CEDAR

IBS intelligence
Global FinTech Perspectives

Building a Future-Ready Bank

5 November 2025 W, Muscat

CEDAR-IBSi EVENTS

EVENT PARTNERS

apar TECHNOLOGIES · AQM · Backbase · its International Turnkey Systems · UNCIA DARE TO GO BEYOND · Yethi Innovation for Quality

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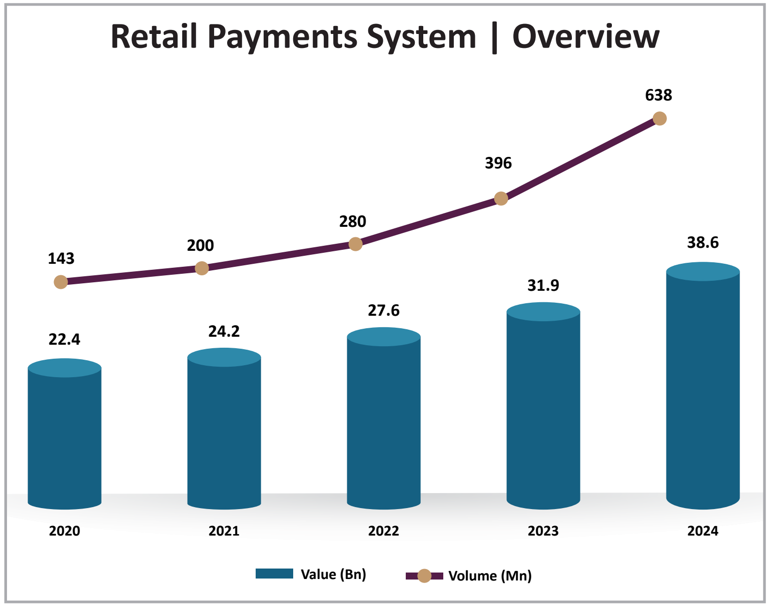
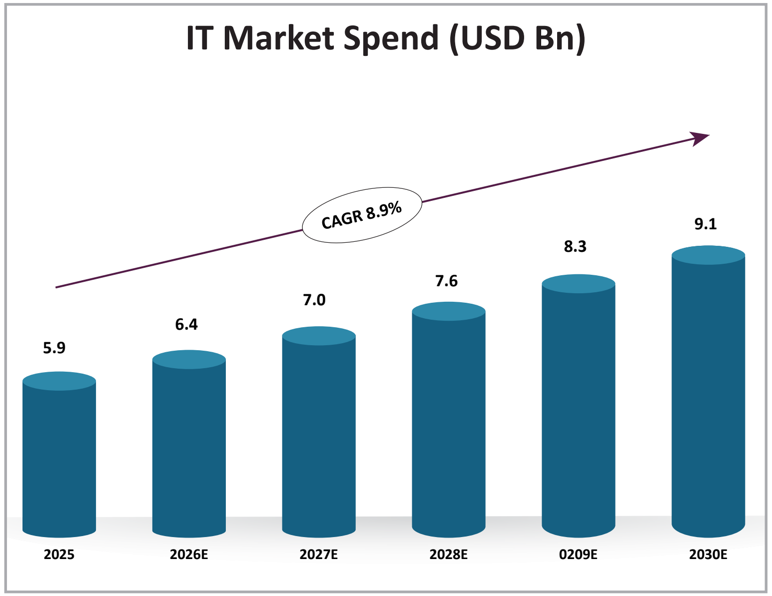
PAYMENT INFRASTRUCTURE POWERING DIGITAL ECONOMY

This five-year trajectory underscores how policy alignment, financial sector digitization, and consumer adoption are converging to accelerate the shift away from cash. The CBO's National Payment Systems (NPS) strategy—covering OmanNet, the Mobile Payments Clearing and Switching System (MPCSS), and ACH transfers—has built an interoperable backbone enabling banks, FinTech's, and merchants to scale instant and card-based payments. The launch of Apple Pay and Samsung Pay in 2024, coupled with rising QR-code and contactless acceptance at SMEs, further boosted consumer familiarity with digital channels. For banks and FinTech's, this expansion opens avenues to monetize retail transaction flows, develop new value-added services, and target inclusion gaps in rural and SME segments. With transaction volumes more than quadrupling since 2020, Oman is firmly on course to establish a cash-lite economy anchored by digital payment infrastructure and regulatory innovation.



IT SPEND FUELING A DIGITAL-FIRST ECONOMY

Technology market is evolving rapidly as enterprise demand converges with banking sector modernization. Oman Vision 2040 reforms are driving digital-first models, with banks focusing on AI automation, open banking, and cloud-native platforms. AI investment has progressed beyond pilot stages to enterprise-level deployment, with USD 156 Mn in 2024 to support applications in fraud detection, credit analysis, customer engagement. Cybersecurity spending projected at USD 135 Mn in 2025, with the BFSI sector at 29% share- highlighting regulatory priorities & growth of digital channels. As cloud adoption accelerates, workloads shift to SaaS and hybrid environments, demand for advanced data analytics and secure digital infrastructure rise. Oman's IT market is transitioning from infrastructure upgrades to innovation-led growth, positioning technology as a foundation for diversification and digital resilience.



AGENDA

08:00 - 09.00 AM **Breakfast and Registration**

09.00 - 09.15 AM **Welcome Note**

09.15 - 09.30 AM **Market Overview and Trends**

09.30 - 10.15 AM **Panel 1: Future of Banking | A Business Leaders Perspective**

Strategy drives technology, or is it now the other way around? Enjoy an interesting conversation with banking business leaders on what's the right answer to this question, and how will a bank strategy evolve for the future. Also, the kind of organization, skills, and culture needed to make it work.

10:15 - 11:00 AM **Panel 2: NextGen Transaction Banking | The Digital Value Chain from SMEs to Corporates**

Transaction banking is unlocking new efficiencies across small, medium and large enterprises. This panel will explore innovations driving payments, trade finance, supply chain finance, and cash management, and how banks can build seamless digital value chains to empower corporate and SME clients. What are the key challenges and opportunities in creating an interconnected ecosystem?

11:00 - 11:15 AM **Tea/Coffee Break**

11.15 - 12.00 PM	**Panel 3: AI in Action | Pioneering the Next Wave of Digital Banking** Welcome to the new industrial revolution – AI. AI is reshaping the financial services industry globally. This panel will discuss how AI is driving personalized customer experiences, optimizing operations, and enabling real-time decision-making. The financial services industry embraces data-driven strategies, what are the key opportunities and challenges in adopting AI and analytics at scale? How can financial institutions leverage these innovations?
12.00 - 12.45 PM	**Panel 4: Future of Digital Lending & Payments | A Cashless Economy** Instant payments are surging driven by customer preferences, progressive regulations, and a thriving FinTech ecosystem. What are the emerging global trends and adoption? More importantly, how can banks remain competitive amid opportunities such as mobile wallets, cross-border remittances, BNPL, and real-time payments?
12.45 - 01.00 PM	**Closing Note**
01.00 - 02.00 PM	**Lunch and Networking**

PANELISTS

PANEL 1: Future of Banking | A Business Leaders Perspective

V. Ramkumar
Senior Partner
Cedar
Moderator

Ali Al Shekaili
AGM - Head of Digital & e-Channels
NBO

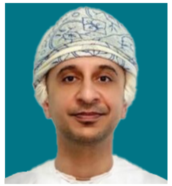
PANEL 2: NextGen Transaction Banking | The Digital Value Chain from SMEs to Corporates

Chetan Parekh
Managing Partner,
MENA FinTech Practice
Cedar
Moderator

Ashish Gupta
Head - Digital Banking and Acquiring
Bank Dhofar

PANEL 3: AI in Action | Pioneering the Next Wave of Digital Banking

Pankul Verma
Director
Cedar
Moderator



Raid Al Lawati
Head of IT & Digital
OHB

Khalid Al Hoqani
Head of Transformation
Alizz Islamic Bank

Ferenc Bole
Head of IT
NBO

Ali Nanji
Regional Sales Director,
Middle East
Backbase

Venkat Narayanan
Founder and CEO
BigTapp Analytics

PANEL 4: Future of Digital Lending & Payments | A Cashless Economy

Ramakrishnan Viswanathan (Ramki)
Senior Partner, Financial Services Practice, **Cedar**
Moderator

PANELIST FIRMS

بنك العز الإسلامي alizz islamic bank

بنك ظفار BankDhofar

Backbase

BigTapp Next big thing in Analytics

البنك الوطني العماني NBO

بنك الإسكان العماني ش.م.ع.م OMAN HOUSING BANK S.A.O.C.

ABOUT CEDAR

With a 40-year track record, Cedar is a Forbes-ranked global consulting firm with deep expertise in strategy & driving performance powered by the Balanced Scorecard. Its Financial Services & Financial Technology Practice is a Centre-of-Excellence transforming leading financial services institutions & technology companies as the digital and AI revolution accelerates.

ABOUT IBS INTELLIGENCE

Founded in 1991 and headquartered in the UK, Cedar's group firm, IBS Intelligence (IBSi) is the world's only pure-play Financial Technology focused research, advisory, and news analysis firm, with a 30-year track record and clients globally. We take pride in covering 5,000+ technology vendors globally – the largest by any analyst firm in this space. IBSi's Sales League Table is the industry barometer ranking banking technology suppliers globally for 20+ years.

ABOUT CEDAR-IBSI FINTECH LAB

Founded in 2017, the Cedar-IBSi FinTech lab has been home to 60+ global financial technology companies seeking "soft-landing" and POC opportunities with banks across the region, making it one of the only such FinTech ecosystems in Asia.

ABOUT CEDAR-IBSI CAPITAL

Cedar-IBSi Capital is a leading early-stage tech venture capital fund backing founders building next-gen enterprise software for the Financial Services industry; leveraging AI and deep technologies. The fund has completed initial investments in Cogniquest and WonderLend Hubs, both disruptive solutions that address large opportunities in Banking and Financial Services and beyond.

We make Strategy, Technology & Capital Work.

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FinTech Venture Capital

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