

Your Source for Financial Solutions

First FORUM

SUMMER 2015



5 Credit Mistakes That Will Have You Cringing

You don't need a special news alert to know... we're all human.

Being human means we're bound to make a mistake or two when it comes to credit decisions. Here are five of the most common credit card mistakes.

Applying for every credit card under the sun (and being approved).

Having a little buying power is great, but too much power can lead to a mountain of available credit and plenty of potential to begin mounting debt. This looks risky to a lender. Stick with one or two cards, and be sure they're the best cards you can carry.

Misplacing your magnifying glass – you really do need to read the fine print.

Within that tiny print lies the answer to whether you'll be paying more to have that credit card in your wallet and for how long. Do your homework – there are plenty of companies out there with annual fees, short introductory rate periods, difficult repayment terms, balance transfer fees and more.

How does your card rate? Low, we hope.

When applying for a credit card, you probably didn't opt to be tied for life to its balance. Not shopping for the best rate can mean paying down a balance for much longer than you might realize. Save yourself some time, money and stress, and search for the best rate you can get. The lower the rate, the faster the balance will be paid off.

Don't listen to mom – less isn't always more.

When it comes to paying off high interest credit cards, making the minimum payments may seem innocent enough, but it leads to bloated balances. To keep balances low and easy to maintain, don't charge more than you can pay off within a month or two, and be sure to make more than the minimum payment. Your future self will thank you.

Fashionably late, or just bad credit karma?

Though there isn't a specific formula to follow for A+ credit, one thing's for sure: making your payments on time, **every time**, is the best thing you can do to keep your credit score up. Be the life of your own credit party – be fashionably on time with your payments.

When you're ready to begin building your own credit or make the switch to a card that's in your best interest, look to MembersFirst for a reasonable solution to your credit needs. Visit membersfirstga.com for a list of solutions and details on our various credit card programs.

Holiday Closings

Independence Day

Saturday, July 4, 2015

Labor Day

Saturday, September 5, 2015, and
Monday, September 7, 2015

Columbus Day

Monday, October 12, 2015

CU Succeed Scholarship



The CU Succeed Scholarship drawing will be held on Monday, August 10.

Please turn in all report cards and transcripts to your local branch by Saturday, August 8.

Coming Soon...

We're thrilled to announce the opening of our newest location in Atlanta Medical Center this July. Come visit us at 303 Parkway Drive, Atlanta, GA 30312, Monday through Thursday, 9:00am - 4:30pm, and Friday, 7:00am - 2:00pm. The same great service from the people you trust is in a new location!





CU cents

7 Reasons to Get a Mortgage with MembersFirst

NMLS # 452961

Purchasing a home is quite a commitment! It doesn't matter whether you're doing it for the very first time or if you're a veteran in the home buying process; there's always something that causes it to seem overwhelming. The good news is that it doesn't have to be that way! As part of our commitment to **Helping You Afford Life** and **Simplifying Your Finances**, we've partnered with Independent Mortgage Associates. Joe Menna and his team have been providing complete mortgage services in the Southeast since 1993. They excel at matching members' needs with the best loan program for each specific situation, and they walk with you, guiding you through the process and paperwork. It's just like having your own personal mortgage consultant.

Here are ~~5~~ 7 Reasons to Get a Mortgage with MembersFirst:

- 1. Applying is easy** – Complete the easy application online at membersfirstga.com.
- 2. Free and fast preapproval within 24 hours** on most loans.
- 3. Step-by-step guidance** through the mortgage process.
- 4. Lower closing costs** – Your mortgage through the credit union is exempt from intangible tax.
- 5. Conditional preapproval letter available for realtor or seller.**
- 6. Discounted rates on PMI.**
- 7. Lower rates**, since credit union members are historically better borrowers.

For more information, contact us at (404) 978-0080 or call Joe at (770) 579-1000.

Credit Selfie... Not So Fab?

Not happy with how your credit looks? Whether you're building credit for the first time or rebuilding after a few financial mistakes, making better financial decisions is the key to helping your credit take on new heights. It's true – building a good credit history and raising your score can take a little time, but it doesn't have to be difficult.

MembersFirst has an easy, affordable option to help you build or rebuild a credit profile you'd be happy to share (with your member advisor, of course). With our **Credit Establishing Loan**, borrow as little as \$500 or up to \$2,500 at rates as low as 6% APR* and terms up to 18 months.

For more information or to apply, give us a call at (404) 978-0080, or stop by one of our locations and ask how you can improve your credit selfie today!

Want even more credit score resources? Visit AnnualCreditReport.com or contact the credit bureaus:

- Equifax: 1-800-685-1111
- TransUnion: 1-800-888-4213
- Experian: 1-888-397-3742

*APR=Annual Percentage Rate.



There's No App for Smart Mobile Use

A recent report states that close to 75% of the world's population owns or has access to a smart device. That's 5.3 billion people who are potential targets of mobile fraud.

With this new way for fraudsters to scam you out of your hard-earned cash, it's no surprise smart mobile use is such a popular topic.

Think about it this way. Free Wi-Fi is so convenient – you're sitting in a restaurant, slurping tomato bisque and checking email, when you click on a link to take advantage of a great deal at your favorite store. You input your personal info, including your email, password, first and last name, mailing address and full credit card information, and click "Complete My Purchase." You've saved yourself a little money, so you decide to reward yourself with a larger-than-life chocolate chip cookie. You hop up to find your server – it'll only take a moment, right? Life is grand.

While your sweet tooth had you hunting down a little gratification, you've left your personal belongings at the table and your mobile device unlocked, making it all too easy for someone to swipe.

In this situation, you've made a few dire mistakes that could cost you a lot of time and money in the long run.

Using free Wi-Fi to make purchases and check your personal accounts is like inviting people to read over your shoulder at the credit union or bank. While you've been happily shopping away, Mrs. Scam E. Fraudartist has hijacked your Internet session and now knows a lot more about you than you really intended to share. Additionally, she could use this information to log in as you, using unfortunately easy-to-find scamming tools, and begin her new life – as you.

Even if you do have the most complex of passwords, there's plenty more you can do to protect your information. Here are just a few tips:

1. When connecting to a mobile hotspot, be sure you're only sending information to websites that are fully encrypted.

There are two ways to tell if a site is secure:

- The site address begins with "https://," or you see a closed padlock somewhere on the web browser page (usually in the address bar or at the bottom in the status bar). When clicking the padlock, you should see the name of the company and a message that says, "This connection to the server is encrypted."



2. Never leave your computer, mobile phone or smart device unattended in a public place, especially while unlocked. The number one most common mistake made by mobile users is bypassing the option to have a passcode/password on their device. Set one up as soon as you can, make it complex and DON'T share it.
3. After logging into sites like Facebook, FlexTeller and other sites on which you may have personal information stored, be sure to log out; then close your browser session.

For every new way to protect your information, scammers are developing a new device or system to hack it. The best thing you can do is be smart with your devices and follow your instincts – if something doesn't feel right, don't proceed. Log out and close the browser session. The worst you could lose is a little time logging in later using a more secure site.

Don't let the summer blow by!



Apply for a Vacation Loan
and borrow up to

\$5,000

at **7.5% APR***

now through
July 31, 2015

Your dream vacation...simplified.



Make a Clean Sweep of High-Rate Credit Card Debt!

Transfer your credit card balance to MembersFirst and pay only 1.99% APR* on your transferred balance for one year. Plus, earn one ScoreCard® Reward point for every dollar you transfer. Make back-to-school purchases at qualified merchants and earn double points during the promotional period. Promotion starts July 20th and ends October 30th.

*APR=Annual Percentage Rate.
Visit www.membersfirstga.com for terms and conditions.

*CU Happenings!



Business Development Officer Angie Holland attending Career Day at P.B. Ritch Middle School in Paulding County.



LeeAnn Sims, VP/Business Development, visiting with our friends at Kennestone Hospital.

Each year, MembersFirst raises funds for and participates in the Relay for Life event in Paulding County. This year, via bake sales, employee dress-down days and employee donations, we were able to raise over \$4,200 toward fighting cancer! Money raised at each relay event around the world goes directly to funding research to find a cure for this disease that has touched us all in some way.



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Phone Banking
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Website
www.membersfirstga.com

This credit union is federally insured by the National Credit Union Administration.



NCUA

Change to Branch Hours

Effective Wednesday, July 15, 2015, our office hours will change. The credit union will open at 10:00 am on Wednesdays to facilitate staff training and development.

