



Legacy banking systems
are holding Canadian
businesses back.

It's time to change.



Foreword



Vroon Modgill,
CEO & Founder

When we expanded our business into Canada, we quickly realized how broken and inefficient the payments infrastructure was. Despite Canada being one of the most trade-oriented economies in the world, businesses here face substantial obstacles. We found ourselves paying up to 60% more in wire transfer fees. The limited online banking functionalities were another significant hurdle, often requiring physical branch visits just to complete routine transactions. Perhaps most troubling, slow legacy systems frequently created cash-flow gaps that hindered our operations and delayed our business processes.

“Legacy payment systems simply can’t keep pace with the speed of innovation that today’s businesses demand. This gap has become a real barrier to growth for Canadian companies, and it’s time we changed that.”

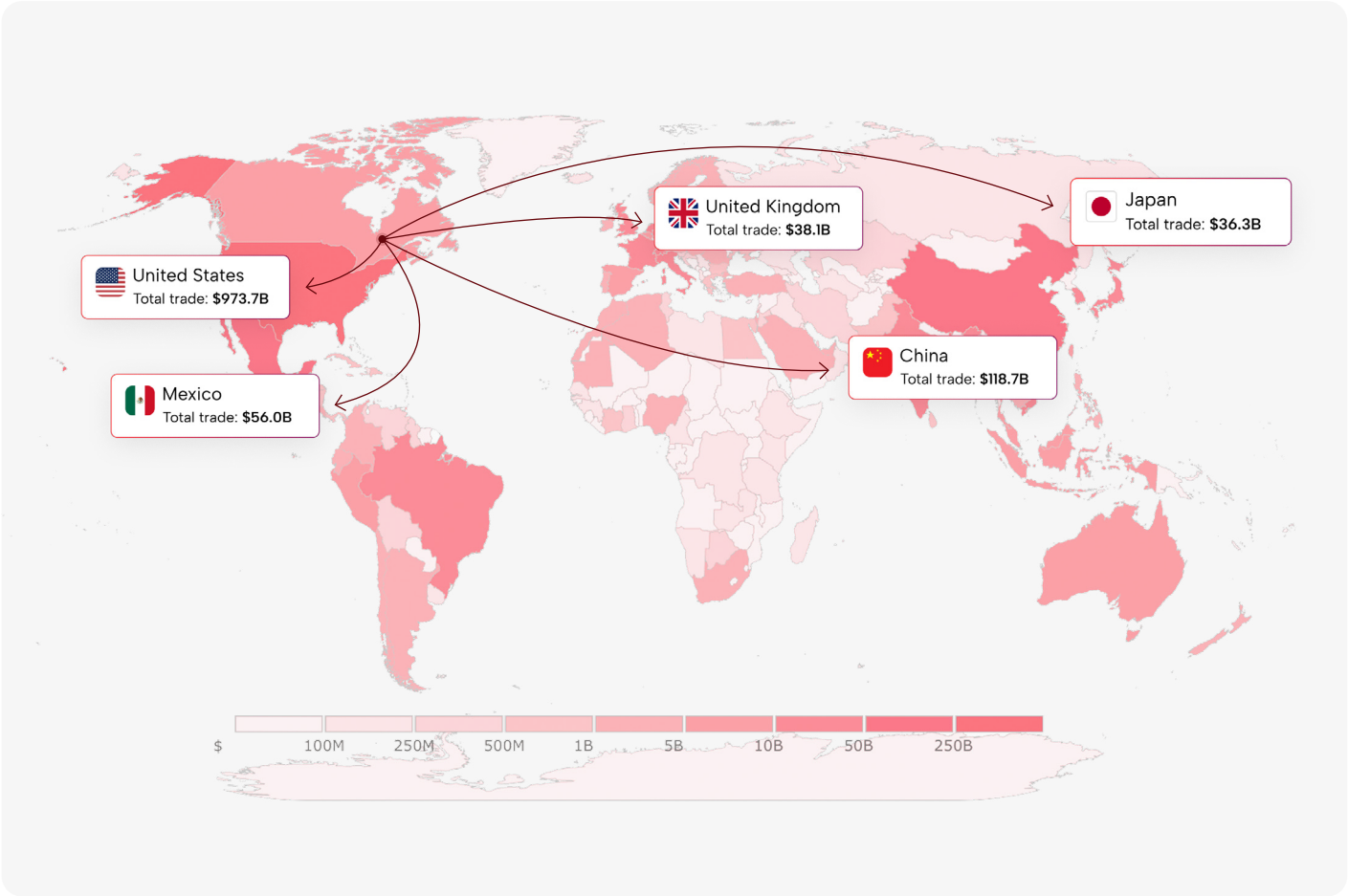
At Sokin, we’re dedicated to transforming how businesses make cross-border payments. We aim to empower businesses with smarter, faster, and simpler ways to manage international transactions. With innovative technology, transparent pricing, and seamless digital capabilities, we’re committed to bringing Canadian businesses the payments infrastructure that truly supports global growth.

This report highlights the key pain points Canadian businesses encounter, explores current payment systems, and demonstrates how we’re reshaping the global payments narrative to better align with the ambitions of modern Canadian businesses.

Vroon Modgill

Canada runs on cross-border trade

Every year, Canadian businesses move hundreds of billions of dollars across borders, driving growth in one of the world’s most trade-oriented economies. [International trade](#) represents more than 60% of Canada’s GDP, with the U.S. alone accounting for over 70%, amounting to more than \$900 billion in trade in 2024^a.



↑ Canada’s top 5 international trading partners in 2024 by total trade volume^a

Other leading partners, including China, Mexico, the United Kingdom, and Japan, collectively accounted for an additional \$240 billion^a.

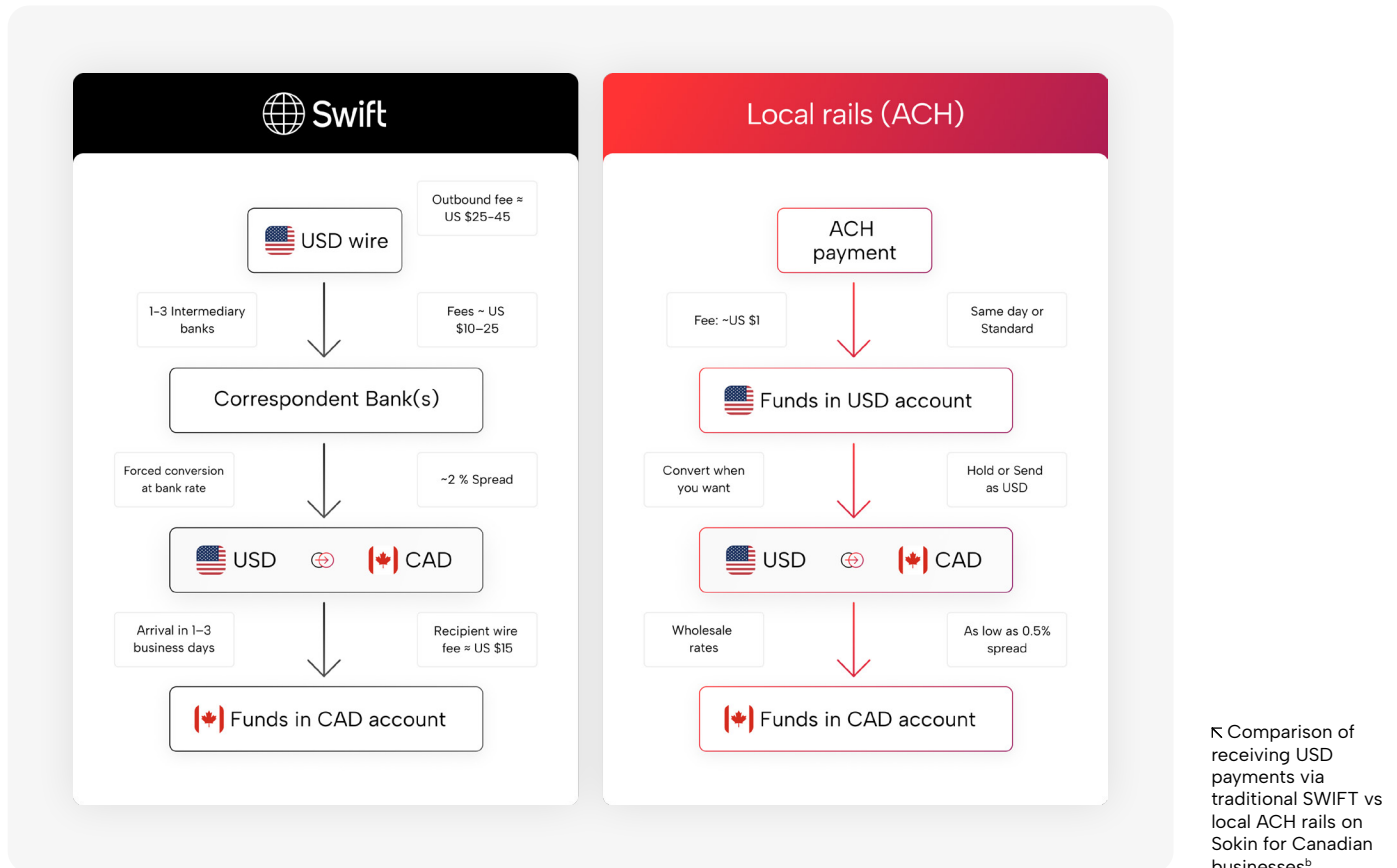
For Canadian businesses, the ability to efficiently send and receive payments no matter where they do business, isn’t merely convenient; it’s critical to their operational success and growth.

In this report, we’ll explore the current state of cross-border business payments in Canada, using the Canada–U.S. corridor as a main reference. We will aim to identify key pain points, compare major payment solutions, and highlight how innovative financial solutions are reshaping this critical aspect of international trade in Canada.

Our objective is simple: to help large or small Canadian businesses identify simpler, faster, and more cost-effective methods for managing their global transactions.

Receiving funds via SWIFT is Legacy

Canadian businesses typically rely on two primary providers for cross-border payments; **Traditional Banks (SWIFT wires)** and **Fintech Platforms**. Direct access to local payment rails is largely limited. For example, a Canadian business wanting to receive USD payments from the U.S. typically cannot access payment methods like the Automated Clearing House (ACH), the U.S. equivalent of Canada's Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). As a result, businesses rely on slower and more expensive alternatives.



Traditional bank transfers (SWIFT wires)

Traditional banks primarily provide businesses access to the SWIFT network for sending and receiving international payments. While SWIFT remains the default option offered by banks, some banks also offer alternative payment options, such as local currency accounts. However, these services are typically limited by the number of supported currencies, transaction limits, and often come with additional fees.

Fintech platforms

Fintech platforms offer a compelling alternative to traditional banks, promising lower costs and greater flexibility for international payments. However, these might come with some potential drawbacks, including limitations in scalability when handling large transaction volumes, and concerns around credibility or reliability compared to established banking institutions.

Key challenges and pain points

Canadian businesses, both SMEs and large enterprises, regularly encounter these key challenges when performing international transactions:



High and unpredictable fees eat into margins

Canadian banks typically charge high fees for cross-border payments, with outgoing wires averaging between \$30–\$50 CAD and incoming wires between \$15–\$20 CAD^c. Businesses also incur other fees like hidden FX markups of up to 2%–3% and sometimes monthly account fees^d, for example a typical SWIFT payment from RBC could cost up to \$45 CAD^c.



Forced conversions and limited multi-currency capabilities increase FX risk

Canadian businesses face significant restrictions and costs when transacting in USD or other foreign currencies through local banks. Banks rarely offer easily accessible multi-currency accounts, which means companies must either maintain multiple fee-based accounts or accept ongoing foreign exchange (FX) risks associated with forced conversions.



Limited online functionalities make payments a hassle

Making International payments from Canada via traditional banks can be cumbersome. Banks like Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)^e and Toronto Dominion Bank (TD)^f often require businesses to visit branches in person to initiate wire transfers, while banks may offer online transfer options, they typically impose additional setup procedures or transaction limits, further complicating operations and creating delays.



Slow settlement and processing complexities create cash-flow gaps

Traditional international payments from Canada to the U.S. typically take 2–5 business days^b. This delay might be due to multiple intermediary banks, manual AML/KYC compliance checks, varying banking hours, or differing time zones. To enhance cash flow management, reduce operational friction, and improve customer and partner relationships, businesses need faster settlement options.



Caps force split payments and extra fees

Canadian banks often cap international transfers by **per-transaction** and/or **daily** limits, which forces businesses to split payments which means more fees and complexities. For example, **CIBC Global Money Transfer for Business** caps total sends at **\$100,000 CAD in 24 hours⁹**, **TD Global Transfer** lists per-transaction and rolling period limits (e.g., **\$6,500 per bank transfer** per 24 hours)⁹, and **RBC PayEdge** “real-time” payments carry a **\$25,000 per-transaction** cap⁹.



Rigid systems restrict customisation

Banks often provide limited flexibility for businesses to integrate payments directly into their existing processes. Most business banking systems (like RBC Express and ScotiaConnect) rely heavily on manual file uploads, rigid file formats, and legacy standards. This makes it difficult and costly for businesses to build custom payment solutions or embed financial services seamlessly into their platforms.

These challenges underscore the urgent need for simpler, more transparent, and cost-efficient solutions tailored specifically to the global payment needs of Canadian businesses.

Features	Traditional banks	SOKIN
Local routes	EFT / Interac	EFT / Interac, ACH, NPP, FPS and SEPA
International routes	SWIFT	SWIFT, Sokin Instant payment ¹
Monthly fees	Typically range from \$9 – \$25 CAD on average ^d	None
International transfer fee	Outgoing wires range from \$30 – \$50 CAD ^c Incoming wire range from \$15 – \$20 CAD ^c	Outgoing wire from 5 units Incoming wires at no fee
FX fees	Typically from 2%	As low as 0.5%
Multi-currency accounts	Limited currency options	26 Currency accounts ¹
Payout currencies	Limited currency options	70+ Payout currencies ¹
Automation and Integrations	Limited automation	APIs, Bulk payments, ERP & accounting integrations

[↑] How Sokin compares to traditional banks in Canada (estimates based on data from Canadian banks)

Our solution for Canadian businesses

We directly address the major pain points Canadian businesses face when making international payments by providing a modern financial platform that simplifies cross-border operations. With our suite of products, we help businesses;

Eliminate the hassle of growing globally

✓ **Open accounts in multiple currencies**

Hold, send, and receive payments directly in USD and 26 other currencies¹ effortlessly. Gain greater control over managing the currencies that matter most to your business

✓ **Access local payment rails (ACH & more)**

Pay suppliers and receive payments via local routes. Eliminates costly wire transfers and significantly speeds up settlements. Also, access payouts in 70+ currencies¹.

Reduce the cost of global transactions

✓ **Access wholesale FX rates**

Foreign exchange rates typically reserved for industry giants on every transaction, regardless of your volume. Enjoy transparent pricing with our best rates and no hidden markups, ever!

✓ **Make free and instant international payments**

Transfer funds without fees to Sokin accounts of your global branches or regular business partners. Reduce operational costs, eliminate settlement delays, and effortlessly manage cash flow across your international network.

Save time on tedious financial processes

✓ **Upgrade your existing systems**

Integrate payments directly into your existing ERP and accounting systems (QuickBooks, Sage, and others). Automate tedious tasks, such as payments reconciliation, inventory management, and bulk payments.

✓ **Streamline internal processes**

Empower your team while maintaining control through user permissions and built-in approval workflows. Simplify operations with a unified platform for all your business finance needs, eliminating the complexity of managing multiple banking providers.

A new payment experience with Sokin

International business payments often come with hurdles that impact revenue, increase operational costs, and slow down critical business processes. With Sokin, global businesses can operate smarter, unlocking faster, simpler, and more cost-effective ways to send and receive payments across borders. Consider a medium-sized Canadian automotive parts manufacturer needing to pay a U.S. supplier **25,000 CAD**;

	Traditional banks	SOKIN
Convenience	• Batched payments due to online transaction limits • Might require an in-branch visit	✓ Full transaction value in one go ✓ Fully online experience
Cost	• FX fee typically ~2 % (≈ 400 USD on 20k) • Potential FX rate mark-up • High transfer fee (from 30 CAD)^d	✓ FX fee as low as 0.5 % (≈ 100 USD on 20k) ✓ Wholesale FX rate ✓ Flat transfer fee (from 10 CAD)
Speed	• Typical SWIFT timelines (1-3 business days)^b • Potential delays due to cut-off times and intermediary banks.	✓ Local USD payout ✓ Instant settlement option to another Sokin account

↑ Comparison of a 25,000 CAD transfer to the US using traditional banks vs Sokin

Products we offer in Canada

✓ Multi-currency accounts and FX payments

Open accounts in foreign currencies and access our best wholesale rates for payments in up to 70 currencies.

[Learn more](#)

✓ Balance boost

Earn up to 3.5% AER on GBP, USD, and EUR balances effortlessly, without tedious paperwork or complicated application processes. [Learn more](#)

✓ Embedded finance

Seamlessly integrate tailored financial services directly into your business through our robust APIs. [Learn more](#)

✓ Treasury management

Simplify reconciliation and financial management with seamless integrations to leading accounting packages and automate bulk payments. [Learn more](#)

Cross-border payments can be fast, simple, and efficient

Cross-border payments between Canada and trading partners like the U.S. remain critical for driving growth in an economy deeply rooted in international trade. Yet many Canadian businesses still grapple with inefficient, costly, and outdated payment solutions. Revenue and financial teams across the region are actively seeking innovative solutions to navigate these challenges, reduce friction, and improve operational agility.

The Canadian payments landscape is ready for solutions that prioritise transparency, efficiency, and ease of use. Innovative financial providers have a pivotal role to play, enabling businesses not just to overcome today's hurdles but also to seize tomorrow's opportunities.

We're committed to driving this innovation forward by challenging industry norms and eliminating costly inefficiencies that have become standard practice. We help businesses gain immediate access to multi-currency accounts, local payment rails, and automated financial processes, all from a single, streamlined platform.

Sources used in this report:

- a. [Global International Trade with Canada Report 2024](#)
- b. Fees and settlement times are estimates based on publicly available information on Swift transfers via banks in Canada (RBC, TD, and Scotiabank)
- c. Wire transfer fees are estimates based on publicly available information
 - [RBC wire transfer fees](#)
 - [TD wire transfer fees](#)
 - [Scotiabank wire transfer fees](#)
- d. Monthly fee
 - [RBC monthly fee](#)
 - [TD Monthly fee](#)
 - [Scotiabank monthly fee](#)
- e. [How to send a wire with RBC](#)
- f. [How to send a wire with TD](#)
- g. Transaction limits
 - [CIBC limits](#)
 - [RBC limits](#)

Sources are accurate as of the 2nd of July, 2025

Ready to transform your cross-border payments?

Get started with a multi-currency business account in 24 hours, or reach out directly to **our sales team** to learn how Sokin can fuel your business growth.