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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Shoppers reap more rewards value

CANNEX releases *rewards star ratings* report today.

Shopping vouchers as rewards for credit card holders have improved by an overall 20% in points value for money spent.

A low usage consumer spending \$12,000 annually on a card can now expect to receive an average reward return of \$89, which equates to around 74 cents per \$100 spend. A year ago, 61 cents per \$100 spend was the average reward return.

In releasing its bi-annual *reward star ratings* report today, financial research firm CANNEX notes an upward swing in the improvement of reward return offered to shoppers.

"The stand-out product in this category is Westpac's Altitude Platinum AMEX card which rewards card users who spend \$12,000 per year with \$215," CANNEX financial analyst Frank Lopez says.

The Myer One card is another offering value to the dyed-in-the-wool shopper, as long as they love shopping at Myer. The card can be used outside Myer but you can only redeem points for Myer vouchers.

"Getting the best value out of a rewards card is entirely dependent on your yearly spend and the type of reward you prefer, whether it's shopping vouchers, frequent flyer points or instant rewards."

According to CANNEX, frequent flyer programs now offer a much more modest 7% improvement in value than they did a year ago.

"For those chasing air miles, the card to keep on the radar is one that partners the AMEX Blue Sky program which requires a spend of only \$8,000 compared to \$18,630 for an average Sydney-Melbourne flight," Mr Lopez says.

"This product is unique in that there is no black out period such as Christmas when many programs do not allow points redemption against flights."

The downside of this program right now is a limitation on air routes, particularly international, but according to CANNEX, the program is worth watching.

When choosing a rewards program, it's important to remember that, on average, you are likely to pay for the privilege through higher interest rates and annual fees.

As annual fees involve a one-off set amount, the more you spend the smaller in relative terms the annual fee becomes.

“It’s not worth chasing a rewards program unless you intend to use your card regularly and you may be better off with a low-cost card that offers instant rewards,” Mr Lopez says.

Spend rate (\$) required for ...

	Lowest	Average	Highest
Sydney-Melbourne flight	\$8,000	\$18,630	\$36,000
\$100 shopping vouchers	\$3,333	\$13,459	\$27,497
* <i>This table measures only those cards who offer the relevant rewards programs.</i>			

Consumers can download the free CANNEX rewards star ratings report at www.cannex.com.au or www.ratecity.com.au



CANNEX FIVE STAR REWARDS PROGRAMS

FREQUENT FLYER – PREMIUM

- American Express
- American Express
- American Express
- American Express
- Westpac

NAME OF REWARDS PROGRAM

- Membership Rewards Ascent -Platinum
- Qantas Frequent Flyer - Premium
- Qantas Frequent Flyer – Ultimate
- Rewards Max with Ascent
- Altitude Platinum Rewards-AMEX

FREQUENT FLYER – STANDARD

- American Express
- Citibank
- Earth
- Nab
- Westpac

NAME OF REWARDS PROGRAM

- Qantas Frequent Flyer Standard
- Citibank Rewards – Silver
- earth-Qantas Frequent Flyer - Amex
- Ant Rewards
- Altitude Rewards – AMEX

GENERAL REWARDS – PREMIUM

- American Express
- American Express
- American Express
- AMP Banking
- Greater Building Society
- Homeloans
- HSBC
- RESI Mortgage Corp

NAME OF REWARDS PROGRAM

- Membership Rewards Ascent
- Membership Rewards Ascent - Platinum
- Rewards Max with Ascent
- Membership Rewards Ascent
- Membership Rewards Ascent
- Membership Rewards Ascent
- Membership Rewards Ascent
- Membership Rewards Ascent

Suncorp
 Westpac
 Westpac
 Wizard Home Loans

Membership Rewards Ascent
 Altitude Gold Rewards – AMEX
 Altitude Platinum Rewards – AMEX
 Membership Rewards Ascent

GENERAL REWARDS – STANDARD

American Express
 American Express
 AMP Banking
 Citibank
 Diners Club International
 Greater Building Society
 Homeloans
 HSBC
 RESI Mortgage Corp
 Suncorp
 Westpac
 Wizard Home Loans

NAME OF REWARDS PROGRAM

Membership Rewards Blue Sky
 Membership Rewards Choices
 Membership Rewards Choices
 Silver Rewards
 Diners Club Rewards
 Membership Rewards Choices
 Membership Rewards Choices
 Membership Rewards Choices
 Membership Rewards Choices
 Membership Rewards Choices
 Altitude Rewards-AMEX
 Membership Rewards Choices

For further information:

Frank Lopez
 Financial Analyst
 (07) 3837 4158
francesco.lopez@cannex.com.au

Christine Thelander
 Head of Communications
 (07) 3837 4151
christine.thelander@cannex.com.au

About CANNEX:

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Does CANNEX rate other product areas?

YES, CANNEX also rates credit cards, mortgages, low-doc home loans, reverse mortgages, personal loans, deposit accounts, margin lending, package banking, business banking products and car insurance. These star ratings use similar methodologies to the rewards star ratings methodology. This guarantees the quality and transparency of these other star ratings. The use of similar star ratings logos also builds consumer recognition of quality products across all categories. Please access the CANNEX website at www.cannex.com.au if you would like to view the latest CANNEX star ratings reports of interest.



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