

CONTRACTORS BENEFIT ASSOCIATION

COMMISSION

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Card Payment Strategies to Boost Your Business's Bottom Line



(BPT) - By Amber Tialino, senior vice president and general manager of Spend & Expense at BILL

Today's business landscape is more competitive than ever. Businesses are fighting every day to win - and keep - their customers while laying the foundation to drive long-term growth and continued success.

From maximizing cash flow and profitability to controlling expenses and tracking expenditures, effective financial management often determines the survival of small and midsize businesses (SMBs). That's why businesses seeking to improve their financial health and better serve their customers should seek solutions that allow them to effortlessly control and manage spend, freeing up time and resources for more strategic activities that drive growth.

A comprehensive solution SMBs should consider

is a corporate card program. In the past, businesses have often used personal cards or have had to endure time-consuming data entry and paper trails when managing expenses. However, the right card solution with integrated expense management software can facilitate better oversight of capital and controls while streamlining financial operations across the organization and eliminating tedious expense reports.

When implementing a corporate card program, SMBs should carefully evaluate their options.

Selecting the card solution that best aligns with their business objectives and unique needs is critical. This process should consider several key factors that can significantly impact their business's financial health and operational efficiency.

Credit versus charge cards: What's right for you?

First and foremost, businesses must decide between a credit card and a charge card. Both credit cards and charge cards can offer convenient payment processing and integrate seamlessly with software. However, they operate on fundamentally different principles.

Credit cards provide flexibility to pay overtime but come with a significant drawback: high interest charges that can eat into an SMB's profits. On the other hand, charge cards require full payment each month, eliminating interest charges while providing the benefits of real-time expense tracking, spend controls and automated expense management capabilities. For SMBs focused on maximizing cash flow while minimizing unnecessary expenses, charge cards are often the more appealing option.

Tailor rewards to fit your business needs

Different cards offer different benefits, from cash back to travel rewards to rebates to vendor-specific discounts. SMBs should evaluate these programs based on their unique spending patterns and choose the card that will serve them the best.

The ideal card program should offer customizable rewards that align with the business' primary spending targets and expense categories and provide meaningful value to both the company and its users. Some cards even allow businesses to choose their reward categories, ensuring maximum benefit from their regular spending patterns.

Elevate the employee experience

During the decision-making process, SMBs should prioritize the employee experience, as

staff members will be the primary card users. The best card solution should offer a seamless, user-friendly experience for making payments and managing expenses.

Essential features businesses should look for include simple receipt capture and submission processes, intuitive mobile apps that complement online platforms and easy expense tracking capabilities. Employees should also be able to monitor their spending against budget guidelines and expense protocols easily while management maintains comprehensive oversight across the organization.

For an organization like Children's Miracle Network Hospitals with 170 children's hospitals across North America, every dollar spent and saved is so meaningful. The business searched for a new spend and expense management solution, and switched to BILL Spend & Expense, which saved them money, provided 1% cash back on purchases and ultimately made the experience for their team much easier.

"A huge, awesome thing about moving over to BILL was the ability to instantly connect receipts to transactions," said Burke Bess, Vice President of Finance, Accounting and Data Analytics at Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. "And BILL was just a very user-friendly system compared to what we had before."

Optimize cash flow with integrated systems

Another vital consideration SMBs should evaluate is how well potential card solutions connect with their existing business tools and platforms like travel booking systems, accounting software and other operational tools. The card system should also offer built-in controls for expense-type restrictions, such as merchant controls to limit the amount spent on a single transaction - automatically enforcing company spending policies.

Perhaps most importantly, SMBs should prioritize cards that integrate seamlessly with their automated financial platforms to help optimize cash flow. Ideally, the card solution



would synchronize card payments with all other financial operations, including accounts receivable, billing and payroll systems. This integration provides business owners and managers with a comprehensive view of their financial metrics and cash flow, facilitating more informed decision-making and strategic planning for the future.

SMBs that are in the middle of rapid growth can especially

benefit from system integration features. FairWave, a specialty coffee collective, for example, adds new brands every three months. Keeping track of spend and expenses for all of these brands was time-consuming and took valuable time away from day-to-day operations.

After implementing BILL Spend & Expense, the company saved over 144 hours per year in their monthly close alone.

“Think about the sheer number of receipts. It takes so many hours to chase those down and figure things out when you have to do it by email,” said Derek Braun, FP&A Manager at FairWave. “Today, 98% of our credit cards are managed through BILL Spend & Expense, so everything’s in one place. Every card user across all our brands. Every receipt. They can just take a photo and add the receipt to the app. BILL has reduced our close cycle by at least 12 hours.”

Choose a solution that supports every step of your business journey

Implementing the right card system offers more than just convenience. It’s a strategic investment in business success. By carefully evaluating card type, rewards structure, user experience, system integration and financial platform compatibility, SMBs can select a card solution that not only meets their current needs but also supports their long-term growth objectives.

Businesses looking for a more controlled way to spend and create a strong financial management foundation should consider the BILL Divvy Card powered by Visa*, available as part of BILL Spend & Expense. Unlike other corporate credit cards, the BILL Divvy card is the only solution that provides SMBs with corporate cards, spend controls, flexible rewards and expense management software (at no extra cost) all rolled into one.

By streamlining efficiency, this corporate card program allows SMBs to focus on what matters most: growing their business and serving their customers. To learn more, visit bill.com/signup.

*The BILL Divvy Card is issued by Cross River Bank, Member FDIC and is not a deposit product.



Keep AMD Vision Loss In Check Healthy Lifestyle Can Protect Eye Health

Changes to your eyesight are normal with age. You may be less able to see up close without reading glasses. It may take your eyes longer to adjust to changing light levels. These problems can usually be corrected with glasses, contact lenses, or improved lighting. But some changes can be a sign of disease.

A condition called age-related macular degeneration, or AMD, is the leading cause of vision loss in older adults in the U.S. It's caused by light-sensing tissue in the back of your eye, or retina, deteriorating. The deterioration happens in the center of the retina, called the macula. In advanced stages, AMD can make it hard to see things clearly when you look straight ahead. You may not be able to recognize faces, read, drive, or do certain household tasks independently.

You're more likely to have AMD at age 55 and older. Smoking, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure increase your risk for AMD. So does having a family history of the disease.

There are two types of AMD. Dry AMD, also called atrophic AMD, is more common. This condition progresses through several stages. Early AMD has no symptoms. In intermediate AMD, you might notice mild blurriness or have trouble seeing in low light. Late AMD usually causes a blurry area or blank spots in or near the center of your vision. Colors may appear faded.

The other type is called neovascular, or wet, AMD. It can cause fast vision loss if not treated promptly. In wet AMD, abnormal blood vessels grow in the back of the eye. These can bleed and leak fluid that damages the macula. A telltale sign is when straight lines appear wavy or crooked. Dry AMD can also turn into wet AMD.

It can take years for AMD to progress. When you detect it early, you can take steps to delay its progress.

An eye doctor can detect AMD using a dilated eye exam. In the exam, they dilate (or widen) your pupils using special eye drops. This allows them to see inside your eyes. They may also take pictures of the inside of your eye using a technique called optical coherence tomography.

If you are diagnosed with AMD, there are several things you can do to slow its progression. "For those early and intermediate stages, it's all about a healthy lifestyle," says Dr. Tiarnán Keenan, an ophthalmologist at NIH. This includes eating a healthy diet, getting enough physical activity, and not smoking. A healthy lifestyle may also lower your chances of getting AMD in the first place. See the Wise Choices box for tips.

Recently, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first two drugs for treating late dry AMD. Both were developed based on NIH-funded research. The drugs can slow the progression of dry AMD, but not stop or reverse it.

The most common treatments for wet AMD involve a doctor injecting medicines called anti-VEGF drugs into your eye. These help stop bleeding and fluid leakage from the abnormal blood vessels.

NIH-funded researchers have been looking into other ways to delay the progression of AMD. Studies have shown that special dietary supplements called AREDS2 can slow the progression from intermediate to wet AMD.

NIH researchers are also exploring using stem cell transplants to preserve the macula. They can take cells from a patient's blood and turn them into stem cells.

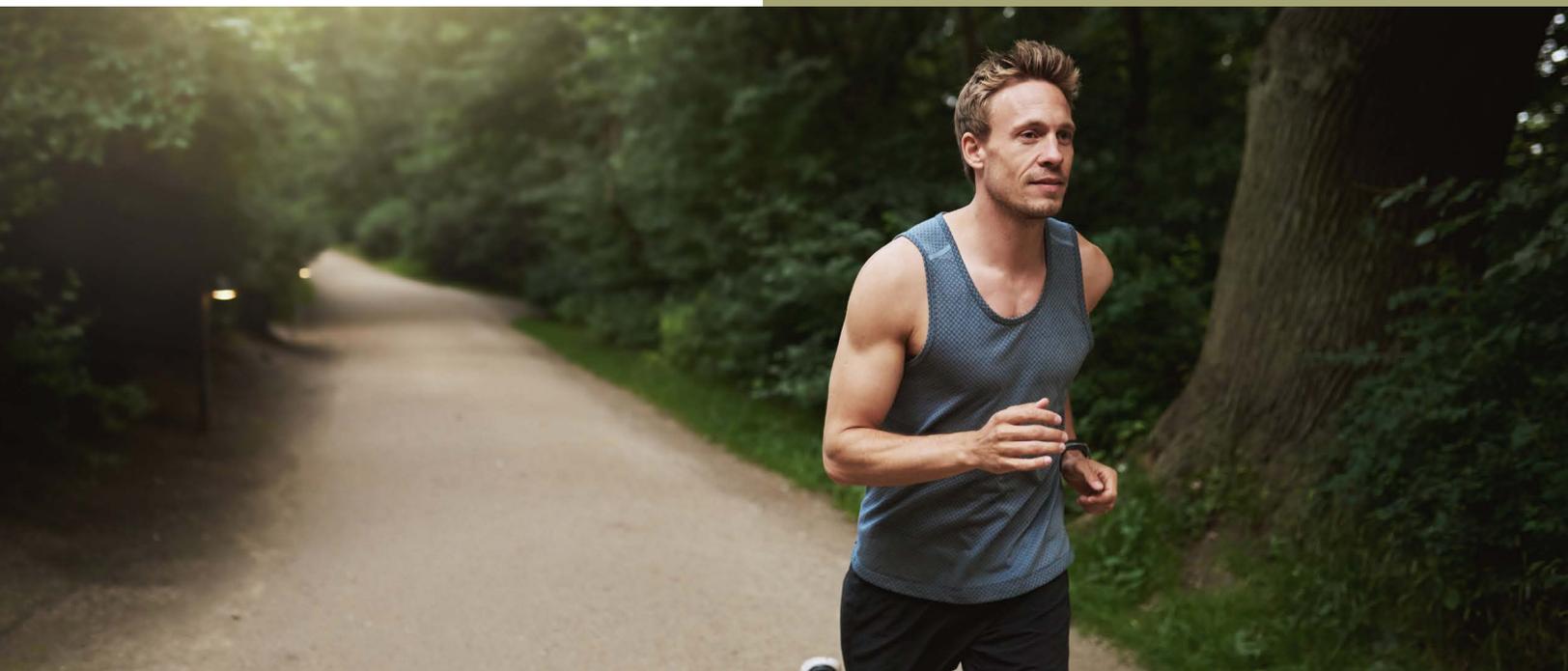
"In the lab, scientists can grow more of the cells. Then, they can transplant those cells into the eye of individuals with AMD," Keenan explains. A clinical trial is currently studying this treatment and recruiting participants. Learn more about the trial.

Wise Choices



Lower Your Risk of AMD

- **Eat a healthy diet**, including fruits and vegetables (especially dark leafy greens like spinach or kale) and fish high in omega-3 fatty acids (like salmon or tuna).
- **Get regular physical activity**. Experts recommend getting at least 150 minutes of moderate activity a week.
- **Maintain healthy blood pressure and cholesterol levels**.
- **Don't smoke, or quit if you do**. Get free help to quit smoking at smokefree.gov, 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669), or by texting QUIT to 47848.
- **Get regular eye exams**. Your eye doctor can tell you how often you need an exam based on your age and other risk factors.



NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

The Annual Meeting of the Members of Contractors Benefit Association will be held at 12444 Powerscourt Drive, Suite 500A, St. Louis, Missouri 63131, on Wednesday, September 17, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. (CST) for election of Directors and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting and any adjournment thereof.

The above notice is given pursuant to the By-Laws of the Association.

PROXY Contractors Benefit Association September 17, 2025 Annual Meeting of Members THIS PROXY IS SOLICITED ON BEHALF OF CONTRACTORS BENEFIT ASSOCIATION

The undersigned member of the Contractors Benefit Association does hereby constitute and appoint the President of Contractors Benefit Association, the true and lawful attorney(s) of the undersigned with full power of substitution, to appear and act as the proxy or proxies of the undersigned at the Annual Meeting of the Members of Contractors Benefit Association and at any and all adjournments thereof, and to vote for and in the name, place and stead of the undersigned, as fully as the undersigned might or could do if personally present, as set forth below:

1. FOR [], or to [] WITHHOLD AUTHORITY to vote for, the following nominees for Board of Directors:
Matt Merrifield, Kirk Luna, and Tom Ebner
2. In their discretion, the proxies are authorized to vote upon such other business as may properly come before the Meeting.

This proxy, when properly executed, will be voted in the manner directed by the undersigned member. If no direction is made, this proxy will be voted for the election of directors and officers.

DATED: _____, 2025

Signature _____

Name (please print) _____

Please date and sign and return promptly to 12444 Powerscourt Drive, Suite 500A, St. Louis, Missouri whether or not you expect to attend this meeting. The Proxy is revocable and will not affect your right to vote in person in the event that you attend the meeting.

St. Louis, Missouri

August 15, 2025

Date



For information regarding your membership
and association services, call or write:

**Membership Services Office
Contractors Benefit Association
12444 Powerscourt Drive
Suite 500A
St. Louis, MO 63131**

1-800-992-8044 or (636) 530-7200

Articles in this newsletter are meant to be informative, enlightening, and helpful to you. While all information contained herein is meant to be completely factual, it is always subject to change.

Articles are not intended to provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

Consult your doctor before starting
any exercise program.

