QA automation unlocks agility: SEB’s partnership with Softeta

SEB, a major Nordic and Baltic bank, was building an ambitious global payments platform and engaged Softeta to accelerate delivery by leveraging our deep technical expertise and proven track record in the financial sector.

By partnering with Softeta and adopting modern QA automation, the bank accelerated releases, improved software quality and efficiency, and maintained strict security and regulatory standards – demonstrating how the right QA strategy transforms delivery in a regulated industry.

The challenge

SEB's user-facing domain was developed by five separate teams, each using different testing strategies, tools, and practices. This caused duplicated tests, inconsistent quality, and wasted effort. Integration testing relied heavily on fragile, UI-driven shared environments, where one team's issue blocked all others. To ensure reliable delivery, SEB needed a unified testing strategy to address several critical challenges.

01

Inefficient software delivery

Project timelines slipped because testing depended on unstable shared environments and duplicated effort across teams. Without a unified strategy, integration issues were discovered late, slowing delivery.

02

Limited innovation capability

Fragmented toolsets hindered collaboration and adoption. A standardized stack for end-to-end scenarios needed to be agreed on to make automation clearer, more scalable, and easier to maintain, while encouraging collaboration by all five teams.

03

Code quality and test automation

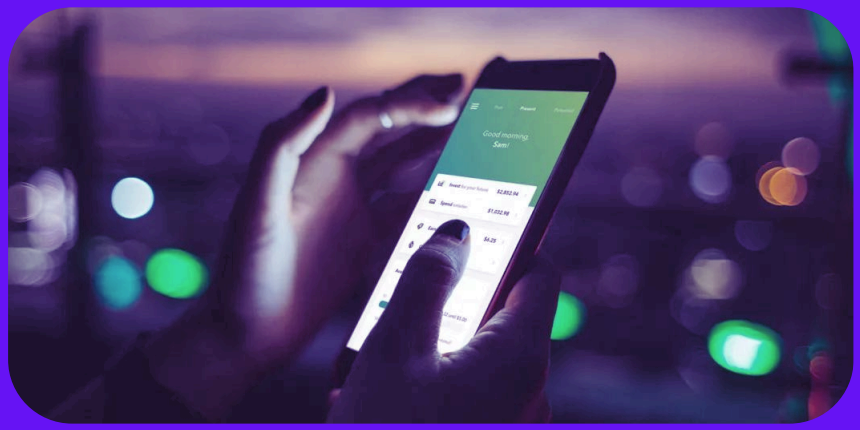
Each team built its own end-to-end tests, creating overlap and heavy reliance on fragile UI testing. Without component-level coverage or mocked dependencies, feedback was slower, less reliable, and poorly aligned with SEB's microservices architecture.

These changes reduced bottlenecks, improved release velocity, and created a sustainable QA foundation for SEB's payments platform, all while respecting the bank's strict compliance and security requirements.

Why SEB choose Softeta

SEB selected Softeta because of its reputation for delivering projects on time and tailoring collaboration models to each client's needs. Softeta's ability to source talent quickly and its focus on performance were decisive factors. The bank also valued Softeta's commitment to agile methodologies and domain-driven design, which promised to raise engineering standards while blending seamlessly into SEB's corporate environment.

Softeta’s Approach



Comprehensive Assessment

Softeta deployed a cross-functional team of QA architects, engineers and senior software developers to analyse the existing environment.

They Reviewed

The architecture and limitations of SEB's testing framework.

Types of tests and the quality of test data.

Delivery pipelines and release processes.

Data security practices and repository management.

Understanding these root causes allowed Softeta to tailor a solution rather than simply overlaying new tools.

Building a modern QA automation framework

Softeta designed and implemented a robust test automation framework based on .NET C#, SpecFlow and xUnit which are technologies already familiar to SEB's developers.

Major improvements included

Centralised test data and enhanced security

Test data was standardised and reused across services. Secrets and certificates were removed from Git and managed securely. A clear automation process linked Jira stories to test tasks so that test development happened in the same sprint as feature development.

CI/CD integration

Tests became part of every pull request across multiple services. This made quality checks automatic, accelerating feedback loops and aligning with SEB's adoption of SCRUM and SAFe.

Behavior-Driven Development (BDD)

End-to-end scenarios were written in clear, business-oriented language, keeping logic transparent across teams and enabling collaboration between developers, testers, and business stakeholders.

Refactoring the test strategy

The team shifted from heavy end-to-end UI testing in shared environments to a layered strategy with component tests mocking dependencies and a shared cross-team E2E framework. This reduced flakiness, improved reliability, and matched SEB's microservices architecture.

Code quality practices

Best practices for automation were introduced, including reusable test libraries, linters, static analysis tools, and peer reviews. This increased stability and maintainability across the QA codebase.

Talent enablement and collaboration

Softeta also ensured that test results were visible to the entire product team rather than just QA, fostering a shared sense of responsibility for quality.

Softeta's team worked closely with SEB's engineers, providing coaching on the new framework. Over time, the bank's QA engineers became proficient at writing their own tests, unifying the technology stack and fostering ownership

Impact and Results

Softeta's intervention delivered measurable improvements across testing practices, efficiency, and business outcomes:

Unified strategy and tools

Five teams were aligned under a single QA automation strategy, reducing duplicated effort and inconsistencies. The adoption of a modern, consistent toolset streamlined collaboration.

Reduced reliance on fragile shared environments

By shifting testing away from UI-heavy shared setups to component-level tests with mocked dependencies, teams became more autonomous. This change cut environment-related delays and enabled faster feedback loops.

Better fit for microservices

The introduction of component tests ensured services could be validated independently. This strategy matched SEB's microservices architecture and reduced dependency between teams.

Time savings from scalable automation

10%

A single cross-team E2E framework replaced duplicated end-to-end tests in each team, saving an estimated 10% of overall test development time.

Focused end-to-end coverage

40

40 end-to-end tests covering the most critical business flows were designed to benefit 5 delivery teams and 10 other teams that depend on those shared functionalities.

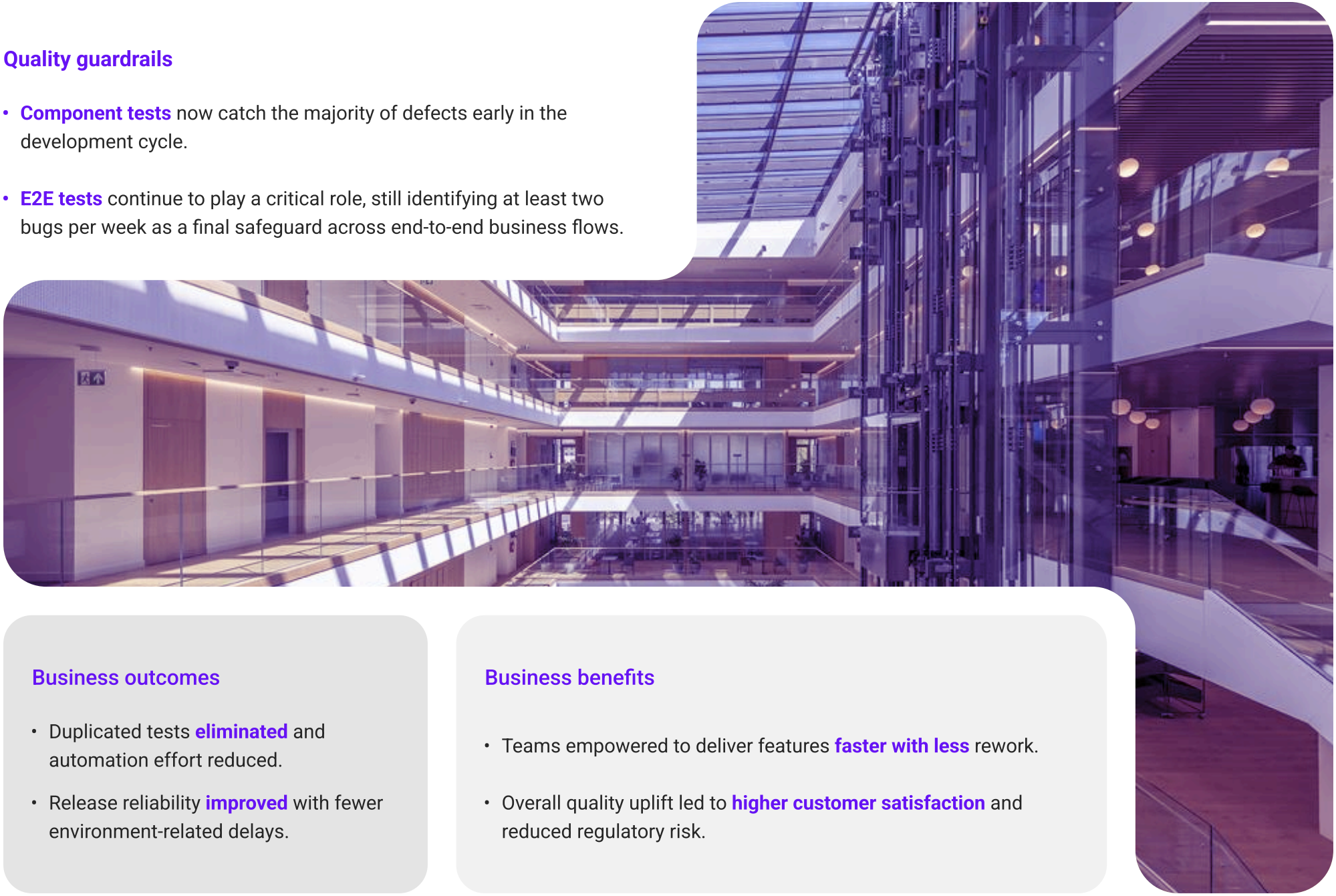
Cost efficiency of early bug detection

80%

Fixing bugs in component tests is up to 70–80% cheaper than in end-to-end or production. With component tests as the foundation, most issues are now caught early in development.

Quality guardrails

- **Component tests** now catch the majority of defects early in the development cycle.
- **E2E tests** continue to play a critical role, still identifying at least two bugs per week as a final safeguard across end-to-end business flows.



Business outcomes

- Duplicated tests **eliminated** and automation effort reduced.
- Release reliability **improved** with fewer environment-related delays.

Business benefits

- Teams empowered to deliver features **faster with less** rework.
- Overall quality uplift led to **higher customer satisfaction** and reduced regulatory risk.

PAY & GET PAID TRIBE AT SEB

Nicklas von Wachenfeldt

Head of Payments and IT Lead

“We have been working with Softeta since mid-2022. The main goal of our collaboration has been to strengthen our delivery capacity with additional development and testing expertise in the payments domain. The partnership has been very successful – Softeta has been highly responsive to our needs, and we have onboarded skilled and competent consultants through them,”

Future Plans

Softeta discovered that anticipating future needs, such as upcoming regulatory requirements, helps keep the automation framework adaptable. SEB and Softeta continue to partner on enhancing the bank's payment platform and exploring new features.

As the relationship matures, Softeta will help SEB expand the strategy and framework to other departments, adopt component testing more broadly, and integrate testing into GitHub pipelines. AI-driven testing capabilities are also part of the roadmap.

The partnership continues to support SEB's innovation goals and stands as a testament to Softeta's ability to deliver real business value in complex, regulated environments.