MANTL

4 takeaways from

ACQUIRE OR BE ACQUIRED

We spent 4 days in the desert discussing growth strategies with some of the industry's most transformative leaders. These are the top insights we gathered for 2025 and beyond.

1 Profitable growth is the goal

The momentum in the banking industry is shifting from “headwinds” to “tailwinds,” and the general outlook for 2025 is positive.

The industry is poised for growth.

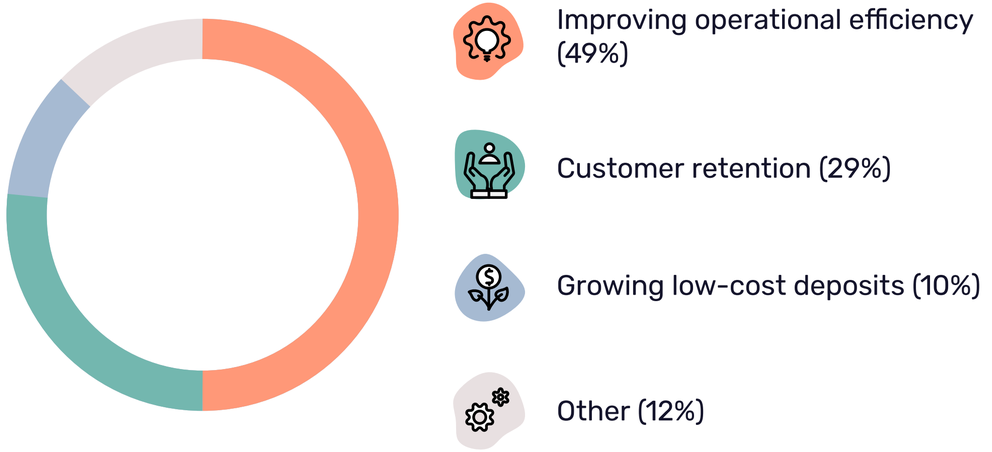
According to KBW, both loan and deposit growth are forecasted to increase from 3% in 2024 to 5% in 2025 and 6% by 2026. However, Al Dominick, Partner at Cornerstone Advisors, cautions, “Growth for the sake of growth is a recipe for potential disaster.” One way to unlock profitable growth is to improve operational efficiency, especially in deposit gathering and new customer onboarding.

According to Bank Directors’ 2024 Technology Survey, improving operational efficiency (49%), attracting and retaining customers (29%), and growing low-cost deposits (10%) are identified as banks’ primary technology objectives.

“Given today’s revenue challenges and elevated labor costs, it’s little surprise to see efficiency as a key driver behind bank investments in technology,” says Emily McCormick, Bank Director’s Vice President of Editorial and Research.

When pursuing profitable growth, Steve Williams, CEO & Founding Partner of Cornerstone Advisors, suggests monitoring operating revenue. “Instead of asset size, banks should quote their operating revenue (net interest income + non-interest income). Very few board members can quote their operating revenue,” said Williams.

Bank’s primary technology objectives



Source: Bank Director’s 2024 Technology Survey

"Smarter banks will need to take inspiration from trailblazer organizations that know how to drive value by leveraging data to make better, faster, and more informed decisions."

— VERITEX COMMUNITY BANK

2 Investments in data architecture are critical

The banking industry is in agreement: access to data is a fundamental requirement for unlocking hyper-efficient growth in 2025.

Veritex Community Bank, a nearly $13B bank headquartered in Texas, cites being data-driven as one of the six pillars of building a Smarter Bank and critical to achieving an efficiency ratio below 58%, a Cornerstone Advisors benchmark of Smart Performers.

Investments in data architecture will lead to organic customer growth. Veritex Community Bank has a robust data intelligence team, including Chief Data & Analytics Officer, data management engineers, business intelligence engineers, and financial analysts, that ensure the bank is well-positioned to manage opportunities and risk. With Business Intelligence dashboards, the bank is managing liquidity, production, credit, customer acquisition trends, earnings, and rate trends in real-time to effectively manage the business and remain nimble.

"In 2025, the concept of leveraging your information in creative ways is going to become even more specific," said Al Dominick.

Just over 50% of banks have Chief Data Officers today, but that number is expected to increase as financial institutions place greater emphasis on prioritizing data and leveraging data-driven insights in years to come.

2 Investments in data architecture are critical cont.

Veritex Community Bank has a long-standing history of strategically leveraging data to optimize deposit raising and marketing spend. Learn how Veritex Community Bank raised over $100M of deposits at 43 basis points per dollar here.

Outcomes generated

$100M

Increased deposits: Acquired over $100M in deposits in three months via the digital channel

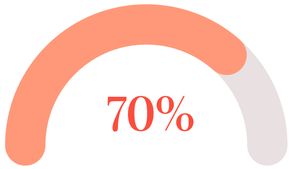
$250 CPA

Improved Cost Per Acquisition (CPA): Reduced CPA two to three times over a 90-day period, resulting in a CPA of $250 in key markets

$84,300

High-value accounts: Average balances for digitally acquired customers of $84,300 post-opening

Sticky customers: A healthy product mix evolved based on the bank's needs and product positioning; nearly 30% of new accounts are high-yield savings accounts with 15% increase in balances post-opening



Increased in-market conversion rate: 70%+ of applications started by customers within their existing footprint led to successfully booked accounts showcasing the high quality of the paid marketing-generated lead

"As competition for commercial and SMB clients increases, the business experience becomes even more critical. Can businesses open an account in less than 10 minutes, so that the valuable time saved can be used for further discovery, relationship building, and cross-sell exploration? Can your bank collect digital signatures from multiple signers in different geographic regions? **Do all of your banking channels work together to create a seamless experience for business owners?**"

Dan Milgrom
Chief Customer Officer
MANTL

3 Unlock the commercial and SMB sector with channel-agnostic experiences

Gathering and retaining small business clients is imperative to banks' longevity and ability to remain competitive. The secret to growing and deepening business relationships in 2025 is providing seamless experiences across every banking channel.

Steve Williams, CEO & Founding Partner of Cornerstone Advisors, said, "A lot of the banks attending AOBA grew up on the relationship manager hustle. We did the shoe leather of shaking hands and being present." But in today's digital world, that experience needs to extend to digital channels.

According to Bank Director, just over half (58%) of banks offer digital deposit account opening for small business customers today. However, simply offering a digital experience will not drive growth if that experience is poor.

"Once someone says 'Yes', how many obstacles are you putting between them to say 'No'?" said Alexander Sulpasso, EVP, Client Experience Officer at GSB, a $1B bank headquartered in Connecticut.

GSB offered online account opening for businesses, but it took over two days to open an account digitally because the process was friction-riddled and cumbersome. GSB digitized its deposit account opening process across every channel, and now businesses can open an account in an average of five minutes online or in-branch.

Streamlined and intuitive experiences helped GSB win business clients: In 2024, GSB raised $50M of commercial deposits and achieved a 9.85/10 customer satisfaction rating, with 98% of new and existing clients willing to refer GSB.

4 Branch technology will be a competitive advantage or strategic liability

As the role of the bank branch continues to evolve, the industry is recognizing that its most traditional service channel has fallen significantly behind the digital transformation curve.

The majority of banks (58%) agree that the branch is equally as important as digital channels to its overall growth strategy.

For the first time in a decade, banks are opening more branches than they are closing," said Nathaniel Harley, co-founder and CEO of MANTL. "As the industry doubles down on bank branches, it's important to remember the technology used in-branch has widespread implications on the customer experience and a bank's ability to scale deposit operations. The key question will be: *how do you serve your customers in an omnichannel world - whether that's at home on their phone, in-branch, or calling into the call center - and seamlessly bridge the experience across all channels to deliver on the promise of relationship banking?"*

Midwest BankCentre, a nearly $3B bank headquartered in St. Louis, with 16 branches, highlighted the importance of modern branch concepts. MBC is embracing technology to operate existing branches more efficiently and expand its branch network to include smaller, more agile physical branches and teams.

"With the right technology in place, you can move towards a universal banker concept where any banker can intuitively open any account type. This was impossible with our complex legacy software, which only allowed specific employees to open specific accounts," said Alexis Hershey, Chief Digital Strategy Officer at Midwest BankCentre. "Additionally, modern branch technology can help improve branch scale and reach. By leveraging ITMs, a single teller can support multiple micro-branches, allowing us to grow our physical network in a cost-effective way. Features like Click-to-Sign and Application Email Handoff support the seamless collaboration between banker and customer, whether sitting in an office together or supporting a customer remotely."

Midwest BankCentre. RISING TOGETHER | GSB The only bank you'll ever need.

About MANTL

MANTL is a financial technology firm offering the industry's first Relationship Banking Platform. MANTL's unified account origination technology empowers banks and credit unions to seamlessly open loan and deposit accounts on any banking channel in real time. MANTL Deposit Origination is among the fastest and most performant solutions on the market; consumers can open a new deposit account in under three minutes, businesses can open a new deposit account in under 10 minutes, and MANTL customers raise billions in core deposits each month. MANTL Loan Origination simplifies each step in the loan process, automating up to 100% of loan application decisions to ensure a smooth, high-quality experience from personal loans to business financing. Founded in 2016, MANTL is a privately held company headquartered in New Jersey with the backing of prominent venture capital investors. For more information, visit mantl.com or follow MANTL on LinkedIn.