



Summer Time Banking

Are you preparing for any major activities this summer? Are you thinking about taking a vacation to a distant location, completing home improvements, planning a purchase of a vehicle or recreation item, or even purchasing a new home? This is the time of year where the bank phone rings the most regarding questions associated with these types of activities or purchases.

Taking a Vacation: Banks have several tools designed to assist you with your travel. Debit and credit cards have become the primary financial tools used when purchasing travel items or withdrawing cash for travel expenditures. The flexibility and ease of using these bank products eliminates wasted time and completes your transactions quicker. And, many card programs and card companies offer travel insurance. You will need to consult with your card company to get more details regarding the security features and usage limits attached.

One financial tool that has become less attractive for travel is travelers' checks. In fact, several banks have discontinued carrying travelers' checks due to low demand. The need to carry paper checks has decreased with the increase in merchants who will accept debit or credit cards as a form of payment.

Home Improvements: The most popular way to finance your home improvements is by using the equity in your home as collateral to fund your project. (Home Equity Loan or Line). One major benefit of using your home's equity for collateral is the opportunity of possibly deducting a portion of the interest from your taxes. Plus, repayment terms on these types of loans can be extended further than most other consumer loan types. It's not uncommon for home equity loans to go as long as 10 years in term. This helps keep the payment lower over time, and, this might help make your project more affordable.

Purchasing a Vehicle or Recreation Item: After coming out of winter hibernation most of us are anxious to look for vehicles or recreational items to begin our summer with some excitement. How do we fix this void in the beginning stages of summer? That's an easy question ... we shop for vehicles or take on a new hobby with a recreational item, such as, a boat, motorcycle, ATV, golf cart, motor home, camper, jet ski, and anything else that sounds exciting. How do you finance these items? This is where the bank can help. Contact your banker to find out if loan programs are available for types of purchases.

Purchasing a New Home: This is the time of year when most people start shopping for a new home. Obviously, our economy has taken a hit in this department; however, if you are positioned correctly, there are several opportunities to acquire a new home at a great price. Mortgage interest rates continue to stay at all time lows. The lower the mortgage rate, the more house you can afford. However, due to the mortgage and housing crisis, you may be asked a few more questions by your mortgage officer. So, be prepared to supply more information and additional support documentation to help the lending company make a loan decision in less time.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like to review items covered in this article.



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