As different people bring different talents, they will



also bring different familiarity and comfort level with technology. The starting point in bridging any digital skills gap has to be, firstly, knowing which skills are necessary for a particular role and, secondly, understanding where different people are in their journey to acquiring such skills. This gap analysis is fundamental in putting together pathways to getting everyone up to speed in the use of technology and tools. Another important aspect is recognizing that people learn and absorb information in different ways. Thus there has to be an effort to provide access to information, to the learning journey in different ways. Lastly is space and time; giving people the space to explore new emerging areas and ensuring they have time to do so. Both can be handled in a number of ways; avenues of exploration via L&D tools, exposure to experts in the field, access to conferences etc. and time via ensuring that the workforce is able to use part of the workday for such activities.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

At its core, a company's culture is its shared values, behaviours and standards that contribute to creating a work environment focused on excellence and client-centricity. It is as important as having a common goal or core strategy as these are the paving stones to the pathway to achieving success. It is equally important to ensure that a culture does not lead to group think, and that an emphasis on values and behaviours to encourage diversity of thought and ideas are embedded within a company's culture.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

I see employee development being via both formal and informal channels. Of course, there has to be an element of guidance and clear

pathways to different opportunities and career paths with clear guidelines as to what an employee needs to do to get to a certain position or function. An important aspect of this is letting people take charge of their development and career progression. Aligned with this are the intangible opportunities given for growth by encouraging individuals to explore their career interests whether it be in other areas or businesses or geographies.

Another aspect is providing opportunities for development via challenging assignments that allow one to grow and cultivate different skills sets. Mentorship and access to senior managers is one area that I feel is very important for employee development. I have benefited from it in all my jobs and, personally, for me it has been very important that such access is provided by the companies I work for. Lastly feedback loops with managers, co-workers and other stakeholders that allow you to see how others perceive you, what you've done well and what you can improve. At no point in your life will such feedback ever lose value.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

As with any other innovative or different way of doing things, the hybrid working model is presenting challenges to companies as well as creating opportunities to keep the workforce motivated and to bring other areas within reach to find talent that may not have been possible otherwise.

The biggest challenge I see is ensuring culture is not diluted or lost. One way of addressing this risk is by ensuring that people are working collaboratively so that the culture is evident in every interaction. Another challenge that comes to mind is inclusion, it is imperative that teams and groups take an inclusionary approach to each individual in that team and that voices/opinions are heard. This is especially important when you have a mixed team,

partially hybrid and partially in the office. The responsibility sits across stakeholders with the employer, manager and employees. The final challenge is knowledge – how do you ensure that knowledge is not being lost and that more junior members of the team are learning from the interactions that happen organically in an office setting.

There are of course major advantages to hybrid working. The first being the ability to attract a more diverse pool of talent. The second is employee wellbeing and motivation, as the flexibility helps companies retain talent.

How do you see AI fitting into the role of L&D practitioners

As in a number of other fields AI can have a very interesting effect on corporate learning and development, and the practitioners in this space.

The advent of AI will change and evolve many areas of business, and Leadership and Development is no different.

AI practitioners will be able to create more tailored content for the consumers based on their particular style of learning and absorbing material. Thus the same material will be customized in different ways for different people. On top of that I expect AI will allow content creators to be able to create targeted examples and case studies based on the persons job responsibilities allowing them to understand how a particular topic affects them and their field.

Next comes the topic of ensuring material is kept topical and up to date. Right now, I see this as a manual and cumbersome process, but AI could help make that a lot more efficient by directly integrating new developments in the material being presented to the users.

The net effect of all the above on L&D practitioners will be to give them more time to integrate new areas in the learning curriculum plus allow them the flexibility to easily design,

implement and test new training methodologies.

Darja Usatjuka, HR Business Partner @ Ecommpay



How to bridge the digital skills gap with a diverse workforce future proofing growth and innovation?

To bridge the digital skills gap and future-proof growth with a diverse workforce, organisations should prioritise collaborative efforts, value continuous learning, and invest in tailored education and upskilling programs. Creating an inclusive environment that promotes diverse perspectives, particularly in leadership roles, is key to fostering innovation and ensuring sustained growth.

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

One of the most common barriers is unconscious bias. This can be overcome by providing comprehensive diversity and inclusion training to raise awareness of biases and promote

a more inclusive workplace culture. It is crucial to implement transparent and standardised HR processes to mitigate the issue and ensure fair consideration of all employees.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

A company's culture shapes the values, behaviours, and norms within the organisation, influencing how individuals collaborate and work toward common goals. A constructive and clearly articulated culture nurtures a setting in which employees actively participate, feel motivated, and share alignment with the organisation's mission, ultimately leading to improved performance and success.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

We allocate resources for continuous training programs, mentorship opportunities, and skill-building initiatives to ensure our employees have access to the tools and knowledge needed for professional growth. We have an entire learning & development department that was created with the goal of providing our employees with high-quality learning opportunities paid for by the company, with each employee having their own education budget. Additionally, we encourage a learning-oriented environment by supporting continuous education, attending workshops, and participating in industry conferences.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

Ensuring fair treatment of all employees and compliance with regulations is paramount for the organisation. Like many companies, we have hybrid employees who are able to come into the office and partake in a variety of on-site activities and events, however we also have remote workers who may feel left out, and we

need to ensure that this doesn't happen by establishing effective communication channels and figuring out how to involve everyone as much as possible. Additionally, formalised objectives and targets provide employees with a sense of purpose, fostering motivation and progression.

How do you see AI fitting into the role of L&D practitioners?

It makes us smarter and more proactive in all L&D fields. By embracing AI technologies, L&D practitioners have the opportunity to revolutionise the learning experience, making it more adaptive, personalised, and impactful for individual employees and the organisation as a whole.

Stefanie Hohenstatt, Vice president, HR @ Unzer



What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

At Unzer, we are immensely proud of our culturally diverse workforce that represents 55 na-

tions, all collaborating to achieve our unified goal of simplifying commerce. Our team spans a wide spectrum of experience, from veterans who have dedicated over a quarter-century to our mission, to newcomers embarking on their first professional endeavor with us. This blend of perspectives and backgrounds establishes us as a genuine melting pot of ideas and innovation. Despite our diverse composition, we recognize the need for greater gender balance. We have set ourselves the ambitious target of achieving equal representation of women and men in our workforce by 2027. As a company specializing in technology and payments, we understand the challenges ahead. Nevertheless, we are committed to implementing every possible measure to realize this goal.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

Company culture is an elusive concept, one that is not easily defined or developed. At Unzer, it is the people who shape our unique culture. When you come to our Hamburg office, the atmosphere is different, from, let's say, Vienna or Aarhus. And we feel it is a good thing to have some local flair. But of course we all share a commitment to our long-term objectives, our values and our code of conduct that define how we work together. One of these guiding principles is a strong speak-up and feedback culture, and we have zero tolerance for discrimination or harassment. We pride ourselves on our flat organizational structure, ensuring that every voice is heard and every contribution valued.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

We at Unzer believe in the positive effects of a vivid learning culture. Therefore, our employees have a significant annual budget to spend for learning formats. This year, Unzer plans to

implement detailed career paths and expand our existing training programs also for leadership.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

We see a hybrid workplace as a positive development because it allows for much-needed flexibility. At Unzer, we offer our employees the option to work remotely for up to 60% of their time, whether from home or another location. However, we also believe in the importance of personal contact and collaboration, which is why we ask all employees to come to the office two days a week. Face-to-face meetings and the spontaneous conversations that occur over a coffee break are irreplaceable. Plus, enjoying a well-brewed coffee together beats a virtual coffee date any day.

Merav Glesinger Choset, Chief People Officer @ Identiq



How to bridge the digital skills gap with a diverse workforce future proofing growth and innovation?

We strive for a 50/50 gender balance, place

emphasis on empowering women in tech and management roles, and continually work to improve our work environment to be inclusive for less represented populations.

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

Recruiting a diverse workforce can be challenging due to lack of connections, cultural differences, and reliance on traditional application processes. During economic downturn, these barriers are even more challenging to overcome. However, by actively seeking diverse talent through networking and promoting an inclusive culture that appreciates and values cultural differences, these barriers can be overcome.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

Behavioral changes are essential to closing the gap in what's needed to achieve success, equal to the importance of product and go to market. The journey of a young startup is filled with many obstacles along the way, and to overcome this, a strong and positive culture is needed to keep a team committed and passionate.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

Our main strategy is to bring strong managers who serve as mentors and constantly help their teams unleash their potential, which also allows people to grow within the company.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

We have a culture of trust and employees who are committed, which allows us to have a successful hybrid workplace.

How do you see AI fitting into the role of L&D practitioners?

AI is expected to change the role of L&D practitioners, transforming how they operate and perform their tasks. With the utilization of advanced AI tools, L&D practitioners will have the opportunity to enhance accessibility and make learning experiences more engaging for learners.

Erika Sabaliauskaite, Vice President, HR & Finance @ Compass Plus Technologies



How to bridge the digital skills gap with a diverse workforce future proofing growth and innovation?

Bridging the digital skills gap requires a comprehensive approach that considers diversity, continuous learning, and strategic planning. At Compass Plus Technologies, one of the most important parts of our strategy is fostering a learning culture, where we encourage continuous learning and recognise and reward team members who actively seek to grow and acquire new skills.

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

A very common, and often overlooked, barrier is inflexible workplace policies that do not accommodate the increasingly diverse needs of the employees. By offering flexible working arrangements, adopting family-friendly policies, and encouraging work-life balance, companies can create an environment that attracts and welcomes a diverse workforce.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

At Compass Plus Technologies, we strive for the betterment of the payments industry, and our culture plays a key role in this. We embrace the dynamic industry we work in and take great pride in the agility our team has fostered to be able to continuously adapt and innovate, and to turn challenges into opportunities.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

At Compass Plus Technologies, continuous growth is one of our key values. We take a personalised approach to career development and encourage every member of our team to pursue the career path that aligns with their individual ambitions, goals, and talents. Combined with our employee reward program, regular feedback, and open communication, we work to foster a positive work environment that celebrates growth and inspires people.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

Managing financial data securely and adhering to industry regulations are key challenges for payment companies adopting hybrid working models. In order to successfully implement the hybrid workplace, payment companies need to find a way to mitigate heightened cyberse-

curity risks, while fostering effective communication and promoting employee wellbeing.

How do you see AI fitting into the role of L&D practitioners?

AI adoption is becoming more prominent in the L&D strategy, making training more personalised, engaging, and efficient. By analysing data on a large scale, performing skill gap analysis, and predicting future learning needs, AI allows L&D practitioners to shape the strategy and design targeted learning programs to align with business needs.

Vinay Shiriwastaw, Chief
Commercial Officer @
DisputeHelp



How to bridge the digital skills gap with a diverse workforce future proofing growth and innovation?

As an executive you have to dedicate time to soft-recruiting — i.e. recruiting before you actually need talent. By constantly networking and engaging with diverse communities you can stay connected to a high quality recruit-

ment pool with the skills that you need to stay innovative.

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

The most common barrier is finding the right talent. You have your requirements — the skill-sets or experience you need — but that has to align with what's actually out there. Once you're familiar with that talent pool, then you can recruit people based on your D&I goals.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

We built upon the culture of our founders, because it resonates with our clients and partners. Determination, innovation, and an entrepreneurial mindset drove our founders to build the organization we have today. Sharing that cultural affinity with our clients, partners, and staff helps us drive them — and ourselves — to success.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

It's a four-point strategy: Communicate, Educate, Invest, and Reward. Our number-one leadership priority is communication. We want our leadership and our associates to be transparent in everything we do to educate all stakeholders and get their buy-in. We then follow-up by rewarding our people for making those initiatives happen.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

Digitally transmitting our energy and enthusiasm for what we do across the hybrid global workspace is the biggest challenge. Maintaining a cohesive culture and keeping priorities aligned globally without traditional face-to-face relationships puts us in uncharted territo-

ry.

How do you see AI fitting into the role of L&D practitioners?

AI has both active and passive use cases. AI data aggregation can be used to passively enhance initiatives and resources that L&D creates. L&D can also identify and distribute specific AI tools that actively contribute to other work streams such as Operations or Sales.

Robert Kraal, co-founder and CBDO @ Silverflow



How to bridge the digital skills gap with a diverse workforce future proofing growth and innovation?

We've found that having a diverse workforce is how we have bridged the digital skills gap. When you bring people in from different backgrounds you build a diverse skillset for your company.

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

Applicants need to realise that companies like

Silverflow want them to succeed. They might have an idea in their mind of what a developer or executive for a Fintech company is like but, really, we recruit on skills and drive before anything.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

We have an extremely ambitious goal as a company – rewriting the entire payments ecosystem from the ground up. The people we need to succeed in this goal are going to have to be good at what they do, but they need to be better at creating a place where people want to work and where they can excel.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

We've invested heavily in a framework for success. This is set around core values of taking pride in our work, always challenging each other, not stopping until we get things right. This approach has enabled us to attract and retain some of the most talented individuals in the industry because as a company we're challenged every day by both our customers and the fast-paced industry we operate in: Payments.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

For us, this hasn't been a problem. We have meet-ups and company lunches at our Amsterdam offices, but our employees are from and based all around the world, so we have to be able to work as well remotely as we can in a single office. It's not just a benefit to our employees, it's a necessity of running a global business.

How do you see AI fitting into the role of L&D practitioners?

One of the biggest reasons for updating out-

dated payments infrastructure is that it will allow companies to have access to the full spectrum of their payments data. Human operators would never be able to draw relevant insights out of so much information, so AI is going to be vital in turning raw data into profit.

Emilian Stoilkov, CEO & Co-founder @ QaiWare



How to bridge the digital skills gap with a diverse workforce future proofing growth and innovation?

To bridge the digital skills gap and future-proof our growth and innovation at QaiWare, we employ a multifaceted approach. This includes ongoing education initiatives, upskilling, and reskilling programs, starting with the assessment of current skills through our internal performance assessment policy. We continually offer professional development opportunities to keep our workforce's skills aligned with the swiftly evolving technology landscape.

Mentorship and coaching programs have been implemented to facilitate knowledge transfer and skill development, particularly for new team members. The introduction of flexible

work arrangements, including remote options, allows us to attract a diverse talent pool from different geographical locations.

Moreover, we foster a culture of continuous learning, encouraging employees to explore new technologies and acquire additional skills. Investments in learning platforms, workshops, and resources ensure our workforce stays updated on emerging trends. Recognizing and rewarding employees for acquiring new digital skills and contributing to the organization's growth and innovation further solidifies our commitment to addressing the digital skills gap.

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

While the IT sector in Bulgaria doesn't inherently face diversity challenges, some common barriers include bias and stereotypes in recruitment processes and an inflexible workplace culture. To overcome these potential challenges, we maintain a holistic and sustained effort to adapt our strategies based on employee feedback, fostering a more diverse workforce.

Our commitment to transparency is evident in our hiring and promotion processes, ensuring all employees have equal access to opportunities. Mentorship and sponsorship programs are in place to support underrepresented individuals in advancing their careers.

In recruitment, we incorporate blind practices, removing personally identifiable information during initial screenings. Standardized interview questions and panels are implemented to minimize bias.

Additionally, we provide flexible work hours, remote work options, and family-friendly policies, fostering an inclusive and flexible workplace culture that accommodates diverse needs.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

At QaiWare, our culture plays a pivotal role in our success. We cultivate a positive environment where mutual support and assistance are integral to our daily operations. Recognizing and rewarding quality work is at the core of our cultural ethos.

Our supportive culture encourages risk-taking and creates an environment where individuals feel comfortable expressing their ideas. This openness is a catalyst for innovation and creativity, essential for maintaining competitiveness and adapting to change in the fast-paced tech landscape.

Moreover, our employees feel a strong connection to the organization's values and mission. This sense of purpose motivates, satisfies, and instills a deep commitment to their work, fostering a collective drive that significantly contributes to our overall success.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

At QaiWare, our commitment to ongoing employee development is ingrained in our talent management policy. Key components include:

- Comprehensive Training and Development programs focusing on both technical and soft skills relevant to employees' roles.
- Providing opportunities for employees to attend conferences, webinars, and industry events to stay abreast of the latest developments.
- Fostering a culture of knowledge-sharing and collaboration within the organization, encouraging continuous learning.
- Offering clearly defined career paths, enabling employees to set goals for advancement within the organization.
- Conducting regular performance reviews to provide constructive feedback and identify areas for improvement.
- Promoting a growth mindset, encouraging employees to view challenges as opportu-

nities to learn and grow.

- Providing financial support or tuition reimbursement for employees pursuing further education or relevant certifications.
- Recognizing the importance of work-life balance and well-being, maintaining a healthy and motivated workforce.

Through these initiatives, we create an inspiring culture that not only motivates but also retains top-tier talent, ensuring a dynamic and ever-evolving team.”

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

At QaiWare, the hybrid work model is deeply ingrained in our culture, with over 13 years of successful implementation. While we don't perceive any inherent challenges, there is ongoing work to adapt policies for effective hybrid work, including areas such as employee engagement and talent management.

The hybrid model, despite its challenges, presents numerous benefits, including higher productivity and enhanced employee well-being. By leveraging our extensive experience, we navigate these aspects seamlessly, ensuring a harmonious and efficient hybrid work environment for our team.

How do you see AI fitting into the role of L&D practitioners?

At QaiWare, we actively incorporate AI, particularly Learning Management Systems (LLM), into our knowledge management processes. The current utilization focuses on enhancing learning and development initiatives. Looking ahead, we have strategic plans to further extend the application of AI in our Learning and Development (L&D) practices. This includes leveraging AI algorithms for personalized learning paths, adaptive assessments, and continuous improvement mechanisms to ensure our team receives cutting-edge training tailored to individual needs.

Carsten Wengel, CEO @ Netcetera



How to bridge the digital skills gap with a diverse workforce, future-proofing growth and innovation?

At Netcetera, I experience daily what it means to exchange with people from different backgrounds, cultures, religions, and beliefs. Having lived and worked in several different countries throughout my life, I know what it means to feel welcomed. In my experience, a wide mix of backgrounds and embracing diversity are key formulas for success and sustainable growth. We strongly believe in the potential of each of our talents, and that is why we invest a lot through training programs that nurture our workforce's creativity, curiosity and motivation. Horizontal and vertical career paths, as well as selective hiring, are part of our people strategy with the goal to future-proof the innovation and growth of our people, Netcetera and our clients.

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

We are an international business operating

in many countries. We welcome people from different backgrounds, nationalities, religions or beliefs. We are diverse, and that makes us better - together! Embracing this diversity and focusing on it in the hiring process and career path development is our way to remove potential barriers.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

In my role as CEO, I'm committed to continue fostering key values with all Netcetarians, for example, an open and inclusive working environment where people can feel at home, one that appreciates every employee, client, and partner to build something great together. This defines our culture at Netcetera. To do this consistently, we have also established a talented culture team with the mission of developing and nurturing our cultural identity. We will always live and work by our key values and leadership principles. And we will always strive to create a positive atmosphere for everyone, and we will continue to go forward together, knowing that we are not alone.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

We invest time, budget, mentoring and coaching resources into helping our teams grow, and we regularly check with employee surveys where we need to improve.

Our employees are in the driver's seat to steer their careers actively and choose from a wide range of development offers. They use the benefits of our leadership programs, a Technology Switch Program, and are always enabled to master a new field. We stay innovative in offering growth paths to our people and showing unique appreciation for their excellent work.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

Netcetera is a hybrid workplace and has embraced working from home as part of its culture. This has much to do with trust and a willingness to adapt or bring changes that improve processes.

Of course, there are security concerns, varied time zones and maintaining continuous service availability and seamless collaboration that can result from the work-from-home model. Introducing the right security measures and nurturing a collaborative spirit with professionalism above all, helps us overcome those barriers and serve our clients with premium services.

How do you see AI fitting into the role of L&D practitioners?

As technology reshapes the world of work, employers' needs are shifting, too.

AI is the new wave of technological developments here to empower people. In this case, with predictive analysis and real-time problem-solving tools to support the efficiency and effectiveness of learning and development practitioners. It should make it easier for them and support them in creating personalized educational offers and impactful learning programs with enriched learning content.

No....still not finished, more interesting read on the next page after the ad....

Do you want to reduce TCO, drive revenue & retention to maximize LTV?

Managing large merchant portfolios is tough!

Our Direct-to-Merchant communication platform (D2M) helps large PSPs leverage smart-devices to deliver a better merchant experience with real-time, campaign-based, and self-serve messaging and workflows that are proven to reduce costs, increase satisfaction, revenue and retention!

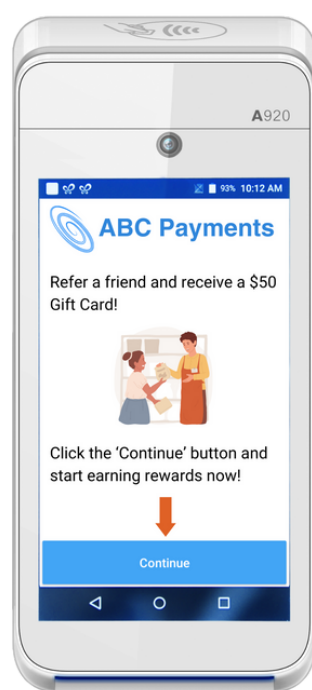
D2M is proven to deliver these benefits - and more!

- ✓ Reduce deployment costs
- ✓ Reduce training and support costs
- ✓ Automate compliance processes
- ✓ Automate maintenance processes
- ✓ Increase merchant referrals
- ✓ Drive upsell/cross-sell VAS
- ✓ Enhanced Merchant and Associate experience

Digital Unboxing



Merchant Referrals



Upsell/Cross-Sell



Self-Serve Help



Stop by booth **W04** or email sales@popcodes to learn more!



Emily Mikaili, Chief People Officer @ Signifyd



How to bridge the digital skills gap with a diverse workforce future-proofing growth and innovation?

To bridge the digital skills gap and future-proof growth and innovation, Signifyd recognises the need to move beyond traditional hiring approaches. We are committed to developing internal programs that build relevant digital skills, creating a best-in-class talent pool and encouraging employee loyalty by providing opportunities for continuous learning and skill enhancement.

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

The key barrier to workforce diversity is the shortage of women and ethnic minorities in STEM fields. To overcome this, companies must invest in initiatives that provide equal access and encouragement to underrepresented groups from early education, while also implementing transparent performance management and promotion processes to address biases in the workplace.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

At Signifyd, our culture is critical to success due to its focus on outcomes over activities, allowing flexibility for employees to achieve work-life balance and deliver their best work. Additionally, our commitment to genuine care and relationships ensures a motivated and engaged workforce, driving optimal performance and growth.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

We've all heard the infamous exchange: CFO asks CEO: "What happens if we invest in developing our people and then they leave us?" CEO: "What happens if we don't, and they stay?" Signifyd takes that ethos to heart. We look at investing in our people, their development, ongoing feedback, and coaching as a requirement, not a "nice to have."

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

Relationship building - as stated previously, having a distributed workforce means there are far fewer organic opportunities for employees to build meaningful relationships and go beyond transactional business needs in their interactions with others. Also, being in our industry means our customers' needs don't sleep - we must be nimble and agile to respond to escalations and provide support at any time, day, or night. Payments companies cannot depend on old-school methods of evaluating performance (how many hours are spent online, rigid work schedules) to drive the right outcomes - they must have trust in their teams to do what is best for the customer and to be flexible in how they achieve that. How do you see AI fitting into the role of L&D practitioners? Above all, the best learning and development happens when experiences are tailored to the

learner's preferences and strengths, and AI allows for more personalized learning experiences that will optimize the value of training activities. AI also allows training programs to be more responsive to a learner's progress, to identify learning gaps and intervene when necessary. Ultimately, AI helps empower traditionally lean L&D teams and the practitioners that lead them to create more bespoke and customized learning experiences that will be most effective and achieve the desired outcomes.

Rudolph Wontumi, SVP,
Human Resources & Corporate
Services, Europe, JCB



How to bridge the digital skills gap with a diverse workforce future proofing growth and innovation?

This requires a detailed planning and implementation process that starts with identifying the skills gap vs the organisation's mission, whilst recognising the diversity of the workforce. Training initiatives must be tailored to address the skills gaps, also accessible via multiple channels and be inclusive of various learn-

ing abilities. Learning targets achieved must be recognized and training content must be periodically reviewed for relevance for now and the future. This will enable the organization create a learning culture where the workforce take ownership of their development, inspired by leadership commitment and investment.

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

Some of the common barriers include unconscious bias, limited diversity in talent acquisition, inadequate inclusivity in work policies and cultures, lack of leadership commitment and accountability to diversity and inclusion and resistance to change. These can be overcome by leadership actively driving the process of change; integrating diversity and inclusion into the organisation's core values, examining their policies and practices to reduce or eliminate bias, continuously education of the workforce and providing equal access to opportunities and development. Regularly assessing their progress, seeking feedback from the workforce and adjusting strategies and policies will enable them to create and sustain a diverse and inclusive workforce.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

Our culture is the DNA that binds us together as colleagues. It is what we collectively believe in and live daily. It serves as a framework for who we are, what we do and how we do it. With these at the heart of our organisation, it enables us to pull together our efforts to achieve our individual and collective goals. Our culture enables us to genuinely showcase our brand values in our interaction with both our internal and external customers. It also serves a positive calling card for attracting top talent into our organization. We gave our culture a boost in 2023 with the launch of our #WeAre-

Omotenashi initiative. This is built on our European brand values of “Truly Connected”, “Completely Trusted”, and “Always Welcome”. This has helped drive our Europe band campaign from inside out. #WeAreOmotenashi is being integrated into every aspect of our employee experience, from employee swag boxes, to learning and development focus and employee recognition and rewards. This is an evolving programme and we know it will strengthen our culture as we roll out more initiatives.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

It starts with having a clear idea about the development needs of the employee and the organisation’s needs. As training funds tend to be limited and employees have different learning styles, it is important to provide a variety of learning opportunities including cross functional training, tutor led courses, workshops, seminars, webinars, online courses, and conferences. Where funds are available, employees must be supported in pursuing relevant certifications and qualifications. It is useful to augment these with mentorship and coaching programmes. Managers must be bought into it so that they can provide opportunities on the job for employees to apply their learning. It is also important that learning and development is recognised and rewarded; both to celebrate attainment and as a boost for career advancement. Each employee has a minimum learning quota per half year, which enables that take ownership of their development, in collaboration with their line managers and HR. This is positively embraced by our employees. Those that attain the highest number of hours of learning are recognised. Our learning platform has been organised to showcase learning that will support employees to demonstrate our core values. These help to create an inspiring learning culture which will motivate and

retains talent.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

Payment companies face the similar challenges that most companies face with hybrid working. These include challenges around onboarding and integrating new starters, team and individual productivity, trust, engagement, and communication. Manager must be equipped with the skills and tools to effectively manage issues related to employee engagement, communication, and performance management in distributed teams. These must be regularly reviewed to ensure that any new issues are highlighted and proactively addressed.

How do you see AI fitting into the role of L&D practitioners?

The integration of AI into L&D, such as the use of machine learning, data analytics, and automation, continues to be a significant trend. It is going to be at core of most learning and development activities in the future. However, the approach of its integration must be done carefully. AI must not be seen as a replacement of human expertise but as a co-pilot. This is crucial to ensuring the design effective and ethical AI-driven learning solutions, which align with an organisation’s goals and values.

...continue reading on the next page....

Carys Richards, EVP, People & Capability, International Markets @ Mastercard



How to bridge the digital skills gap with a diverse workforce future proofing growth and innovation?

At Mastercard we're upskilling and re-skilling our employees through various learning opportunities, including through our internal talent marketplace, Unlocked, that uses AI to match employees to opportunities in short-term projects, mentoring, career paths, and more – based on areas of interest and desired future roles. Unlocked has helped our employees own their careers, building their capabilities to meet business and market demands, while exploring passion projects and investing in themselves.

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

We strongly believe that diverse teams who feel included and valued, lead to better business outcomes. Our focus has been on everyone having a seat at the table and recognizing that diverse perspectives looks different all around the world. That's why we develop pro-

grammes, opportunities, benefits and initiatives that ensure everyone has a seat at the table and feels their voice can be heard. We have found that leadership engagement at all levels of the organization is key to making progress in this area.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

We know that what we deliver is just as critical as how we deliver. Our culture – The Mastercard Way – is comprised of behaviors that we know are critical to our business success. These include; saying what we mean, creating scalable solutions, learning and pivoting, and owning the outcome, and we formally measure and reward our employees on both their ability to deliver on their business objectives, and how they demonstrate our culture.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

At Mastercard, we offer and empower employees with the support and resources to help them 'own their careers' and explore growth and development. We've invested in; building our internal marketplace; expanding our Learning Academies; developing external learning partnerships, including leadership development and professional coaching opportunities; developing robust, relevant, and on-demand learning content.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

We know if done incorrectly hybrid working can be isolating, so we approach hybrid working as a way to provide flexibility without compromising on collaboration and connectivity. We provide leaders and employees with resources, training, and support to promote best practices, and we have a strong partnership with our Employee Digital Experience Team, ensuring we are providing tools and technology that

support a seamless experience for all. We also lean on our people leaders to bring our employees together for the moments that matter (which may look different across teams), helping us to build a strong, hybrid culture.

How do you see AI fitting into the role of L&D practitioners?

We have experienced the benefit of AI in learning and development through our platform Unlocked, which uses AI to match employees to projects, mentorship and career paths, based on areas of expertise and desired growth. We see the value and opportunity in AI helping to curate learning content for our employees, delivering our learning assets to them where and when they need them.

Gregg Aamoth, CEO @ POPcodes, Inc.



How to bridge the digital skills gap with a diverse workforce future proofing growth and innovation?

We see simplicity, flexibility, and personalization as the key to effectively engaging a diverse community of people – whether they are cus-

tomers, partners or employees. Starting with a solid understanding how different technology is perceived and most effectively used by each group creates the foundation needed to deliver a multi-faceted, omnichannel approach to bridging this “experience” gap.

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

The false perception that any individual is inherently more or less capable to contribute to the workforce because of how they fit into a specific group (whether because of their age, sex, race, religion, hobbies, etc.) versus the simple admission that bias is often a result of the workplace itself. Changing the systems and processes in the workplace to reduce the friction for everyone creates an environment that will inherently increase diversity.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

We are creating something that hasn't existed before, a global in-person communication platform for B2B and B2B2C interactions. A diverse, collaborative, and creative organizational culture is essential to delivering the broad range of solutions and services our clients need and the broad range of perspectives is key to identifying opportunities to improve.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

Each employee is given the budget and time for professional development - outside of what's planned for the team. They also have the opportunity to participate in an ESOP program, so they are rewarded when the company succeeds.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

Onboarding new associates and educating them on the many nuances in payments requires a lot of informal knowledge transfer that can be difficult with less frequent in-person interactions. We're also constantly innovating and refining our processes, and with our commitment to collaboration the progress via email and online meetings is more time-consuming.

How do you see AI fitting into the role of L&D practitioners?

AI has the potential to greatly improve the content generation, maintenance and personalization that is difficult for everyone – and especially L&D practitioners – to keep up with. Re-writing and refining content for different audiences, delivery channels, and learning styles seems to be an ideal use of today's AI enabled toolkits.

Gareth Corbishley, Managing Director @ Halo Dot



How to bridge the digital skills gap with a diverse workforce future proofing growth and innovation?

At Halo Dot, we believe in the investment in several e-learning platforms for all members of the workforce to upskill, some at a more technical level than others but for all to have access. Another way to bridge the digital skills gap would be to inform the team who the subject matter experts within the team so that knowledge can transfer through general questions, knowledge share sessions and hackathons.

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

A common barrier to creating a more diverse workforce is a lack of gender diversity in technology and payment spaces. As a relatively male-dominated industry, we at Halo Dot believe that the gender divide can be overcome with dedicated bursaries and programs specifically for women to promote careers in the payments industry.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

Your company culture is what differentiates you from your competitors and plays a role in the retention of the critical skills in your business. A culture of innovation and inclusion leads to people wanting to do their best, consistently which in turn leads you to achieving success in your business.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

We have invested in different e-learning platforms and structures around the individual members of the Halo Dot team, and we strive to communicate our mission and strategy as clearly as possible to ensure continual buy-in. We strive for innovation and connection in the team, ensuring that each member knows their role and how they fit into the grand plan to motivate and retain talent.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

Although remote work is great for output, the opportunity to collaborate, ideate and innovate in a room as a team is often. Team members may not be in the same city, or country, as the barriers to hiring globally are substantially lower now than before, making it difficult for a team to come together and grow. With a hybrid workforce being a new norm for most industries, not just payments, most challenges experienced by companies are similar.

How do you see AI fitting into the role of L&D practitioners?

AI can become a tool that L&D practitioners can use to tailor individual development plans to every member of the organization. Models exist that can be automated to create an individual development plan, monitor progress and recommendations with minimal L&D practitioner intervention.

Christophe Bourbier, Managing Director @ Thunes Collection



How to bridge the digital skills gap with a di-

verse workforce future proofing growth and innovation?

New transformational technology can enable us to be much more productive. At Thunes, we're all entrepreneurial and passionate about learning. We use Slack Channels to share new tools and AI workarounds to deliver high-quality results at pace.

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

Unfortunately, unconscious bias can create homogeneous teams. We hire for gaps, skill sets and strengths that we're missing. Our team is incredibly diverse; we employ people all over the world with highly localised skill sets to operate our expansive payment network in 130 countries.

Why is your culture critical to achieving success?

Getting your culture right is critical to accelerating growth. You need buy-in, a sense of excitement and engagement from your employees. However, it's a two-way street where you must provide a strong employee value proposition to retain the best talent.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

We offer a wide variety of career paths within Thunes that frequently sees employees move between roles and departments. In this way, employees keep learning and stay fresh, and are able to develop long-term careers in payments and fintech.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

Overall, hybrid work arrangements are effective. In a scale-up environment, we need in-person engagement and communication.

However, remote working has a place for better work/life balance and for focus time on specific tasks.

How do you see AI fitting into the role of L&D practitioners?

AI is essential for many different corporate functions, not just L&D. However, it can speed script writing and course development, increase productivity, and lower costs.

Kilian Thalhammer, Managing Director, Global Head of Merchant Solutions - Fintech & Platform Sales @ Deutsche Bank



How to bridge the digital skills gap with a diverse workforce future proofing growth and innovation?

While an evolving and diverse workforce comes with its challenges and requires a targeted approach to address issues and gaps, it also lays out several opportunities that can

help a company thrive into success. Initially, to ensure there is no lack of technical or digital skills, it is important to foster a culture of lifelong learning, with “learning by doing” as the motto, providing a platform which not only enables trainings and learning, but also a space where employees can pitch and share innovative ideas championing collaboration, skill-building and knowledge-sharing. Moreover, leveraging the power and uniqueness of a diverse workforce introduces new ways and perspectives on how to foster agility, bridge the digital skill gap and contribute towards the collective goals. Lastly, being and becoming digital should not simply be seen as a skill, but rather as a mindset setting up the foundations for leadership & growth.

What are the most common barriers to creating a more diverse workforce? How can they be overcome?

Fostering diversity is a continuous and challenging process often hindered by unconscious bias, a lack of belonging or limited access to leadership, where the communication and perception gap between decision makers and target group could result in weakened impact of the desired outcome. To ensure that biases are as little prevalent as possible, it becomes essential to transparently communicate the D&I values and beliefs through the right channels, while providing the right training & development programs and continuously laying out how important it is to celebrate and rely on our differences to foster trust and inclusivity. While it is essential to help foster the right culture and create a strong diversity mindset, it is also important to receive the right support from an external point of view through the right measures, regulations & laws in place enabling faster adaptation times and allowing for a more dynamic environment.

Why is your culture critical to achieving suc-

cess?

An inclusive and up-lifting working environment provides employees with a clear sense of responsibility and purpose. Having the workforce's trust in our values & culture, we are more likely to create an open, supportive and innovative working space to drive creativity and high performance, while putting change & progress at the center of all efforts. Additionally, a diverse & inclusive workplace can help companies to attract and retain talent in a highly competitive market while also enhancing interpersonal skills by inspiring people to closely collaborate with one another.

How do you invest in ongoing employee development to create an inspiring culture that motivates and retains talent?

Operating in a fast-paced and highly competitive environment with continuously evolving trends, it means we also face a continuously evolving workforce eager to learn and reach new heights. Therefore, it is essential to support and invest in our workforce's further development through diverse programs and initiatives such as trainings, mentoring, internal mobility opportunities, career planning, job shadowing, etc. Investing also means enabling more time for creativity and new ideas for the existing work force, by continuously investing into new talents and highly motivated and enthusiastic workforce. Considering the highly competitive market, it becomes fundamental to create a USP through these opportunities to not only empower the skill development, but also recognize and reward talent to ensure low levels of attrition.

What are the biggest challenges payment companies face with a hybrid workplace?

While the hybrid workplace has brought more flexibility, increased productivity and more opportunities for employees to upskill, there are definitely also challenges linked to it. With

employees located across different locations, security perimeters and technology infrastructure are more vulnerable towards cyberattacks and data breaches leading to a need for stronger controls and monitoring in place to ensure meeting all regulatory and compliance requirements. Continuous investment is not only required in better controls and data protection tools, but also in cloud solutions and user-friendly collaboration tools. Additionally, a strong leadership – to steer and guide, and efficient & digital processes – to ensure efficiency, are required for a hybrid workforce to be functional and productive.

How do you see AI fitting into the role of Learning & Development (L&D) practitioners?

Looking into the growing impact of AI in performance, decision-making and upskill, there are several ways that it can enhance the way that companies approach the career development of their employees. For example, AI-powered platforms can tailor personalized learning paths based on performance data or individual needs providing an efficient way for employee to learn new skills and develop skills. Moreover, through AI analysis & real-time feedback individuals or teams can identify areas for improvement in their performance not only enhancing their own capabilities, but also improving overall performance.



berlin
march 12-14, 2024

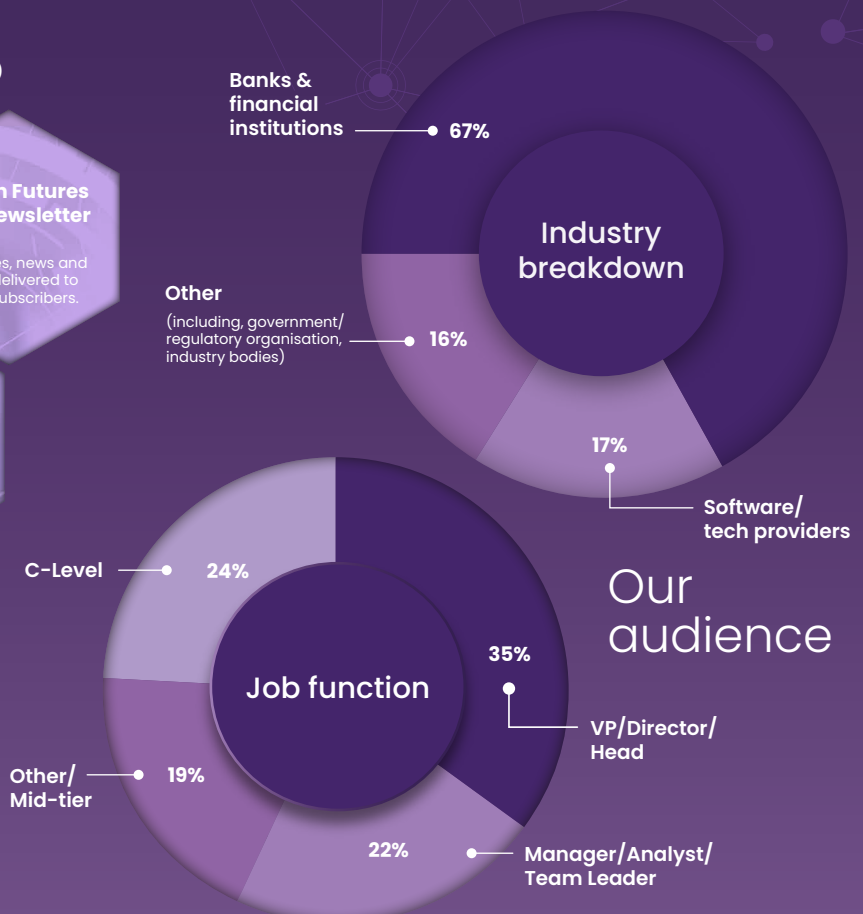
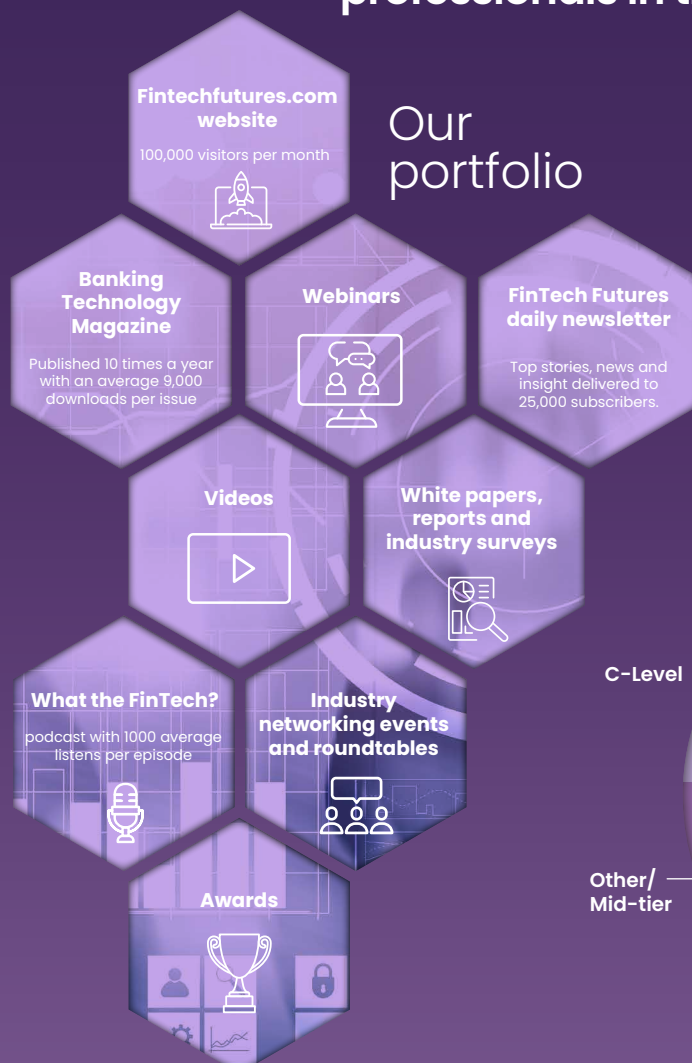
FINTECH FUTURES

fintechfutures.com

in FinTech Futures **X** FinTech_Futures



With over 40 years of media expertise, FinTech Futures is the leading global provider of independent intelligence and insight for professionals in the fintech sector.



We have a range of advertising & sponsorship opportunities available from brand awareness, lead generation, & thought leadership. To find out more, talk to:

Sam Hutton
Head of Sales
sam.hutton@fintechfutures.com
+44 208 052 0434

Kate Stevenson
Business Development Manager
kate.stevenson@fintechfutures.com
+44 782 593 0099

Expert perspective:

Rewriting the Script for European Merchants in 2024

Svetlana Atanasova, Regulatory Lead, Payments Compliance

2024 has just begun, but the landscape of European merchant payments is already undergoing a seismic shift, driven by a wave of EU-driven regulatory changes set to redefine the industry. At Vixio Payments Compliance, we are closely monitoring and reporting on this flurry of activity that promises not only to reshape payment practices, but also to fundamentally alter the playbook for merchants.

One example of this paradigm shift is the Instant Payments Regulation (IPR), which was adopted at first reading by the European Parliament on February 7, 2024. Under the IPR, an instant credit transfer is designed to occur at any time of day or night, with funds reaching the recipient's account within 10 seconds. Additionally, the payer should receive confirmation within the same timeframe regarding the availability of the transferred funds to the intended recipient.

The Parliament's vote exceeding 80 percent of MEPs, overwhelmingly in favour of the IPR, represented the culmination of a narrative that began back in June 2022 when the European Commissioner for Financial Stability, Financial Services, and the Capital Markets Union boldly declared that "instant payments are the new frontier in payments." But what opportunities does the IPR unlock for merchants?

For businesses, including small and medi-

um-sized enterprises (SMEs), the benefits could be substantial in light of this immediate access to money, ranging from enhanced fund management to reduced strain stemming from cash flow challenges. Particularly for smaller merchants and their service providers, a quicker turnaround of funds has the potential to significantly impact their cash flow solvency ratio, offering newfound financial stability and agility in an ever-evolving market landscape. The stakes are high – according to the Commission's 2022 estimates, the IPR will release economic benefits for European businesses in the range of €1.34-1.84bn per year.

Before merchants can fully capitalise on these benefits and others, proactive engagement with payment service providers (PSPs) remains essential. Considering the potential entry into force of certain IPR provisions as early as 2024, depending on the publication date of the final text, merchants should fully understand the implications of these regulatory changes not only for their own operations, but for PSPs as well. They should seek clarification on how their PSPs plan to adapt operationally and ensure compliance, including any adjustments to internal policies, procedures, and contractual agreements.

Merchants may also face potential barriers to seamless movement of funds arising from differences between various jurisdictions, and

regulation update

particularly in EU Member States whose local currency is not the euro. Merchants operating in these countries may face challenges outside of business hours due to the IPR's exemption criteria for PSPs which can provide non-euro denominated instant credit transfers in local currency only up to a certain limit per transaction.

Beyond the IPR, numerous other EU initiatives, including the upcoming third Payment Services Directive (PSD3) and the Payment Services Regulation (PSR), are set to re-shape the payments landscape further, presenting new busi-

ness opportunities. At Vixio PaymentsCompliance, we remain committed to keeping our clients updated and prepared for these regulatory shifts through delivering breaking news, horizon scanning monitoring and in-depth analysis, ensuring they navigate the evolving European and global payments landscape with confidence.

To find out more about Vixio PaymentsCompliance, please visit our webpage at <https://www.vixio.com/payments-compliance>

worldpay

**We're your
PAYMENTS
PEOPLE.**

**At the heart of great
commerce experiences**

No matter the channel, you can take, make and manage payments with Worldpay. We also help merchants optimise authentications, fight fraud, get real-time business insights and more. We're the people-centric payments partner of choice for many of the biggest brands in the world.



Let's talk.
Worldpay.com
linkedin.com/company/worldpay/

Look ahead: The year of collaboration

mpe conference interviewed industry experts & community members to learn what's next in the merchant payments ecosystem (mpe) in 2024. Experts predict that "collaboration" is the new name of the game, and winners will be those who focus on payment experience (PX), are multifunctional or highly specialized and provide VAS-related payments. Let's dive deep into what the experts said.

Ugne Buraciene, Group CEO
@ payabl.



"The world of merchant payments is going through an evolution, almost like a high-stakes match where the usual players - merchants, acquirers, and card networks - are engaged in a strategic struggle for dominance in the payment ecosystem. Despite the familiar faces, the dynamics are constantly changing as each player fights to claim a bigger piece of the profitable payment market. The dynamics within fintech, marked by collabo-

rations among major banks and technology companies, resemble a marketplace model. It's evident that we are transitioning towards a collaborative marketplace ecosystem. In this evolving landscape, companies that excel are those capable of adapting and collaborating seamlessly with various parties, even those they may have previously viewed as competitors.

In this evolving landscape, companies that excel are those capable of adapting and collaborating seamlessly with various parties, even those they may have previously viewed as competitors. They embody a multifunctional approach, participating in the marketplace ecosystem where the best services are selected and packaged for merchants. This adaptability benefits merchants who find it easier to integrate with players they are already connected to. The players that stand out are those that are multifunctional or highly specialized providers.

As we look ahead, I foresee challenges for large acquirers. Their sheer size can actually hold them back from expanding their share of the market, indicating that consolidating companies may not always guarantee long-term success. Their struggle to gain market share and innovate is apparent, given their traditional models that lack the agility of a collaborative marketplace. The difficulty in adapting swiftly to evolving merchant needs may pose challenges for these larger players in the coming year. The market is increasingly favouring flexibility and adaptability, traits that the larger players may find challenging to embrace".

Siamac Rezaiezadeh, VP
Product Marketing and Insights
@ GoCardless



"We're entering a golden era for embedded finance, with larger enterprises getting serious about their payment strategies and the competitive edge it can provide. New GoCardless research has shown that 34% of merchants are proactively planning to consolidate their suppliers over the next 12 months, prioritizing providers who can offer more in one place.

This means the gauntlet has been thrown down with a huge payoff or those who can be first to market with expanded capabilities. Open banking will become more "real" - we'll see organizations across the ecosystem look at what's working, what's not and what's on the cusp of working through 2024. This will mean increased partnership deals with providers seeing to add open banking powered payments; it will mean enterprises starting to get serious about what open banking use cases are right for them; and it will mean beginning to move beyond early adopters and initial use cases, particularly as commercial VRPs begin to trickle out.

Nako Siskov, Principal
Consultant Secure Digital
Payments @ Netcetera



"The year 2024 presents lucrative opportunities for companies prioritizing customization and personalization. It is expected that in 2024, the emphasis will be on accelerating the development and implementation of consistent Click to Pay solutions.

These solutions aim to lower cart abandonment rates and reduce fraud, providing a more seamless and secure alternative to traditional guest checkouts and proprietary wallet-based checkout buttons. A notable shift in perspective is evident among stakeholders, emphasizing the necessity for a highly collaborative and consultative development approach."

Andy McHale, Senior Director
of Product and Market Strategy
@ Spreadly



"In 2024, key players in the merchant payments ecosystem will include Payment Service Providers (PSPs) like PayPal and Stripe, major banks, card networks such as Visa and Mastercard, and payment orchestration platforms like Spreadly. Additionally, e-commerce giants (Amazon, Shopify), fintech start-ups, and mobile wallet providers (Apple Pay, Google Pay) will play significant roles".

Juan Pablo Boccardi, head of fintech and payments industry at Simetrik, commented:

"The merchant payments ecosystem in 2024 is expected to be shaped by a dynamic interplay of established financial institutions, tech giants, and fintech disruptors. Traditional players like Visa, Mastercard, and leading banks will remain influential, while tech innovators such as Apple, Google, and emerging fintech start-ups are poised to play pivotal roles. Collaborations and strategic partnerships between these entities will likely define the competitive landscape, with agile fintech players contributing to the diversification and democratization of payment services."

Ken Serdons, CCO @ Mollie



"In 2024, the key players will be the ones that are closest to the customer, the ones that offer an end-to-end suite of services, and the ones that offer "one app" to run all your finances across your business.

As financial services become more complex, we are seeing a proliferation of companies offering single "point" services. While it's critical to ensure a rich and diverse payment ecosystem, the disparate nature of many offerings creates a hassle for merchants who don't have the time and money to "stitch" them together into a cohesive suite. This is especially true for the underserved SME segment. Today, merchants are looking for a single partner to provide not just payment services but a range of integrated financial services that help them to grow their business."

To learn more about key players, trends, and technologies shaping merchant payments, join the mpe 2024 conference, the leading European event on merchant payments (Berlin, March 12-14).

www.merchantpaymentsecosystem.com

Industry reports

Cross-Border Payments and Ecommerce Report 2023–2024

The fifth edition of the Cross-Border Payments and Ecommerce Report 2023–2024 – Complete Overview of Trends, Developments, and Future Perspectives taps into the fast-growing cross-border market, being the ultimate source of information for businesses interested in expanding globally.

essential. The newest issue of our report brings together subject-matter experts who share industry insights and highlight the challenges and opportunities that the current landscape has opened up.

[Download the report here.](#)



THE PAYPERS

At a time plagued by uncertainty, when business expansion leaves no room for failure, keeping up to date with the latest developments in cross-border ecommerce and payments, leveraging the latest technologies, and forging strategic partnerships becomes es-

Nilson report

Access to the highest caliber information on statistics, news stories and events in the payment card industry is more critical than ever. Top executives know that their personal success as well as that of their company depends on the same thing: high-quality business intelligence.

From the latest in online fraud fighting strategies, biometric checkout for in-store sales, BNPL partnerships, blockchain-based loyalty solutions, POS terminals and more, including annual rankings on your competitors — the Nilson Report is essential reading in the payment industry. Our subscribers in 80+ countries have let us know.

We are pleased to partner with the Merchant Payments Ecosystem to help deliver our information to you.

Attendees of the MPE conference in Berlin (and readers of POSitivity) can download, at no cost and with no obligation, two issues of the Nilson Report that feature comprehensive datasets of interest to anyone in the merchant acquiring business.



Our issue 1250 features a ranking of the 150 largest merchant acquirers worldwide. Issue 1242 features our ranking of the 45 largest mer-

chant acquirers in Europe. We publish these rankings annually. In both issues you will also find the names of dozens of industry executives along with their email addresses, feature articles on a variety of topics and dozens of brief news items that identify partnerships between industry players.

We know that Nilson Report data and reporting can help you and your business. Our 53 years of continuous publication validates our claim. In partnership with MPE we have made it easy for you to know.

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR POSITIVITY READERS! - 2 FREE ISSUES, download them below.

Largest Merchant Acquiring Portfolios Worldwide

https://nilsonreport.com/wp-content/uploads/NilsonReport_Issue1250mpe.pdf

Europe's Top Merchant Acquirers

https://nilsonreport.com/wp-content/uploads/NilsonReport_Issue1242mpe.pdf

We are looking forward to seeing you all at mpe 2024!

Like our magazine? Share it!

**| Get in touch with the team behind
POSitivity magazine**



| Natalia Ivanis

natalia.ivanis@merchantpaymentsecosystem.com



| Filip Rasovsky

filip.rasovsky@merchantpaymentsecosystem.com



| Adriana Rasovska

adriana.rasovska@merchantpaymentsecosystem.com

| Want to talk business?

mpe@merchantpaymentsecosystem.com

| Interested in sponsoring?

spons@merchantpaymentsecosystem.com

**POSitivity is the official digital publication
of © Merchant Payments Ecosystem owned
by Empiria Group. All rights reserved.**

