

Expressupdate

The American Express Middle East Merchant Newsletter



Issue 1 | 2007



Welcome to the first edition of Express Update - the new Merchant Services newsletter for you, our partners in the Middle East & North Africa.

The newsletter will include regular updates designed especially for our merchant partners.

It will provide information and insight into the world of American Express across the region and beyond, and feature a number of topics relevant to your business.

In this first edition, we have covered a diverse array of subjects including sections on how to help combat the threat of fraud in your establishment, new American Express Card launches across the region, new online merchant service payment tools, as well as details of free marketing tools that can help drive incremental business to your establishment.

You will also find details of a fantastic, year-round travel offer available exclusively to you, as a special thank you for being a loyal merchant partner.

We hope you and your staff will enjoy reading Express Update, and would certainly welcome any feedback regarding this or subsequent editions.

Express Update will also be published online at www.americanexpress.com.bh/merchants

Happy reading!

Peter Fawn
Head of Establishment Services Group
Middle East & North Africa

Merchant Network Top Business Priority



American Express recognizes the critical importance of a highly resilient Point of Sale (POS) communications network to support transaction processing at merchant outlets. When an American Express Card is presented at your POS terminal, both you and our Cardmembers can expect rapid, successful processing of transactions.

To ensure we meet and exceed those expectations, we have made substantial investments in our data communications and transaction processing technology over the last year. We are confident that we will be able to continuously deliver world class service to both merchants and Cardmembers in this aspect of our business.

Here is a brief look at what we have done: First, every country within our region has, or shortly will have, enhanced data communications and transmission capabilities. We are implementing leading edge technology and communication networks that are both very reliable and very fast! In the unlikely event of failure, every country will have backup facilities available for both equipment and data transmission.

Second, the transaction switching systems located at our regional processing centre have

been completely replaced. World-leading software and hardware facilities are in place to accurately and quickly obtain authorisation responses and deliver them to your POS terminal.

Our central systems will turn around the vast majority of authorisation requests in less than 1 second; we are also achieving system availability figures of 99.99%. Millions of transactions have been successfully processed through these new systems, so we are confident of our ability to cope with very large volumes.

Finally, we can more effectively monitor network availability on a 24 hour basis, thanks to the installation of new state-of-the-art equipment. If a glitch does occur somewhere in one of our Middle East or North African countries, we can respond quickly to isolate and rectify the problem.

Thanks to these technology investments, American Express can offer a truly world-class POS transaction service to both merchants and Cardmembers. You can now feel confident, when customers use their American Express Card at your establishment, that the transaction will be handled quickly the first time around!

PAGES 2 & 3

Merchant Online Services
Save the OctopusTravel Way
Accepting Chip-enabled Cards
Fight Fraud

PAGES 4 & 5

Growing your Business
Stationery
Membership Rewards®

PAGES 6 & 7

New Card Launches
Arabian Travel Market 2007
Executive Travel Potential

PAGE 8

On the Move - New Offices
Contacts



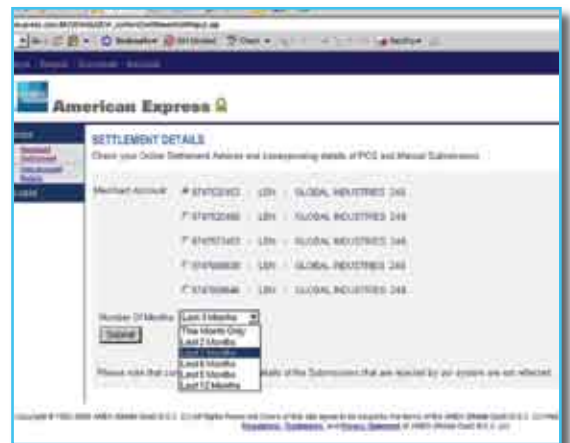
View your payment details 24/7



Want to keep track of your American Express payment details? With our Merchant Online Services website, you can get updated information any time of day, month or year from the comfort of your home or office.

To get started, simply register online. Here's how:

- Step 1:** Visit the special website for merchants at www.americanexpress.com.bh/SEWeb
- Step 2:** Create a new User ID and password by clicking "I am a new user."
- Step 3:** Enter a username – the online equivalent of your identity – and password of your choice. Read the rules mentioned and check the "I accept the Terms and Conditions" box. Press 'Continue' when you are finished.
- Step 4:** To add your merchant details, simply enter the new ID and password and log on to the system. You will then be asked to add your merchant details, including merchant number, payee name, bank sort code, last statement date, discount rate and last payment amount. If your merchant account is not set up on direct credit, the bank sort code field can be left blank.
- Step 5:** If you would like to add more accounts or modify your existing details, click on 'User Account Details'. Congratulations! You now have access to a world of American Express convenience.



For more information or to obtain your copy of the Step by Step guide to Merchant Online Services, please call your local American Express office.

Great savings for you



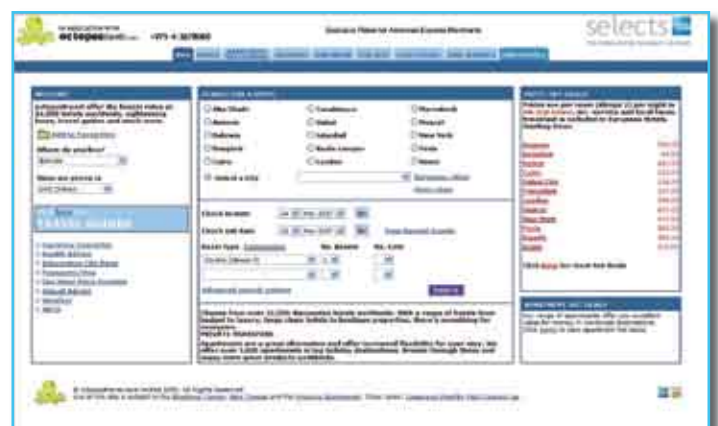
OctopusTravel offers worldwide exclusive rates on hotels, car hire and much more

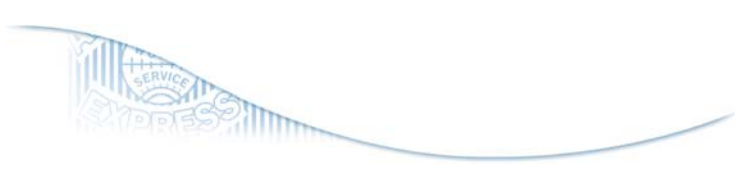
As a special thank you for being a valued merchant partner and welcoming the American Express Card, you can now take advantage of all-year round exclusive American Express travel offers with OctopusTravel.

Choose from more than 21,000 hotels worldwide, knowing you are getting the best available room rate online - guaranteed! If you find a lower rate, OctopusTravel will refund you the difference. See their website for full terms and conditions.

1. Simply log on to: www.americanexpress.com.bh/mena/merchant/services/
2. Click on 'Book my Trip'
3. Then fill in your 10-digit American Express Merchant Account Number and plan your trip. It's as simple as that!

So whether you are planning your next business trip or vacation, remember to visit the American Express Merchant website first, and see how much you can save!





Middle East & North Africa POS Terminals

Although you will have undoubtedly noticed an increase in the number of chip-enabled Cards being used at your establishment, you will still need to ensure that any American Express Card presented to you is handled in the correct way to ensure that you do not miss out on valuable sales.

Remember to always use the magnetic stripe reader in your Point of Sale (POS) terminal whenever you are presented with an American Express Card for a transaction in your establishment.

We are currently working together with banks and terminal providers in the region to provide the necessary certification for our chip Cards. However, in the meantime, even though the Card itself may have a chip on it, please ensure that you swipe all American Express Cards through the magnetic stripe reader on your terminal.

We will be sending you additional information as soon as the certification is completed later in the year, so please watch out for this communication. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your local office for more details.



Fight Fraud!

Fraudulent transactions are on the rise around the world. Here are some tips to help keep you and your company safe:

Always Ensure

- The surface of the Card does not look dull (valid American Express Cards always have a glossy finish)
- The Signature panel is intact and has not been visibly tampered with
- The Card number and signature on the Charge Form matches those on the Card
- The Card relates to the holder in terms of name and gender
- The date of the transaction falls within the valid dates on the Card

Never Accept

- A face-to-face purchase request from a customer who does not present a Card, but cites the Account Numbers from memory, a slip of paper, or an old charge slip
- A Card that appears physically altered (i.e. painted-out signature panels or re-embossed names and Account Numbers)



Watch Out For

- Customers who come in frequently to make small purchases with cash, and then return to make additional purchases of very expensive items with a Credit Card
- A customer who has signed the Card with a felt tip pen or needs to see the Card in order to sign the sales receipt
- Customers who purchase large quantities of high-priced merchandise without regard to colour, size or product feature, or without trying them on
- Customers who often come in just before closing time. Criminals also take advantage of crowds and busy shopping days, such as holidays or special sale events, when sales associates may be less attentive
- Cards that may have been altered by a criminal. Check to ensure the Account Number embossed on the front of the Card matches the number printed on the back of the Card as well as the terminal receipt
- If you suspect Card misuse, call your local American Express Authorisations Centre. This number can be found on the sticker on your POS machine



Selects offers

Cardmembers know that Selects, the global merchant offers programme from American Express, provides exclusive 'added value' on Travel and Leisure, Shopping, and Dining. But what's in it for you?

By becoming part of the exclusive group of Selects merchant partners, businesses can also enjoy rewarding opportunities. Here's how:

- **Worldwide reach:** American Express is a true global brand providing you with opportunities to reach over 78 million valuable customers through your partnership with Selects
- **High spending customers:** Research on the premium lifestyle of American Express Cardmembers reveals their affinity for high-end brands. Since Selects is a core benefit to their Card, they trust American Express to single out the best offers for them
- **Zero Cost:** As a merchant partner of Selects you can reach our Cardmembers through these channels:
 - **Selects** - An online marketing platform for merchant partners based in the Middle East and North Africa to promote their offers in travel and leisure, shopping and dining. Participation is free, provided an exclusive offer is included for American Express Cardmembers
 - **Promotional Cardmember Statement Messages** - These are messages that Cardmembers receive on their monthly statements communicating exclusive offers and Cardmember information. As space is limited only the best offer nominations will be promoted



selects AMERICAN EXPRESS
THE WORLD OFFERS. WE SELECT. YOU ENJOY.

Did you know?

- On average, American Express Cardmembers have a family income that is 66% higher than the income of competitive Cardholders
- They are 59% more likely to take 3 holidays a year. They also take more expensive holidays than non American Express Cardmembers, spending an average 46% more on purchases during their holiday
- They are 113% more likely to have stayed in a hotel on their last holiday
- They are 98% more likely to have used car hire in the last 12 months
- They are two and a half times more likely to dine out in a restaurant during the evening more than once a week
- They are 68% more likely to buy something they like without any price consideration
- American Express Cardmembers are 31% more likely to buy new clothes every season in comparison to the average Credit Cardholder

Source: Target Group Index (TGI) and American Express PVP Research

JOIN THESE MERCHANTS WHO HAVE ALREADY BECOME SELECTS PARTNERS

Jumeirah	Radisson SAS	AVIS
The Ritz Carlton	Rotana Hotel	Budget
InterContinental	Qatar Airways	Tiffany & Co.
Starwood	Virgin Atlantic Airways	Piaget
Hyatt	National Car Rental	Escada
Hilton	Europcar	S.T. Dupont

For more information on how to participate in the Selects programme, contact your local American Express office.

Are you visible?

American Express Research proves that:

- 74% of Cardmembers look for the American Express sign on the door of the establishment or once inside, when they go to pay
- 48% of Cardmembers agree they are more loyal to merchants that accept American Express
- 23% of Cardmembers would spend less if a merchant had discouraged them from using the American Express Card
- 21% of Cardmembers would no longer shop at a merchant that discouraged them from using the American Express Card

American Express promotional material is available for free in a variety of shapes, sizes and formats. For these and any other stationery requirements, please contact your local American Express office.



Circular Revolving Open-Closed sign
Specs: 165mm diameter,
item CAM2085



Etched Glass Sticker
Specs: 100 X 100mm,
item CAM2077



Push-Pull Sticker
Specs: 128 x 95mm,
item CAM2075



Till Sticker
Specs: 50 x 50mm,
item CAM2074



Acrylic Stand
Specs: 75 x 80 x 40mm,
item CAM2071



Authorisation Sticker
Specs: 80 x 30mm,
item CAM2196



Billholder
Specs: 209 x 147mm,
item CAM2101



Reserved Tent Stand
Specs: 40 x 121mm,
item CAM2088



No Smoking Tent Stand
Specs: 40 x 121mm,
item CAM2099



Membership Rewards = Bigger Profits

LIFE IS AN ADVENTURE.



What is Membership Rewards®?

Membership Rewards, the American Express award winning loyalty programme, is continually being enhanced with new partners and promotions. This ensures that our Cardmembers insist on using the Card as often as possible whenever and wherever they are, to build up their reward points.

This is good news for our merchant partners, who accept the Card in their establishments, as well as those who have taken advantage to join the programme as a Membership Rewards redemption partner.

Membership Rewards is now in its 16th year and continues to evolve and drive incremental spend to our merchant partners through our high spending Cardmembers. It is the largest Card based rewards programme in the world with over 15 million enrollees in 50 countries.

Why do our Cardmembers like the programme so much?

Cardmembers have grown to rely on the Membership Rewards programme which gives them one point for virtually every US dollar spent. Since there is no limit to the number of points Cardmembers can earn and no validity on the lifetime of points, it provides a continuous way for them to experience lifestyle rewards from the finest names in travel, shopping, car rental and more. For our well traveled Cardmembers, Membership Rewards points can even be transferred to the frequent flyer/guest programmes of our hotel and airline partners.

What are the benefits to our partners?

Of all American Express Cardmembers, those enrolled in Membership Rewards represent the vast majority of our highest spending customers worldwide.

Annually, they spend over 4 times more than other cardholders. In addition:

- 50% of the Membership Rewards enrollee base has over 10 years tenure with American Express
- 46% of enrollees are more likely to use a partner that participates in Membership Rewards than one that does not
- 38% of the Membership Rewards programme enrollees say they have a more positive opinion of partners that participate in the Membership Rewards programme than partners that do not

Source: Target Group Index



New Partners

Recent partner additions to the Membership Rewards programme include:

RCI – core business is Exchange Vacations at more than 3,700 resorts in 101 countries. Cardmembers are now able to redeem points to stay at any of these properties at the same rate as RCI members

National Car Rental - operates in over 3,000 locations around the world. Cardmembers can now benefit from free Emerald Club membership plus they will earn 10 Bonus Membership Rewards points for every dollar spent, when booking car hire in select Middle East countries.

For further information on the Membership Rewards programme, visit www.americanexpress.com.bh





Travel and City Benefits

Constantly looking at ways to increase the number of high spending American Express Cardmembers shopping at merchants in the UAE and across the Middle East, the new version of the co-branded premium Credit Card from American Express and Dubai Duty Free was launched in the UAE, earlier this year.

The Dubai Duty Free American Express Card sports a sleek and modern design, an embedded smart chip to ensure transaction security, great rewards and the best of shopping, entertainment, sports, dining and travel experiences to meet the lifestyle requirements of UAE's cosmopolitan residents.

The Card includes special rates at the First, Business and Marhaba lounges and Marhaba services at the Dubai International Airport; more chances to win in Dubai Duty Free's Millennium Millionaire and the Finest Surprise luxury draws, exclusive access to top Dubai events; and exclusive American Express Selects offers.

These enhanced features are in addition to the core benefit of 10% discount on a wide range of products at Dubai Duty Free and the exclusive offers and discounts of up to 40% at their world class retail, dining and lifestyle partners across the city.



Clear Blue Value



Keeping pace with the fast changing lifestyle of Cardmembers, 'Blue' was revamped at the beginning of 2007, with added benefits and greater every day value for Cardmembers. The new Card is increasingly customised for the forward thinking, optimistic and young-minded individuals who seek prestige as well as good value. Sporting a new translucent design, embedded smart chip, new Value Back and Cash Back programmes, new 'Blue' was re-launched in Bahrain as well as being introduced into the Qatar and Jordan markets.

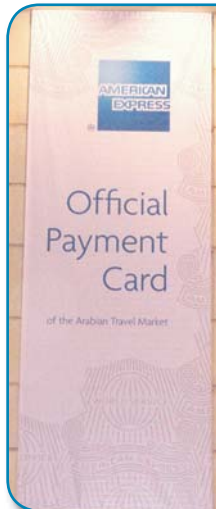
For you, our merchant partners, this means that Blue Cardmembers will be paying with American Express for a wider range of everyday purchases such as supermarkets and utility bill payments as well as for travel and entertainment. As seekers of a value driven lifestyle, Blue Cardmembers can be a profitable and loyal segment of customers to attract to your establishment. With a strong integrated marketing and communications campaign, we have created a buzz in the marketplace for Blue. The essence of the Card's transparent and clear value offerings are captured in the creative campaign with the message "Clearly Blue is for you".

Gulf Bank Partnership



Gulf Bank and American Express have joined forces to offer co-branded American Express Cards in Kuwait. As part of the agreement, American Express is issuing the US Dollar denominated Gold Credit Card and managing the credit operations and customer service, while Gulf Bank is marketing and distributing the American Express Cards through the Bank's ever expanding branch network across Kuwait.

In addition, all American Express Cardmembers in Kuwait will be able to settle their monthly Card statements at any Gulf Bank branch as well as being able to withdraw cash from any of Gulf Bank's 66 ATMs and five drive-through ATMs in Kuwait on a 24 hours basis; which reflects the American Express commitment to creating convenient, value added services for its Cardmembers.



American Express was again one of the major sponsors of this year's Arabian Travel Market (ATM) held in Dubai from 1st-4th May .

The sponsorship, which is part of a multi-year deal with Reed International, the organisers of the ATM, reflects the importance placed by American Express on the development of the travel industry within the region. The ATM is seen by American Express as a great opportunity to network with key decision makers within the industry and to discuss sales and marketing plans with our local, regional and global partners who attend the event in ever increasing numbers.

The 2007 ATM has built upon the success story of the past few years and will continue to grow in importance on the world travel market stage.



Unlocking Travel Potential

With over 70% of Fortune 500 companies using the American Express Corporate Card for all of their travel and entertainment spend, it is little wonder why an increasing number of Travel Agents across the region are seeing the benefits of accepting the Card.

American Express 100% total expense management means more than booking flights and reserving hotel rooms, it means uncovering hidden savings, negotiating consistently low rates, providing management information and insight and supporting Cardmembers virtually anywhere in the world.

The security and payment guarantees associated with the acceptance of the Card, make it an essential tool for the travel industry to help expand customer relationships. The advantages associated with the American Express Corporate Travel Account include:

- Ability to provide additional solutions to clients
- Reduction in receivables management
- Increased cash flow

American Express has the industry influence, technical capabilities and sourcing expertise to help deliver savings to corporations across 100% of their travel programme expenses. American Express Business Travel can provide corporations with greater control over their travel budget through detailed globally integrated online reporting, the ability to monitor travellers activities from start to finish and enforcing policy compliance.

Benefits at a glance:

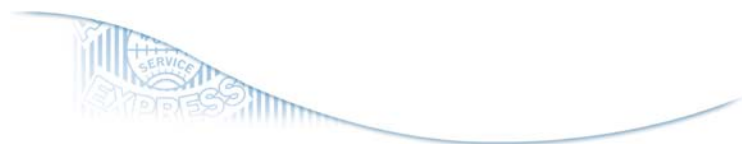
- Integrated Expense Management Solution
- MIS and Global Network
- World Class Loyalty Programmes
- Travel Insurance
- High Quality Customer Service



70% of The Fortune 500 Corporations use our expense management solutions



American Express partners with Travel Agents throughout the region and can help corporations establish an end-to-end expense management programme that will help leverage 100% of their travel spend and gain the greatest return on T&E investment, clearly highlighting "Value through Partnership".



On the Move



Across the MENA region, American Express is on the move – literally! Our Egypt, Jordan and Qatar offices have recently relocated to better and larger premises to keep up with our ever increasing growth in the region and to strengthen our operations and offerings on the ground.

The opening of these new offices confirms our commitment to the region and comes as a result of the company's strategic focus on increasing the number of Cardmembers as well as the acceptance of American Express Cards across all industry sectors.

The rapid growth of our merchant network reflects the tangible, high value and long term benefits that American Express brings to our partners. With the upgrading of our offices you will be able to receive more focused and even higher standards of services from our expanded on the ground presence. We are confident that these moves are only the start of bigger and better things to come.

Contacts

Country	Office Address	Authorisations	Stationery Supplies	General Enquiries	Fax No.
Algeria	All Enquiries via Casablanca Office			(+212) 22 203552/40	(+212) 22 203582
Bahrain	Ground Floor Al Moayyed Tower Al Seef District, Manama	17557700	17557714/15	17557777	17557800
Egypt	City Stars Complex Star Capital 8 - Office #2 Heliopolis, Cairo	(02) 24801540	(02) 24801510	(02) 24801510	(02) 24801515
Jordan	Al-Waseem Center Abedalhameed Sharaf St Shemesani, Amman	(06) 5205005	(06) 5205000 Ext.2	(06) 5205000 Ext.2	(06) 5205090
Kuwait	Saihiya Commercial Complex Gate #1, Mezzanine 2 Safat	2414414	2594458	2594458	2492347
Lebanon	Al Borj Bldg (An Nahar) Al Borj Square Beirut	(01) 977833	(01) 977834/7/40	(01) 977834/7/40	(01) 977841
Libya	All Enquiries via Tunisia Office			(+216) 71 960738	(+216) 71 961575
Morocco					
Casablanca Office	Schwartz Amex Representative 2, Avenue Hassan Souktani 4th Floor Apt 10, Casablanca	(022) 437437/5	(022) 203552/40/58	(022) 203552/40/58	(022) 203582
Marrakech office	Schwartz Amex Representative 22, Rue Moulay Ali Cherif Residence Nadia - Guleiz Marrakech	(022) 437437/5	(024) 437469	(024) 437469	(024) 430960
Oman	c/o Zahara Travel & Service Bureau Al Khuwair Muscat	24692671/4	24400870	24400870	24400806
Qatar	Al Mirqab Complex Salwa Road Doha	4440770	4556888	4556888	4556889
Syria	K Abou Shaar Group Sudan Airways Building 2 Al Mutanabi St, Damascus	(011) 2451399	(011) 2217813	(011) 2217813	(011) 2217938
Tunisia	6 Rue du Lac Toba 1053 Les Berges du Lac Tunis	(71) 1840680	(71) 1960738	(71) 1960738	(71) 1961575
UAE					
Dubai	Ground Floor - Hermitage Building Zabeel Road next to General Post Office Karama, Dubai	8000 9730003/4	(04) 4082215	(04) 4082210	(04) 3354077
Abu Dhabi	Ground Floor - Al Masood Travel Building Al Nasr Street Abu Dhabi	8000 9730003/4	(02) 6213045	(02) 6213045	(02) 6314692

We hope you have enjoyed this first edition of 'Express Update'. At American Express we continuously strive to add that extra value to our products and services. We appreciate any comments and suggestions you may have. Please email us at Express.Update@americanexpress.com.bh