



Visa (NYSE: V) is a toll road for money, not a bank: it does not issue cards, lend, or bear credit risk — banks do that — it runs VisaNet and charges its bank clients for service, data processing and cross-border activity. FY2025 gross revenue of \$55.8B less \$15.8B of client incentives left \$40.0B of net revenue (+11%) on \$17T of payments and cash volume and roughly a 60% operating margin (INFERENCE). Growth is now tilting to value-added services — fraud and risk tools, issuing and acceptance software, consulting — which grew to \$10.9B in FY25 (+24%) and \$3.8B in fiscal Q3 2026 (+33%), while Visa Direct, B2B flows and agentic-commerce tokens extend the network. The cost of the toll road is legal: a \$2.56B litigation provision in FY25, the interchange class-action settlement, and the DOJ's suit alleging debit monopolization.

BUSINESS MODEL CANVAS

Visa

Research date: Oct 9, 2026

Evidence-backed · sources in companion brief

KEY PARTNERS

- **Issuers** — ~14,500 financial institutions use Visa to offer credit, debit, prepaid and cash-access programs (FACT).
- Acquirers, processors and payment facilitators connect sellers; ~64M merchant locations come via facilitators (FACT).
- **Other networks** — A2A and real-time rails are connected via 'network of networks' and Visa as a Service (FACT).
- Fintechs, digital wallets, governments and NGOs join the original bank-centric model (FACT, 10-K).
- **Ecosystem and AI partners** — Cloudflare (Trusted Agent Protocol), AWS and others in the Intelligent Commerce Connect pilot (FACT, Visa press).

KEY ACTIVITIES

- **Process transactions on VisaNet** — authorization, clearing, settlement (FACT).
- Set network rules, default IRFs, settlement and risk policies (FACT).
- **Build and sell value-added services** — Issuing, Acceptance, Risk and Security, Advisory (FACT).
- **Acquire capabilities** — Tink (2022), Pismo (2024), Featurespace (2024), Prisma + Newpay (2026) (FACT).
- Defend litigation and manage regulators across 200+ countries and territories (FACT).

KEY RESOURCES

- **VisaNet** — proprietary processing network connecting 200+ countries and territories (FACT).
- **Brand and acceptance** — ~5B credentials, 175M+ merchant locations (FACT).
- **Tokens** — >16B provisioned by Sep 30 2025 (FACT).
- **People and IP** — ~34,100 employees (+8%); AI risk scores; Pismo, Featurespace, Tink platforms (FACT).
- Cash and investments \$13.9B (30 Jun 2026) plus settlement collateral \$8.8B

VALUE PROPOSITIONS

- **Acceptance reach** — 175M+ locations in 200+ countries and territories (FACT).
- **Security** — tokens (>16B), AI risk scores, Visa Protect, Featurespace fraud AI (FACT).
- **One connection to many rails** — cards, A2A, real-time, Visa Direct, Visa+ (FACT).
- **Services that raise yield for clients** — loyalty, BNPL/installments, Visa Flex Credential, consulting (FACT).
- **Agentic-commerce readiness** — Visa Intelligent Commerce, Trusted Agent Protocol, Intelligent Commerce Connect (FACT, Visa press).

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

- Long-term incentive contracts with banks, sellers and partners; \$15.8B contra-revenue in FY25 (FACT).
- Clients can reassess or terminate on relatively short notice in some cases (FACT, 10-K risk factors).
- Consulting and analytics (VCA) embedded with issuers, acquirers and sellers (FACT).
- **Cardholder engagement programs** — lounge access, offers, loyalty, controls (FACT).
- Developer APIs and an MCP server for fintechs and AI builders (FACT).

CHANNELS

- Issuers distribute Visa cards and tokens to ~5B credentials worldwide (FACT).
- Acquirers and payment facilitators bring 175M+ merchant locations (FACT).
- **Visa Acceptance Platform** — Cybersource, Authorize.net, token management for sellers (FACT).
- Developer platform, APIs, MCP server for fintechs and AI agent builders (FACT).
- **Brand sponsorships** — IOC, NFL, FIFA World Cup 2026, Formula One teams (FACT).

CUSTOMER SEGMENTS

- **Issuers (banks, digital banks, card programs)** — ~14,500 financial institutions (FACT).
- **Acquirers, processors, payment facilitators and sellers** — 175M+ locations (FACT).
- **Consumers and account holders** — nearly 5B credentials (FACT).
- **Businesses and governments** — Visa Commercial Solutions, Visa Direct B2B/G2C (FACT).
- **Fintechs, wallets and AI platforms** — A2A, tokens, agentic APIs (FACT).

COST STRUCTURE

- **Client incentives (contra-revenue)** — \$15,751M, 28% of gross FY25 (FACT / INFERENCE).
- Personnel \$6,961M; G&A \$1,926M; marketing \$1,684M (FACT, 10-K).
- **Network and processing only \$894M** — ~2% of net revenue (FACT / INFERENCE).
- Litigation provision \$2,562M FY25; \$1,290M in nine months FY26 (FACT).
- Settlement-guarantee exposure averaged \$91.2B/day in FY25, with minimal historical losses (FACT, Note 12).

REVENUE STREAMS

- Service \$17,539M (+9%), data processing \$19,993M (+13%), international \$14,166M (+12%), other \$4,053M (+27%) (FACT).
- Less client incentives \$15,751M (+14%) = net revenue \$40,000M (+11%) (FACT).
- **Fiscal Q3 2026** — net revenue \$11,633M (+14%); cross-border ex-intra-Europe volume +12% (FACT).
- **Value-added services** — \$10.9B in FY25 (+24%); \$3.8B in Q3 FY26 (+33%) (FACT).
- Operating margin ~60% GAAP (FY25) and ~59% GAAP in Q3 FY26 (INFERENCE).