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Chase - Steadfast, versatile, competitive, and rewarding.

by Derek Lenehan

As a child, I sincerely believed that the word Chase on my dad's credit card was some sort of anti-theft device. I envisioned a thief trying to use the card to buy groceries, the cashier seeing Chase on it, and then the entire store's staff running the thief down. I really thought it meant 'chase this person down, they shouldn't have this.'

Then I turned 17 and realized this was not the case, as my father would have been apprehended several hundred times by members of the cashiers' union. Turns out Chase is actually a world-class bank and credit card issuer, and a branch of JP Morgan Chase. Who knew?

Most publicly, Chase is a credit card issuer first. They issue under both the MasterCard and Visa brands, and offer the full spectrum of card types, ranging from frequent flyer cards, to balance transfer cards, to low APR, etc. Virtually any kind of consumer credit card type you can think of, Chase probably issues one.

Also in the consumer market, along with their credit cards, Chase issues loans for small businesses, automobiles, education, as well as home financing and insurance. Commercially the bank offers business credit, is involved with commercial real estate, and also leases equipment.

Interestingly enough, Chase can trace its lineage back nearly as far as the country can. Prior to being merged with J.P. Morgan & Company Inc., thus becoming J.P. Morgan Chase & Company, Chase was The Chase Manhattan Corporation. The Manhattan part of the name comes from the 1955 merger of Chase National Bank and the Bank of Manhattan Company. The Bank of Manhattan Company was founded in 1799 by Aaron Burr, the same man who shot and killed the person we see on our \$10 bill. This really has no bearing whatsoever on Chase's current operations, of course, and shouldn't really sway you to or away from them, but hey, it's cool to know that a fraction of their very merged body is 206 years old.

If there is any single credit card to capture the essence of an issuing company, I have to figure it's their simplest platinum card. With Chase, that card is, shockingly, the Chase Platinum Credit Card. It comes with up to 12 months of no interest, as well as up to 12 months with a 0% APR. It has no annual fee, a rewards program that can be redeemed with cash back, frequent flyer miles, or gift cards. The card rewards holders that pay their bill in full each month with an interest free grace period, which pairs nicely with the free online account access and the free \$500,000 in travel accident insurance.

At the risk of being corny, I selected this card to showcase because it represents Chase. Not flashy, versatile, competitive, and rewarding. Those traits are what keep the company making money, and dangit, they make for a good credit card too.

by Derek Lenehan

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