

ISSUE # 32, 2009

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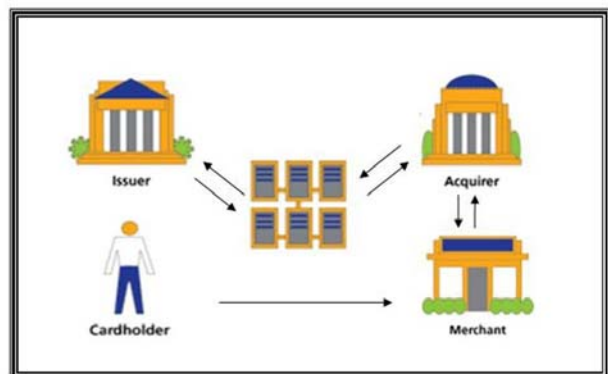
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Latest news from Card Academy

Your internal Card Academy

Through Card Academy we aim to bring a number of key partners together. This in order to bring a more cost-effective educational offer to employees within this sector and to extend the reach and effectiveness of resources spent on education in general.

- Flexible modules
- Customized to your needs
- In local language where possible
- Delivered on your premises
- Conducted as closed sessions



Card Academy is a service available next to your office, and the defined mission for our business is:

Your internal Card Academy

Tell us about your thoughts, needs or requirements. Don't hesitate to get in touch with us!

Yours sincerely,

Kurt Andersen, Card Academy

The Nordic and Baltic States news

Baltic Sea Card Conference 2009

The Baltic Sea Card Conference is a new service to all employees within Banking and Retail business in the Nordic & Baltic Sea countries.

This is your opportunity to get updated on regional and local day-to-day business issues, as well as meet up with colleagues from all over the Baltic Sea area, facilitating the opportunity to network.

**Baltic Sea
Card Conference**

**6th & 7th October 2009
in Stockholm, Sweden**



Book your Conference already today:

Conference fee €699

(VAT will be added to this fee)

Just send us your personal details on

Booking@BalticSea-CardConference.com ,

and we will confirm your booking shortly.



You also have the opportunity to network with those interested in this Conference on LinkedIn – please register for the Baltic Sea - Card Conference group on <http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=1828269>

Please visit www.BalticSea-CardConference.com for further information.

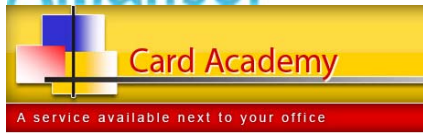
Nordea Finland launches ePiggy – save as you pay with Debit cards

With the ePiggy service their customers can transfer a sum to a savings account in Nordea Finland in accordance with the savings type they have chosen in the service. The sum is automatically transferred to the savings account which the customer has selected in the service, when the card linked to debiting account determined in the service is used to pay for purchases.

The service can be taken into use when one of the following Nordea Bank Finland cards has been linked to the customer's debiting account:

- Bank card
- Bank card facilities of Visa cards and MasterCards
- Debit card facilities of Visa cards and MasterCards
- Visa Electron
- Visa Debit

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When the service has been taken into use, it is available when purchases are paid with a card or its parallel card linked to the customer's debiting account. When the credit facility of the above mentioned cards is used, savings transfers are not made.

In the service you can select one of the savings types described below:

- Fixed amount, i.e. the same amount is always transferred to the savings account in connection with a card purchase, or
- Rounded amount, i.e. the euro amount of the purchase is rounded up to a euro amount selected in the service and the difference between the purchase amount and the rounded-up amount is transferred into the savings account.

(Source: Nordea Finland, May 2009)

MasterCard World Signia is already in Latvia

Following the principles of individual customer service, in May of 2009 Baltic International Bank became the first Latvian bank entitled to issue the prestige credit card of the international payment system MasterCard Worldwide - World Signia.

Roberto Romano, MasterCard Europe commented: "The MasterCard World Signia card is tailored to wealthy clients leading an active life, travelling a lot and at the same time appreciating a high level of service quality. As a holder of a World Signia card, a client gets access to a wide range of financial and non-financial services. Presently, this card is issued in countries around the world and with every year interest in this card is growing. We are glad to present this exclusive card now in the Baltic region and looking forward to effective co-operation with Baltic International Bank in the future."

The MasterCard World Signia card is an excellent instrument, by means of which a client gets a unique package of services, allowing to use his/her personal time effectively. The holders of the MasterCard World Signia card will be able to access benefits of a professional Concierge Service, the specialists of which speak the language of a client twenty-four-hour a day.

For business people with constraints on their personal time having access to assistance during business meetings and trips is an important benefit. The assistance in looking for an office for the time of a business trip, organization of personal secretary or assistant, preparation of documents, transfer of messages, coordination of meetings and many other benefits will be at the disposal of the World Signia card's holder.

Card holders also get access to VIP lounges at airports all over the world, travel insurance, as well as the possibility to get additional privileges and bonuses in the best hotels of the world, SPA complexes, and car rental agencies.

"The wealthy business people succeeded in their aims, appreciating individual and high-quality service, value time as one of the major elements of success. We are glad to offer to our clients the possibility to effectively use their time, delegating solution of everyday issues to the professionals", said the Chairperson of the Board of the Baltic International Bank Ilona Gulchak.

Baltic International Bank offers the MasterCard World Signia card to its clients by the special invitation. The first MasterCard World Signia cards will be issued already in May.

(Source: Baltic International Bank (Rixtar), May 2009)

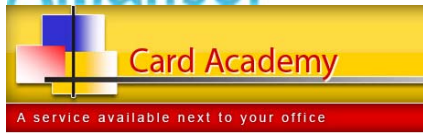
Europe & World Wide news

Travel Bank to issue first Visa pre-paid card in Japan

Japan's Travel Bank has partnered TSYS to launch a pre-paid Visa card designed as an alternative to paper travellers' cheques for people going overseas.

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TSYS will provide processing services for the cards, which can be used to make payments at overseas Visa merchants and cash withdrawals from ATMs.

Hitoshi Kondo, MD, TSYS Japan, says: "We are confident that Japanese consumers who travel overseas will find Visa-branded prepaid cards to be a convenient way to pay when travelling abroad."

In the UK A&L, Barclays, Lloyds TSB, Virgin Money and The Post Office have all launched pre-paid plastic cards aimed at holidaymakers and travellers. In the US Travelex teamed with MasterCard and West Suburban Bank to launch a pre-paid foreign currency card aimed at US customers travelling to Europe.

(Source: Finextra, May 2009)

Brits ditch credit for debit cards - Apacs

Brits are turning away from credit to debit cards during the recession, according to payments association Apacs.

In the first quarter total spending on plastic cards was up 5.4% at £94.2 billion. The number of purchases made was up 6.5% to 1.9 billion.

Debit cards accounted for 74.5% of all plastic card purchases in 2009, seeing a four per cent rise in spending compared to Q1 2008. In contrast, spending on credit cards fell three per cent.

The popularity of cheques continued to decline, with the number cleared falling by 10.6%, and the total value down by 9.4%

Meanwhile, there were 696 million withdrawals from cash machine during the three months, with £45.1 billion taken out.

The Faster Payments Service, launched in May 2008, continues to gather momentum, with 60.1 million payments processed to a value of £20.6 billion in the first quarter of 2009.

Since launch, a total of 142.9 million payments have been processed, reaching a total value of £53.5 billion.

(Source: Finextra, May 2009)

Virgin plans Internet bank

Virgin Money is planning to launch a UK Internet bank in a bid to take advantage of public anger at traditional high street outfits, according to the Observer newspaper.

The financial services arm of Richard Branson's empire is preparing to apply to the Financial Services Authority for a banking licence that would allow it to take deposits and offer mortgages.

Virgin Money was launched in 1995 and claims over two million UK customers, offering credit cards, personal loans, savings products and insurance. Sales rose from around £70 million to £100 million in 2008 with profits estimated at £30 million.

The unit is now looking to follow the lead of Tesco and push much further into financial services, taking advantage of public anger at traditional banks.

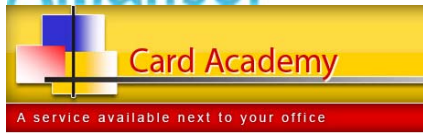
Tesco bought out RBS to take complete control of Tesco Personal Finance in December and plans to open 30 bank branches in its stores by the end of the year. Another retailer, Boots is also considering following Tesco's lead.

The Observer says Branson is now in discussions with US investment banks over financial backing and is also talking to advisers about a new bid for failed bank Northern Rock.

Branson is said to be considering three options: launching a new bank with a branch network; teaming up with another finance firm; or joining a consortium to buy a troubled bank like Northern Rock.

(Source: Finextra, May 2009)





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Socialwise launches e-commerce payments system for children

E-commerce outfit SocialWise has launched a system that enable children to make purchases online by "billing" their parents.

The BillMyParents service lets children mark items they want to buy by clicking a button next to it on participating e-commerce and social networking sites.

Parents are then notified via e-mail or text message and, if they choose to, make the purchase with their credit card. The child and retailer do not have access to card information.

The company has not yet signed partnership agreements with online retailers to integrate the technology but has set up its own BillMyParents site powered by Amazon. The site gives children access to the entire inventory available on Amazon without needing a credit card to make purchases.

It has also struck deals with online gaming sites and social network applications targeted at children, including Artix Entertainment, Habbo, Outspark and RockYou!

Meanwhile, a social network shopping application lets children track their purchase requests made with BillMyParents on sites like Facebook and MySpace. Users' friends can see recent purchases and rate products from a dashboard on their social network profiles.

Socialwise claims that out of more than \$132 billion spent annually by "youth", \$40 billion is spent offline on products researched online. Lack of a credit card is cited by 40% of teens as the reason why they don't buy online.

James Collas, CEO, Socialwise, says: "The online teen spending market is hugely underserved and BillMyParents is uniquely poised to tap into the desire for teens to be able to shop online, while still letting parents maintain control in a safe and secure environment."

(Source: Finextra, may 2009)

Scheme news

American Express cuts another 4000 jobs

American Express is cutting around 4000 jobs - six per cent of its global workforce - as part of a programme aimed at reducing costs by \$800 million this year.

The company says the job cuts will be across business units, markets and staff groups, saving around \$175 million. They are on top of 7000 cuts announced in October as part of a re-engineering plan designed to save \$1.8 billion in 2009.

The lay-offs will lead to a restructuring charge of between \$180 million and \$250 million pre-tax in the second quarter.

A further \$500 million will be saved by reducing spending on marketing and business development. Slashing expenses for consulting and other professional services, travel, and general overhead will save around \$125 million, says the firm.

Kenneth Chenault, chairman and CEO, American Express, says: "We believe these efforts will put us in a better position to remain profitable and free up some additional resources that will be reinvested in the business to make sure we can take competitive advantage of opportunities as the economy begins to rebound."

Last month the company reported a 56% fall in first quarter net income as the recession and rising unemployment hit consumer spending and provoked customer defaults.

(Source: Finextra, May 2009)



US Bank pilots contactless payments and access card

US Bank is piloting a card that can be used for for traditional magnetic stripe purchases, Visa payWave contactless transactions and to gain access to secure facilities.

The bank is trialling the technology with staff in Minneapolis, enabling participants to use their pre-paid payroll account cards to make purchases and enter their secure work location.

The card contains Inside Contactless' MicroPass 4006 platform, which consists of Visa's payWave application and Hid Global's contactless access technology.

US Bank says the combined identification, payments and access card could prove useful in sectors such as government, university, corporate, health care and transportation.

Dominic Venturo, chief innovation officer, retail payment solutions, US Bank, says: "By working with our business partners, we have been able to bring several technologies together to simplify the end solution for the cardholder."

In the UK, Deloitte employees are piloting a corporate Visa Barclaycard that includes technology for generating one-time passwords that can be used to remotely access the company's IT system.

(Source: Finextra, May 2009)

Rome 2009: UEFA Champions League Final Worth €310m, Says MasterCard Study

Two of the world's greatest football clubs contended for a windfall of more than €110 million for winning the 2009 UEFA Champions League Final, in a match worth upwards of €310 million in total to the European economy, according to a new study commissioned by MasterCard, Official Sponsor of the UEFA Champions League.

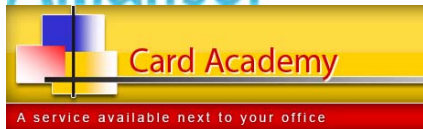
The MasterCard Heart of Sports Commerce report, developed by Professor Simon Chadwick, one of the world's most revered sport business experts, found that FC Barcelona and Manchester United FC stand to profit from positive economic impacts such as increased squad value, prize money, sponsorship deals, television rights and growth in season ticket sales, with even the losing side making at least €65m. Professor Chadwick found that the 2009 Final will generate a greater economic boost (€310m) than last year¹ (€267m). He cites the global economic downturn as a key positive factor in this, as it has created a new community of football fans and organisations worth €25 million in spending power to the European economy.

These are people not previously engaged with the UEFA Champions League Final who are looking for excitement and to escape the pessimism associated with harsh economic conditions. They are also companies seeking the best value-for-money and exposure the UEFA Champions League Final provides, such as those looking to deploy advertising budgets. This economic trend was already identified at other major sporting events in 2009, such as the NFL Superbowl, which saw increases in both number of viewers and advertising spend from the 2008 to 2009 event¹¹, making it one of the biggest in history.

Recent UEFA Champions League matches between major clubs have also shown significant levels of interest, such as when Real Madrid CF played against Liverpool FC in this year's knockout phase, 42% of Spain's TV viewing audience tuned in. Similarly, the knockout phase game between Chelsea FC and Liverpool FC saw 34% of Britain's TV viewers watch the game.

- Windfall for the winning club: upwards of €110 million
- Windfall for the city of the winning team: upwards of €15 million
- Windfall for losing club: upwards of €65 million
- Windfall across Europe: upwards of €75 million
- Windfall for Rome: upwards of €45 million

(Source: MasterCard International, May 2009)



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Contact and Partner information

Here you find information and links to Card Academy and our partners. We currently have Agent agreements covering Finland and the Baltic states.

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