Alphacomm®

Fast-Moving Digital Goods

2026 Edition

Strategies and opportunities for travel eSIMs, top-ups, digital gift cards, and more

Message from CEO

The digital goods market is at an inflection point. What worked yesterday won't win tomorrow.

I'm Michiel Rouppe van der Voort, the new CEO of Alphacomm. After 25+ years in telecom and payments, I've watched countless companies rise and fall based on one simple factor: their ability to adapt when the rules change.

Right now, those rules aren't just changing – they're being rewritten entirely.

Michiel Rouppe van der Voort
Chief Executive Officer

Change is moving faster than ever

If you look back at the first edition of this publication just a year ago, the world looked completely different. The AI revolution has unfolded at a pace nobody could have predicted. The truth is, nobody really knows where AI is heading next and companies are moving hand-in-hand with every new development. At Alphacomm, we're right there in the thick of it, constantly adapting to stay ahead.

Why our mission matters more than ever

This rapid change underscores why our mission matters more than ever. Our mission is simple: make it simple and safe to sell digital goods so businesses can capture every revenue opportunity in fast-moving markets. Companies lose revenue daily through outdated channels, fraud or simply not having the right digital goods available when customers want them.

Three forces reshaping FMDG

Throughout this publication, you'll see three interconnected trends defining our space:

Speed matters more than ever.

Consumers expect instant delivery and frictionless purchasing. Winners embed digital goods directly into customer journeys - at checkout, booking confirmation or through loyalty programmes.

Fraud is getting smarter.

AI-powered attacks mean each fraudulent transaction now costs 3x its original value. The gap between businesses with advanced prevention and those without is widening fast.

Build versus buy has changed.

With AI integration and real-time fraud detection now essential, most businesses find that partnering with proven platforms beats building from scratch.

These forces amplify each other, which is why mastering all three matters.

Join the FMDG Club

The FMDG space is growing super fast that staying ahead requires more than just tools; it requires community. That's why we recently launched the FMDG Club: a place where industry peers meet, share challenges, learn from each other's experiences and stay up-to-date with specialists in the field.
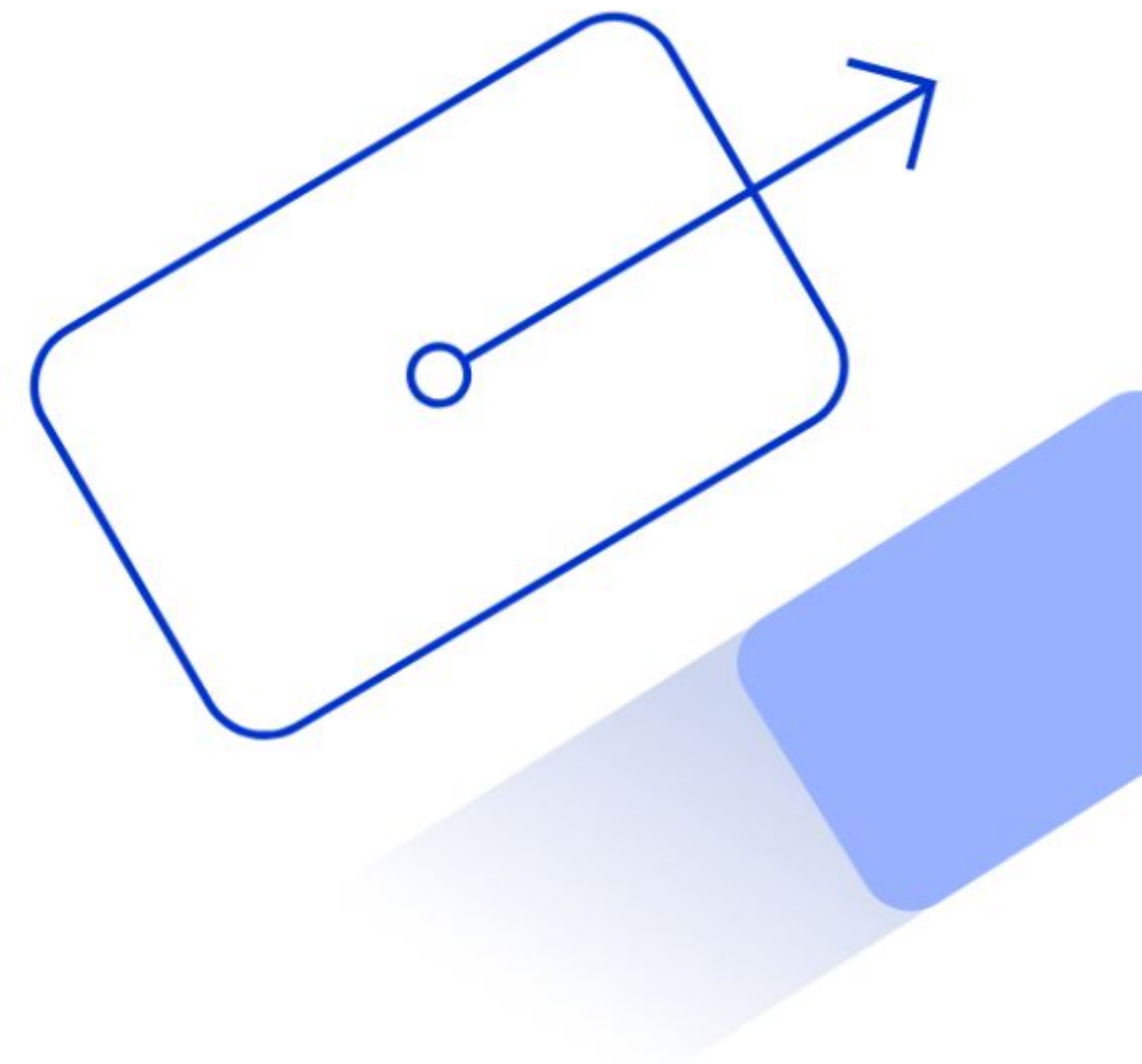
Whether you're selling travel eSIMs, prepaid top-ups, digital gift cards or any other digital good, the insights from other verticals can transform how you think about your own business. I'm looking forward to what we'll build together.

Check it out

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What are Fast-Moving Digital Goods?

Fast-Moving Digital Goods (FMDG) are digital products that consumers purchase frequently and repeatedly. Similar to Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) in the physical retail world, they are bought often and delivered instantly. They meet modern consumer expectations for speed and convenience, while providing businesses with opportunities for high-volume sales without needing physical inventory.

These products, like travel eSIMs, prepaid top-ups, and digital gift cards, are instantly delivered and affordable, making them a win for both consumers and businesses. Here's how FMDG benefit both sides:

From the consumer perspective:

Immediate activation:
Products are delivered and activated within seconds of purchase, eliminating wait times.

Low cost:
FMDG are typically affordable, offering convenience without high upfront expenses.

Effortless purchasing:
Streamlined buying processes require minimal steps and support multiple payment methods.

Recurring value:
FMDG address ongoing consumer needs, creating natural repurchase cycles.

From the merchant's perspective:

Scalable revenue streams:
Digital delivery enables unlimited inventory and global reach without physical constraints.

Optimised margins:
While individual transactions may have lower margins, volume and repeat purchases drive profitability.

Increased security risks:
The instant, transferable nature of digital goods attracts sophisticated fraud attempts requiring advanced protection.

Zero inventory overhead:
Digital products eliminate storage, shipping and handling costs while enabling instant global distribution.

Types of FMDG include

In general, there are a few types of digital gift cards:

Travel eSIMs:

Virtual SIM cards providing instant global connectivity without a physical SIM card, making them ideal for travellers who want to avoid high roaming fees.

Top-ups:

Prepaid credit additions that let users add funds to their mobile accounts for calls, texts, and data without needing a long-term contract. Prepaid plans offer greater flexibility and cost control than postpaid plans, allowing users to recharge as needed. Typically associated with SIM-only services, they allow users to avoid being tied to fixed monthly fees, making them ideal for those who prefer control over their spending.

Digital gift cards:

Electronic vouchers that are instant and convenient, allowing users to choose a value and send it. Most consumers prefer them for their speed and flexibility, making them a top choice for modern gifting.

→ **Open-loop cards:**

Prepaid cards that can be used at any merchant within a card network, offering flexibility to make purchases at various locations. Unlike closed-loop cards, they aren't limited to specific stores or brands.

→ **Closed-loop cards:**

Cards redeemable at specific stores and brands. They are ideal for more targeted gifting or loyalty programmes.

Game cards:

Digital cards that allow gamers to buy in-game content or subscriptions without a credit card. Popular with younger audiences, they help retailers tap into the lucrative gaming market.

eMoney:

Prepaid monetary value stored on digital platforms (such as PayPal or Skrill), allowing consumers to make payments and complete transactions seamlessly across various online and physical outlets.

Travel eSIMs

The secret to hassle-free travel: eSIMs have evolved from a niche product into an essential travel companion.

They help millions avoid high roaming costs and stay connected everywhere. Thanks to early users, awareness is growing fast. Brands that keep investing in education and easy onboarding gain a strong edge in this booming market.

Key projections for 2026-2030

Sources: Kaleido Intelligence, Juniper Research, Morgan Stanley

$12B
Retail spending on travel eSIM services in 2030

+250%
Growth in connected eSIM devices and sensors from 2025-2030
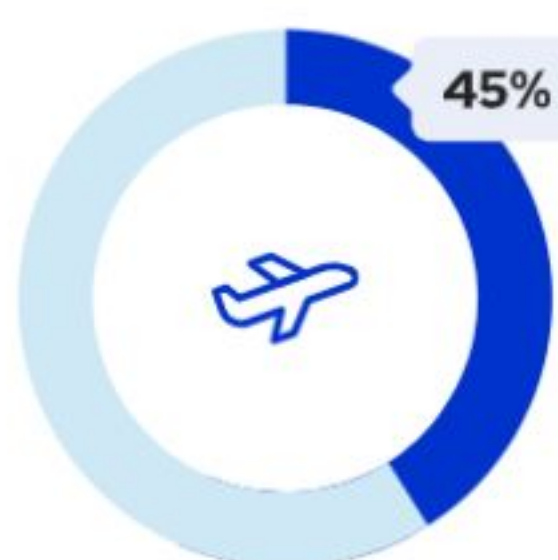
5.8%
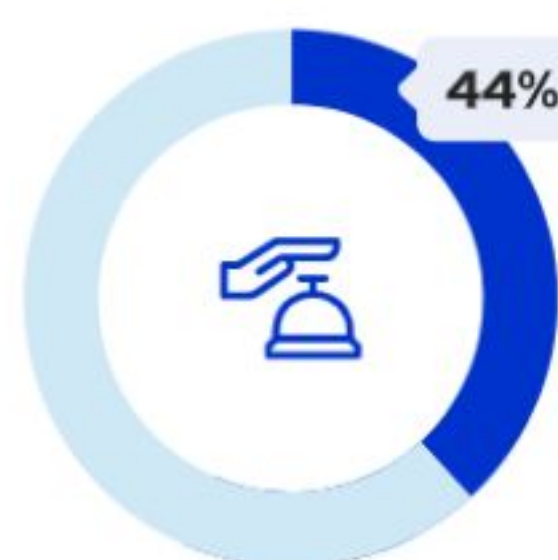Annual growth in international business travel 2026-2030

Purchase channel preferences for travel eSIM

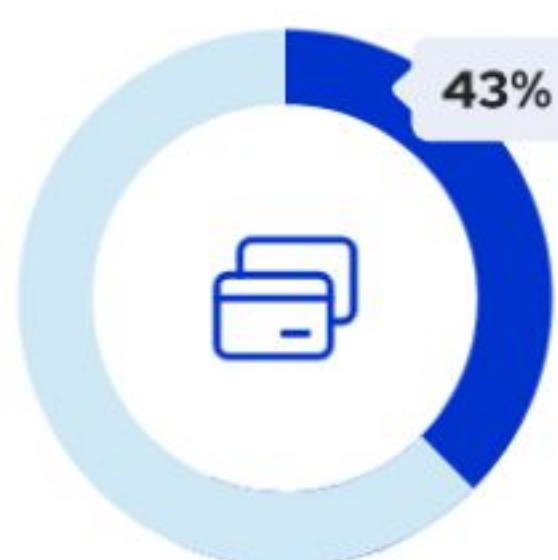Size, By End-User, 2025-2023 (USD Million)
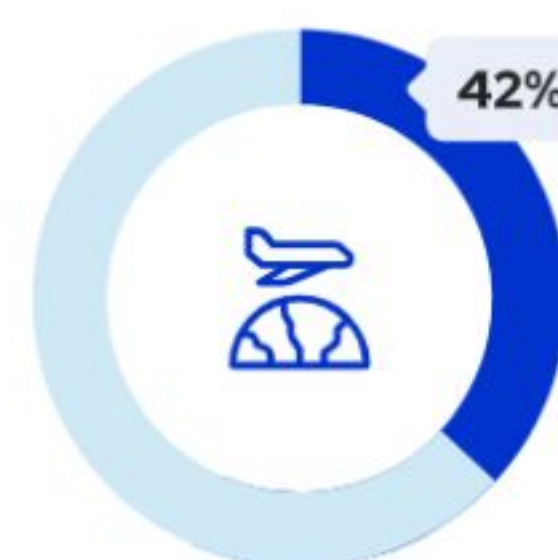
- Individual Travellers
- Business Travellers

45%	44%	43%	42%	41%
Airports	Hotels	Payment Card Providers	Airline	Travel Agents Booking Sites

Key trends

Consumer awareness is growing
More travellers now know about travel eSIMs, showing that efforts to educate consumers are working and demand is increasing.

Pre-departure purchases dominate
Between 85% to 90% of travel eSIM spending now occurs before departure.

More devices are now eSIM-ready
Over 51% of smartphones certified in 2024 support eSIM (up from 35% in 2023) and the newest iPhone models are eSIM-only in the US.

Strategies for selling travel eSIMs

Travel eSIMs present a substantial revenue opportunity but increasing competition demands strategic implementation.

As the market matures and more providers enter the space, success requires differentiation beyond basic connectivity, focusing on better customer experience, targeted positioning and value-added services that build lasting relationships. Here are some:

1. **Map eSIM opportunities across the customer journey**

   Identify natural touchpoints where travellers need connectivity for example at booking confirmations, pre-departure emails, check-in processes and in-app notifications. Offering eSIMs at these decision points converts interest into sales without disrupting existing flows.

2. **Simplify the customer experience**

   While travel eSIM adoption is growing, many consumers are still making their first purchase. Make it easy by removing technical hassle and decision paralysis. Offer clear, straightforward data packages such as XS/S/M/L options rather than dozens of country-specific SKUs. Customers shouldn't need to understand technical specifications or compare overwhelming options to get connected.

3. **Develop loyalty programme integration**

   Leverage fixed-price models that make voucher integration seamless with existing loyalty programmes. Enable customers to use points, miles or rewards to purchase eSIMs, encouraging repeat engagement and increasing customer lifetime value.

4. **Start small, then scale strategically**

   Launch with a focused pilot targeting one or two high-impact touchpoints such as booking confirmation emails or airport lounges. Use early performance data and customer feedback to refine your messaging, pricing and integration before expanding to additional channels like in-app notifications or loyalty programmes. This iterative approach reduces risk while building momentum for broader deployment.

5. **Offer instant, accessible support**

   Provide support through messaging platforms and chat-based customer service so travellers can resolve issues instantly. Real-time troubleshooting and plan adjustments happen without phone queues or international calling charges, keeping customers connected when they need it most.

Prepaid top-ups

Expanding prepaid opportunities: Prepaid services are growing in developing countries, while in established markets, they're progressing to offer better digital features and extra perks.

Modern prepaid strategies focus on customer lifetime value optimisation rather than simple transaction processing. Advanced bundling, automated experiences and digital integration are driving higher engagement and revenue per user across all market segments.

Mobile data consumption by region

Sources: Ericcson Mobility Report, GSMA

Global average
+53.33%
2025 — **23 GB**
2022 — **15 GB**
driven by richer media formats and cloud services

Western Europe
+155%
2025 — **20-22 GB**
2022 — **15 GB**
Driven by streaming, remote work and €400M+ EU 5G funding

North America
+38.46%
2025 — **18 GB**
2024 — **13 GB**
average mobile data usage per person

Central & Eastern Europe
+160%
2028 — **4.05 GB**
2022 — **10.53 GB**
consistent growth as 4G and 5G networks expand

ARPU by Region

● ARPU by region for 2023   ● ARPU by region projections for 2026

ARPU ($)

Region	2023	2026
Central and Eastern Europe	$8	$12
Developed Asia-Pacific	$8	$32
Emerging Asia-Pacific	$4	$12
Latin America	$6	$11
Middle East and North Africa	$8	$22
North America	$8	$58
Sub-Saharan Africa	$4	$12
Western Europe	$8	$24

Key trends

5G
5G traffic growth
5G's share of mobile data traffic reached 35% at the end of 2024, forecast to grow to 80% by 2030.

Digital wallet adoption
Growth even among older demographics (30-35% of 50+ users now use Apple Pay/ Google Pay), which could change how customers execute prepaid top-ups.

Dynamic payments
Consumer demand for payment variety drives telecoms to offer recharge via banking apps, e-wallets and digital platforms.
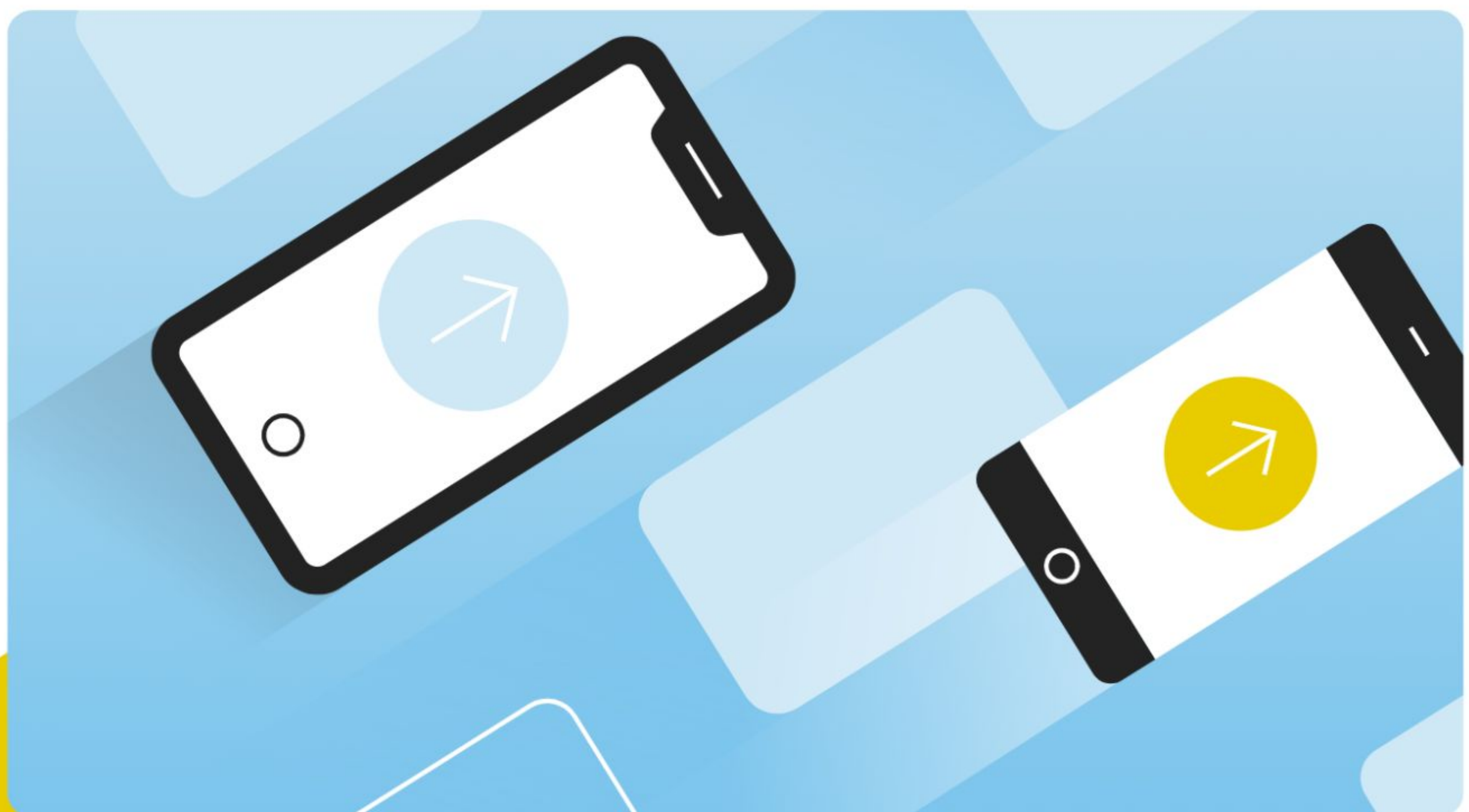
Emerging market leadership
Sub-Saharan Africa, Emerging Asia-Pacific and Latin America drive prepaid growth as essential digital infrastructure, contrasting sharply with North America's ARPU.

Prepaid top-up engagement strategies and opportunities

Prepaid services have expanded beyond basic voice and SMS to include mobile payments, data services and app-based features. Success requires focusing on Customer Lifetime Value (CLV) maximisation through improved user experiences, automated convenience and strategic value proposition development.

The goal remains unchanged...

...deliver maximum value to prepaid customers to ensure long-term retention and increased spending. However, the methods have become more sophisticated and data-driven:

1. **Shift from voucher-centric to bundle-centric journeys**

   Transform prepaid from plain credit purchases to curated value packages that combine data, voice and premium services. Bundle-first approaches increase perceived value, drive higher ARPU and create recurring revenue patterns that reduce churn while improving customer lifetime value.

2. **Implement auto top-up and subscription models**

   Promote recurring top-ups with flexible triggers like monthly renewals, low balance alerts or every 28 days. Support recurring-friendly payment methods, including SEPA direct debit, PayPal, Apple Pay and Google Pay, to transform prepaid from reactive purchases into predictable revenue streams. When auto top-ups fail, use CLV insights to provide high-value customers with temporary service continuity and intelligent payment retry logic, reducing involuntary churn.

3. **Drive higher average transaction values**

   Use tiered incentives where larger top-ups include bonus credit, rollover data, or loyalty points. Implement psychological pricing strategies, highlight "most popular" packages and use smart defaults to guide customers toward mid- or high-tier options that increase spend per transaction.

4. **Optimise omnichannel top-up experiences**

   Provide access across web, mobile apps and messaging platforms with both logged-in flows for personalised experiences and guest checkouts for wider adoption. Integrate local payment methods and ensure persistent login with securely stored payment details.

5. **Deploy real-time fraud protection systems**

   Use instant fraud screening with telco-specific risk models that recognise prepaid customer behaviour patterns, frequent small transactions, weekly cycles and high-risk geographies, rather than generic payment processor assumptions. This prevents false declines that waste customer acquisition costs while blocking genuine fraud. Implement indemnified fraud services to eliminate chargeback costs and dispute handling.

6. **Create time-bound bundle strategies**

   Offer attractive bundles combining multiple services (data + international minutes, entertainment access) with clear expiration dates. This promotes consistent monthly spending patterns and higher-tier purchases compared to traditional top-ups that customers may stretch over multiple months.

7. **Identify missed revenue**

Our Quick Scan benchmarks critical prepaid metrics, including guest journey experience, auto top-up adoption, conversion rates, payment costs and operational efficiency. This diagnostic reveals where operators are losing revenue and provides actionable insights to optimise each touchpoint and maximise customer lifetime value.

8. **Implement Customer Lifetime Value-driven engagement**

Use predictive CLV modelling to personalise the customer journey. High-value customers receive preferential treatment during payment failures (grace periods, flexible retry schedules), while CLV insights identify optimal moments for upsells, cross-sells or supportive downsells for struggling customers, transforming payments into retention opportunities.

9. **Reduce payment friction through technical optimisation**

Deploy data science to analyse customer journeys and identify drop-off points like technical errors, data loss during checkout or confusing flows. Even small improvements to web-based transactions significantly impact revenue. Combine this with specialised telco fraud models that balance security with approval rates appropriate to each customer's risk profile.

10. **Strategic payment cost management**

Reduce dependence on high-cost credit card processing by incentivising lower-cost methods. Restructure autopay discounts to require ACH/direct debit or debit cards rather than credit cards, progressively shifting the payment mix. Support emerging payment methods (crypto, regional wallets) to provide cost-effective alternatives while maintaining convenience.
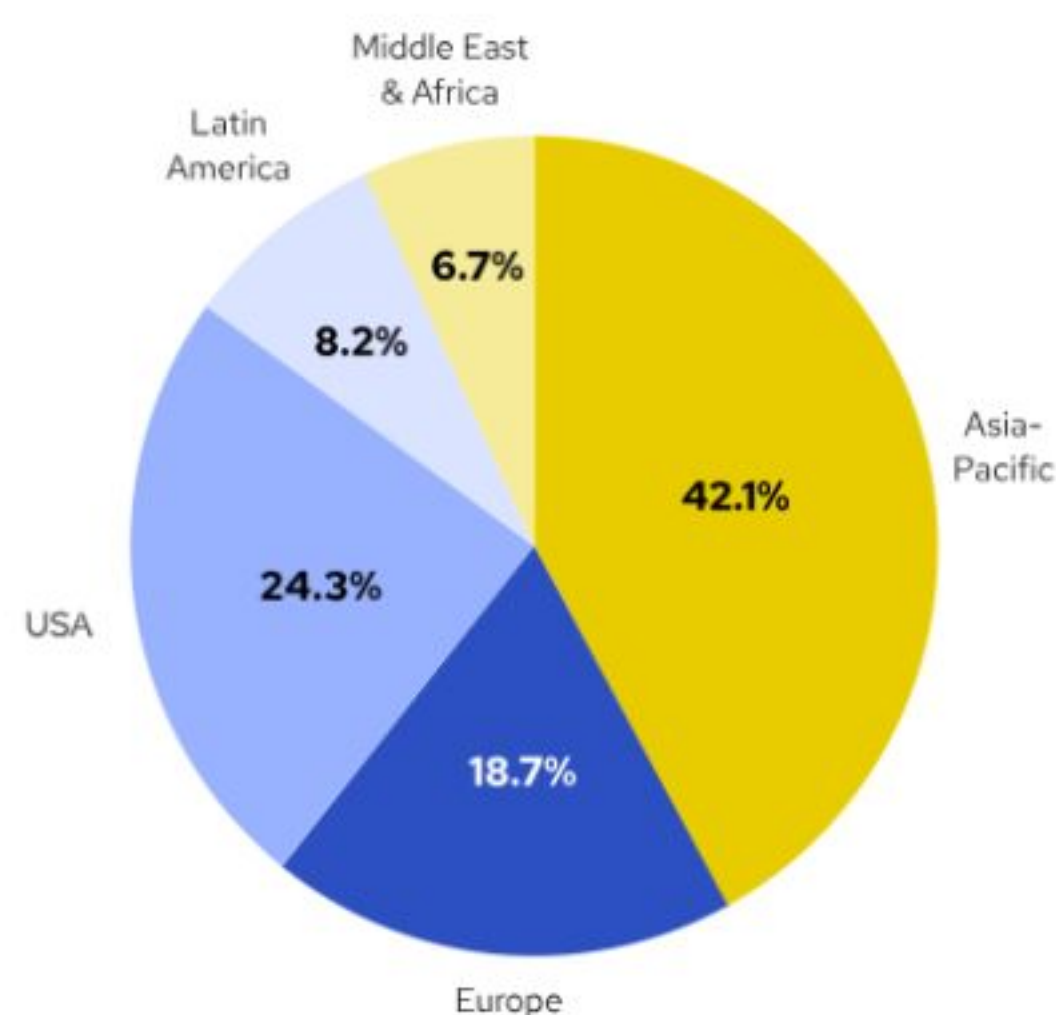
Digital gift cards

The maturation: The digital gift card market has matured beyond simple digitisation to become an ecosystem of personalised, experiential and instantly accessible gifting solutions.

Market projections for 2025-2032

Projected prepaid card market share by region (2030)

- Asia-Pacific: 42.1%
- Europe: 18.7%
- USA: 24.3%
- Latin America: 8.2%
- Middle East & Africa: 6.7%

$1.24T — Global gift cards market size in 2025, up from $1.10T in 2024. $1.42T projected by 2026

$359B — Digital gift card market size in 2025, reaching $774.3B by 2030

€74.40B — EU gift card market revenue in 2025, growing 8.5% annually

Key trends

Self-use adoption increasing

51% of open-loop gift cards and 66% of digital gift cards are purchased for self-use, with buyers using them to manage their own expenses.

Multi-currency & cross-border expansion

Digital gift cards now support 150+ currencies with instant cross-border conversion, enabling international gifting and unlocking diaspora market revenue.

Corporate and B2B expansion

Businesses use gift cards more often for employee rewards, customer acquisition and partner incentives.

Instant social gifting

Platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and messaging apps now enable direct gift card purchases, with social gifting up 156% YoY in 2024.
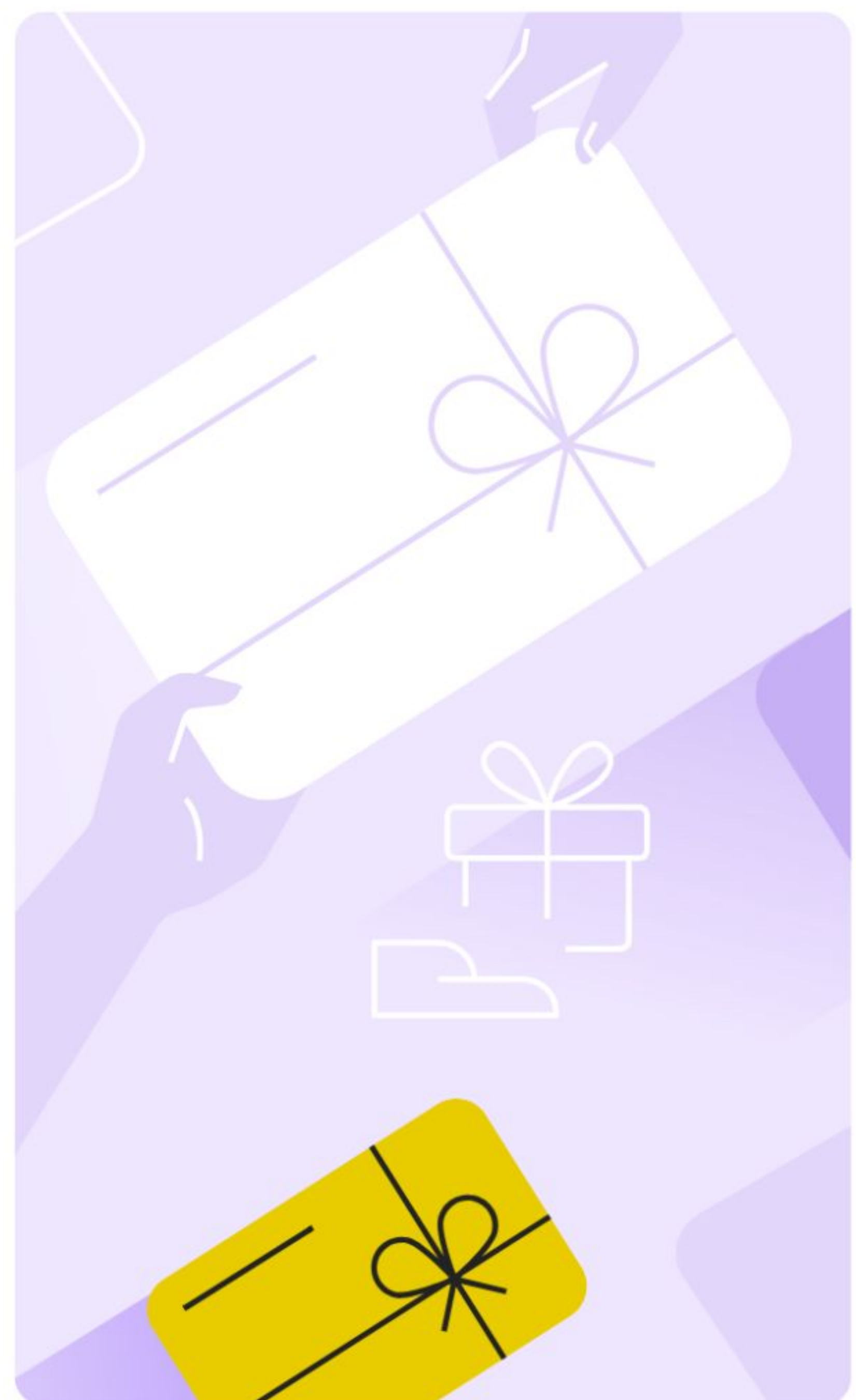
Strategies for selling digital gift cards

Digital gift cards have become central to modern retail strategy, offering businesses flexible tools for customer acquisition, retention and revenue optimisation. Success requires understanding the changes in consumer expectations for personalisation, instant delivery and easy redemption experiences.

1. **Develop multi-platform distribution strategies**

   Establish gift card sales across multiple touchpoints, including your website, mobile app, social media platforms and third-party marketplaces. Enable seamless purchasing through Instagram Shopping, TikTok Shop, and messaging apps to capture customers where they naturally discover and share products.

2. **Create personalised gifting experiences**

   Use customer data to suggest optimal gift card amounts, recipient preferences, and occasion-specific designs. Implement custom messaging, photo uploads and scheduled delivery options that make digital gifts feel personal and thoughtful rather than generic transactions.

3. **Implement dynamic pricing and promotions**

    Use tiered pricing structures, bulk purchase discounts and time-sensitive bonus offers to increase average transaction values. Deploy seasonal promotions, holiday bonuses and loyalty programme integration to capture high-volume gifting periods.

4. **Optimise for mobile and instant delivery**

    Make mobile buying simple with one-click checkout, digital wallet integration and instant delivery via email, SMS or app notifications. Make sure that recipients can redeem cards immediately through QR codes, links or in-app scanning.

5. **Build subscription and recurring gift models**

    Offer monthly or quarterly gift card deliveries for occasions like birthdays, anniversaries or seasonal celebrations. Subscription models increase CLV and create predictable recurring revenue streams while ensuring customers never miss important gifting moments.

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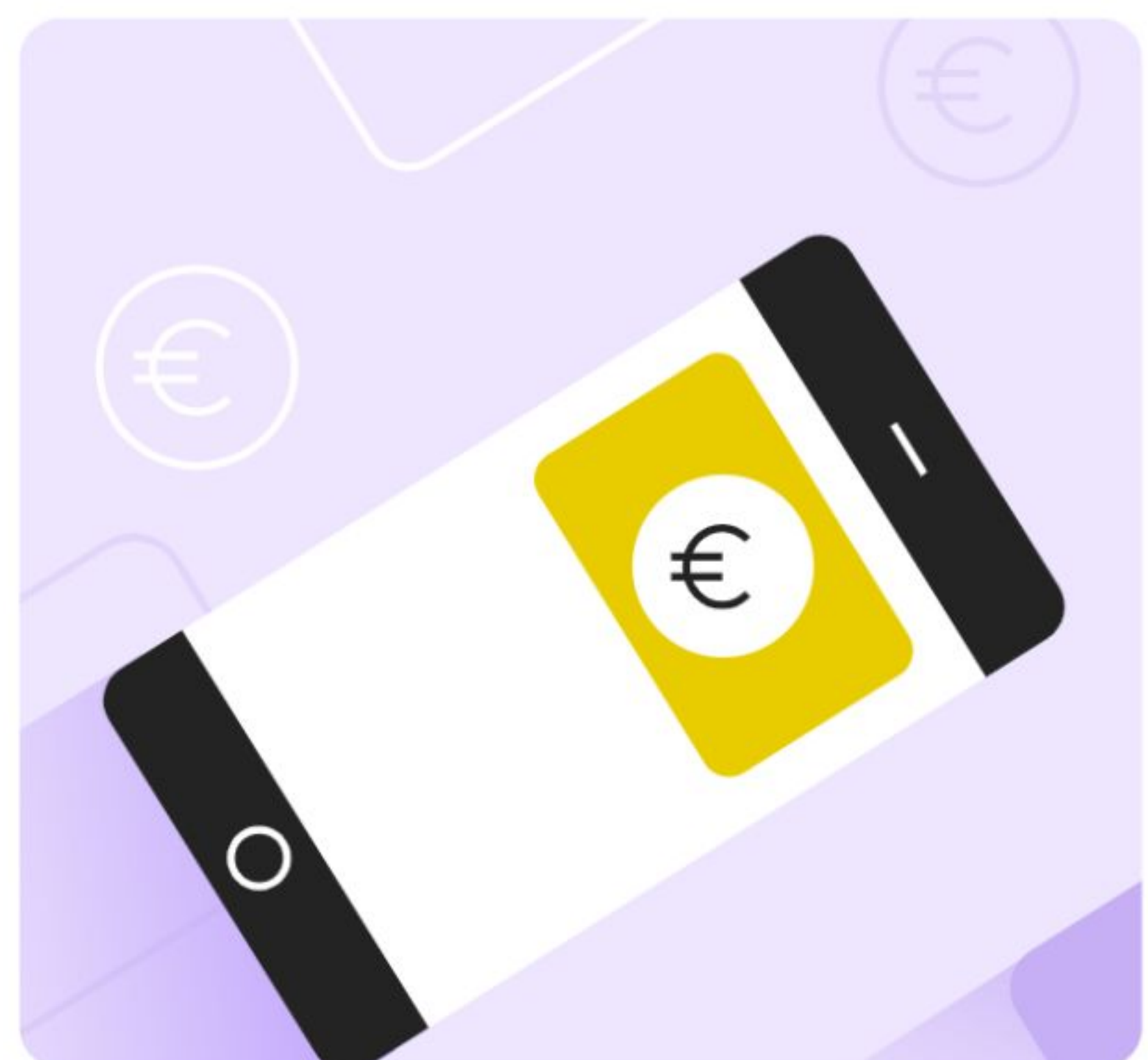
Making eMoney work for your retail strategy

eMoney refers to prepaid payment methods like Paysafe and Transcash cards, as well as digital wallets that customers load with funds and use to make purchases. Think of them like reloadable gift cards that work online.

For retailers selling digital goods and services, eMoney products represent an attractive revenue opportunity. Many customers prefer these payment methods because they don't require a credit card or bank account, offering better budget control and privacy. By stocking eMoney products, you can tap into this growing customer segment and increase your sales.

Here's how to sell eMoney effectively as a digital goods retailer:

1. **Manage fraud risk proactively**

   Because eMoney products are close to real money, they carry inherent fraud risk. Protect your business by implementing solid anti-fraud measures. Set basic transaction rules such as limits on the number of products per basket, maximum basket value and restrictions on the number of transactions within short time periods. These simple guardrails can significantly reduce your exposure to fraudulent purchases.

2. **Handle surcharges carefully**

   Many merchants apply surcharges to eMoney products to cover fraud-related risks. If you choose to apply a surcharge, communicate it clearly and transparently at checkout. Keep the surcharge reasonable and proportionate to avoid customer complaints and backlash. Hidden or excessive fees will damage trust and hurt conversion rates.

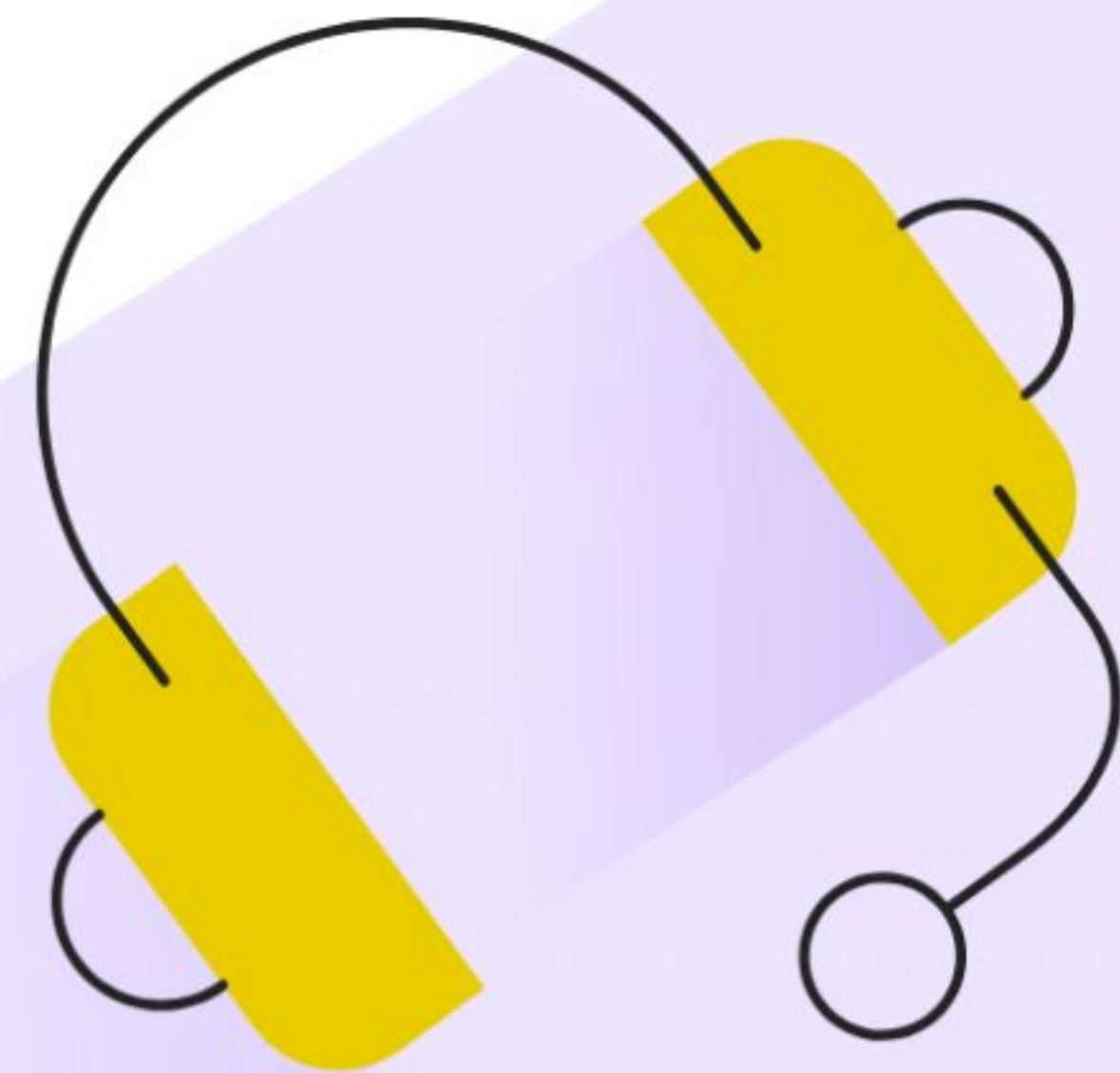3. **Communicate transparent pricing**

   Display all costs clearly upfront with no hidden charges. Show customers exactly what they'll pay for the eMoney they're purchasing, including any activation fees, terms or surcharges. Many eMoney users choose these payment methods specifically to control spending, so transparent pricing builds trust and motivates them to complete purchases and return to your platform.

4. **Offer flexible denominations**

   Stock eMoney in various denominations (€10, €25, €50, €100) to suit different customer budgets. Offer bundle options that align with common loading amounts, making it easier for customers to fully utilise their available balance. This flexibility increases conversion and customer loyalty.

Game cards

Game cards now serve as essential bridges between traditional payments and digital gaming ecosystems.

As gaming becomes more social and globally accessible, game cards enable secure transactions for users preferring prepaid solutions or lacking traditional banking access. Growth is driven by mobile gaming, esports and virtual economies.

Key Projections

Sources: Statista

$691.30B
Global games market revenue projection by 2029

$843.90
Average revenue per user (ARPU)

3B
User base to reach by 2030

37.5%
Increase in user penetration, compared to 34.4% in 2025

Key trends

Sources: Sources: FinTech Magazine, SQ Magazine, Coop Board Games

Mobile gaming dominance
Mobile gaming represents 58% of global gaming revenue, with game cards becoming primary payment methods for in-app purchases.

Virtual economy expansion
In-game purchases dominate monetisation at 51% of total revenue, while emerging markets like NFTs are projected to reach $15 billion by 2027.

Global accessibility focus
Game cards serve as essential payment infrastructure for emerging markets where traditional payment methods remain limited or unavailable.
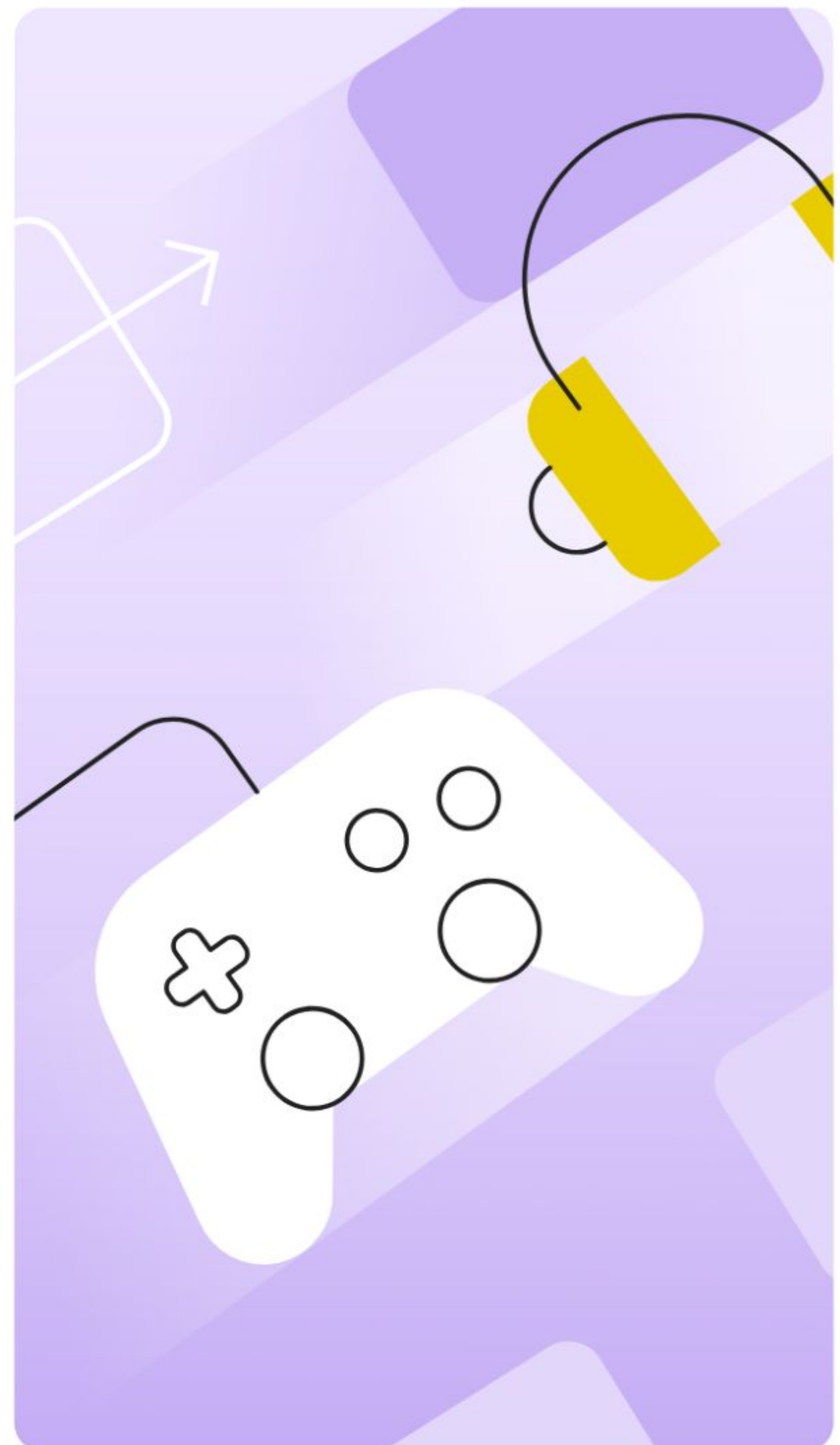
Strategies for selling game cards

The gaming industry has become the world's largest entertainment sector, surpassing movies and music combined. Game cards represent a crucial entry point for capturing gaming commerce revenue while serving diverse customer needs from parental controls to international accessibility.

1. **Stock popular platforms and trending games**

   Keep game cards for major platforms like PlayStation, Xbox, Nintendo, Steam and mobile games like Roblox readily available. Focus on what's currently popular with gamers, especially titles that appeal to younger players, as these drive consistent sales and repeat purchases.

2. **Display cards where customers can see them**

   Put game cards in visible, high-traffic spots where shoppers naturally look while browsing or waiting to check out. Good placement at eye level, near gaming sections, or at checkout counters helps customers notice them easily. The more visible your game cards are, the more likely customers will remember to grab one as a gift or for themselves.

3. **Offer different price options**

Stock game cards in various amounts from small values to larger denominations so customers can choose what fits their budget and needs. Having options like $10, $25, $50 and $100 cards means you can serve everyone from kids buying with allowance money to adults making bigger purchases. Different price points also work better for different occasions - smaller amounts for casual gifts, larger ones for special celebrations.

4. **Promote during gift-giving seasons**

Push game cards harder during holidays, birthdays, and back-to-school periods when people are actively looking for gifts. They solve the common problem of not knowing what to buy for gamers, especially teenagers.

5. **Make the buying process quick and simple**

Keep the purchase process straightforward with fast checkout, clear pricing and easy-to-understand instructions. Avoid complicated steps or confusing options that might make customers change their minds. The smoother and faster the experience, the more likely customers are to complete their purchase and come back next time.

Fraud in FMDG

Digital goods continue to be prime targets for fraudulent activity due to their instant delivery and ease of resale.

Preventing known fraud tactics is already challenging. New technologies are making fraud even more sophisticated, creating additional security challenges for merchants.

Impact of fraud projections for 2026-2029

$362B

Fraud losses projected 2023-2028 in global online payment, with $91B in 2028

$28.1B

Global card-not-present (CNP) fraud losses estimated to reach by 2026, a 40% increase from 2023

$107B

Third-party e-commerce fraud projected to reach by 2029, up 141% from $44.3 billion in 2024

+48%

Increase in merchant IDs used for card testing in 2024, giving fraudsters more validation options

Impact of advanced fraud

Revenue and operational losses

Each fraudulent transaction costs ~3x its value in fees, chargebacks and overhead. For digital goods, a single breach can scale massively, risking business continuity.

Cross-border vulnerability

International transactions are prime targets for fraudsters, who exploit currency differences and use devices from unfamiliar locations to slip past fraud detection systems.

Prevention investment requirements

Merchants now invest significantly in fraud prevention software, internal teams and external audits to combat sophisticated AI-powered attacks.

Reputational damage

Modern fraud incidents are highly visible and news-sensitive. A single major breach or scam can undo years of brand building, with incidents spreading rapidly across social media and news outlets.

Decline in customer confidence

Fraud erodes customer trust. When customers feel unsafe, they leave, causing lasting revenue loss. For digital goods, one provider's security failure can damage the entire industry's reputation.

Recovery costs exceed initial losses

Rebuilding trust requires transparency and visible security measures, often costing more than the original fraud loss through remediation, upgrades and reassurance campaigns.

Advanced fraud tactics in digital goods

APP fraud (Authorised Push Payment fraud)

Criminals impersonate officials to trick victims into authorising bank transfers to criminal accounts. Unlike card fraud, these victim-authorised payments are nearly impossible to reverse.

Friendly fraud

Occurs when legitimate customers abuse the payment system by disputing valid transactions. This includes two main types:

- **Chargeback fraud**
  Customers consume digital content then dispute charges with their bank, claiming non-receipt. Merchants lose sales and face chargeback fees.
- **Refund fraud**
  Customers exploit return policies by claiming consumed digital products are defective, or use stolen payment methods knowing chargebacks will follow.

AI-generated synthetic identities

Fraudsters use machine learning to create realistic fake identities with synthetic credit histories, making traditional identity verification ineffective against sophisticated attacks.

Agentic AI fraud

Autonomous AI agents execute fraud at scale by navigating interfaces, solving CAPTCHAs and adapting when blocked. Over 40% of travel sites now block all bot traffic, inadvertently blocking legitimate AI assistants alongside malicious ones.

Account takeover automation

Account takeover cases skyrocketed by 76% in 2024 in the UK, with over 74,000 cases recorded, particularly targeting mobile phone accounts and online retail.

Card testing and validation

Fraudsters use automated systems to test stolen credit card data on digital goods platforms which offer quick transaction validation without physical delivery requirements.
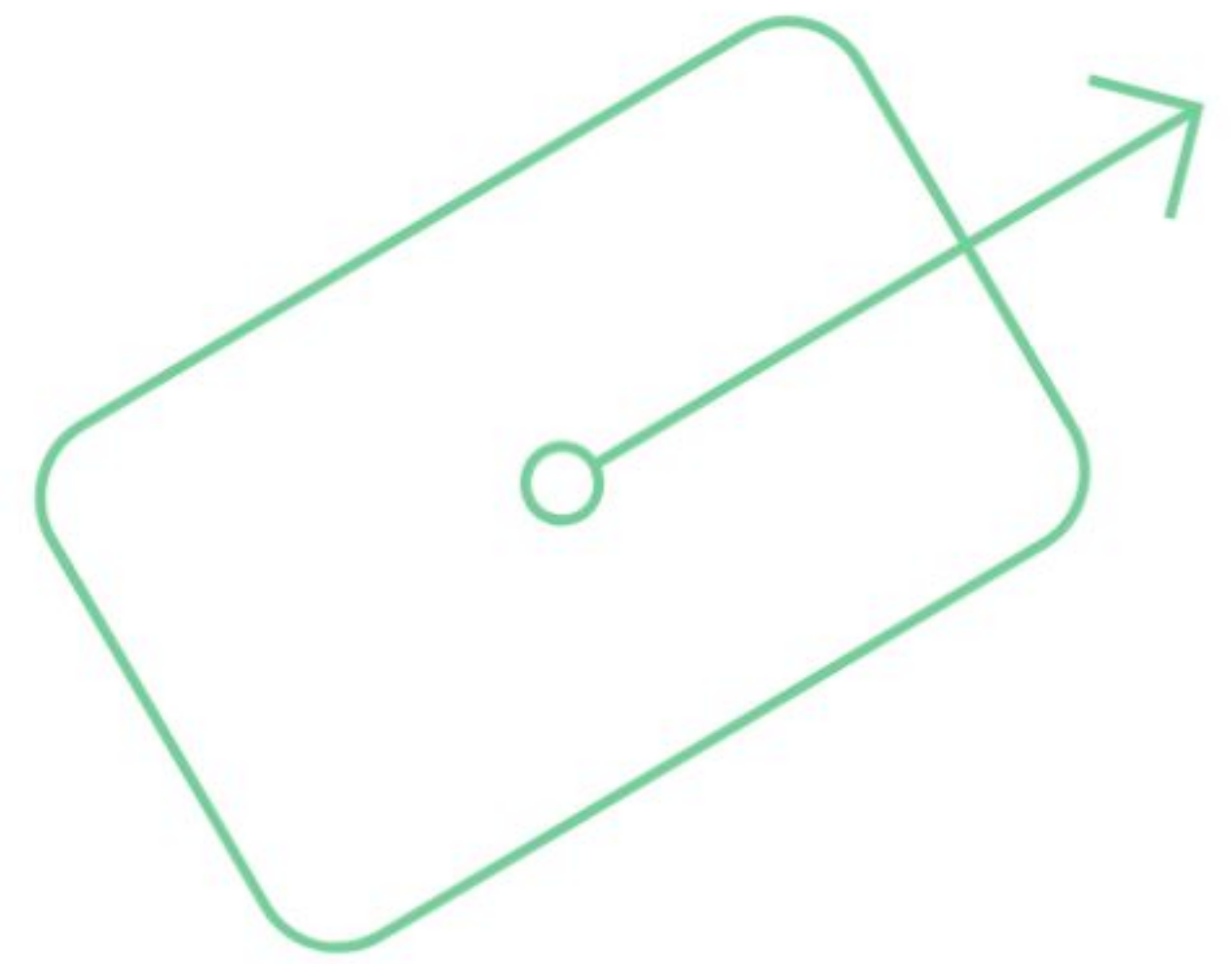
Identity document fraud

Criminals create or manipulate identity documents and use social engineering tactics to bypass verification processes, particularly targeting high-value digital transactions.

Phishing automation at scale

AI-powered phishing campaigns affect 43% of merchants, with fraudsters creating realistic impersonations of legitimate platforms to steal credentials.

Strategies for fighting payment fraud

1. **Deploy real-time transaction monitoring**

   Use advanced analytics to screen transactions instantly, flagging suspicious activity based on velocity checks, geolocation anomalies, and device fingerprinting. Combine automated alerts with experienced fraud analysts for comprehensive coverage.

2. **Strengthen identity verification processes**

   Use proportionate real-time risk scoring based on transaction patterns, device intelligence and behaviour analysis rather than document-heavy KYC that would harm conversion rates for low-value digital goods.

3. **Create comprehensive fraud data management**

   Maintain clean, accurate customer data through regular audits and validation processes. Integrate fraud intelligence from multiple sources including industry consortiums, payment processors, and internal transaction histories.

4. **Balance security with customer experience**

   Match your security requirements to the risk level of what's being sold. For lower-risk products, don't ask customers to fill out lengthy forms or provide full address details, keep checkout simple. Only add extra security checks for high-risk transactions.

   Use fraud detection that works in the background without slowing down legitimate customers.

5. **Leverage device and network intelligence**

   Deploy device fingerprinting to recognise trusted devices based on hardware and software characteristics. Use geolocation verification and network analysis to detect proxy or VPN usage masking true locations. Implement mobile device management to track system integrity and prevent compromised devices from conducting transactions.

6. **Foster merchant education and network collaboration**

   Maintain PCI DSS compliance and implement network monitoring to detect compromised systems. Build transparency about data usage to strengthen customer confidence. Establish chargeback management programmes that help dispute invalid chargebacks while reducing legitimate disputes through improved customer service.

7. **Establish strategic fraud prevention partnerships**

   Partner with specialised fraud prevention providers who offer both advanced AI capabilities and human expertise. These partnerships provide access to sophisticated detection tools, global threat intelligence, and indemnification services.

8. **Develop rapid response and recovery protocols**

   Digital goods fraud prevention succeeds or fails on three factors:

   Data quality: Use fraud detection trained specifically on transaction patterns, not generic e-commerce data. Response speed: Deploy real-time blocking to stop fraud within minutes, before it scales to thousands of transactions.
   Pattern updates: Continuously feed newly detected fraud tactics back into your rule-based systems, not quarterly or monthly.

Combine automated instant-response capabilities with specialised fraud teams who understand digital goods fraud patterns. Generic fraud tools miss the unique velocity and scale risks of FMDG; specialised systems catch fraud other tools miss.

Traditional rule-based systems and human oversight. Use machine learning to identify patterns while maintaining manual review processes for high-risk transactions and edge cases that require human judgment.

However, building and maintaining this sophisticated multi-layered setup requires significant technical expertise, ongoing investment and continuous updates to stay ahead of changing fraud tactics. If your organisation lacks the capacity or resources to develop this in-house, partner with a specialised anti-fraud provider with proven expertise in digital goods fraud prevention like Alphacomm. The right partner can deliver superior protection at predictable costs while freeing your team to focus on core business growth.

9. **Implement multi-layered risk assessment**

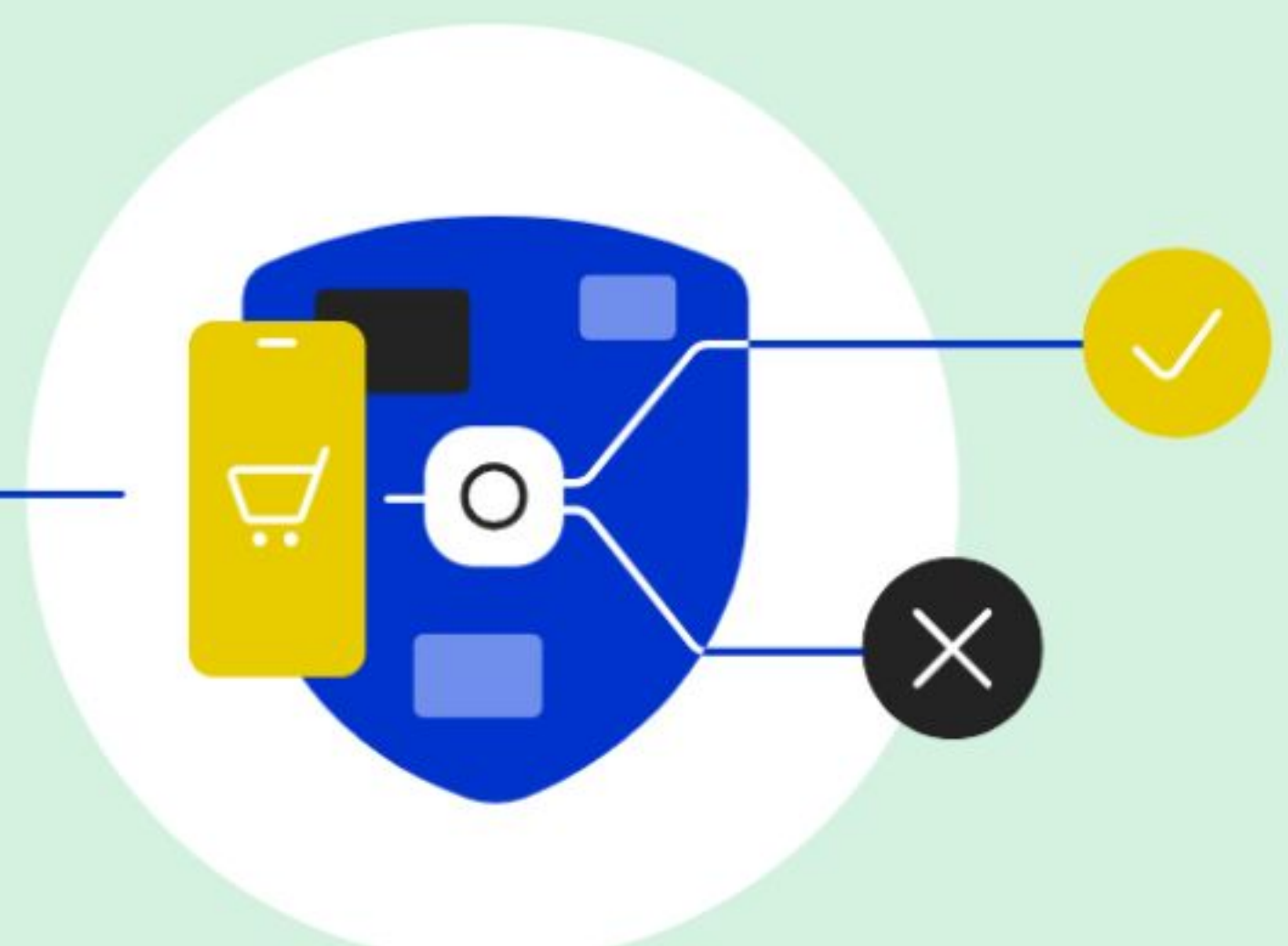Effective fraud prevention combines AI-powered behavioural analysis with

Protectmaxx
Fraud protection

Eliminate payment fraud at check-out with our state-of-the-art fraud protection for digital goods.

Our anti-fraud engine provides tailored protection for businesses selling digital goods, all while maintaining one of the highest acceptance rates in the market.

https://alphacomm.io/solutions/protectmaxx

How to sell digital goods online - buy or build?

The decision between building custom solutions versus improving existing platforms has evolved significantly. Modern businesses must consider not just initial costs and timeframes but also AI integration capabilities, fraud prevention sophistication and global scalability requirements.

Success nowadays requires platforms that can handle complex personalisation, real-time fraud detection and seamless omnichannel experiences. Here's how to evaluate your options:

Buying

Faster market entry
Launch within weeks using proven platforms with fraud prevention built in.

Predictable cost structure
Lower upfront investment with transaction-based pricing; indemnification turns fraud costs into fixed expenses.

Access to specialised expertise
Leverage provider expertise in digital goods and fraud prevention.

Potential platform limitations
Consider flexibility constraints and vendor dependency.

Building

Maximum customisation potential
Create bespoke experiences aligned with your brand and processes.

Higher initial investment
Significant upfront costs, extended timelines, plus ongoing maintenance.

Complete control and flexibility
Full ownership of features and system integrations.

Technical expertise requirements
Requires in-house skills or costly partners, plus ongoing investment to address evolving fraud.

Key evaluation factors:

1. **Development timeline requirements**

   Existing platforms enable immediate market entry and revenue generation, while custom development typically requires 6-18 months before launch. Consider opportunity costs and competitive timing in your decision.

2. **Total cost of ownership analysis**

   Compare not just initial development costs but ongoing maintenance, security updates, compliance management, fraud prevention and scaling costs over 3-5 years.

3. **Customisation and integration needs**

   Evaluate whether existing platforms provide sufficient flexibility for your specific business requirements or if custom development is essential for competitive differentiation.

4. **Fraud prevention capabilities**

   Digital goods require smart fraud prevention. Assess whether you can develop or afford best-in-class fraud prevention internally or if partnering with specialists provides better protection.

Final recommendations

The optimal choice depends on your specific business requirements, technical capabilities and market timing needs.

Choose existing solutions when:

- Speed to market is critical
- Limited internal technical expertise
- Focus on core business rather than platform development
- Need proven fraud prevention and compliance

Choose custom development when:

- Unique business requirements that platforms cannot accommodate
- Substantial technical team and budget available
- Platform differentiation is a competitive advantage
- Long-term control over platform evolution is essential

For most businesses entering the FMDG market, partnering with experienced platform providers like Alphacomm offers the optimal balance of speed, security and scalability. This approach enables focus on customer acquisition and business growth while leveraging specialised expertise in digital goods challenges.

What's next?

FMDG is just getting started

The market is evolving continuously, which means massive opportunity for those who adapt quickly. The core principles -frictionless delivery, impulse purchasing, flexible access- work across any vertical. Master these fundamentals early and you'll have a significant advantage as the market scales and matures.

Obsess over conversion rate & cost optimisation

Success in FMDG isn't about having the flashiest product; it's about ruthless efficiency. Small improvements in conversion rates and customer acquisition costs compound dramatically. Test everything. Measure everything. Optimise relentlessly.

Deploy AI and automation

AI is transforming how FMDG businesses operate; from personalised recommendations that boost conversion, to automated fraud detection that protects margins, to customer behaviour predictions that inform smarter strategies. The operators scaling fastest aren't doing more manual work; they're using AI to handle repetitive tasks and uncover patterns humans miss. Start experimenting now. The learning curve is real but so is the edge it gives you.

Think outside your existing vertical

Your next breakthrough might come from a completely different industry. Broaden your horizon. Study what's working in adjacent markets. The businesses winning in FMDG are those willing to learn from sectors they never considered before.

Join the FMDG Club

FMDG moves too fast to figure out alone. The operators winning right now aren't just sharing tactics; they're building real relationships, solving problems together and learning from each other's wins and losses in real time.

This is a community that values genuine connection and collaboration. The insights you need aren't in another blog post, they're in conversations with people who are in the trenches doing the work.

We are building something real in the digital era!
Will you join this community?

Check it out

About Alphacomm

With 25+ years of experience in telecom, travel and e-commerce, Alphacomm sets the bar for making the sale of digital goods simple and safe.

Our suite of scalable solutions specifically designed for digital goods, including white-label shops, payment services, and fraud prevention, empowers businesses to stay ahead of digital trends while protecting every single transaction.

As Revenue Geeks Alphacomm's mission is to ensure a seamless, secure experience that customers love and fraudsters hate.

Visit **alphacomm.io** to learn more on how you can start selling digital goods and protect your transactions.

Decoding the FMDG ecosystem: a glossary of terms

Agentic AI

Autonomous AI systems that can execute tasks independently including fraudulent activities like account creation and payment fraud, while adapting their behaviour to bypass security measures.

ARPU (Average Revenue Per User)

The average revenue generated per customer over a specific period, a key metric for measuring profitability in prepaid and subscription services.

Bot traffic

Automated web traffic generated by software programs (bots) rather than human users which can be used for legitimate purposes or fraudulent activities like account creation and card testing.

CAPTCHA (Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart)

Security mechanism designed to distinguish human users from automated bots by presenting challenges that are easy for humans but difficult for computers to solve.

CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate)

Measure of growth rate over multiple time periods.

Card testing automation

Automated systems that rapidly test stolen credit card information across multiple platforms to identify active cards for fraudulent purchases.

Churn

The rate at which customers stop doing business with a company over a given period, a critical metric for subscription-based and prepaid services.

Customer Lifetime Value (CLV)

The total revenue a business expects from a customer throughout their entire relationship, crucial for evaluating long-term profitability strategies.

KYC (Know Your Customer)

Identity verification processes that include document verification, biometric checks and database validation to prevent fraud and ensure regulatory compliance.

SEPA (Single Euro Payments Area)

Payment integration initiative that simplifies bank transfers denominated in euros across European countries, commonly used for direct debit payments and recurring transactions.

CNP (Card-Not-Present)

Transactions where the physical card is not present, such as online purchases, which carry higher fraud risk.

Device fingerprinting

Technology that creates unique identifiers for devices based on hardware, software, and configuration characteristics to detect fraud and improve security.

PCI DSS (Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard)

Security standards for organisations that handle credit card information.

Synthetic identity fraud

Creation of fake identities using machine learning to combine real and fabricated information, making them difficult to detect through traditional verification methods.

Velocity checks

Monitoring transaction frequency and patterns to detect suspicious activity.