



Mortgage platform modernization

Lead with experience,
enable with technology

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Borrower expectations are evolving beyond rates. Will your business keep up?

Borrower expectations within the mortgage industry are shifting faster than the systems designed to support them. The industry's long-standing focus on platform upgrades and modernization initiatives is no longer enough; 2026 demands a fundamental reset built around clarity, transparency, and human-centered design. As satisfaction scores for the mortgage industry remain low and servicing gaps widen, the message is clear: **Lenders cannot rely on technology-first approaches and must instead focus on experience as the primary differentiator.** Borrowers don't care about a lender's internal architectures; they want simplicity, predictability, and personalization.

Building on the extensive mortgage executive research KPMG performed in 2025, this paper digs deeper into the following key issues:



The increased importance of customer experience (CX) within the mortgage industry



The reasons lenders should build their architecture to be centered around the borrower



The ways in which the borrower experience has already been enhanced by generative artificial intelligence (GenAI)

With borrowers demanding intuitive, frictionless journeys and AI unlocking new ways to deliver them, we will also present examples of how leading lenders are re-centering their technology and operating models around the outcomes that matter most.



1. Customer experience: Mortgage's most undervalued differentiator

CX has become one of the most powerful long-term differentiators across industries. In fact, research from KPMG shows that the top ten brands of 2025 and 2026 achieved three times the revenue and profit growth of the next 90 brands.¹ Yet, despite its proven outsized impact, many organizations still struggle with customer experience. Forrester's 2025 CX Index shows that consumer perceptions of CX have declined for the fourth straight year,² reaching an all-time low. The study highlights a persistent gap between how executives believe customers feel and what customers actually experience. And this gap is only widening as technology modernization efforts outpace business-led clarity on customer needs.

In mortgage lending, the issue is even more pronounced. Mortgage servicing satisfaction came in at

713/1000 in the 2025 JD Power ranking, lower than the average satisfaction across other industries. Servicing satisfaction levels also remain 47 points below origination, signaling organizations remain hyper-focused on originating loans, without replicating the same level of investment into retaining these borrowers across their entire mortgage journey.³ For example, only 44 percent of mortgage servicing apps deliver basic foundational functionality (i.e., limited app outages, intuitive navigation, and basic visual appeal), and only 12 percent of mortgage servicer apps deliver more advanced functionality (i.e., ability to set up alerts, direct extra payments toward principal balance, and identify an expected shortage/overage in escrow accounts).⁴ Borrowers want to feel confident in servicing a mortgage from their phone, and lenders are not currently instilling that confidence.

¹ "Amplifying Noise or Creating Value? Signal Moments: When AI and Human Insight Create Real Results," KPMG, 2025–2026 US Customer Experience Excellence Report, 2025

² "Forrester's CX Index™ 2025 Results," Forrester Research, June 24, 2025

³ "Mortgage Customer Satisfaction Surges as Originators Adopt Advisory-Style Approach to Lending, JD Power Finds," JD Power, November 12, 2025

⁴ "Mortgage Servicing Apps Deliver Uneven User Experience, JD Power Finds," JD Power, December 2025

⁵ "Mortgage Customer Satisfaction Surges as Originators Adopt Advisory-Style Approach to Lending, JD Power Finds," JD Power, November 12, 2025

⁶ "Mortgage Servicing Apps Deliver Uneven User Experience, JD Power Finds," JD Power, December 2025

⁷ "Mortgage Customer Satisfaction Surges as Originators Adopt Advisory-Style Approach to Lending, JD Power Finds," JD Power, November 12, 2025

⁸ "Mortgage Servicing Apps Deliver Uneven User Experience, JD Power Finds," JD Power, December 2025

Three lenders consistently rank near the top of industry analysts' surveys

Rocket Mortgage

Differentiator: Fully integrated digital ecosystem that allows the customer to seamlessly navigate the entire mortgage ecosystem within the Rocket Mortgage experience

Awards: #11 in JD Power's 2025 Mortgage Origination Satisfaction Survey,⁵ #4 in JD Power's 2025 Mortgage Servicer Digital Experience Study⁶

Chase

Differentiator: Blends strong digital infrastructure with advisory-style, early-stage engagement that elevates satisfaction across the mortgage origination journey

Awards: #9 in JD Power's 2025 Mortgage Origination Satisfaction Survey,⁷ #2 in JD Power's 2025 Mortgage Servicer Digital Experience Study⁸

These gaps signal a deeper structural issue: Many lenders still approach modernization from purely a technology stack perspective without being grounded on the holistic borrower experience. Organizations are jumping to platform upgrades (e.g., new LOS configurations, POS redesigns, or enhanced servicing portals) without first defining the borrower journey and the business outcomes that those platforms must enable. Operating in silos drives

over-customization, resulting in systems that are no longer aligned to the features and experiences borrowers actually value. Today's borrowers reward solutions that deliver simplicity, transparency, and personalization across the lending lifecycle. KPMG estimates that nearly 4 out of 10 customers are even willing to pay a premium for superior experiences within Financial Services.⁹

Experience-first vision to guide platform modernization

This experience-first orientation is also reshaping how organizations think about scale. Rather than optimizing individual systems, leaders are designing end-to-end journeys that unify origination, closing, and servicing. KPMG 2025 Mortgage Executive Research highlights that while 60 percent of lenders view platform modernization as

a competitive differentiator, the organizations realizing the highest ROI are those that begin with a clear borrower experience vision.¹⁰ This alignment enables modular architectures, more effective use of GenAI-enhanced workflows, and meaningful reductions in cycle time that borrowers actually feel.



⁹ "Amplifying Noise or Creating Value? Signal Moments: When AI and Human Insight Create Real Results," KPMG, 2025–2026 US Customer Experience Excellence Report, 2025

¹⁰ "KPMG Executive Mortgage and Home Lending Survey," KPMG LLP, October 2025

¹¹ "Mortgage Customer Satisfaction Surges as Originators Adopt Advisory-Style Approach to Lending, JD Power Finds," JD Power, November 12, 2025

¹² "Navy Federal Ranked No. 1 For Customer Experience Among Multichannel Banks for the 10th Consecutive Year," Navy Federal Credit Union, July 15, 2025

Navy Federal Credit Union

Differentiator: Navy Federal Credit Union designs its platforms and solutions around deep member understanding, empathetic service, and seamless digital experiences

Awards: #4 in JD Power's 2025 Mortgage Origination Satisfaction Survey,¹¹ #1 US multichannel bank for CX quality in Forrester's 2025 CX Index Rankings¹²

*Brand was not "rank eligible" because it did not meet study award criteria.



2. Platform architecture: Experience-led, technology-enabled

To enable lenders to more effectively ground their products and services to borrower expectations, the next phase of the transformation requires constructing an architecture that can operationalize those expectations. This shift enables business-led, tech-enabled modernization that can reduce complexity and ensure technology investments translate directly into measurable improvements in satisfaction, efficiency, and scalability. By tying technology investments to substantive experience metrics (e.g., SLAs and KPIs), lenders can illustrate real ROI via improved experience instead of a disjointed one.

Experience drives architecture

Leading lenders are shifting from platform-driven designs to experience-first models because experience has become a primary differentiator. While improving the borrower experience is a top strategic priority, many lenders report that infrastructure constraints remain a significant barrier to achieving these goals. This gap underscores the need to invert traditional architecture models so that experience outcomes define how systems are assembled rather than allowing legacy platforms to limit what the journey can become.¹³

Maximize out-of-the-box platform capabilities

Excessive customization can inflate cost and slow innovation, which is why leading lenders increasingly prioritize standard platform capabilities over bespoke development. KPMG experience shows that organizations that maximize out-of-the-box functionality achieve 20 percent to 30 percent lower total cost of ownership compared to heavily customized environments, underscoring the value of reserving customization for direct borrower/associate touchpoints where there is a proven increase in satisfaction.¹⁴

Client impact in action

KPMG helps leading financial institutions modernize how they engage partners and customers. For a mid-sized private lender, KPMG designed and launched a custom Sales Partner Portal integrated with a bespoke loan origination system—creating a streamlined, intuitive experience that positioned the lender as a technology leader in the non-QM market. For a large government-sponsored enterprise, KPMG reimagined the servicer experience through a CX-led, one-stop portal that unified fragmented interactions and established a scalable foundation for future growth.



¹³“2025 Mortgage Executive Research,” KPMG LLP, September 2025

¹⁴“Enterprise Architecture Framework,” KPMG LLP, December 2025

Capability rationalization eliminates redundant technology

Years of acquisitions and point solutions have created overlapping capabilities, rising costs, and operational drag for many mortgage lenders. STRATMOR Group reports that mid- to large-size lenders often operate 15 to 25 core mortgage systems, many of which provide duplicative functionality with limited incremental experience value. Rationalizing capabilities using borrower and employee outcomes as the lens can help eliminate waste, reduce tool sprawl, and focus investment on capabilities that actually move experience metrics such as speed, clarity, and transparency.¹⁵

Legacy complexity and excessive customization can slow delivery and compound risk. KPMG enterprise architecture research indicates that legacy complexity can increase time to market for new borrower features by up to 40 percent. Targeted rationalization and modernization can reduce technical debt, standardize integrations, and remove brittle custom code. Doing so can enable faster experience enhancements without destabilizing core systems or creating operational fragility.¹⁶

“ AI is fundamentally changing the economics of platform builds and modernization. Mortgage lenders that take advantage of this opportunity will be able to create customer-centric experiences that drive true competitive advantage at a fraction of the historical investment costs. Moreover, organizations that pair experience-centric design with modular architecture will be able to adapt to shifting customer sentiments and demands at market speed and sustain that advantage over their competition.”

— **Christopher Panneck**
Principal, Advisory



¹⁵“Laying the Foundation for a Seamless Digital Mortgage Experience,” STRATMOR Group, April 2025

¹⁶“Enterprise Architecture Framework,” KPMG LLP, December 2025



Customization focused on front-end experience

Leaders are showing that customization should be targeted at the front end, where it meaningfully enhances the borrower's journey. Snapdocs' State of Digital Mortgage Closings shows that borrower satisfaction rises by 12 percent to 15 percent when digital closing experiences are streamlined, demonstrating that targeted customization at high-impact

interactions such as application clarity, status transparency, and closing workflows can deliver measurable value. By concentrating innovation at these experience-defining moments while relying on standardized services and orchestration elsewhere, lenders can improve satisfaction and speed without compromising system maintainability or scalability.¹⁷

Modular architecture can enable rapid change without disruption

A modular, service-oriented architecture decouples front-end experiences from back-end systems so teams can make incremental capability changes without re-engineering core platforms. Enterprise architecture research in mortgage lending demonstrates that service orientation aligned to The Open Group Architecture Framework (TOGAF®) principles supports faster implementation while preserving

operational stability and regulatory control. This pattern allows lenders to iterate continuously on the experience layer while keeping the core resilient and governed.¹⁸ By establishing this level of modularity and stability, lenders can position themselves to deploy next-generation AI enablement, which requires clean interfaces, reusable services, and well-governed data flows.

¹⁷"State of Digital Mortgage Closings," Snapdocs, February 2022

¹⁸"Enterprise Architecture Model for the Mortgage Lending Process in a Financial Institution Using TOGAF," Springer, May 30, 2024





3. Artificial intelligence: Supercharge your modernization

The architectural vision of an experienced mortgage process—one that is faster, more transparent, and highly personalized for better CX—is being brought to reality by the transformative power of AI. Despite initial caution due to regulatory scrutiny, fair-lending concerns, and the risk of customer harm, mortgage lenders are now accelerating AI adoption as successful use cases emerge and the technology becomes mainstream. As a result, AI is being applied across the entire value chain, serving as a crucial accelerator for modernizing the industry.

Streamlining loan origination and enhancing CX

In loan origination and processing, AI is being used to generate leads and enhance CX. For instance, United Wholesale Mortgage (UWM) stays connected with past borrowers through a series of mortgage-activity alerts, such as when a client lists their house for sale or has their credit pulled for a mortgage to generate leads.¹⁹ Rocket Mortgage introduced the Rocket AI Agent to provide real-time mortgage options, rates,

and document processing.²⁰ Rocket Mortgage also uses their Rocket AI for document processing intended to reduce human error and subjective bias in the initial stages of the loan process.²¹ Additionally, Chase goes further to use its AI platform, OmniAI, to offer customers products based on factors including their finances, bureau demographics, and spending habits, which also reduces risk.²²

¹⁹“UWM Introduces Suite of AI-Powered Solutions,” UWM, May 14, 2025

²⁰“How Rocket streamlines the home buying experience with Amazon Bedrock Agents,” AWS, July 10, 2025

²¹“Rocket Companies Introduces Rocket Logic AI Platform to Make Homeownership Faster and Easier,” Rocket Mortgage, September 4, 2024

²²“AI in Mortgage Industry: Top Use Cases You Need To Know,” SmartDev, September 10, 2025

AI use cases being tested and implemented in the market

Origination and processing

- Personalized loan offerings
- Credit application review guide
- Data collection and data processing

Underwriting and pricing

- Classification and organization of loan documents
- Compliance and reporting
- Proactive risk identification

Servicing and monitoring

- Default prediction models
- Virtual loan assistant
- Personalized collection

AI support tools

- AI-powered enterprise support tools to reduce time searching for documents and answers

Unlocking mortgage underwriting

When it comes to underwriting, lenders continue to utilize a manual process with little or no assistance from AI because of integration complexity and cost. Regardless, some lenders are paving the way forward. Better Mortgage's AI-driven underwriting system generates up to \$1,400 in fulfillment cost savings per loan,²³ and approximately 75 percent of its locked loan files are now reviewed through this system, improving mortgage closing time

by about 12 days (32 versus the industry's 42 to 44).²⁴ Chase uses AI-driven predictive analytics to analyze both cash flow data and unstructured signals—including spending behavior or employment volatility—to provide underwriters with actionable insights that were not possible with traditional scoring models. This allows them to match borrowers with products based on "individual and safer" risk assessments.²⁵

Transforming loan servicing with AI

AI is also enhancing servicing, improving efficiency and customer satisfaction. AI-powered tools can handle customer inquiries effectively, reducing the burden on call centers. Wells Fargo's AI-driven "Smart Conversations" has achieved a 73 percent resolution rate for customer inquiries, which drastically reduces call center volume.²⁶ This automation allows servicing teams to focus on

more complex issues while ensuring customers can use self-service tools. In a pilot program, Chase and U.S. Bank are leveraging AI-powered predictive analytics to forecast default risks, with U.S. Bank reporting a greater than 15 percent improvement in prediction accuracy over traditional methods.²⁷

²³"Better Mortgage's AI Revolution: How Better is empowering loan officers, not replacing them," Housingwire, June 30, 2025

²⁴"How AI Mortgage Lending is Transforming the Home Loan Process," Better, April 4, 2025; updated January 5, 2026

²⁵"AI in Mortgage Industry: Top Use Cases You Need To Know," SmartDev, September 10, 2025

²⁶"AI in Mortgage Industry: Top Use Cases You Need To Know," SmartDev, September 10, 2025

²⁷"AI in Mortgage Industry: Top Use Cases You Need To Know," SmartDev, September 10, 2025



Where do we go from here?

The path forward is clear: Mortgage modernization efforts need to be anchored to the borrower's experience and delivered through modular and scalable architectures that can be accelerated by AI. But to win in any market cycle, lenders must go a step further, by making the mortgage process genuinely understandable for their customers. The mortgage industry currently serves one of the most complex consumer transactions in financial services, marked by dense disclosures, confusing fee structures, tight timelines, and an intimidating level of jargon. This complexity disproportionately impacts first-time buyers, who often feel overwhelmed, distrustful, or "swindled" by unclear information, leading to high abandonment rates and low retention rates.

The lenders that will rise to the top in 2026 and beyond will be those that address this complexity head on. They will simplify decisions, clarify

tradeoffs, and design experiences that feel intuitive even to customers navigating the process for the first time. They will eliminate unnecessary friction, demystify costs, guide borrowers proactively, and use technology to anticipate confusion. In a space where so many customers drop out because the experience feels opaque or adversarial, the competitive advantage will belong to organizations that make a complicated process feel approachable, transparent, and empowering.

These mortgage lenders will need to find a way to build trust with borrowers through their whole homeownership journey. The future will belong to lenders that make mortgages not only faster, but also clearer. And with experience as the anchor, the industry can rebuild confidence, elevate satisfaction, and deliver a lending journey built for today's borrowers and tomorrow's expectations.

How KPMG can help

KPMG helps mortgage lenders modernize by aligning customer-centric design, scalable architecture, and AI-enabled delivery to help drive measurable improvements in customer experience and operational efficiency. Backed by deep industry insight and multidisciplinary capabilities, KPMG works to inspire confidence and empower change—helping lenders build businesses fit for the future.

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Related thought leadership:



2025 mortgage executive research



Intelligent banking: A blueprint for creating value through AI-driven transformation

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