

Digital efficiency by design

Innovative system gives
banking a boost



A digital dilemma

Each of the routine banking transactions we make each day, month and year add up to a bigger picture of our financial lives. And as consumers increasingly turn to web and mobile banking to complete those transactions, financial institutions are feeling the pressure to provide the tools they need and the ease and reliability they expect.

Sabadell, Spain's fourth-largest banking group with operations in 20 countries, wanted to meet those needs for its customers. The bank was committed to becoming more

digital and more innovative, and sought a way to bring new online offerings to market quickly and efficiently. It wanted to deliver high-quality apps and tools with seamless, consistent experiences across all of their platforms. But it was being slowed down by an inefficient, outmoded approach to how those apps and tools were developed.

The solution: A custom-built design system that could industrialize the creative and development process, accelerate digitalization and deliver unique and reliable experiences faster. Design systems are flexible,

modular libraries of design elements and guidelines that connect user experience, visual design and product development. Because all of the elements are reusable and accessible, teams can work collaboratively by sharing parts of their creations to aid in the development of others.

A design system would allow Sabadell's designers and developers to create new products and services more efficiently—and keep costs at bay. Working with Accenture, the bank set out to make it a reality.



When tech meets human ingenuity

One system, countless creations

The team called the system Galatea, a reference to artist Salvador Dalí's "Galatea of the Spheres" painting, which depicts his wife through individual dots and circles that contribute to the complete portrait.

The name served as both a nod to the institution's Spanish heritage and a reference to the atomic structure of such a design system, in which the power of individual elements can contribute to a larger whole.

With Galatea, digital components and the code that accompanies them could be standardized—and therefore reproduced and repurposed easily and

efficiently. For example, once a developer successfully built, tested and implemented a log-in module, other developers could then fast-track their own work by re-using that same module, rather than coding a similar module from scratch. Any project that involved modifying the front-end, user-facing part of Sabadell's digital presence could leverage components through Galatea along the way. As a centralized environment, it would also create consistency in all new projects across platforms, resulting in a smoother and more intuitive experience for customers.



When tech meets human ingenuity

To bring Galatea to life, Sabadell and Accenture worked together to not only design the system itself, but also to generate a governance model that would ensure effective maintenance and evolution of the system as it adjusted to meet new needs over time. They had to consider all possible digital channels and their specific needs, to make sure the components could be widely used, and build in the how-to guidance, best practices and brand guidelines that would keep the final product in line with customer expectations.

The most important part of any design system is that people commit to using it. So the team held collaborative workshops to communicate their methodologies and support the development of the skills needed to use and grow the system. In this way, they could build a community around the design system and promote a change of culture and mindset to ensure it was adopted by all.

A valuable difference

"The trust that Accenture Song provided us, thanks to its knowledge and prior experience in this type of change processes, was key, besides their ability to empathize with us as a client made us think that they were the right partner to go hand in hand with in this transformation."

SILVER BRUNA

Banco Sabadell Design Team Manager

Banking on the future

In 2022, Galatea provided support to some 65 designers and developers across 56 projects and 55,000 hours of development time. Sabadell's teams saw a 50% reduction in average development time for new products. From that new efficiency came €2.5M in cost savings for its business teams.

Internally, Galatea allowed faster launches, better version control and easier onboarding of new team members and contractors. By standardizing routine components, the system freed up designers and developers to focus on more creative and complex work. Externally, the system helped Sabadell improved its digital customer

experience. Users would now see the same interface and familiar navigation across all platforms, making them easier and more intuitive to navigate.

As a design system, Galatea is constantly evolving. Its participants not only take advantage of what exists within it, but add new creations and guidelines as needed for future use. Each addition makes it stronger. In this way, its growth is a team effort. In the same way, Sabadell's digital transformation is ongoing—with Galatea as a new and important part of the bank's digital whole.

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