



ALFA-BANK EXPRESS: SERVICE PIONEERS

World-class By 2001 Alfa-Bank had already become one of Russia's leading investment banks and it was the senior management's ambition to bring world-class retail banking to Russia. The economy was just recovering from the financial crisis of 1998 and foreign banks were re-entering the Russian market, focusing on servicing wealthy customers. Sberbank dominated Russia's retail market but offered customers little choice or innovation. Queues as well as a cold and uninviting atmosphere dominated the banking experience everywhere and stifled its development. So Alfa-Bank senior management decided to create a new and innovative service format.

Big A Wolff Olins developed a brand proposition built around the notion of 'service pioneers'. We created a compelling brand called Alfa-Bank Express, with a distinctive big A logo, and a brand environment that brought the idea to life. Even though Alfa-Bank Express built on Alfa-Bank's strong heritage, it differentiated itself from the traditional Alfa-Bank offer, and achieved a powerful stand out in the Russian market.

New standard The new service format was launched in 2003. Since then Alfa-Bank Express has won several awards: best brand of the year/EFFIE Gold award in 2003 (in the financial products and services category), best retail bank in 2004 (Global Finance), and a national award as 'Super Brand of the Year' in 2005. The brand created a new standard in the Russian banking sector with its pioneering service for customers. Alfa-Bank has now adopted the brand's style and the big A as a symbol for the whole business. It has been recognised as the Best Bank in Russia for 2007, 2008 and 2009 (Euromoney Magazine).

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