

Empower SMEs to know “how to do the work before going to work”

A STRATEGIC APPROACH FOR ING TO ENHANCE THE ING - SME RELATIONSHIP

Challenge

A noticeable gap persists between SMEs’ perception of their interactions with the bank and ING’s aspiration towards a supportive and empowering partnership model. The research reveals a **noticeable friction in the ING-SME relationship**, primarily stemming from a **perceived power imbalance**. SMEs often view their relationship with ING as distant and transactional, leading to a trust paradox where SMEs do not know what information needs to be shared, why this information is necessary, and what happens during processes.

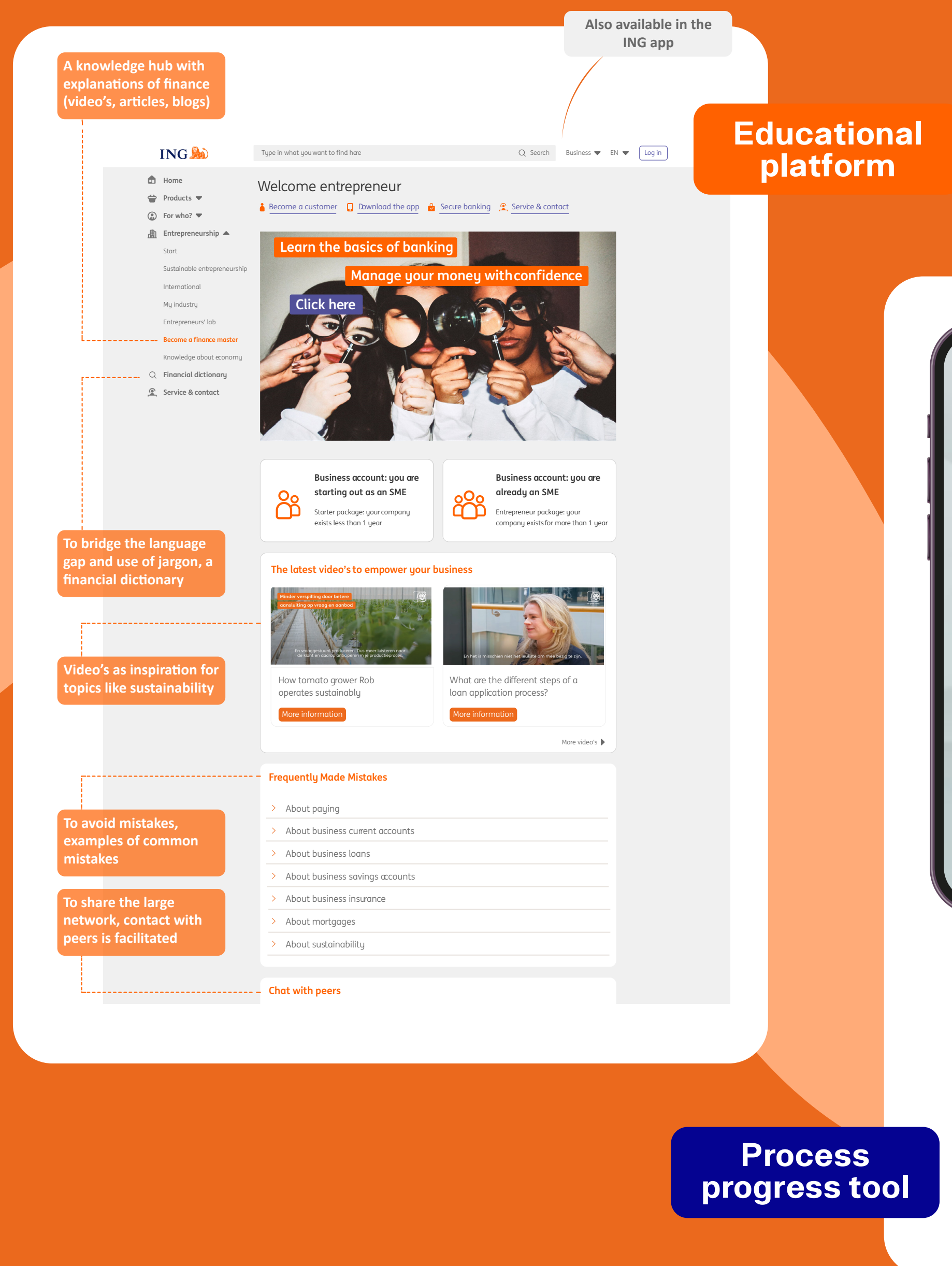
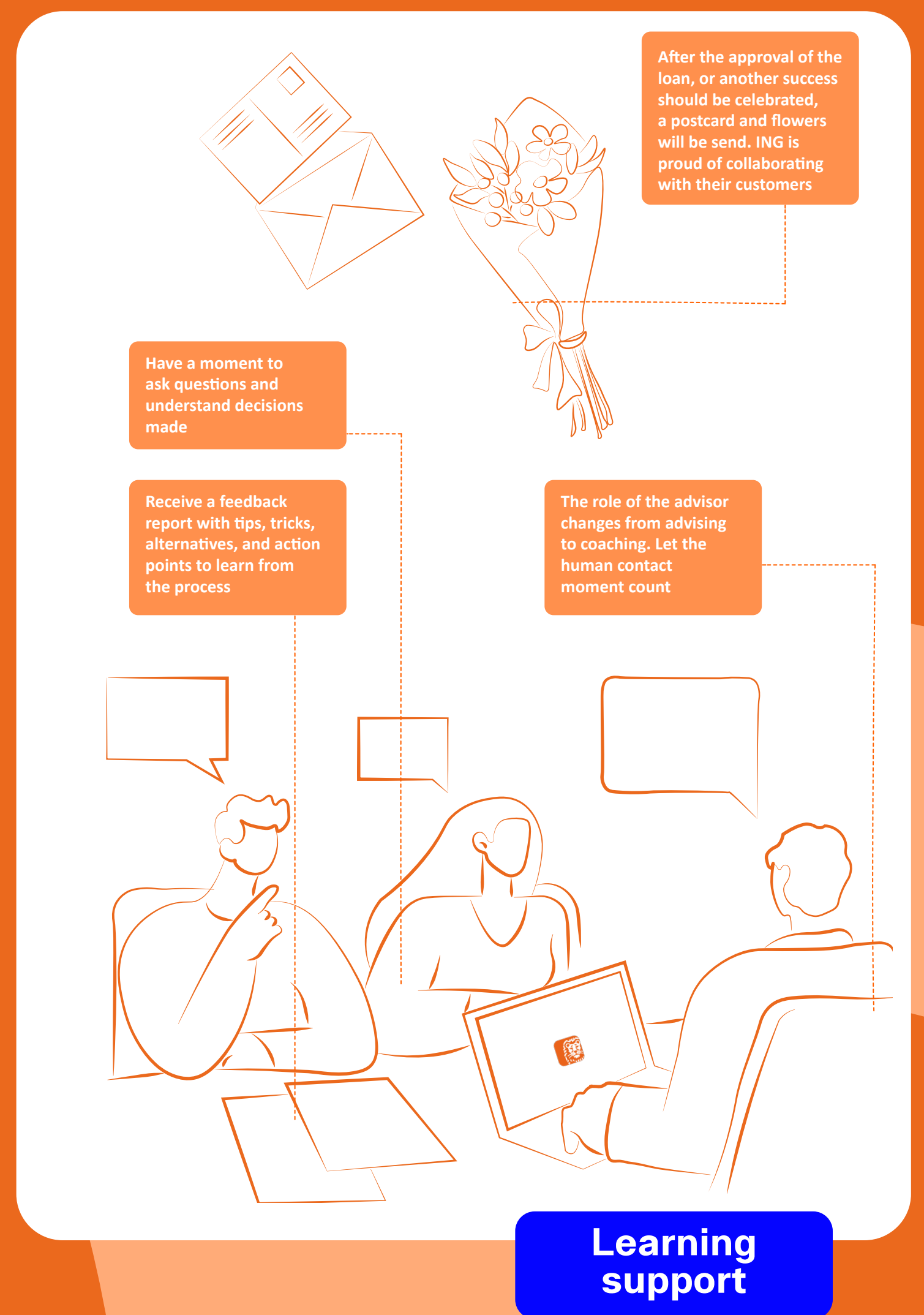
Design focus

ING needs to take an **active role in informing, guiding, and supporting** SMEs in their journey to sustaining cash flow

Solution

Recognising SMEs’ dual challenge of innovating while ensuring cash flow stability, the proposed service approach aims to bridge this gap by empowering SMEs with financial literacy and support. The new service approach comprises **three design interventions** in SMEs’ journey to financial support: an interactive finance learning hub, a process progress tool, and post-process learning support. Through these interventions, ING seeks to **leverage its resources and network** to guide SMEs in **navigating complexities and achieving sustainable growth**.

The proposed service approach represents a significant step towards redefining the ING - SME relationship. By shifting from a transactional to a **collaborative partnership model**, ING aims to **position itself as a trusted advisor, facilitating mutual success and fostering mutual growth**.



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