

# Modernize financial connectivity for the real-time era

A cloud-first strategy to reduce costs, strengthen compliance, and accelerate SWIFT modernization



## Benefits

- Real-time payments demand always-on connectivity
- ISO 20022 expands data and compliance demands
- Sanctions and fraud risks evolve faster than tools
- Legacy SWIFT infrastructure limits scale and speed

Financial institutions are entering a new era of financial connectivity. Real-time payment networks are expanding globally, ISO 20022 standards are increasing data richness and operational complexity, and sanctions and fraud risks are evolving faster than legacy monitoring tools can adapt. At the same time, boards and regulators expect stronger resilience, tighter compliance, and measurable technology efficiency.

These pressures affect treasury leaders, transaction banking executives, technology teams, and risk officers responsible for financial messaging infrastructure. Together, they face a common challenge—modernizing financial connectivity without increasing cost, complexity, or operational risk.

## Financial connectivity is at a turning point

Financial institutions are at an inflection point.

Real-time payment schemes are expanding across regions. [ISO 20022 mandates](#) are increasing data richness—and operational complexity. Sanctions regimes evolve daily. Fraud patterns are more sophisticated and global.

# 48%

of financial leaders  
deploy cloud solutions  
to optimize costs.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, boards are demanding resilience, cost discipline, and measurable return on technology investments.

Yet much of today's financial messaging infrastructure was built for a different era—batch processing, regional scale, and predictable regulatory change.

Modernization is no longer optional. But modernization does not need to mean layered complexity, fragmented tools, and perpetual upgrades. With a cloud-based financial hub model, organizations can modernize once, then optimize everything from infrastructure and compliance to onboarding and growth.

Reduce total cost of ownership (TCO), strengthen resilience, embed compliance, and accelerate time-to-revenue with a cloud-first financial hub.

## The inflection point in financial connectivity

Financial connectivity is no longer a back-office utility. It is a strategic enabler.

Across markets, four forces are converging:

### 1. Real time becomes the expectation

Payment schemes are shifting from batch to instant settlement. Customers and corporate clients expect immediate confirmation, transparency, and exception resolution.

### 2. ISO 20022 raises the bar

The [migration to ISO 20022](#) introduces richer data models. While this improves insight and compliance, it also increases transformation, validation, and testing requirements across systems.

### 3. Risk moves faster than legacy controls

Sanctions lists update frequently. Fraud tactics evolve rapidly. Static or disconnected monitoring tools create gaps—and gaps create exposure.

### 4. Boards demand resilience and cost control

Technology investments must demonstrate operational efficiency, scalability, and risk reduction. Infrastructure-heavy models are increasingly difficult to justify.

*The tension is clear:* Legacy infrastructure was built for batch messaging and regional scale. Today's ecosystem requires real-time, global orchestration across banks, corporates, clearing networks, and regulators.

## The hidden cost of legacy financial messaging

Modernization discussions often focus on hardware refresh cycles or connectivity upgrades. The deeper issue is structural inefficiency.

### Infrastructure drag

On-premises messaging stacks require:

- Hardware refreshes
- Version upgrades
- Testing cycles
- Disaster recovery infrastructure
- Specialist SWIFT expertise

Each layer adds cost, risk, and delay.

<sup>1</sup> Deloitte Global, *2025 Revisited: Future Finance Trends, 2025*

**18**  
**months:**

Average vacancy duration for senior compliance role.<sup>2</sup>

**41%**

of senior compliance officers retired in 2024–2025.<sup>3</sup>

## Compliance fragmentation

When sanctions screening, fraud detection, and monitoring operate as separate systems:

- Data must be reconciled manually.
- Alerts generate duplicate investigations.
- Audit trails are fragmented.

This increases operational overhead and regulatory exposure.

## Onboarding delays stall revenue

Corporate clients and correspondent partners expect rapid onboarding. When connectivity and compliance workflows are manual or inconsistent, time-to-revenue extends unnecessarily.

## Talent risk

SWIFT specialists are [retiring](#). Cloud and integration skills are in high demand. Maintaining legacy expertise while funding transformation strains already limited teams.

**The financial industry is now in Year 3 of what Deloitte calls “The Great Compliance Drought”—a talent shortage so severe that 43% of global banks report regulatory work going undone due to staffing gaps.<sup>4</sup>**

## A structural comparison

Legacy stack model	Cloud-based financial hub model
On-premises SWIFT infrastructure	Managed SWIFT connectivity
Separate compliance engines	Embedded sanctions and fraud monitoring
Custom ISO transformation layers	Native ISO 20022 readiness
Manual onboarding workflows	Standardized onboarding
Regional silos	Global scale through a unified backbone

<sup>2</sup> Garrett & Fields, *The 2025 Compliance Talent Crisis: How Financial Institutions Are Losing the War for Regulatory Expertise*, 2025

<sup>3</sup> SIFMA, *Highlights from SIFMA’s 2025 State of the Industry Briefing*, 2025

<sup>4</sup> Garrett & Fields, *The 2025 Compliance Talent Crisis: How Financial Institutions Are Losing the War for Regulatory Expertise*, 2025

## Measurable business impact

Organizations that transition to a managed, cloud-based service bureau model can achieve:

- Up to 33% reduction in total cost of ownership.
- Faster onboarding and reduced time-to-revenue.
- Improved compliance posture through embedded monitoring.
- Reduced operational risk and downtime.

Cost savings are important. But structural simplification is transformative.

**Financial institutions across EMEA alone spent approximately \$85 billion in 2023 on financial crime compliance, largely driven by specialized labor—a figure that 81% of EMEA financial institutions are actively trying to reduce.<sup>5</sup>**

## The modern financial hub architecture

A modern financial institution needs more than connectivity. It needs a digital backbone that connects enterprises securely and at scale.

OpenText™ SWIFT Service Bureau is one that delivers a secure, cloud-based financial messaging platform, which unifies:

- SWIFT connectivity and messaging.
- ISO 20022 transformation and validation.
- Real-time sanctions screening.
- Fraud monitoring and audit trails.
- Corporate-to-bank onboarding.
- Integration with broader B2B ecosystems.

This is not simply outsourced infrastructure. It is a multi-enterprise financial messaging platform designed to

- Scale globally.
- Adapt to regulatory change.
- Embed **compliance** within transaction flows.
- Reduce operational complexity.

By consolidating financial messaging and monitoring into a single managed service, organizations eliminate silos and gain a consistent control framework.

## From cost containment to competitive advantage

Modernization is often positioned as defensive—reduce cost, lower risk, maintain compliance. But a cloud-first financial hub enables growth:

### Faster product rollout

Transaction banking teams can introduce new services more quickly when connectivity and compliance are standardized.

### Scalable cross-border expansion

Expanding into new markets becomes simpler when messaging formats, monitoring controls, and onboarding workflows are already aligned to global standards.

<sup>5</sup> McKinsey, *Guardrails for Growth: Building a Resilient Payments System*, 2025

“The OpenText solution provides IPG with holistic access and transparency into our bank connectivity process.”<sup>6</sup>

Lisa Tana,  
Director of Global  
Treasury Operations,  
IPG

## Embedded compliance as a growth enabler

When screening and monitoring are built into the transaction lifecycle, institutions reduce false positives and investigation delays—improving client experience.

## Ecosystem-ready collaboration

Banks operate in multi-enterprise ecosystems. A managed financial hub enables secure, scalable collaboration across corporates, clearing networks, fintech partners, and regulators.

Modernization becomes a **foundation for innovation**—not a recurring cost center.

## A strategic approach to SWIFT modernization

For executive leaders the question is not whether to modernize. It is how to modernize without introducing new risk.

A successful approach includes the following steps:

1. Assess current TCO across infrastructure, compliance, and onboarding.
2. Identify fragmentation across monitoring and integration layers.
3. Evaluate resilience gaps and disaster recovery exposure.
4. Build a phased roadmap toward a unified financial hub.

With the right architecture, modernization happens once. Optimization continues over time.

## SWIFT modernization timeline



## Resources

[The SWIFT Service Bureau is sitting on a data goldmine. Are you ready to unlock it? >](#)

[From connectivity provider to transformation partner: The strategic evolution of the SWIFT Service Bureau >](#)

## Modernize once. Optimize everything.

Financial connectivity is foundational to revenue, resilience, and regulatory trust.

Legacy models increase cost, complexity, and operational risk. A cloud-based financial hub simplifies infrastructure, embeds compliance, and accelerates growth.

With [OpenText SWIFT Service Bureau](#), organizations can:

- Reduce total cost of ownership.
- Strengthen compliance and fraud controls.
- Accelerate onboarding and revenue realization.
- Future-proof financial messaging operations.

Modernize once. Optimize everything.

## Executive next steps

To explore your modernization path, consider:

- **Strategic architecture assessment**  
Evaluate current-state infrastructure, compliance layering, and resilience exposure.
- **TCO modeling workshop**  
Quantify cost reduction opportunities and long-term savings potential.
- **SWIFT modernization roadmap consultation**  
Build a phased, risk-managed transition plan aligned to business priorities.

Learn more about [OpenText SWIFT Service Bureau](#).