

Debt Burden, Merchant Surcharges and Declining Financial Outlook Temper Credit Card Customer Satisfaction in Canada, J.D. Power FindsAverage Monthly Credit Card Spend Decreases 17% in Past Two Years

TORONTO: 10 Sept. 2025 — Persistently high incidence of revolving debt and deteriorating financial health¹ have started to affect the way credit cardholders in Canada use their cards. According to the J.D. Power 2025 Canada Credit Card Satisfaction Study,SM released today, 58% of credit card customers are now categorized as financially unhealthy—up from 57% in 2024—and 36% of customers are carrying revolving debt—flat from a year ago. These, and other consumer headwinds, such as merchant surcharges, have conspired to put a strain on customer satisfaction and reduce overall credit card spending.

“The macroeconomic situation in Canada is increasingly unpredictable and credit card customer behaviour is starting to shift in meaningful ways, notably with less overall spending and a higher likelihood of switching to debit card or cash purchases when merchants apply credit card surcharges,” said **John Cabell, managing director of payments intelligence at J.D. Power.**

“While overall customer satisfaction with credit cards has risen slightly, customer behaviour—particularly among those with higher debt burdens—is starting to show the effects of a more anxious economy. Premium cards, however, seem to be a consumer bright spot, similar to what we are seeing in the U.S. market.”

Following are some key findings of the 2025 study:

- **Satisfaction varies with debt levels:** Overall satisfaction among all credit card customers is 564 (on a 1,000-point scale), which is up 3 points from 2024. The average overall satisfaction score among customers who carry no revolving debt and have the most optimistic personal financial outlook is 579. That compares to a score of 540 among customers with a current balance between \$1,000 and \$5,000 and 518 among those with a balance of \$10,000 or more. Interestingly, among cardholders who feel near delinquency satisfaction is 593, driven by their apparent appreciation for their credit card as a lifeline.
- **Monthly spend declines:** The average monthly credit card spend for cardholders in Canada in 2025 is \$1,336. That is down from \$1,342 in 2024 and \$1,618 in 2023—a 17% decline in two years. Cardholders report that their debit and cash spending have also declined since 2023.
- **Merchant surcharges drive behavioural shift:** More than half (53%) of cardholders say merchants charge a higher price when a credit card is used. Satisfaction scores among this group are 42 points lower than for cardholders who have not received a surcharge. In the majority (88%) of instances when a surcharge occurs, customers opt for an

¹ J.D. Power measures the financial health of any consumer as a metric combining their spending/savings ratio, creditworthiness and safety net items like insurance coverage. Consumers are placed on a continuum from healthy to vulnerable.

alternate payment method. This is reflected in a shift in reported spending to a greater reliance on cash and debit cards when merchants charge extra for credit card use.

- **Premium high annual fee cards show immunity to financial stress:** Satisfaction in the high annual fee card segment (fee \$100 or more) improves by 17 points year over year. Cardholders rate overall card satisfaction 28 points higher than low fee cards (under \$100) and 45 points higher than no fee cards. Customers with annual income of \$100,000 or more are the primary drivers of this segment's strong performance.
- **High hopes for AI to enhance card security:** Customer awareness of credit card issuers' use of artificial intelligence (AI) remains relatively low, yet customers are optimistic about its potential benefits. Just 8% of cardholders say they completely understand how their issuer uses AI, and only 7% feel their issuer has clearly communicated its application. More than one-third (36%) of customers cite improved fraud prevention and data security as the biggest potential benefits of AI, while 21% say they would most like AI to help them avoid service charges.

Study Rankings

American Express ranks highest in customer satisfaction among credit card issuers, with a score of 628. **Tangerine Bank** (626) ranks second and **PC Financial** (608) ranks third.

Canadian Tire Triangle World Elite Mastercard ranks highest among credit cards with no annual fee for a second consecutive year, with a score of 654. **Tangerine World Mastercard** (641) ranks second and **PC World Elite Mastercard** (622) ranks third.

American Express Cobalt Card ranks highest among credit cards with an annual fee for a second consecutive year, with a score of 698. **PC Insiders World Elite Mastercard** (652) ranks second and **Desjardins Cash Back World Elite Mastercard** (636) ranks third.

The Canada Credit Card Satisfaction Study measures cardholder satisfaction with their primary credit card issuer and performance in seven factors (in alphabetical order): account management; benefits; customer service; new account; rewards earning; rewards redeeming; and terms. The 2025 study was fielded from May through July 2025 and includes responses from 11,825 cardholders who used a major credit card in the past three months.

For more information about the Canada Credit Card Satisfaction Study, visit <https://canada.jdpower.com/financial-services/canada-credit-card-satisfaction-study>.

To view the online press release, please visit <http://www.jdpower.com/pr-id/2025102>.

About J.D. Power

J.D. Power is a global leader in consumer insights, advisory services, and data and analytics. A pioneer in the use of big data, artificial intelligence (AI) and algorithmic modeling capabilities to understand consumer behaviour, J.D. Power has been delivering incisive industry intelligence on customer interactions with brands and products for more than 55 years. The world's leading businesses across major industries rely on J.D. Power to guide their customer-facing strategies.

J.D. Power has offices in North America, Europe and Asia Pacific. To learn more about the company's business offerings, visit JDPower.com/business. The J.D. Power auto-shopping tool can be found at JDPower.com.

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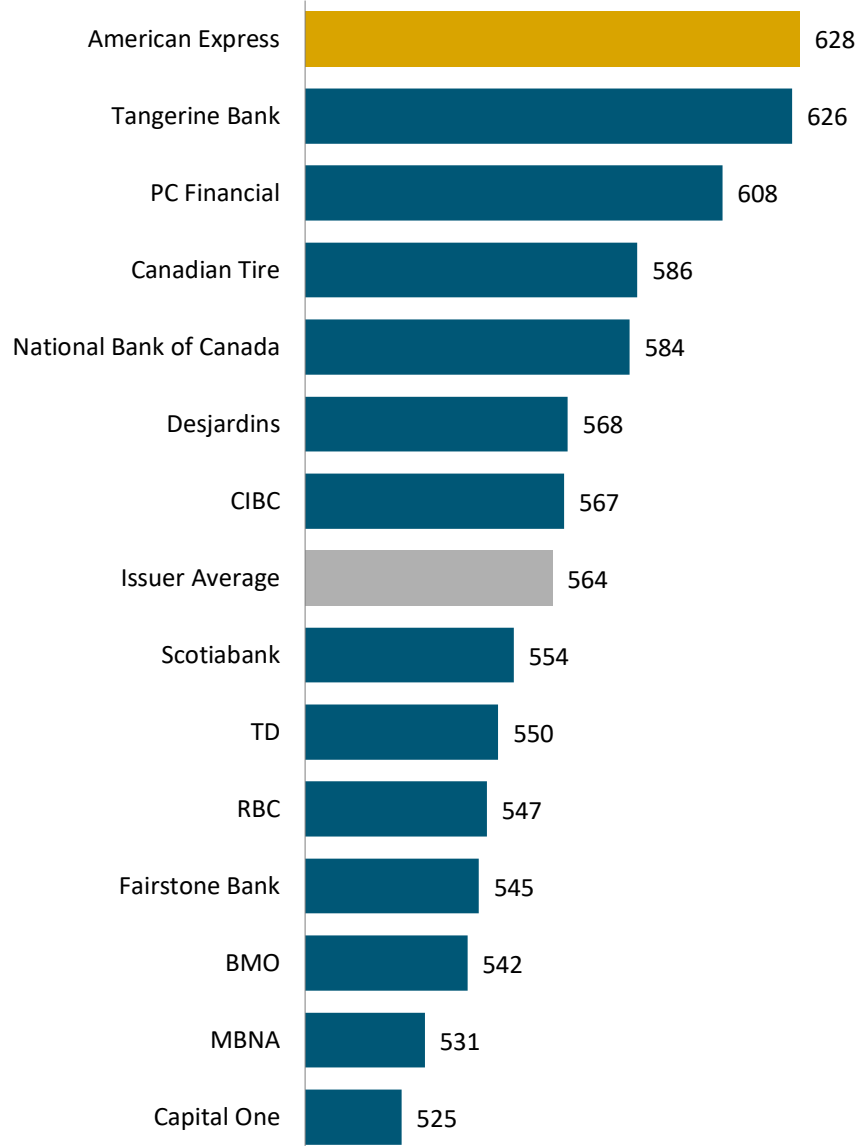
Note: Three charts follow.

J.D. Power 2025 Canada Credit Card Satisfaction StudySM

Overall Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)

Credit Card Issuers



Source: J.D. Power 2025 Canada Credit Card Satisfaction StudySM

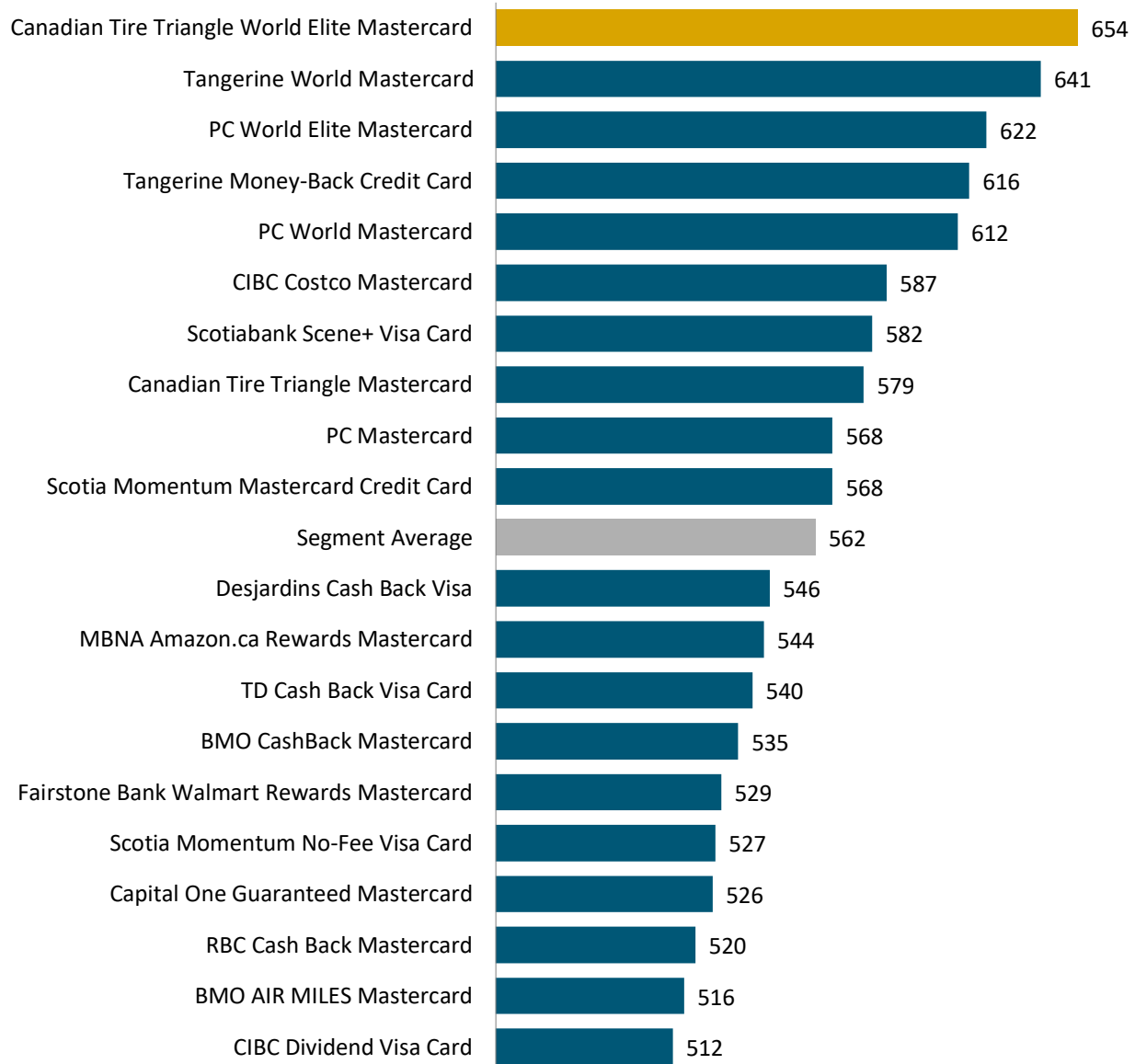
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J.D. Power 2025 Canada Credit Card Satisfaction StudySM

Overall Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)

Credit Cards—No Annual Fee



Source: J.D. Power 2025 Canada Credit Card Satisfaction StudySM

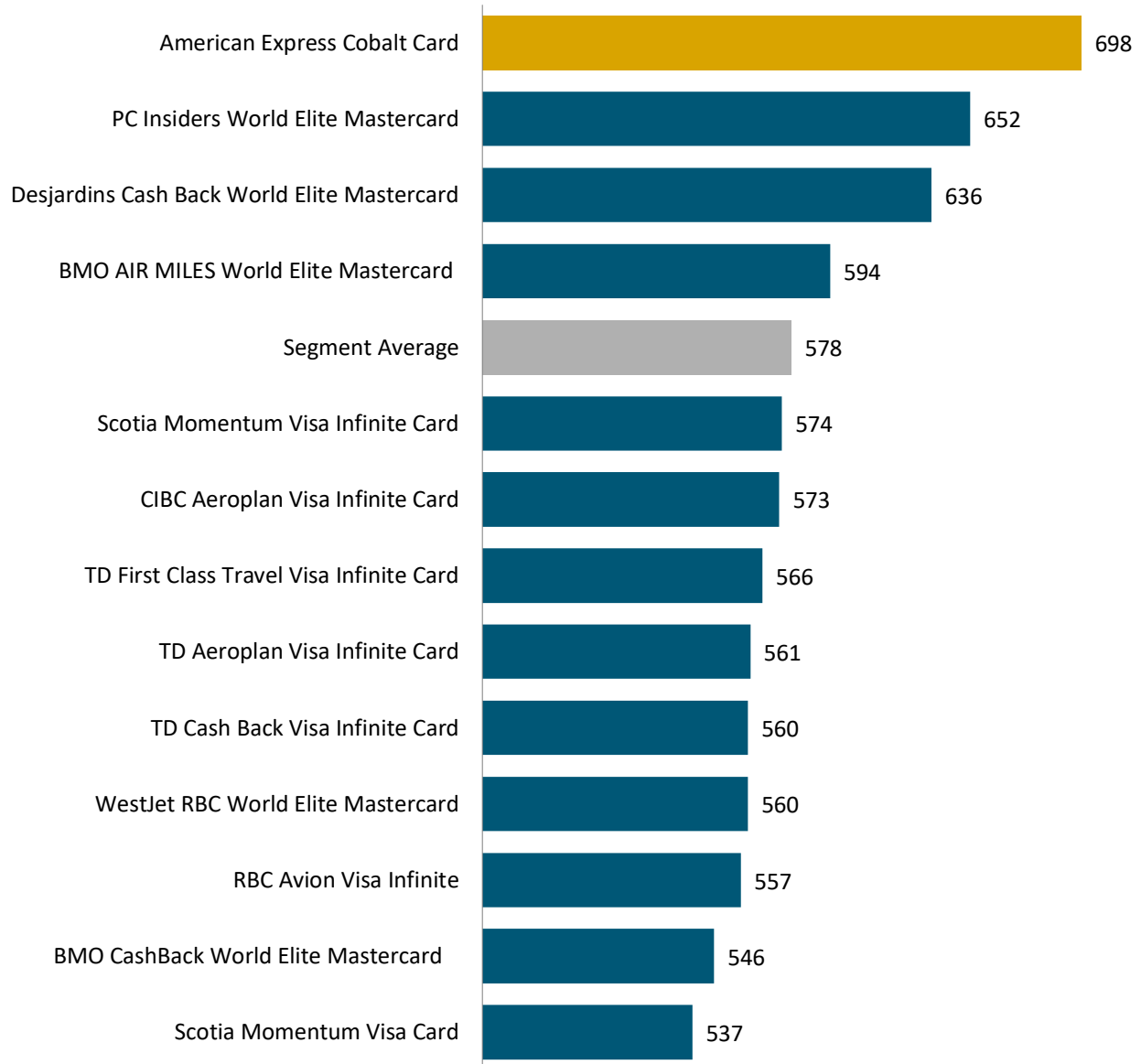
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Overall Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)

Credit Cards—Annual Fee



Source: J.D. Power 2025 Canada Credit Card Satisfaction StudySM

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