



NORTH AMERICA INSIGHTS

DECEMBER 2025

Unlocking the value of debit loyalty

Uncovering new opportunities
with committed debit users



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Leveraging loyalty and adding value



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In an age of rapid cultural and economic shifts, debit cards and demand deposit accounts (DDAs) are not just a gateway to banking, they can be a launchpad to engage millions of young consumers and cultivate deep, lasting connections for growth in tomorrow's banking landscape. Nearly all adults (16+) in the U.S. have a checking account (93%) and at least 4 million Gen Z consumers open new bank accounts each year.¹ For many new account openers, debit is the first card product they use — a key entry point for managing purchases and building financial habits. The key lies in identifying young debit users with strong loyalty potential and fostering their sustained engagement across a broader suite of products. By tailoring debit offerings and innovations to appeal to young, devoted debit customers today, issuers can build on debit as a cornerstone product and set the trajectory for long-term profitability.

Shaping debit experience to drive loyalty requires recognizing the dynamic cultural changes taking place in our world today and understanding how they affect debit customers. Mastercard's groundbreaking Powering Prosperity framework explores four key areas of societal transformation — demographic and life stage shifts, social shifts, technological acceleration, and economic variabilities — and applies this lens to debit consumers or those who are using their debit card as their primary form of payment. The result is a nuanced view of debit users that highlights tailored strategies and audience opportunities to drive change in today's evolving landscape.

Gen Z stands out as the fastest-growing segment in debit activity, with usage increasing 2.4 times more than the average U.S. consumer over the past year. Gen Zers are rapidly entering the workforce, accelerating their growing spending power which is expected to reach \$12T by 2030.² As Gen Z consumers gain financial strength they will likely transition from debit to credit, and look to their DDA provider before looking externally. Younger generations are also driving economic and cultural change through their heavy and enthusiastic participation in social forces like the rise of entrepreneurship, the gig economy, and the creator class. Modes of compensation are shifting as well, as workers receive payment directly rather than through direct deposit.

The digital revolution is also propelling debit forward. With 71% of customers willing to open a bank account digitally, an issuer's first interaction with its customers is moving online, and this digital experience must extend to how their debit product comes to life in order to retain these customers. Payments are also rapidly changing — the contactless payment market is expected to reach \$6.2 trillion by 2028,³ cross-border payments, person-to-person (P2P) transfers, and mobile wallet payments are all increasing in number of transactions as well.⁴ Debit plays a key role in meeting this heightened demand for digital payments, particularly among frequent debit users.

Join us as we embark on a journey to better understand the nuances and needs of highly-engaged, loyal individuals who turn to debit as their go-to payment method — those we call Debit Devotees, an ideal segment for driving growth. Their loyalty to their card issuer is unprecedented and they embody many of the forces driving change in the broader economy, including youth, technological savvy, and non-traditional work paths.

Together, we will identify ways to create experiences and products that strengthen relationships with this valuable group. By meeting Debit Devotees' needs today, issuers have a powerful opportunity to attract and retain loyal customers, continuing to drive engagement with a variety of products long into the future.

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1. Fast Company, [How Gen Z is poised to redefine retail banking](#), August, 25, 2023.
2. Nielsen IQ, Spend Z, [Gen Z Changes Everything](#), Global Gen Z Spending Report, 2024.
3. PR News Wire, [Worldwide Contactless Payment Market Is Expected to Reach USD 6.25 Trillion by 2028](#), December 13, 2021.
4. Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, [Federal Reserve Payments Study \(FRPS\)](#), November 13, 2024.

Executive summary

1

Debit unlocks a powerful path to loyalty and long term value

Issuers can foster long-term loyalty with debit users by catering to their unique needs early on, such as by offering digital access, convenience, and an easy experience when they open their first DDA. Debit issuers have an opportunity to grow DDA deposits and invest in future business growth by capturing and retaining a very loyal audience.

2

Debit Devotees are young, ambitious, high-spending customers with long-term potential

Debit is an important conduit to engage a young, devoted customer segment, the Debit Devotee, a consumer who has a debit card and uses it as their primary card for purchasing. 76% of Debit Devotees say they are loyal to their debit provider. They are young, 65% Gen Z or Millennial, and ambitious — they are +17% more likely than the average U.S. population to actively seek ways to improve their lives. They have high monthly debit spend, +13% more than typical debit users across a broad range of categories. Building a strong relationship with this upwardly mobile group is likely to yield rich rewards for issuers in the many years of affluence-building potential ahead.

3

Ready for diverse product offerings now and in the future

Debit Devotees are poised to use and invest in additional products, and 74% look to their debit issuer first. To connect with Debit Devotees, issuers should seize the opportunity to tee up products and services that best align with their financial goals, such as buying a house. Credit, specifically, is a clear opportunity to expand on an already strong relationship; this segment is +21% more likely than the general population to be in the market for a new credit card and expect to consider their debit provider first. Issuers can support Debit Devotees by helping them keep their spend under control, build their credit, and be first in line to offer them the new products and services.

4

Digitally savvy customers with a forward-thinking mindset

Debit Devotees are tech-savvy early adopters who are eager for products and payment methods that prioritize convenience and personalization. The majority (65%) feel confident using new technology (+11% higher than total) such as apps, digital wallets, and connected accounts. Easy debit integration with apps, access to contactless payments, personalization, and robust security will allow issuers to stay relevant and current.

5

Powering Prosperity can help with development of resonant products and messages

Within the Mastercard Powering Prosperity research framework, Debit Devotees are represented in a variety of personas with different needs, attitudes, lifestyles, and priorities. By understanding the distinct personas of Debit Devotees — Futurists, Overcomers, Newbies, and Transcenders — issuers can deepen connections and strengthen engagement. Focus on high opportunity personas will identify strategies for long-term customer relationships with significant promise for cross-sell.

An intersectional approach

Our understanding of Debit Devotees is informed by Mastercard's Powering Prosperity. The Powering Prosperity methodology is anchored in foundational inputs that capture the breadth of society, including values, lifestyles, changing priorities, past challenges, and future goals. Layering in analysis of behavioral data such as income, savings, category spend, and media habits creates a comprehensive, culturally grounded framework.

Quantitative data was collected in two online surveys from a nationally representative sample in the U.S. The first survey focused on lifestyle and attitudes, among other topics, while the second was a thorough review of financial product usage and preferences. The sample includes those ages 16+ in the U.S. and is census-balanced by generation, gender, and ethnicity. In particular, we surveyed U.S. Debit Devotee consumers, those who currently have a debit card and use it as their primary card for purchasing. A total of 1,423 Debit Devotees were interviewed in the first survey, and 2,569 in the second.

The comprehensive sample provides invaluable insights into the emerging trends that will shape preferences and behaviors in the years to come. The data are linked to behavioral modeling that is continuously refreshed to enable precision marketing. The detailed methodology means the findings about Debit Devotee consumers and their sub-personas are future-proofed and dynamic, not solely based in present attitudes and behaviors.





1

Debit loyalty as a
launching pad for
growth

The relationship-building power of debit

Debit represents a powerful opportunity to spark loyalty with an audience who is young and aspirational. 85% of U.S. adults have a debit card, a foundational tool for building financial acumen.¹ Debit usage is higher among younger generations² who have a long financial path ahead, ripe with potential for issuers who earn their loyalty.

Grounded in a demand deposit account (DDA), debit is both an in-road to acquiring new customers and a gateway to additional products. The key to unlocking this acquisition and growth opportunity is in understanding the DDA and digital experience needs of loyal debit customers to build strong, lasting customer relationships with an eye to the future. One sub-segment of debit users is brimming with potential: Debit Devotees, super-users who are highly loyal, tech-forward, and have clearly defined goals



Looking forward and leaning into loyalty

At 98 million strong, Debit Devotees point the way to an ideal customer relationship with strong issuer loyalty. Their tendency to keep debit top of wallet and their strong relationship with their issuer — 76% say they are loyal to their debit provider — differentiate them from other customer groups. They lead with debit, making them a powerhouse of everyday debit card spend today — and a strong prospect for long-term growth across other financial products.

The Debit Devotee segment is poised for an exciting journey of remarkable growth. They are curious about additional financial products, want to learn more, and 74% would first turn to their debit issuer for a new product. They're also digital enthusiasts with a penchant for online and mobile banking. Identifying these high-potential debit users and providing value through financial advice or additional products tailored to their specific needs, spending habits, and budgets creates significant opportunities for enduring and expanding customer relationships.

76%

of Debit Devotees are loyal to their debit provider, +13% more than all U.S. debit users

74%

of Debit Devotees would first turn to their debit issuer for more products or services, +20% more likely to than all U.S. debit users

1. All statistics come from this research unless otherwise noted.

2. Federal Reserve. [Banking my way — Gen Z and millennials are driving change in payments](#), April, 2024.

Breaking the traditional debit spending mold

Nearly 20% of Debit Devotees use their debit card every day (more than 2x the average rate in the U.S.).¹ From essentials like gas and groceries to shopping and entertainment, they rely on debit for a broad range of spending occasions, using their debit cards 17% more frequently across all spending categories than the average U.S. debit user (20 spending categories were tested in this research). And they’re not just using debit at checkout or for everyday purchases, they’re also making purchases that are less traditional for debit, including bill-pay, subscriptions, and travel — showing just how integral this card is to their financial management approach.

Debit Devotees need an easy, comprehensive platform to manage all their debit spending including recurring payments like bill payments and subscriptions



Debit Devotee Category Spending with Debit	% Who Purchase Using Debit	Difference from Total U.S.
Grocery	77%	+15%
Bill payment	65%	+13%
Gas and automotive	59%	+17%
Dining and culinary	58%	+18%
Retail and apparel	56%	+19%
Subscriptions	46%	+15%
Entertainment	45%	+15%
Fashion and beauty	39%	+17%
Electronics	35%	+21%
Well-being	34%	+17%
Home improvement	33%	+22%
Big box and club stores	31%	+20%
Travel	27%	+21%

HOW TO READ: 77% of Debit Devotees use debit to purchase groceries, which is 15% higher than typical debit use for groceries (67%) in the Total U.S.

Although many Debit Devotees have other payment options in their wallet, including credit, prepaid, and payment apps, they reach for their debit card for most expenses because it is simple to use and makes it easy to track spending.

Debit Devotees depend on their bank

48% use debit most often because it is associated with their primary bank

Debit makes it easy to track spending

38% use debit most often because they prefer to manage money from their checking account, +18% higher than total U.S.

59% use debit most often because it's easy to use, with direct access to their funds, no payments, and low additional account management required

1. All comparisons throughout are made against the U.S. total population numbers unless specified otherwise

DEBIT LOYALTY AS A LAUNCHING PAD FOR GROWTH

Gig economy
workers have
high reliance
on debit



On a trajectory for success

Motivated to improve their lives and build their financial knowledge, these consumers are hungry for tools and guidance that support a path to financial empowerment. Understanding their unique needs and attributes will not only contribute to building a stronger relationship, it's the key to winning with the next generation of Debit Devotees, too.

Eager to learn

Many are enthusiastic about expanding their financial knowledge, with 72% seeking information on additional products (compared to 67% overall), including areas like financial planning (32% vs. 26%) and financial health (28% vs. 22%).

Driven and focused

With strong personal and professional ambitions, self-improvement is central to their identity. They are +16% more likely than the average U.S. population to set big goals and +17% more likely to actively seek ways to improve their lives (65% vs. 56%).

Entrepreneurial minded

They're likely to pursue creative, autonomous income streams, including gig work, starting small businesses, freelance work, and side hustles. They're +55% more likely to want to start their own business than the general population. Debit will increasingly be an avenue to be paid for creators, gig workers, and other freelance employment — the new direct deposit for the gig economy generation.

Debit Devotees exhibit remarkable ambition, and some of their aspirations for the next five years reflect a desire to balance individual progress with making a positive impact on the world.

In the next 5 years Debit Devotees want to:



Add a new income stream
(33%, +48% higher than total U.S.)



Be in a position with a higher title
(24%, +52%)



Earn a degree or certificate relevant to their career (20%, +79%)



Work to make a positive change in the workplace around equity, sustainability, or local causes
(18%, +22%)

Low cost and cyber security – keys to retention

To keep them reaching for debit and to drive incremental spend, issuers must continue to meet or exceed their expectations. That means keeping their products affordable and emphasizing security as many Debit Devotees have experienced fraud/fraud attempts. Easy access to support and speedy issue resolution are also important, and will help increase the stickiness of their relationship with their issuer.

Furthermore, a seamless digital experience is essential for these tech savvy Debit Devotees. Debit cards must be easy to integrate with apps and mobile wallets to facilitate their frequent debit spend in any of their favored methods.

Whatever the financial product, Debit Devotees' top needs are low costs and reliable security and service

- No/low fees (66%, similar to total U.S.)
- Security (60%, similar to total U.S.)
- Helpful customer service (53%, similar to total U.S.)

Ease-related features, including accessibility and digital access, are particularly appealing to Debit Devotees

- Easy-to-use app, website (51%, +16% higher than total U.S.)
- Easy access to branches/ATMs (50%, +16%)
- Digital payment tools (29%, +59%)
- Immediate access upon approval (28%, +81%)

A seamless digital experience is essential for the tech savvy Debit Devotee customer



Debit Devotee consumers by the numbers

Income and spending



98 million U.S.
Debit Devotees



+18% more likely
than the total U.S. population to rely
on debit to manage money from their
checking account

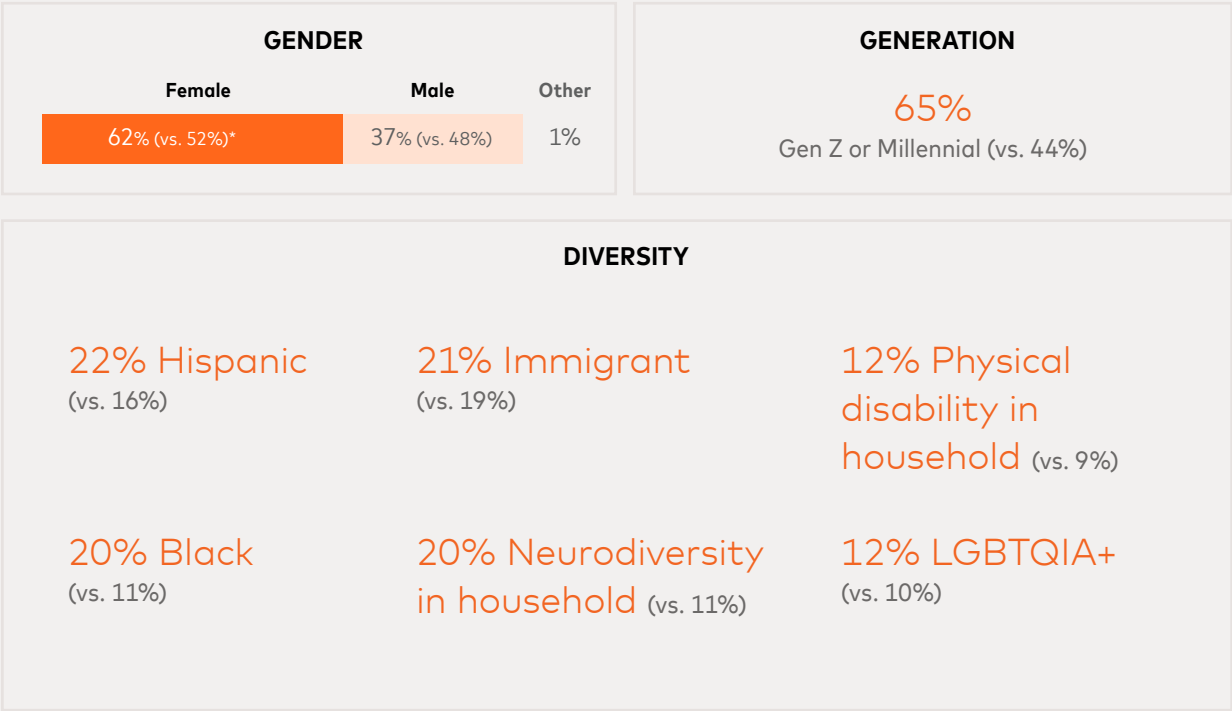


\$83k (mean) household income
(vs. \$108k among total U.S. population)



59% say 'simple to use'
is the top reason they turn to debit most
often (vs. 56% among total U.S.)

Demographics



All comparison numbers represent the total U.S. population

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a brown blazer over a light blue button-down shirt, stands by a large window. She is looking out at a city skyline with a slight smile. She is holding a red tablet in her hands. The background shows a blurred cityscape with buildings and lights.

2

Meeting their needs
today and tomorrow

Expanding horizons by adding value

Promoting financial learning among a loyal customer group creates a positive feedback cycle for issuers who will be their first source for additional products

52%

of Debit Devotees are looking for a new credit card or expect to look soon (+21% higher than the total U.S. population)

Debit Devotees are

+51%

more likely to be interested in access to credit from their debit issuers than the total U.S. population

Debit Devotees are primed for a broader suite of financial products. Many are young and just starting out on their financial journey. They tend to live in the moment, rarely thinking beyond tomorrow, focusing on near-term financial needs, and often spending without over-analyzing it (+29% higher than total U.S.). Debit Devotees could use help learning to better control and manage long-term budgeting.

Given their self-improvement mindset, the right support could help them establish better spending habits so they can build affluence and reach their potential. Now is the perfect moment to introduce tools and resources that will help them hone their financial management skills and set them up for long-term success.

A foray into credit

Eager to expand their financial toolkit, many Debit Devotees are actively considering a new credit card — and they're most likely to turn to their trusted debit provider to take that step. To appeal to this audience's interest in credit, consider promotion and prioritization of features that appeal to their mindset and help them address their challenges.

Debit Devotees require a number of core qualities in a credit card, priorities that are not unique for Debit Devotees, but important for all credit users. Security is fundamental as the top credit card need (39% want a credit card that is safe and secure, 28% are also looking for fraud and purchase protection). Customer service (23%) and a trusted issuer (20%) reinforce the importance of brand connection. Low costs or other ways to see cash value are also table stakes (35% value cashback rewards, 30% no annual fee, 22% high credit line).

Cross-selling credit to sophisticated debit users unlocks new revenue streams and increases overall customer value. These users often display responsible financial behaviors, making them prime candidates for credit products with lower default risks. Offering credit deepens customer relationships and increases retention by positioning the issuer as the primary financial provider. Customers with both debit and credit products are more engaged, use more services, and are less likely to switch to competitors. Expanding credit access to eligible debit users supports financial inclusion while fostering personalized banking experiences and long-term loyalty.

DIFFERENTIATING CREDIT CARD NEEDS SHOW THE IMPORTANCE OF EXTENDING LIMITED RESOURCES:

Low APR
(+59% higher than total)

Longer billing cycles
(+54% higher than total)

High credit limits
(+54% higher than total)

No interest balance transfers
(+54% higher than total)

BNPL options
(+60% higher than total)

MEETING THEIR NEEDS
TODAY AND TOMORROW

Rewards help Debit Devotees stretch their money while driving loyalty and spending. Within rewards, cash back is most preferred, followed by points and retail rewards. Unlike traditional credit card users, Debit Devotees are more interested in rewards and points that are not tied to travel, making cash back and flexible point options a smart way to capture their loyalty and increase card usage.

Type of Reward	% Debit Devotees Who Prefer It	Difference vs. Total U.S.
Cash back rewards	72%	
Points	31%	+25%
Points redeemed for non-travel merchandise	27%	+29%
Retailer rewards	23%	+45%
Points redeemed for travel rewards	21%	
Airline rewards	18%	-17%
Miles redeemed for airline tickets	17%	
Hotel rewards	16%	-11%

No difference shown when Debit Devotee % is similar to U.S. Total

72%

of Debit Devotees are interested in additional financial learning

Earn more devotion by helping Debit Devotees transition to more frequent, responsible credit use and build higher credit scores

Deepening financial know-how

Financial education offers an excellent opportunity to deepen relationships with Debit Devotees, many of whom are struggling to get by and find managing their finances beyond the day-to-day is a challenge. 1 in 3 say they rarely think beyond tomorrow when it comes to finances, +60% higher than the general population. And more than 1 in 3 say that managing their financial accounts feels complicated, +19% higher than the general population. Despite these challenges, they are determined to take control and actively shape their futures.

72% of Debit Devotees are hungry for additional financial learning (vs. 67% of the total U.S. population), including financial planning, retirement planning, and overall financial health. They could also use help managing their current liabilities: 36% plan to pay off their credit card debt as a near-term financial goal (+55% higher than total), 26% want to improve their credit rating (+75% higher than total), and 19% aim to pay off student loans (+78% higher than total).

MEETING THEIR NEEDS
TODAY AND TOMORROW

21%

would like to buy a home in the next 5 years, +52% higher than the total U.S. population

Issuers can provide the financial knowledge they need to start them on a path of growth. With more financial savvy, control, and increasing wealth, Debit Devotees will continue to need and use more financial products. Their loyalty can draw them back to the debit issuer as they expand their financial toolkit.

Debit Devotees would benefit from tools that help them understand and manage their future financial projections such as starting a family, buying a home, or saving for college. Debit Devotees will soon need loans, financial advice and personalized services. By providing them with relevant resources and literacy-building tools, issuers can foster deeper loyalty and become an essential partner in the exciting financial journey ahead.

Topics They Are Interested in Learning More About	% of Debit Devotees Interested in Topic	Difference vs. Total U.S.
Financial planning	32%	+24%
Retirement planning	29%	
Financial health	28%	+27%
Investment advice	26%	
Security	19%	
Financial basics	19%	+50%
Household management	14%	+59%
Cryptocurrency	12%	+34%

No difference shown when Debit Devotee % is similar to Total

For many Debit Devotees, home ownership is a dream they wish to fulfill. They are younger and less likely to currently own a home than the general population (42% vs. 62% among total U.S.), presenting a key opportunity to deepen the relationship and add value. Offering tools to help them achieve this milestone can help to cement trusted financial partnerships.

Debit Devotees will soon need loans, financial advice and personalized services



3

Dialing into digital

Debit Devotees are digital-first

Debit Devotees are particularly tech-savvy and digitally proficient — 65% feel confident using new technology (vs. 59% among U.S. Total) — making them eager to explore financial products and payment methods that put ease and convenience first. Personalization is also a priority, and security is essential.

Debit Devotees tend to be early tech adopters. They're also plugged into the digital economy, with 21% creating online content (+37% higher than U.S. Total) and 38% saying they would like to participate in the creator economy but do not yet (+39%).

This group is a prime audience for innovative products and offerings that align to their digital-forward way of doing things and meet their unique financial needs. Relevance is the key to staying top of mind.

54%	Willing to share personal data in exchange for:	% Debit Devotees	% Total U.S.
want technology to enhance their experiences (vs. 44%)	An easier experience	48%	38%
	Personalized experiences	42%	36%
	A convenient experience	40%	33%



37%
want one app that does everything (vs. 25%)



31%
agree more digital payments are the future (vs. 26%)

A penchant for digital payments

For the Debit Devotee market, digital technology has opened the door to an exciting range of product options that align with their preferences. These consumers are significantly more engaged with digital payment tools than the average debit user. Over half use payment apps (54% vs. 41% total U.S.) and open banking (53% vs. 41% total U.S.), and nearly half rely on digital wallets (48% vs. 38% total U.S.). One in four has embraced buy now, pay later services, more than double the rate of standard use in the U.S. (11%). What truly sets them apart is the desire for fully digital functionality, such as a digitally native debit experience (41% vs. 26%). This group's strong digital engagement presents a valuable opportunity for issuers to create technology-driven solutions that meet their evolving needs.

Digital Products and Features of Interest	% of Debit Devotees Interested	Difference vs. Total U.S.
Easy-to-use digital app	51%	+16%
Willing to share their data in exchange for a better digital experience	48%	+25%
Access to digital payment tools	29%	+59%
Connected accounts	21%	+19%
Personalization	18%	+25%

Of those Debit Devotees using a digital wallet, the overwhelming majority (84% vs. 50% of U.S. total) connect it to their debit card rather than another payment card, such as credit or prepaid. Encouraging more digital wallet use will help integrate debit naturally into the digital payment ecosystem and compete with payment apps. Digital wallet users should also be reminded that connecting their debit card will enable them to stay in control of their spending — a top reason they reach for debit first.

Over half of Debit Devotees use payment apps and are more likely to load their debit card, another mechanism that encourages frequent debit spend. The top apps they use are Venmo (56%), Zelle (50%), and CashApp (52%). While their Venmo and Zelle usage are very similar to total U.S., their use of CashApp is +51% higher, likely because of its accessibility without a bank account and its cultural relevance among younger audiences. On average, Debit Devotees spend \$400 per month on their payment apps (+33% higher than U.S. total), with the top spending categories being groceries, entertainment, and bills.

Issuers have an opportunity to lean into Devotees' openness to tech by focusing on the digital customer experience and making it as easy as possible for these consumers to get things done in an app or online.

A warm, candid photograph of a man with a short beard and a blue and white plaid shirt, laughing heartily. He is seated at a table in what appears to be a cafe or restaurant, with a white cup and saucer in front of him. To his left, the back of a woman's head with blonde hair is visible. To his right, another person's hand is raised near their face. The background is softly blurred, showing other patrons and warm, golden light from the windows, creating a cozy and social atmosphere.

4

Tailoring
opportunities to
nuanced needs

Four disruptive forces create an imperative for change

Debit Devotees' product choices, preferences, and identity are shaped by our rapidly evolving cultural landscape. Specifically, transformations in society, culture, technology, and economics are changing the role of debit within the lifestyles and life stages of customers. As human identities and behaviors grow more complex, traditional assumptions fall further behind, pushing businesses to fundamentally rethink how they understand their customers.

Mastercard developed the human-centered Powering Prosperity research framework, grounded in the comprehensive analysis of these transformational shifts in North America, to support innovation. This framework identifies communities and opportunities where change is most evident — for instance, how the digital world offers new ways to interact, access information, and transact, particularly for younger populations such as the Debit Devotee. The insights around Debit Devotees are enhanced by our ability to look at personas who make up this population, which has been enabled by Mastercard's Powering Prosperity framework. The strategic focus on dynamic areas keep business efforts aligned with the most promising opportunities for sustainable growth and development.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND LIFESTAGE SHIFTS

Disruptive Forces:

- Diversifying population
- Women gaining power
- Immigration growth
- Evolving identity and family models
- Longer lifespans

Macro Trends:

- Wealth accumulation struggle
- New markers of adulthood
- New metrics of wealth

Disruptive Forces:

- Digital Access and Literacy
- Regulation
- Web 3.0
- Generative AI

Macro Trends:

- Digital-first living
- Digital-first finances
- Data privacy & security

TECHNOLOGICAL ACCELERATION

SOCIAL SHIFTS AND INCREASED AWARENESS OF INEQUITIES

Disruptive Forces:

- Equity & Inclusion
- Environmental changes
- Political/health instability

Macro Trends:

- Prioritization of self/wellness
- Community focus
- Meaningful consumer-brand relationships

Disruptive Forces:

- Rise of entrepreneurship
- Cryptocurrency/Blockchain
- Inflation

Macro Trends:

- Rise of creator class
- Younger gen finances
- New/Alt banking & finance

ECONOMIC VARIABILITIES



Modern values, many ways

Applying the Powering Prosperity framework captures the spirit and unique needs of tomorrow's consumers by characterizing them into eight high-growth communities. Together, these personas make up 80% of the North American population. Through this lens, Debit Devotee consumers are seen as a multi-dimensional, complex population with a wide range of needs and interests. The map below shows all groups plotted by their financial curiosity (the x-axis) and how supported they feel by current financial systems (the y-axis).

Four personas present valuable opportunities to support Debit Devotee consumers: Futurists, Newbies, Overcomers, and Transcenders. While Debit Devotees typically represent 25% of the U.S. population, these personas have high incidence of Debit Devotees (all over 34% or more). Focusing on them allows for innovation, new product development, and tailored messaging to gain the largest impact and growth with debit.

With high spend and frequent use of debit across many categories, **Futurists represent the most fruitful debit opportunity.** They fall into the lower right map quadrant, meaning they are highly curious about and dedicated to financial education but feel under-supported by the financial system. They are strongly motivated to grow, appreciate trying new things, and have a lot to gain from financial advancement.

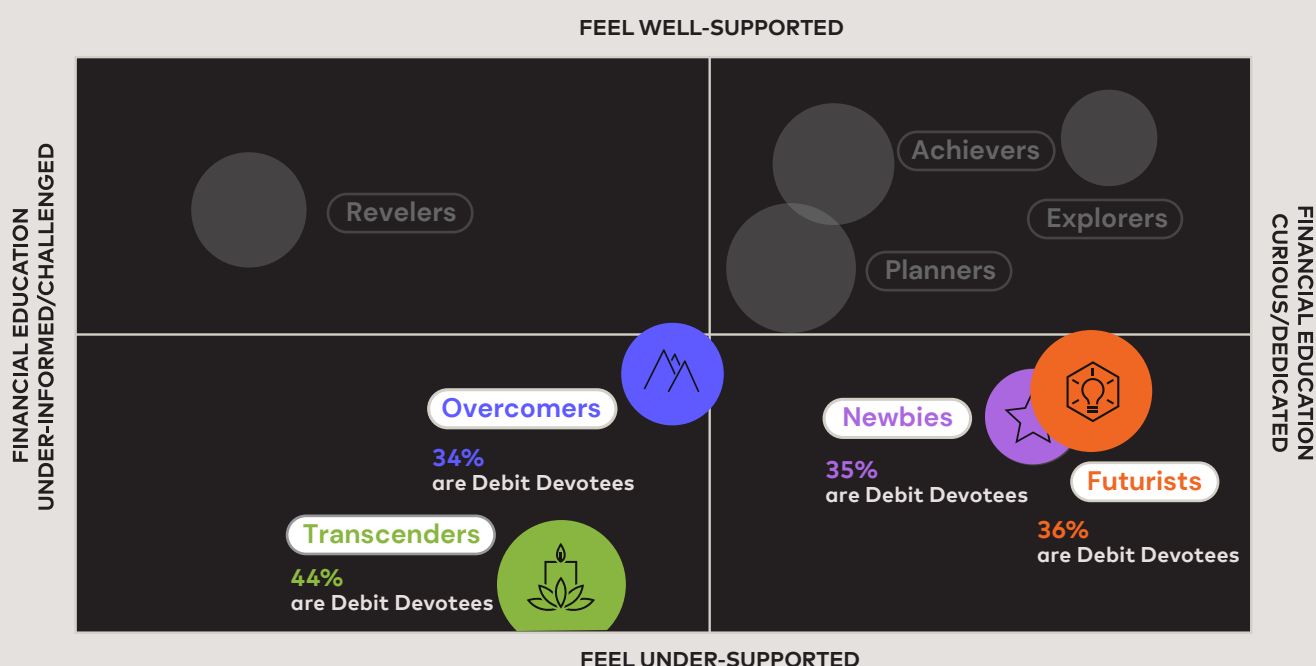
Newbies, Overcomers, and Transcenders present additional opportunities based on their prevalence. Overcomers currently have high debit spend while Newbies show strong potential for more debit use. They offer alternative options to broaden reach among unique audiences. Transcenders are the largest group of Debit Devotees, but less of a growth target than other personas.

Futurists: Driven and goal-oriented, Futurists embrace modern lifestyles and shoot for the stars. 77% use debit, 36% are Debit Devotees.

Overcomers: Practical and positive despite financial challenges, Overcomers enjoy exploring new ideas and connecting with people. 78% use debit, 34% are Debit Devotees.

Newbies: Spontaneous, impressionable, and open to guidance, Newbies are finding their place in the world. 85% use debit, 35% are Debit Devotees.

Transcenders: Transcenders need simplicity and education to get them to the next level. 84% use debit, 44% are Debit Devotees.



DEBIT DEVOTEE FUTURIST

The priority persona: Who they are

Driven, goal-oriented disrupters who embrace modern lifestyles and shoot for the stars



Futurists are creating their own destinies by finding creative, novel ways to live, work, and make ends meet — especially if it makes them more productive. As early tech adopters, they have a modern, digital-forward perspective and penchant for gadgets, devices, and fun new features.

Image is important to Futurists, who like to indulge and care what others think of them. They also embody diversity and inclusion, with high representation for LGBTQIA+, neurodivergent, Black and Hispanic/Latino populations.

SKREW YOUNG 74% are Gen Z or Millennial (vs. 44%)	MALE 42% vs. 48% FEMALE 58% vs. 52%
SUBURBAN YOUNG ADULTS 50% live in suburban areas (vs. 46%) 24% in small cities (vs. 22%) 19% live with extended family (vs. 12%)	EMBODYING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION 34% are first generation citizens (vs. 24%) 34% Hispanic/Latino (vs. 16%) 23% Black Americans (vs. 11%) 21% have neurodiversity in their household (vs. 11%) 15% LGBTQIA+ (vs. 10%)

All comparisons are made against the total U.S. population, either directly or as % higher than total U.S. population. Numbers in gray represent the total U.S. population, where relevant. Statements shown without numbers are higher for Futurists than total U.S. population.

SHOOTING FOR THE STARS

Entrepreneurial spirit

33% are creators (+115% higher than total)	25% have a side hustle (+106% higher than total)	13% are gig workers (+211% higher than total)	12% are small/medium business owners (+65% higher than total)
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Goal-oriented and future-focused

- Personal identity defined by career and network
- Determined to have it all – “fake it ‘til you make it” attitude
- Aim to earn substantially more money
- Entrepreneurial goals include starting a business, building new/passive income streams

Extroverted and motivated

- Enjoy meeting new people and regularly seek out new experiences
- Measure success based on peer standards
- Feel it’s important to know people with different interests

FORWARD-THINKERS

Tech-savvy and digitally minded

66% are always looking for ways to use technology to enhance experiences (+50% higher than total)	35% agree more digital payment methods are the future (+35% higher than total)
45% prefer personalized experiences for sharing data (+24% higher than total)	33% are early adopters (+51% higher than total)

Striving for more

- Fight for their financial progress
- Often struggle with personal finances including making ends meet
- Have goals to improve financial literacy and credit

MOTIVATED TO IMPROVE THEIR SITUATION

Middle class

39% grew up middle socio-economic status, and 39% are currently middle socio-economic status	HNW+ Affluent 6% 15%	Emerging Affluent 32%	Mass 48%
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INCOME AND INVESTIBLE ASSETS

\$52k median household income (vs. \$73k)	\$53k median individual income (vs. \$51k)	\$12k median investible household assets (vs. \$106k)
34% auto loans (vs. 25%)	30% student loans (vs. 14%)	21% personal loans (vs. 10%)

HAVE LIABILITIES

Renters

- 49% rent their homes (vs. 24%)
- 39% find the purchase process too intimidating (vs. 29%)
- 55% feel the costs associated with home ownership are too much to afford (vs. 44%)
- 31% expect they would receive family/friend assistance if they were to buy (vs. 9%)

Overcoming past challenges

- Living with a thin margin of financial flexibility
- Past setbacks include credit card debt, unemployment, caring for a relative, student loan debt, and healthcare expenses
- 47% could not cover a \$2000 unexpected expense (2x higher vs. 23% among total)
- If they received a windfall, they would pay off loans/debt

Limited credit usage

62% have a credit card (vs. 85%)	74% of credit card owners are revolvers (vs. 32%)	\$418 monthly credit card spend among users (vs. \$590)
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TOP CATEGORIES FOR CREDIT PURCHASES:

Grocery	Bill payment
Retail/Apparel	Entertainment
Gas/Automotive	Travel
Dining/Culinary	Fashion/Beauty

DEBIT DEVOTEE FUTURIST

Product preferences

Seeking exciting, modern products that will help them build the future they dream of

Futurists are an engaged and receptive audience. They're curious about financial education, open-minded, and more willing to accept risk than other Debit Devotee personas. With strong loyalty, higher monthly debit spend, and frequent debit use across many categories, they represent the best opportunity for debit issuers to add value and expand customer relationships.

Debit Devotee Futurists are excited about new credit cards, particularly from their financial provider. Compared to the general population, they are 2x more likely to want a credit card from their current provider, are highly motivated by rewards, and want immediate access upon approval, marking an interest in digital issuance.

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USE DEBIT FOR EVERYTHING

Spend \$572 with debit monthly
(vs. \$521 among all U.S. debit users)

HIGHER DEBIT CARD USE (+20% OR MORE) ACROSS ALL CATEGORIES, PARTICULARLY:

Retail	Entertainment
Apparel	Fashion & beauty
Subscriptions	Well-being

OPENNESS AND AFFINITY FOR MODERN PRODUCTS

Need guidance to achieve the growth they seek

- Goal to become more financially literate
- Aspire to invest more and build credit
- Seeking guidance on financial opportunities
- Risk-tolerant in financial decisions

READY FOR CREDIT

Eager for access that maximizes spending power

66%	2x	2.5x
are looking for new credit compared to 52% of all Debit Devotees and 44% of all debit users	more likely to want a credit card from their current provider	more likely to want immediate access to the card upon approval

DESIRES FROM CREDIT CARDS (FEATURES THEY DON'T CURRENTLY HAVE)

Lower APR	27%	+44% higher than total
Higher credit limit	20%	+77% higher than total
No interest balance transfers	17%	+123% higher than total
Longer billing cycles	16%	+111% higher than total
Buy now pay later	12%	+95% higher than total

TOP FINANCIAL LEARNING TOPICS

Financial planning	41%	+61% higher than total
Retirement planning	37%	+32% higher than total
Investment advice	37%	+48% higher than total
Financial health	33%	+50% higher than total
Financial basics	31%	+141% higher than total
Cryptocurrencies	23%	+144% higher than total
NFTs	22%	+316% higher than total
Security	19%	+4% higher than total
Trust/estate management	15%	+8% higher than total
Risk assessment	12%	+13% higher than total
Household management	10%	+11% higher than total

Enthusiasm for every reward/benefit category

REWARDS OF INTEREST FOR FUTURISTS	% Interested in Topic	Difference vs. Total
Cash back rewards	75%	+9%
Points	38%	+54%
Points for non-travel merchandise	33%	+53%
Points for travel rewards	29%	+47%
Airline rewards	27%	+28%
Retailer rewards	27%	+71%
Hotel rewards	25%	+42%
Miles redeemed for airline tickets	20%	+14%

Likely strong engagement with debit of the future

49% likely to choose a digitally native debit experience (+89% higher than total)

Additional Debit Devotee opportunities

In exploring Debit Devotee opportunities, it is critical to identify other consumer groups that are also strong debit users who may be on a different trajectory from Futurists. Overcomers, Newbies, and Transcenders offer exciting growth opportunities for debit issuers. These unique segments demand tailored strategies and products to meet them where they are — and help them get where they want to be.



OVERCOMERS

Overcomers are curious, experience-focused, and knowledge-seeking. They fought to make financial progress — and many still struggle to make ends meet, working part-time, multiple jobs or side hustles. They are tenacious and haven't let financial challenges stand in their way. They have higher income and debit spend than other Debit Devotee personas. Overcomers live by learning and exploring, and are open to expanding their horizons, but are not cutting-edge. Socially connected, compassionate, and practical, they go with the flow and live life one day at a time, including managing their finances.

EXPANDING THEIR HORIZONS

- Constantly explore new topics and ideas
- Regularly seek out new experiences
- Want to move to a different location
- Enjoy meeting new people, making new friends

MIDDLE CLASS INCOME AND VALUES

Most grew up middle class or lower and remain there:

\$58k median household income (vs. \$73k)	31% of their income goes to discretionary and savings (vs. 38%)
51% homeowners, many still in first home (vs. 62%)	74% also have credit (vs. 85%)
Spend \$587 with debit monthly (vs. \$521 among all U.S. debit users)	

RESILIENT AND OPTIMISTIC

Making a positive impact on others and improving their position:

- Professional goals to influence others, grow network
- Many use credit to manage, and hope to pay off debt soon
- Tend to think outside the box when solving problems
- Past setbacks include: credit card debt, unemployment, divorce/separation, student loan debt

PRACTICALITY COMES FIRST

Categories for debit use, used much more than total population:

(+20% or more):	(+10-19%):
Dining and culinary	Grocery
Retail and apparel	Gas and automotive
Big box and club stores	Entertainment

Comparison numbers represent the total U.S. population.
Statements shown without numbers are higher for Overcomers than total U.S. population.



NEWBIES

Newbies are just starting out and live in the moment. They're excited by tech, learning, and what the future holds. Friendships and cultural communities are core to their identities. Newbies are impressionable and image-conscious. With slightly higher proportion of discretionary spending available than other Debit Devotee personas, and as a young segment likely to spend more as they age, they represent an excellent growth opportunity. They are also open to improving their financial literacy but could use some guidance.

EAGER AND OPEN

- Like learning, technology, and trying new things
- Unsure of the way forward
- Tailoring their image and online presence
- Have a casual, low-stress perspective
- Still young – 31% are Gen Z (4.5x total)

ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT MODERN PRODUCTS

57% always looking for ways to use technology to enhance experiences (vs. 44%)

48% want one app that does everything (vs. 25%)

48% willing to share data for digital convenience (vs. 33%)

31% willing to forego security for a more convenient experience (vs. 14%)

USE REMITTANCES AND PAYMENT APPS

19% have sent payments overseas (+35% higher than total) via...

- 54% payment app
- 34% money transfer service
- 23% wire transfer through bank
- 12% in-person through bank

ROOM TO GROW

\$46k median household income (vs. \$73k)

76% Anticipate career advancement (vs. 57%)

Spend \$533 with debit monthly (vs. \$521 among all U.S. debit users)

77% likely to look to debit card issuers for additional financial products/services (vs. 62%)

Categories for debit use, used somewhat more than total population (+10-19% higher than total):

- Grocery
- Bill payment
- Dining and culinary
- Subscriptions

(No categories are used much more, +20% or more higher than total population)

Comparison numbers represent the total U.S. population.
Statements shown without numbers are higher for Newbies than total U.S. population.



TRANSCENDERS

Transcenders are thoughtful, resilient individuals who draw strength from their identities and lived experiences. Rooted in small towns with larger households, they face economic hardship with quiet perseverance, patching together income and holding tightly to their values of stability and self-control. While cautious and often skeptical of change, these emotionally attuned, purpose-driven debit users value proven solutions, low fees, and financial products that offer control without complexity.

LIMITED RESOURCES

\$36k median household income (vs. \$73k)

Spend \$550 with debit monthly (vs. \$521 among all U.S. debit users)

Least educated, 59% have only some college or a HS education (vs. 34%)

Housing and necessities making up 73% annual spend (vs. 62%)

45% are renters, and they say the costs of home ownership are too high (60% vs. 44%) or the purchase process is too intimidating (48% vs. 29%)

PREFER SIMPLICITY

- Anxious about things outside of their control
- Risk-averse with their finances
- Question or doubt positive effects of tech on the world

Debit is their go-to for recurring purchases, including bills, more than the total population:

(+20% or more):

(+10-19%):

Bill payment

Grocery

Gas/Automotive

Retail/Apparel

Subscriptions

TENACIOUS AND EMOTIONALLY ATTUNED

- Looking for ways to live a better life and want to see equal access to opportunities for everyone
- Have goals to work more hours, earn more money, further their education, make a positive change at work
- Want better work/life balance and mental health
- Rely on intuition for decision-making

BUDGET FOCUSED

- Financial goal to lower spending, but managing accounts feels complicated
- Interested in discounts and rewards with cards, but less likely to accept fees for more benefits
- Interested in improving the basics of their financial education

Unique benefits that would encourage more debit use:

- Discounts on goods and services (49% vs. 34%)
- Cashback rewards (44% vs. 39%)
- Faster earn rate for rewards (26% vs. 22%)

Comparison numbers represent the total U.S. population.
Statements shown without numbers are higher for Transcenders than total U.S. population.

A young man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a red t-shirt, is sitting at a dark wooden desk in a library. He is looking down, focused on writing in a spiral-bound notebook with a black pen. His left hand rests on the desk near another spiral-bound notebook. In the foreground, there are several sheets of white paper and a yellow pencil. The background is filled with blurred bookshelves, creating a sense of a quiet study environment.

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Deepening the
debit relationship

Strategies for reaching Debit Devotee consumers and Debit Devotee Futurists

Debit Devotees are highly engaged with and loyal to their debit issuer, especially Debit Devotee Futurists. The future potential of Debit Devotees and this specific subgroup represents excellent opportunities to deepen and expand your relationships with debit users. The Debit Devotee audience is ambitious, with more personal and professional goals than average, and is always looking for ways to live a better life. Connect with them through their unique needs and goals, offering and supporting a path to a brighter financial future. Futurists are ambitious and trying to leave their mark in the world, making them a smart investment at this point in their life trajectory.



Build on their loyalty

These consumers have already shown their loyalty to their trusted debit issuer by turning to this card first for the majority of their spending. Debit Devotees are ready for more products and would consider their debit issuer first to meet these needs. Open the door to more acquisition and establish long-lasting, satisfying multi-product relationships by offering cardholders additional products and features that make financial management easier, such as installment payments or credit.



Debit Devotee Futurists are highly interested in credit cards and seek options that support their future growth. Attract Futurists with card benefits and rewards that excite them. Keep them engaged and loyal by providing clear growth paths, showing how their credit limits and benefits can increase as their financial situation improves.



Embrace digital-forward tools

Debit Devotees are tech-forward and digitally savvy. They are early adopters of digital wallets, digital apps, and online checkout, and willing to share data via open banking — especially if it means more convenience and personalization. Make the most of their tech-forward attitude about personal finance and set the foundation to be their go-to provider by offering a digital-first experience. Enabling push provisioning into click-to-pay, digital wallets, and mobile apps will further help to secure top-of-wallet preference.



Debit Devotee Futurists are even more technologically savvy than Debit Devotees in general, making them the most eager to try and adopt new products and features. Capture and maintain their attention with modern and engaging digital experiences.



Grow their financial confidence

Managing finances feels complicated for this audience, but they want to learn more about financial health, building credit, and household management. Financial education is an important need to focus on. Teaching this loyal group can ultimately lead them back to their issuer when they're looking for additional products. Help them learn the basics of financial management and guide them through the decision-making process of when to use which products. The "Master Your Card" program, for example, gives cardholders access to resources about budgeting savings plans and credit building.



In addition to their interest in financial basics, Futurists are keen to explore higher risk, higher reward uses for their money. Provide them with guidance on how to start investing and educate them about emerging trends like cryptocurrency and NFTs.



Boost peace of mind

Fraud protections are table stakes today, but still top of mind. Despite being tech-forward, Debit Devotee and Futurist cardholders still need issuers to play an active role in protecting their accounts against fraud. Clearly communicate advanced security features and benefits so these customers know they're covered. Regularly remind both of these groups about core safety and security features such as zero liability, extended warranties, and satisfaction guarantee services.



Play the everyday advantage

Debit Devotees over index in everyday spending and recurring payments, including subscriptions, card-on-file, and bill pay. Consider incentivizing cardholder spend and behavior that becomes habitual — for example, subscription management tools, bill pay switch, and "always on" offers.



Debit Devotees, particularly Futurists, also heavily rely on their debit card for a range of other categories. Futurists frequently spend in retail and fashion and could be motivated to increase spending with rewards or benefits. Buy now, pay later debit options could also encourage both groups to boost their spending in big-ticket areas like electronics, home improvement, and travel.

Opportunities to collaborate

Mastercard is proud to collaborate with institutions and other brands to enhance the array of financial convenience options for Debit Devotee consumers. We support these efforts with a range of dedicated programs and services that allow our partners to develop a keen awareness of the multifaceted aspects and opportunities of this audience. We hope these insights will offer valuable guidance as you refine your strategies to engage with this dynamic and responsive market.

Mastercard Identity Insights

Mastercard Identity Insights for Accounts simplifies and enhances digital onboarding workflows by leveraging dynamic identity data to accurately assess risk and improve conversion rates among qualified consumers. This solution delivers device intelligence, individual attributes, predictive signals, and scores through a single API. These insights are also embedded within Mastercard Open Banking, enhancing the security of the account linking process by identifying suspicious identities. The Account Insights solution provides predictive signals and scores that support more informed decision-making. By aligning onboarding strategies with applicant insights and organizational risk tolerance, the solution helps streamline the customer experience. Passive predictive signals contribute to confident onboarding and the successful conversion of high-quality customers, fostering long-term value and trust. In addition, Mastercard collaborates with a broad network of data and platform providers. This partner ecosystem enhances solution capabilities and experience quality, while reducing the need for additional vendor management and associated supplier costs.

Mastercard's Embedded Open Banking

A unique suite of three services designed to support secure and seamless account opening and funding — at no cost to issuers. We maintain a network that reaches over 95 percent of DDA accounts in the United States through more than 10,000 connections with U.S. financial institutions, enabling consistently high success rates — typically 95 percent or greater. The solution offers account owner verification via a one-time request that returns key identifying information — name and address, email, and phone number — associated with the selected account. This feature enhances Know Your Customer (KYC) compliance by reducing friction while helping to mitigate account opening fraud in real time. In addition, the platform includes account detail verification, which instantly authenticates and confirms account and routing numbers to further reduce fraud risk. It also performs an account balance check to assess available funds prior to funding, payment, or account setup — helping prevent transaction failures due to insufficient balances and improving the overall customer experience.

Digital First

Mastercard Digital First delivers a premier digital banking experience with instant access to card information, relevant benefits, and secure transactions backed by Mastercard's trusted brand. By focusing on removing friction and securing every aspect of payments, it enables cardholders to spend immediately with instant digital issuance, while push provisioning and Mastercard Checkout Services keep cards top-of-wallet. Consumers gain control through subscription and transaction management, convenience with seamless payments and money management tools, security with advanced fraud prevention and secure digital options, and relevance through flexible, innovative features that adapt to their needs. The result is a secure, convenient, and consumer-focused digital experience that builds trust and loyalty.

Subscription Controls

Mastercard Subscription Controls, powered by Ethoca Consumer Clarity, enable issuers to give cardholders greater visibility and control over their recurring payments directly within digital banking channels. The solution provides subscription identification and enriched transaction data, so consumers can easily recognize, track, and manage their recurring charges. With clear insights at their fingertips, cardholders can pause, cancel, or update subscriptions seamlessly, without the frustration that often leads to disputes. For issuers, this reduces unnecessary chargebacks, lowers servicing costs, and strengthens customer trust. By making subscription management simpler and more transparent, Mastercard Subscription Controls improve the digital banking experience, enhance satisfaction, and increase engagement and loyalty across the customer base.

Mastercard Virtual Card Tokens

An illustrative example of Mastercard's commitment to enhancing both security and convenience at checkout is the Mastercard Virtual Card Token solution. This offering empowers cardholders with the ability to instantly generate a virtual token linked to any card product through a streamlined and user-friendly process. Once issued, the virtual card token can be customized with spending limits and usage preferences — such as single-use or multi-use configurations — providing flexible control over transaction behavior. This capability presents a valuable solution for individuals seeking to safeguard their card credentials, particularly when engaging in online commerce, traveling, or assigning a dedicated payment method to specific services such as streaming platforms. By enabling precise control over digital payment interactions, Mastercard Virtual Card Tokens contribute to a more secure and user-centric payment experience.

Mastercard One Credential

Mastercard One Credential is a single digitally connected credential with multiple ways to pay, empowering consumers with more control, choice and convenience. Simply by logging into their banking app, consumers will be able to set their preferences, and payments will automatically be tailored to their needs. Consumers can set preferences based on transaction amount, all through the convenience and security of their banking app. For example, a consumer may choose to have purchases under \$100 debited from their checking account, while larger purchases are paid via installments or credit. At launch, consumers using Mastercard One Credential can toggle between debit, installments and credit.

