
4 Key Components of a Modern Commercial Card Solution

The pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for the financial operations of small and mid-market companies. Now more than ever, operational continuity and business resilience are vital.

A banking partner that offers a card program addressing the unique needs of your business—from working capital optimization, spending controls, and rewards to advanced reporting and fraud detection—can help your company better manage its cash flow, gain more visibility into financial operations, and chart a path forward to improve your resilience, even during times of uncertainty.

Consider these four questions as you assess whether a commercial card solution can meet your business' needs today and in the future.



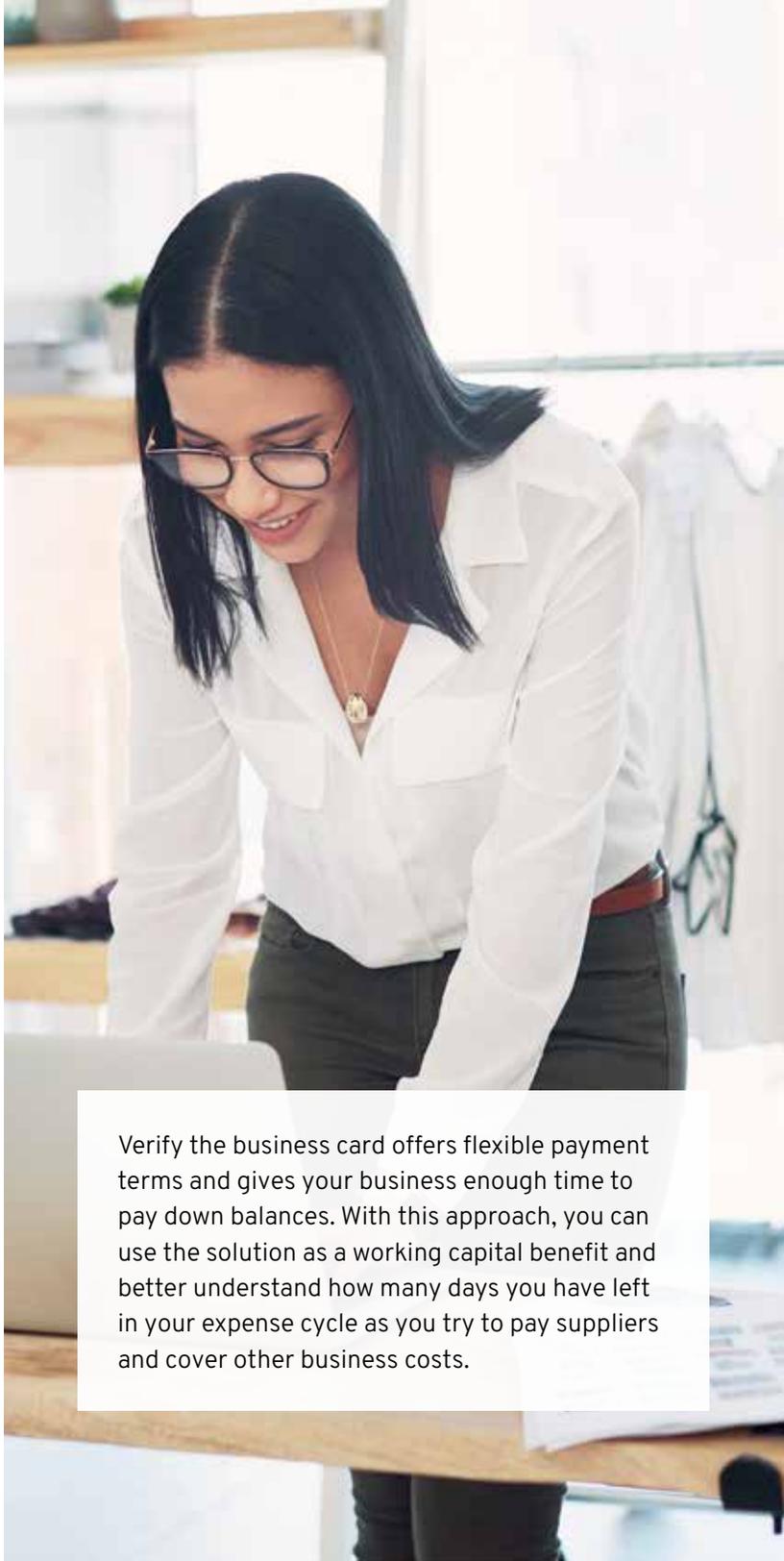
What cash-management capabilities do we need?

66% of senior executives say cash flow is among their top three concerns.¹

To improve cash management, businesses need more financial flexibility—whether it's for a large equipment purchase or technology modernization.

Work with a trusted financial partner that offers a commercial card program featuring a revolving credit line with a higher limit. This can give your business access to the capital it needs to make strategic investments that support growth and agility.

The program also should provide added financial flexibility through automatic rebates at participating merchants, so you don't have to worry about earning or redeeming points for everyday business purchases and can easily get more return for your spending.

A woman with long dark hair and glasses, wearing a white button-down shirt and dark pants, is leaning over a desk and looking at a laptop. She is smiling slightly. The background is a bright, modern office with a window and some office equipment.

Verify the business card offers flexible payment terms and gives your business enough time to pay down balances. With this approach, you can use the solution as a working capital benefit and better understand how many days you have left in your expense cycle as you try to pay suppliers and cover other business costs.

¹ PwC US CFO Pulse Survey, June 2020

With robust security, you can protect the financial integrity of your business and make your financial operations more resilient.

Does the card solution offer robust fraud prevention and protection?

Cyberattacks have increased **400%** since the pandemic, according to the FBI.²

Companies of all sizes have encountered more security threats over the last year. Research shows businesses are predominantly concerned with AP, treasury, and payroll fraud,³ as executives say they believe AP and AR processes are the most susceptible to security breaches.

Mid-market companies also may be more susceptible to cyberattacks because less than half of these companies have advanced threat monitoring or threat detection in place.⁴

A commercial banking partner that offers advanced security and fraud protection tools with its card program can reduce your financial risks and help ensure your payments are secure. These tools should include real-time visibility into company-wide spend data and monitoring for all account activity and transactions, including single bureau credit monitoring, financial account takeover monitoring, and URL and domain monitoring. Encrypted token security and multi-factor authentication to prevent unauthorized access to your online account should be part of the bank's multi-layered approach to security. Many businesses are also choosing to leverage inherently more secure virtual card solutions, in lieu of physical plastic.

² The Hill, "FBI Sees Spikes in Cyber Crime Reports During Coronavirus Pandemic," April 16, 2021

³ 2020 Treasury Perspectives Survey Report

⁴ National Center for the Middle Market at The Ohio State University/Fisher College of Business

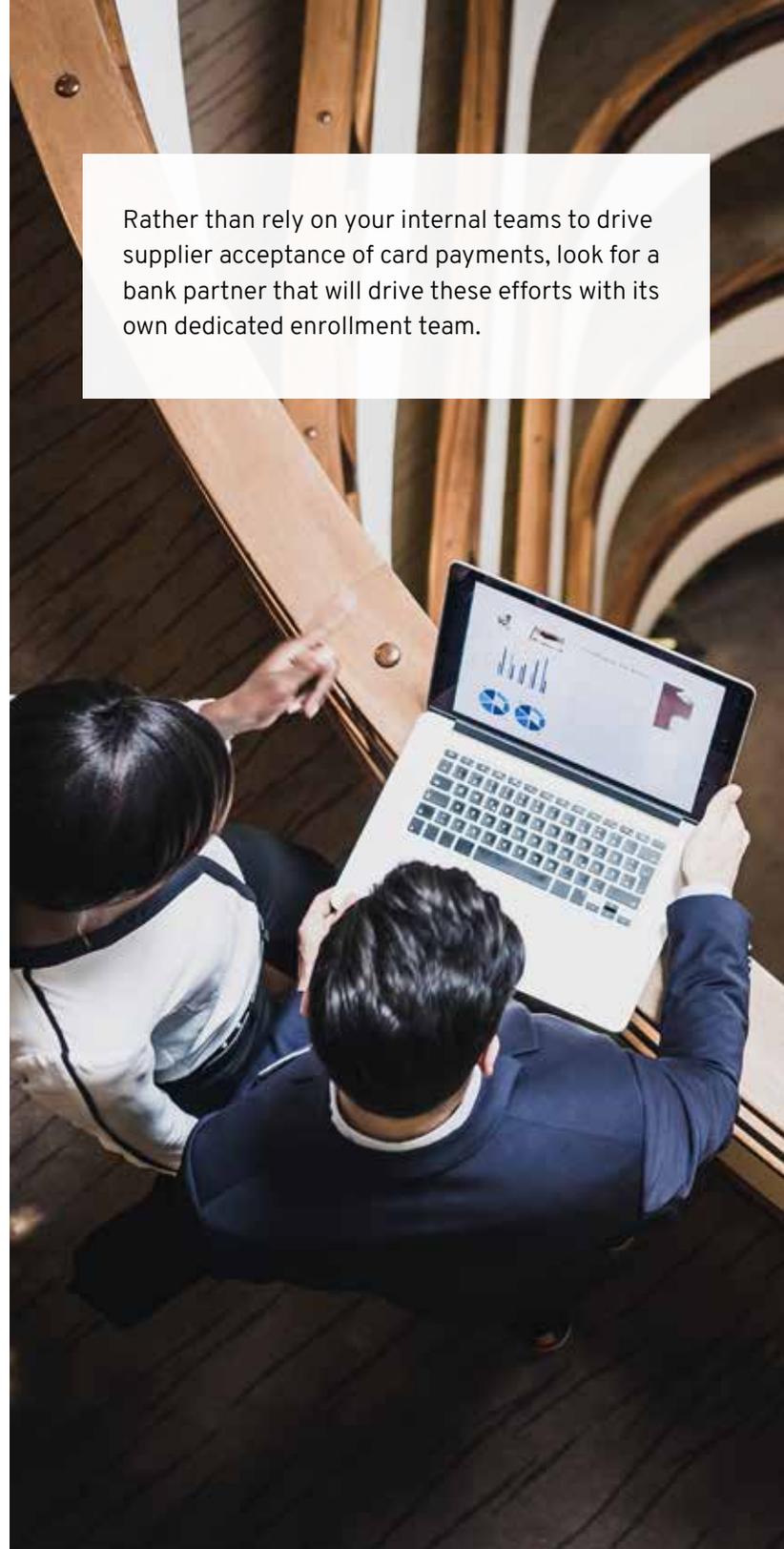
What additional AP automation and support capabilities are part of the card program?

In 2020, electronic payments comprised **57%** of payments.⁵

Suppliers increasingly prefer digital payment methods so they can receive payments quickly and reliably. To meet these needs, look for a commercial card solution that is scalable and can be integrated into broader payment capabilities, such as ACH and check, or even full AP process automation—from receipt of invoice through payment.

Rather than rely on your internal teams to drive supplier acceptance of card payments, look for a bank partner that will drive these efforts with its own dedicated enrollment team. This team should handle initial analysis of your supplier community to identify those that already accept card and those that are targets for enrollment, as well as direct outreach and onboarding. Added support services like these accelerate the reduction of paper processing costs and manual, low-value work like stuffing and mailing paper checks for your AP team, while increasing your overall efficiency.

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⁵ Ardent Partners, “State of ePayables 2020” Report



More flexibility can boost employee morale and retention, which is a win-win all around for your business.

Does the card program facilitate plans for remote or hybrid work?

According to a Pricewaterhouse-Coopers survey, **54%** of CFOs plan to make remote work a permanent option.⁶

With modern AP processes, your AP team can operate remotely all while keeping controls and approvals in place. Employees shouldn't have to come into the office to perform their work. They should have the capability to securely and effectively process payments from anywhere.

Your banking partner should provide automated solutions that not only modernize your AP processes, but also improve business continuity. This offers advantages in terms of revenue and growth, but also your organization's culture. Many companies have experienced an increase in productivity with remote work arrangements.⁷

⁶ PwC COVID-19 CFO Pulse Survey

⁷ SHRM, "Study Finds Productivity Not Deterred by Shift to Remote Work," September 16, 2020



Ready to Launch Your Business Card Program?

If you want to optimize your working capital, automate your payment capabilities, and make your business operations more efficient—without compromising security—ask these four questions as you assess card program opportunities from your banking partner and other providers.

Doing this due diligence will help you find the best card program that will adapt to evolving business needs and help you remain as agile and competitive as possible.

Check out People's United Bank's treasury management resource center to learn more about commercial card solutions.

 www.peoples.com/getstreamlined

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