

# By ‘personalization,’ customers mean quick, relevant, situational financial advice

Article

**The news:** Banking customers crave seamless digital communication, personalized financial advice, and sometimes a human touch, per a [report](#) from **Sinch**, a Stockholm-based provider

of telecom and cloud communications platform as a service solutions.

The report surveyed 2,900 financial services consumers in over 15 countries during the first half of 2022.

**Key stat:** Nine out of 10 respondents said they want their bank to proactively offer personalized financial advice, but only three in 10 said they currently receive it. Some information that customers said they want include:

- An online tutorial on how to increase their credit score
- An overview of what to expect on their first credit card bill
- A personalized financial assessment that provides information on the right type of education loan
- An interactive home buying guide that covers the process after they apply for a mortgage

**More on the numbers:** Customers are increasingly calling for personalized financial advice, but it's not always clear what that means. Specific examples from this study reveal that they seek financial guidance that aligns with their situational needs.

- **76% want an educational buying guide** based on previous purchases. It seems they want guidance on budgeting and a review of their spending habits to find areas where they can cut costs.
- And customers appear to want more than just a report on their financial situation. **83% want an educational video** based on a recent purchase. This likely signals that customers value an expert human opinion on spending and saving, or at least hearing a human explanation.

A high percentage of respondents also desire a more holistic analysis of their financial situation.

- **73% said they want to receive a digital personalized financial assessment.** But it's unclear what customers calling for a financial assessment want. It's difficult for a bank to give specific financial information scalably.
- And **81% of respondents want a personalized video tour through their financial picture,** indicating that banks can capitalize on a blend of technology and human interaction using video calls.

## Importance of Personalization in Successful Customer Interactions According to Financial Services Executives in North America, Nov 2021

% of respondents

	Very important	Important	Total
Customer acquisition	31%	37%	68%
Customer service	33%	32%	65%
Customer onboarding	30%	33%	62%
Other	24%	29%	53%

Note: n=324

Source: Forrester Consulting in collaboration with Blend, "How Banks Can Unlock Quick Wins and Lasting Benefits Through Smart Personalization," March 24, 2022

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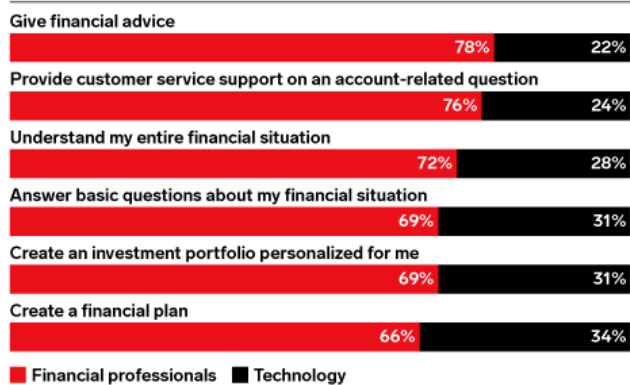
**Quick, mostly digital—but not always:** 98% of respondents said they want their questions answered quickly, and they are willing to accept guidance and advice in new digital ways. 53% of respondents said they are frustrated that they can't respond to mobile text message alerts they receive from their banks. They also indicated that they are comfortable with using text messaging to perform financial tasks like:

- Authorizing a transaction
- Paying a bill
- Responding to banking alerts
- Getting information about financial products
- Completing a loan application

But in complex scenarios or when they're frustrated, 95% of people say it's useful to be able to instantly switch from online chat to a phone call, and 54% said they'd be more comfortable speaking with a human about sensitive financial matters.

## Ability of Financial Professionals vs. Technology to Do Select Tasks Well According to US Investors, June 2021

% of respondents



Note: n=1,000  
Source: Charles Schwab, "Charles Schwab Investing & Technology Survey 2021" conducted by Logica Research, Sep 28, 2021

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**Our take on personalization:** The study provides some examples of what customers are looking for—and it appears to be situational guidance through life events that many people experience, like going to school or buying a home.

- General advice for these situations could be relatively inexpensive to produce and provide, as it can be specific but also scalable. For instance, banks could build a content library to educate customers performing certain financial activities.

But more in-depth personalization remains challenging. Our research report, [Bank CMOs and Personalization](#), discusses how complexity grows with scale, making implementing personalized, hyper-relevant messaging challenging to deliver objectively and quickly. Providing financial advice requires specific qualifications and training, and it usually comes at a cost. Implementing it improperly risks opening the door for liability and customer dissatisfaction.