

Development of IT platforms

In line with Sberbank's strategy, we continued our work aimed at transforming the bank into a technological leader across all major fields of the banking industry, improving clients' experiences when dealing with the bank and ensuring the stability of our business processes. Our key strategic programs in this field were centered primarily on developing our IT platforms and automated business processes, reformatting our branch network and continuing the centralization of back and middle-office functions.

Following global trends, Russian banking business is becoming increasingly complicated and demanding from an IT standpoint, and many of our business successes in 2012 were directly linked to our continuing investments in our technological platform. Having set one of our key strategic goals as making a rapid shift to providing high-tech banking solutions to our clients, we are continuing to invest actively in our IT development.

The centralization and unification of our IT platforms across the regions is one of the most important technological initiatives. As part of this project, we are integrating core banking functions (e.g. accounting) under select platforms. This enables us to ensure much higher stability for our IT system, which is increasingly important given the growing complexity of our operations and the rapidly expanding number of transactions. As part of our technology centralization strategy, we have built Mega Data Processing Centers that have started to play a pivotal role in our business processes, as they allow us to ensure much greater reliability and higher execution speed in all of our operations. Growing business volumes, in particular in retail transactions, also imply very high demand for more powerful processing technologies, which represent another important area of investments in our IT platforms.

In this section of this report, we discuss the major results achieved on the IT front in the past year.