



Digital bank Tinkoff achieves mass rollout of Black metal cards to the Russian market

For those who are used to getting more

Standing out from the crowd in the Russian payment market is no easy task, constantly having to differentiate yourself from well-established banking leaders as well as emerging fintechs. Which is why challenger bank Tinkoff made a strategic move by launching a distinctive Black card made of metal to meet the needs of its most affluent and demanding clients.

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Prestige appeal

Fintech leader Tinkoff is **a bank operating in Russia**, and it is now the world's largest digital bank in number of customers. Already boasting more than 10 million users on its online platform, the company is keen to capture an even bigger share of its home market and conquer a new segment, by offering **disruptive payments services** to its most affluent clients.

Staying ahead of the curve

Russia's highly competitive payment market is developing at speed, and only the strongest will survive. Tinkoff has had to pull out all the stops to capture the lion's share of the country's emerging **mass affluent segment**, devising products and strategies that can compete with tough market players as both fintechs and well-established traditional banks try to get in on the act. It's a lofty ambition, but Tinkoff is well prepared to leverage its position as a **digital pioneer to deliver high-end quality banking products**.

Elegance at its finest

While providing its **most exclusive customers** with a raft of **premium services**, Tinkoff wanted to offer to a wider segment of customers certain services which other banks only offer to their VIP customer segment. It opted for **an eye-catching metal card** – a distinctive product at three times the weight of a standard plastic card – which would evoke a sense of **luxury and pride** in cardholders and turn heads whenever they used it to make a payment. Crafted from a single sheet of stainless steel, the Tinkoff Black Metal card is engraved with both Mastercard's and the bank's logos and emblazoned with the brand's striking coat of arms in silver. To top it off, a double-coated satin finish gives the card a noticeably sleek and refined look to reflect the design tastes of the discerning customer base it's aimed at, helping to ensure it retains its top-of-the-wallet status. But that's not all. In addition to creating a metal card that's an object of desire, Tinkoff chose to put **contactless payment technology** at the heart of its offer, marrying the convenience of contactless payment with the **beauty of metal** to attract and retain its most tech-savvy customers. The truly innovative and classy look of the Tinkoff Black Metal card is not its only asset. It comes with an **impressive**



set of premium services, featuring cashback on every purchase; commission-free money transfer to cards issued by other banks; travel insurance; access to airport business lounges... a world of advantages enabling Tinkoff to increase loyalty as well as boost the attractiveness of its offering.

A colossal project

With such ambitious goals, Tinkoff had to be confident that it could **roll out a huge number of the cards** within a **tight timeframe** to gain first-mover advantage and stay ahead of the competition while also creating a truly unprecedented moment in the history of the Russian finance market. It chose **Gemalto – a Thales group company** – right from the design stage to the conception of the metal card and through to market rollout.

The project started with a pilot that demonstrated the market's appetite for the ground-breaking product. This was followed by the **rollout of more than 100,000 Tinkoff Black Metal cards**, a colossal undertaking for the two companies working together to deliver a metal card that could also make contactless payments. Gemalto helped Tinkoff to select the right metal card product for its needs, supported it **in the design of this very select payment card** and assisted the digital bank in the selection of its special features. It also helped the bank achieve its **ambitious rollout plans on time and to budget** without compromising on card quality and design. Working in conjunction with US-based metal cards manufacturer **CompoSecure**, Tinkoff was able to take advantage of both Gemalto and CompoSecure's long experience in metal card projects, coordination and mutual knowledge, to ensure a **smooth rollout**.

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