Arrive

Payment growth in Washington, D.C.



How clearer signage supported mobile payment growth in Washington, D.C.

When Washington, D.C. began updating its parking zones and meter codes, it also refreshed the mobile-payment signage across the area. Before the change, physical meters did not include mobile-payment signage or zone guidance, leaving drivers with limited information at the point of parking. The new signage brought both elements together, giving drivers clearer guidance when paying. The parking footprint itself remained the same, with no changes to the area, coverage, or ward.

To understand what changed after the refresh, transaction activity was compared with the same pre-to-post pattern across the previous three comparable periods. The analysis includes both physical meter and mobile-payment transactions.



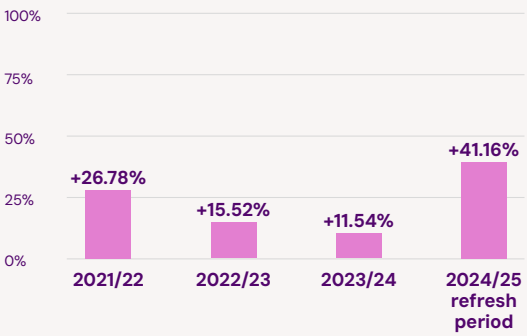
Transaction growth above the historical average

+41.16%

Increase in total transactions from pre-refresh to post-refresh

During the 2024/25 refresh period, total transactions increased by **41.16%**. Across the previous three comparable periods, the average increase was **17.95%**.

The difference between the 2024/25 increase and the historical average was **23.21 percentage points**.



Even the strongest previous period, at **26.78%**, remained below the **41.16%** recorded during the refresh period.

Calculation note

The observed **41.16%** pre-to-post increase was normalized against the historical average increase of **17.95%**:

(1 + 41.16%) ÷ (1 + 17.95%) − 1 = **19.68%**

More than seasonal growth

To account for normal seasonal changes in parking activity, the 2024/25 result was compared with the same pre-to-post pattern across the previous three comparable periods.

After accounting for that historical pattern, transaction performance was **19.68% above the historical benchmark**.



Stronger performance after the refresh

The 2024/25 pre-refresh period was **8.63% below** the comparable period the year before. By the post-refresh period, transactions were **15.63% above** the prior year and had reached the highest post-refresh level in the four years analyzed.

Before the refresh

↓ **8.63%** below the prior year

After the refresh

↑ **15.63%** above the prior year



A clear shift to mobile payment

The change was also visible in how drivers chose to pay:

~66%

increase in mobile-payment transactions

~19%

decrease in physical meter transactions

Following the refresh, mobile-payment transactions increased by approximately **66%**, while physical meter transactions declined by approximately **19%**.

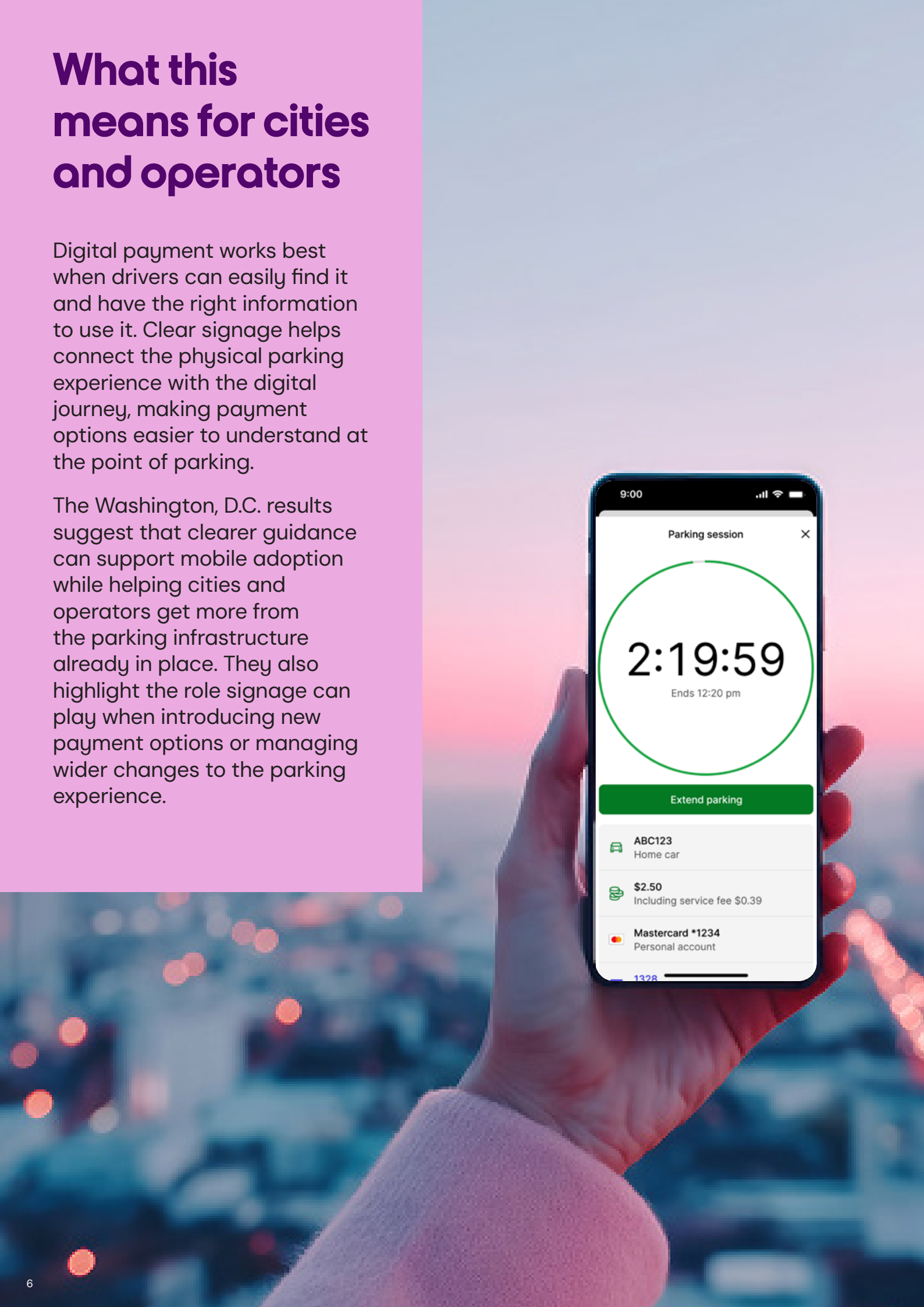
The shift is consistent with clearer signage supporting mobile-payment adoption by making the option easier to see and use at the point of parking. The figures show a clear change in payment behavior, but do not show that every reduction in meter use transferred directly to mobile payment.

The shift toward mobile took place alongside overall transaction growth, rather than simply reflecting a change in payment channel.:

What this means for cities and operators

Digital payment works best when drivers can easily find it and have the right information to use it. Clear signage helps connect the physical parking experience with the digital journey, making payment options easier to understand at the point of parking.

The Washington, D.C. results suggest that clearer guidance can support mobile adoption while helping cities and operators get more from the parking infrastructure already in place. They also highlight the role signage can play when introducing new payment options or managing wider changes to the parking experience.

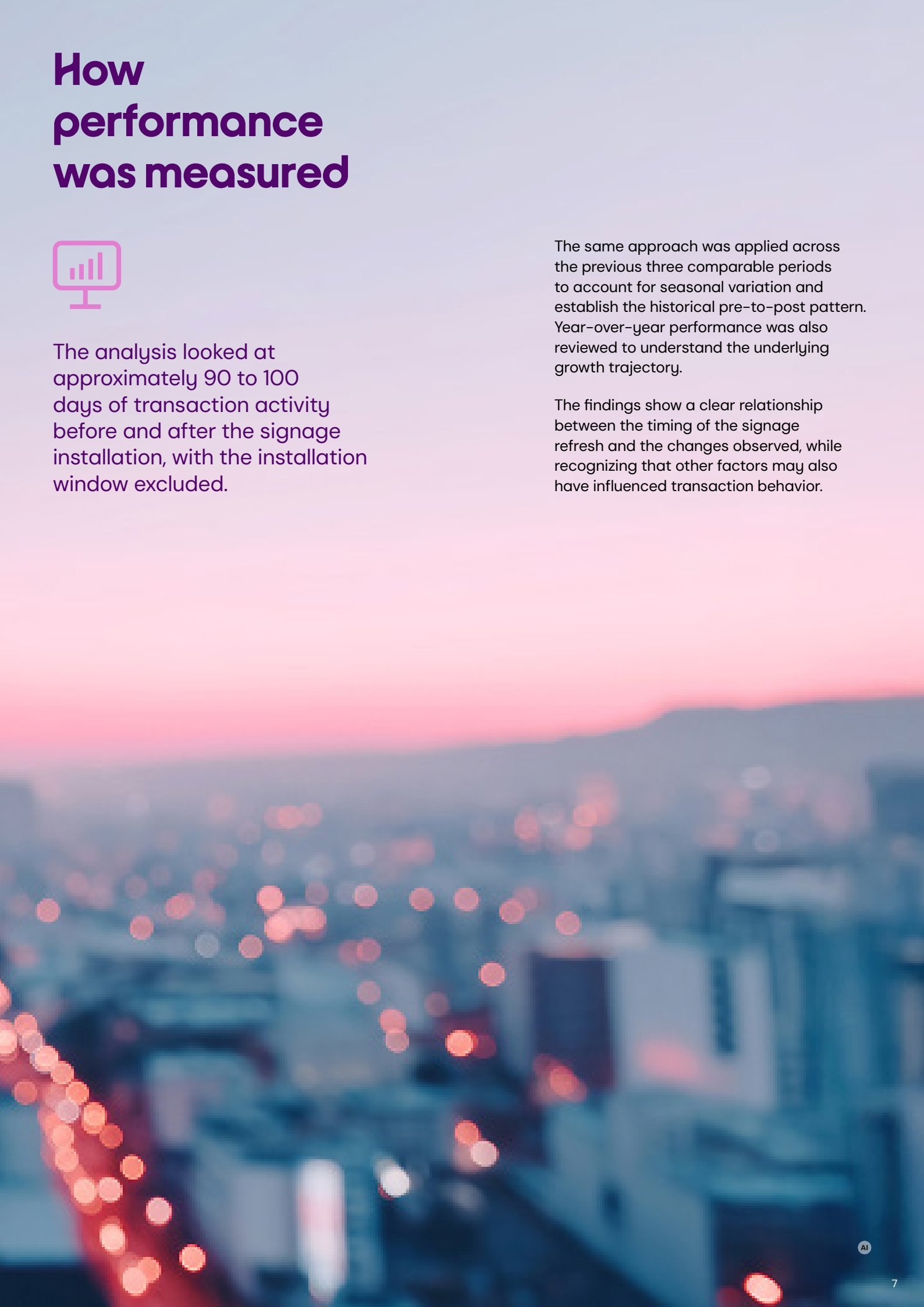


How performance was measured

The analysis looked at approximately 90 to 100 days of transaction activity before and after the signage installation, with the installation window excluded.

The same approach was applied across the previous three comparable periods to account for seasonal variation and establish the historical pre-to-post pattern. Year-over-year performance was also reviewed to understand the underlying growth trajectory.

The findings show a clear relationship between the timing of the signage refresh and the changes observed, while recognizing that other factors may also have influenced transaction behavior.



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