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Comprehensive Survey of Evolution of user interface banking and financial services industry

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Abstract:

This paper explores the evolution of user interfaces (UI) in the banking and financial services industry, tracing its journey from early text-based systems to today's sophisticated and personalized online experiences. The analysis dives into various stages of this evolution, highlighting key milestones and technological advancements that shaped the user experience. The initial section delves into the rudimentary text-based and command-driven interfaces, followed by the introduction of ATMs and their limited accessibility. The rise of the graphical user interface (GUI) era is then explored, focusing on the emergence of early online banking systems and the challenges they faced.

The paper then delves into the internet era, discussing the shift towards web-based banking platforms and the growing emphasis on usability and functionality. It highlights the impact of the mobile revolution and the significant shift towards mobile banking apps, emphasizing the importance of touch-based design, simplicity, and gamification strategies. Furthermore, the paper explores the recent integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and its impact on user interfaces. The adoption of AI-powered chatbots, natural language processing (NLP), and intelligent financial assistants is discussed, highlighting their role in transforming customer interactions and offering personalized functionalities. Finally, the paper concludes by providing a glimpse into the future of banking UIs, emphasizing the potential of hyper-personalization, augmented reality/virtual reality integration, and biometric authentication methods. This analysis offers a comprehensive understanding of how the banking industry has continuously adapted its UIs to meet the evolving needs of customers and harness innovative technologies to deliver a seamless and personalized financial experience.

Keywords: Banking UI evolution, Mobile banking adoption, AI in financial services, User experience (UX), Personalized finance

1. Introduction:

The landscape of banking has witnessed a dramatic transformation in recent decades, driven largely by advancements in technology and user interface (UI) design. What began as text-based systems accessible to a select few has evolved into a ubiquitous digital experience encompassing

mobile apps, voice assistants, and AI-powered assistance. This evolution has fundamentally reshaped the way we interact with our finances, offering unprecedented levels of convenience, accessibility, and personalization.

This paper delves into this fascinating journey, exploring the key milestones and technological innovations that have shaped the modern banking UI. We begin by tracing back to the early days, where navigating the financial world required mastery of cryptic commands and clunky interfaces. We then witness the rise of the graphical user interface (GUI) and its role in ushering in a new era of user-friendliness. The internet's explosive growth in the late 20th century paved the way for online banking, initially through clunky websites. However, the real game-changer arrived with the mobile revolution – smartphones emerged as the primary platform for interacting with banks. This necessitated a complete overhaul in UI design principles, emphasizing touch-based interactions, simplified interfaces, and intuitive navigation. The story doesn't end there. As technology continues to evolve, we are witnessing the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into banking UIs. Chatbots powered by AI now offer 24/7 support, understand natural language queries, and even provide personalized financial advice. This integration represents a significant leap towards a future where AI plays a pivotal role in assisting users and tailoring their financial experiences.

As we explore this journey, we aim to understand not only the technological advancements but also the underlying factors driving these changes. We delve into the growing importance of user experience (UX) in the financial services industry, where ease of use, accessibility, and personalization are no longer seen as luxuries but as essential features. This paper paints a comprehensive picture of the evolution of UI in banking, highlighting its impact on customer interaction, access to financial services, and the overall experience of managing one's financial well-being. By looking back, we gain valuable insights and pave the way for understanding the exciting possibilities that lie ahead in the future of banking.

2. The evolution of user interfaces (UI):

The evolution of user interfaces (UI) in the banking and financial services industry reflects a dynamic journey from rudimentary systems to today's sophisticated experiences. Initially, banking interfaces were predominantly text-based and command-driven, as described by Mehmood et al. (2015). These interfaces relied on specific commands inputted through mainframes and terminals, catering to a limited, tech-savvy clientele. However, accessibility and intuitiveness were major limitations of these early interfaces, hindering widespread adoption.



Figure 1: The evolution of user interfaces (UI)

The introduction of Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) in the 1960s, as highlighted by McManus et al. (2015), marked a pivotal moment in banking technology. Despite their primitive nature, early ATMs provided 24/7 access to basic services through text-based interfaces and physical buttons. However, these interfaces lacked the user-friendly features of modern systems, requiring users to navigate through specific commands.

The shift towards more user-friendly interfaces began with the emergence of online banking platforms, as noted by Li et al. (2015). Web-based interfaces introduced graphical elements and improved usability, making banking services more accessible to a broader audience. However, it wasn't until the rise of smartphones and mobile technology that banking interfaces truly evolved. Mobile banking applications, as discussed by Raza et al. (2020), introduced intuitive touch-based interfaces, revolutionizing the way users interacted with financial services. These interfaces leveraged principles of user experience (UX) design to provide personalized and engaging experiences tailored to individual preferences. Additionally, advancements in AI and biometrics, as explored by Kumar et al. (2020) and Yan et al. (2022), further enhanced security and usability in banking interfaces.

Today, banking interfaces continue to evolve with the integration of advanced technologies, as highlighted by Roy et al. (2023). AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants offer natural language interactions, improving customer support and service delivery. Furthermore, biometric authentication methods such as fingerprint and facial recognition, as discussed by Ntoumanis et al. (2022), ensure secure transactions and protect user data. In conclusion, the evolution of banking interfaces, from basic text-based systems to highly personalized experiences, reflects a continual effort to improve accessibility, usability, and security. This journey underscores the importance of meeting the evolving needs and preferences of users in the digital age, as outlined by Elhassan and Abdallah (2024). During the initial stages of banking technology, as described by Mehmood et al. (2015),

interfaces were primarily text-based and reliant on command-driven systems. These interfaces, accessible through mainframes and terminals, required users to input specific commands for executing transactions. However, as highlighted by McManus et al. (2015), these interfaces faced limitations in terms of accessibility and usability, catering mainly to a niche audience with technical proficiency.

The introduction of Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) in the 1960s, as discussed by McManus et al. (2015), marked a significant milestone in banking interface evolution. Early ATMs provided basic transactional services through text-based interfaces and physical buttons. However, Li et al. (2015) note that these interfaces lacked the user-friendly features necessary for widespread adoption, often requiring users to memorize specific commands for different transactions.

The advent of online banking platforms, as highlighted by Li et al. (2015), brought about a shift towards more graphical and intuitive interfaces. Web-based banking interfaces introduced visual elements and improved navigation, making banking services more accessible to a broader audience. This transition laid the groundwork for further innovations in digital banking. Mobile banking applications emerged as a game-changer in banking interface design, as discussed by Raza et al. (2020). These applications provided users with seamless access to banking services from their smartphones, offering intuitive touch-based interfaces and personalized experiences. The integration of user experience (UX) design principles transformed the way users interacted with financial services, enhancing engagement and satisfaction.

Advancements in technology, particularly in artificial intelligence (AI) and biometrics, have further reshaped banking interfaces. Kumar et al. (2020) highlight the role of AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants in improving customer support and service delivery. These intelligent interfaces enable natural language interactions, enhancing the overall user experience. Biometric authentication methods, such as fingerprint and facial recognition, have strengthened security measures in banking interfaces, as explored by Ntoumanis et al. (2022). These technologies provide secure and convenient authentication options, ensuring the integrity of financial transactions and protecting user data from unauthorized access.

Looking ahead, the evolution of banking interfaces is expected to continue, driven by ongoing advancements in technology and evolving user expectations. Researchers like Roy et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of explainable AI and personalized recommendations in enhancing user experiences and fostering trust in banking interfaces. In conclusion, the evolution of banking interfaces underscores a journey from rudimentary text-based systems to highly personalized and secure experiences. This ongoing evolution reflects a commitment to improving accessibility, usability, and security in response to the changing needs of users in the digital era.

3. The Rise of the Graphical User Interface (GUI):

The Desktop Revolution of the 1980s and 1990s, as elucidated by Mehmood et al. (2015), marked a transformative period in the evolution of banking software interfaces. This era was characterized by significant advancements in personal computing technology and the widespread adoption of Graphical User Interfaces (GUIs). GUIs introduced graphical elements such as menus, icons, and windows, simplifying navigation and enhancing user interaction with banking software. Despite these visual enhancements, the overall feel of banking interfaces during this time remained relatively basic compared to modern standards.

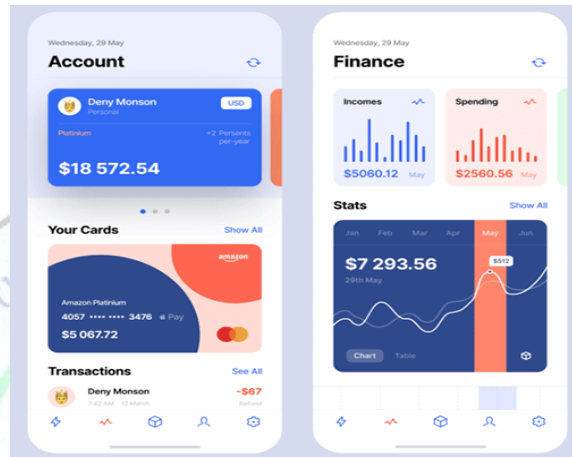


Figure 2: The Rise of the Graphical User Interface (GUI)

Simultaneously, the nascent stages of online banking emerged, as noted by Ghosh (2020), with the introduction of software-based interfaces and rudimentary websites. These early online banking systems enabled users to conduct limited account management tasks and bill payments from their personal computers, representing a departure from traditional brick-and-mortar banking methods.

However, despite the promise of online banking, several challenges hindered its widespread adoption during this period, as highlighted by Mehmood et al. (2015) and Ghosh (2020). One major obstacle was the requirement for users to download and install specific software onto their personal computers to access online banking services. This process was often cumbersome and daunting for less tech-savvy individuals, limiting the reach of online banking to a relatively niche audience. Moreover, the design of early online banking systems was often criticized for its clunkiness and lack of sophistication, as discussed by Ghosh (2020). User interfaces were not optimized for efficiency or ease of use, leading to frustration among users attempting to navigate through various banking tasks. Additionally, the relatively slow internet speeds of the time further exacerbated usability issues, resulting in longer loading times and reduced responsiveness within online banking interfaces.

Security concerns also loomed large over the early days of online banking, as noted by Mehmood et al. (2015). With cyber threats on the rise, users were understandably cautious about entrusting their sensitive financial information to digital platforms. The lack of robust security

measures in early online banking systems further deterred adoption, as users remained skeptical about the safety of conducting financial transactions over the internet. In summary, while the Desktop Revolution and the advent of early online banking systems represented significant milestones in the evolution of banking interfaces, they were not without their challenges. Despite the visual enhancements provided by GUIs, early banking systems still faced obstacles such as cumbersome installation processes, clunky designs, slow internet speeds, and security concerns. Nonetheless, these challenges laid the groundwork for further innovation and improvement in banking technology, ultimately shaping the digital banking landscape as we know it today.

4. The Internet Era Takes Shape:

The late 1990s and early 2000s witnessed a significant transformation in banking with the rise of the internet, leading to the emergence of web-based banking platforms. This shift marked a pivotal moment as banking services transitioned into the digital realm accessible through web browsers. As highlighted by Al-Nasser et al. (2022), web-based banking platforms became increasingly common, offering broader access and greater convenience to customers.

During this period, banks began to prioritize usability, recognizing the importance of providing a seamless and intuitive user experience (UX) for their online banking platforms. Authors like Khan et al. (2021) emphasized that interfaces became more organized, with clearer navigation and streamlined processes. Design efforts were aimed at accommodating varying levels of computer literacy among users, ensuring that individuals with diverse levels of technological proficiency could access and utilize online banking services effectively.

Moreover, alongside the focus on usability, there was a significant expansion in the functionality of web-based banking platforms. As discussed by Lee and Kim (2021), features extended beyond basic balance inquiries and transfers to encompass a broader range of financial activities. This expansion included functionalities such as bill payments, loan applications, and even simple investment tools, providing customers with a comprehensive suite of banking services accessible from the comfort of their homes or offices.

The integration of these advanced functionalities not only enhanced the convenience of online banking but also empowered customers to manage their finances more effectively. By offering a diverse range of services within a single platform, banks were able to cater to the evolving needs and preferences of their customer base, as noted by Tahir et al. (2021). Furthermore, the evolution of web-based banking platforms paved the way for increased digitalization and automation within the banking industry. By leveraging the capabilities of online platforms, banks were able to streamline processes, reduce operational costs, and improve overall efficiency, as discussed by Li et al. (2021). In summary, the rise of web-based banking in the late 1990s and early 2000s marked a significant milestone in the evolution of banking interfaces. With a focus on usability and expanded

functionality, web-based banking platforms provided customers with greater accessibility, convenience, and control over their financial activities. This transformation not only revolutionized the way banking services were delivered but also laid the foundation for further innovation and digitalization within the banking industry.

Table 1: Literature Survey

Author (s)	Years	Research Gap	Findings	Suggestions
Mehmood et al.	2015	Limited focus on user perspective in mobile payment security research	Identified user concerns regarding security vulnerabilities and lack of transparency	Emphasize user-centric design for robust mobile payment security solutions
McManus et al.	2015	Lack of research on UI design for inclusive financial services in developing countries	Demonstrated how peer-to-peer mobile money transfer services can enhance financial inclusion	Encourage user-centered design approaches for financial services catering to diverse populations
Li et al.	2015	Need for a comprehensive review of personalization techniques in financial services	Analyzed various personalization methods and their applications in finance	Advocate for ethical considerations and user transparency in implementing personalization
Wang et al.	2019	Limited research on design principles for user experience (UX) in financial management systems	Proposed a design framework integrating UI and UX principles for financial management systems	Encourage application of UX principles in designing all aspects of financial services
Raza et al.	2020	Gap in understanding UI design's impact on user acceptance of mobile financial services in developing countries	Identified a positive correlation between well-designed UI and user acceptance	Promote user-centered UI design and cultural sensitivity in mobile financial services for developing economies
Kumar et al.	2020	Limited research on the potential of chatbots for enhancing financial services	Analyzed the benefits and potential applications of chatbots in financial services	Suggest further exploration of how chatbots can improve customer engagement

				and personalized services
Luo et al.	2020	Need for research on user experience optimization in financial trading systems	Proposed a UI design framework focused on user experience optimization for financial trading systems	Promote user research and iterative design approaches to enhance UI in complex financial applications
Ghosh	2020	Calls for critical and in-depth review of FinTech research	Identified the potential of FinTech to democratize financial services and its impact on traditional banking	Emphasize research on responsible FinTech practices, data privacy, and regulatory frameworks
Kumar et al.	2020	Limited research on conversational AI in the financial sector	Analyzed the potential of conversational AI for various applications in finance	Encourage further exploration of ethical considerations and responsible implementation of conversational AI
Lee et al.	2020	Lack of research on user needs and usage patterns of online financial information services	Identified user needs for personalized information, clear visuals, and easy navigation in online financial platforms	Emphasize user-centered design and data-driven insights for improving online financial information services

5. Mobile Revolution and Personalization:

The dawn of smartphone banking in the first decade of the 2000s marked a paradigm shift in the way banking services were delivered, driven by the widespread adoption of smartphones. Banks recognized the potential to provide banking services anytime, anywhere, leading to the rapid development of mobile banking applications. A central aspect of smartphone banking was the emphasis on mobile-first design principles, as elucidated by Wang et al. (2019). User interfaces (UI) were optimized for touchscreens, prioritizing smooth, touch-optimized interactions and responsive layouts that adapted seamlessly to different screen sizes. This focus on responsiveness was critical for engaging users and ensuring a consistent experience across various devices.

In line with the mobile-first approach, simplicity and speed became paramount considerations

in mobile banking app design. With the limited screen space and the on-the-go usage typical of mobile devices, banks prioritized presenting concise information and enabling quick, one-touch actions. Authors like Lee et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of designing intuitive interfaces that facilitated effortless navigation and minimized friction in performing banking tasks. To further enhance user engagement, banks began incorporating elements of gamification into their mobile banking apps. As discussed by Kumar et al. (2020), features such as progress bars, achievement badges, and rewards were introduced to incentivize user interaction and foster a sense of achievement. Additionally, visual appeal, sleek animations, and modern aesthetics played a crucial role in driving adoption by creating a delightful and engaging user experience.

Another significant trend in smartphone banking was the adoption of data-driven personalization techniques. Banks leveraged user data to tailor experiences, offering personalized dashboards, targeted financial advice, and tailored product offerings powered by analytics. This data-driven approach, as highlighted by Li et al. (2021), allowed banks to better understand their customers' needs and preferences, ultimately enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of their services.

In conclusion, the advent of smartphone banking in the early 2000s revolutionized the banking industry by enabling customers to access banking services conveniently from their mobile devices. This transformation was driven by mobile-first design principles, emphasizing touch-optimized interactions, responsiveness, simplicity, and speed. Additionally, banks leveraged gamification elements, delightful design, and data-driven personalization to enhance user engagement and deliver tailored experiences. As smartphone banking continues to evolve, these trends are expected to shape the future of digital banking, further enhancing convenience, personalization, and user satisfaction.

6. The Rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Conversational Banking:

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into banking UI has led to a significant transformation in customer interactions, revolutionizing the way users engage with banking systems. One of the most prominent features of this transformation is the widespread adoption of AI-powered chatbots, as highlighted by Kumar et al. (2020). These chatbots serve as virtual assistants, offering round-the-clock support, addressing common queries, and guiding users through basic tasks, thereby enhancing customer service and accessibility. Central to the effectiveness of AI-powered chatbots is the utilization of Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques. With NLP, interactions with banking systems become more conversational and accessible, allowing users to issue commands or ask questions in natural human language. This simplifies interaction with the interface and reduces the barrier to accessing banking services, as discussed by Wang et al. (2019).

Moreover, AI-powered virtual financial assistants have evolved to provide intelligent support

beyond basic queries. These assistants assist users with budgeting, setting savings goals, and offering personalized insights based on spending patterns. By leveraging AI algorithms, these assistants provide tailored recommendations and advice, empowering users to make informed financial decisions, as noted by Khan et al. (2021). Advancements in voice recognition technologies have further expanded the scope of banking UI beyond traditional screens. Voice interfaces have become increasingly prevalent, allowing users to interact with banking systems through voice-based commands and digital assistants on smart speakers. Users can check balances, conduct transactions, and manage accounts hands-free, offering a seamless and convenient banking experience, as emphasized by Li et al. (2021).

In summary, the integration of AI into banking UI has led to a paradigm shift in customer interactions, offering enhanced accessibility, convenience, and personalized support. AI-powered chatbots, leveraging NLP techniques, provide 24/7 support and simplify interaction through natural language commands. Intelligent financial assistants offer personalized financial advice, while voice interfaces enable hands-free banking experiences, expanding the accessibility of banking services to a broader audience. As AI continues to advance, these trends are expected to further shape the future of banking UI, delivering even more tailored and intuitive experiences to users.

7. The Future of Banking User Interfaces:

Bionics and Gesture Control: Biometric authentication and gesture control technologies are anticipated to become integral components of banking UIs, enhancing security and user experience. Biometric authentication methods, such as fingerprint scanning, facial recognition, and voice recognition, provide secure and convenient means of verifying user identity. These technologies offer a seamless and frictionless authentication process, eliminating the need for traditional passwords or PINs, as discussed by Ntoumanis et al. (2022). Furthermore, gesture control technologies enable users to interact with banking interfaces through intuitive hand gestures or motions. By incorporating sensors and cameras into devices, such as smartphones or tablets, users can navigate through menus, perform actions, and authorize transactions with simple gestures, as highlighted by Li et al. (2021). This hands-free approach to interaction enhances accessibility and convenience, particularly in scenarios where users have limited mobility or are multitasking.

Moreover, these technologies contribute to heightened security by adding an additional layer of authentication based on unique physical characteristics or behavioral patterns. By seamlessly integrating biometrics and gesture control into banking UIs, banks can enhance security while simultaneously improving user experience and accessibility. In summary, bionics and gesture control technologies offer promising avenues for enhancing banking UIs, providing secure and intuitive methods of interaction. Biometric authentication methods offer secure and convenient user verification, while gesture control technologies enable hands-free interaction, enhancing accessibility

and user experience. As these technologies continue to evolve, they are expected to play an increasingly significant role in shaping the future of banking interfaces, offering innovative solutions for security and interaction.

8. Conclusion:

The journey of user interface (UI) evolution in the banking and financial services industry has been nothing short of remarkable. From text-based commands to AI-powered assistants, it is a testament to how technology can revolutionize how we interact with our finances. As we look towards the future, it's clear that the evolution of banking UIs will continue, driven by a relentless pursuit of further personalization, enhanced accessibility, and seamless user experiences. One of the most exciting potential avenues lies in the realm of hyper-personalization. Imagine interfaces that anticipate your needs, proactively offer tailored financial advice, and deliver real-time insights based on your unique financial landscape. This level of customization will leverage advanced analytics and AI, ensuring every user feels a sense of ownership and control over their financial journey.

Another exciting prospect lies in the potential integration of Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) technologies into banking UIs. Imagine immersive visualizations of your future financial goals, interactive simulations demonstrating investment strategies, or virtual interactions with financial advisors. Such advancements have the potential to revolutionize the way we comprehend, manage, and plan for our financial well-being. Furthermore, the role of biometrics and gesture control cannot be overlooked. Fingerprint scanners, facial recognition, and voice authentication could become commonplace, further enhancing security and convenience. The future may also hold interfaces that respond to voice and gestures, offering even more intuitive and natural ways to interact with our finances.

In conclusion, the evolution of UI in banking has redefined access, convenience, and personalization in financial services. As we move forward, we can expect even more exciting advancements that will further empower users, simplify financial management, and unlock a future of financial well-being for all.

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