

# Purchasing Card Best Practices for University Procurement

As universities continue to institute new purchasing card programs or enhance existing ones, JPMorgan Chase surveyed dozens of its University purchasing card customers to share some of the industry's Best Practices.

As a result of implementing purchasing card programs, department heads are spending less time authorizing, tracking and processing purchase data. Financial administrators are reducing overhead and significantly minimizing administrative tasks so staff can focus on other responsibilities, improving payment flexibility, and making purchasing more efficient at all levels of their institution.

Best Practices shared by the University community include the following:

1. Secure buy-in and involvement from upper management
2. Engage key influencers for your program rollout and continued expansion
3. Increase visibility into spend with online payment management tools
4. Use technology to help better leverage vendor discounts and then mandate usage of certain vendors
5. Seek best-in-class technologies that enable integration of all purchasing activity
6. Partner with a card issuer that takes a consultative approach to ramping up and growing your program
7. Establish effective controls and business rules
8. Mandate training for cardholders and card managers before a purchasing card is released
9. Build a strong Web presence for your card program administration
10. Communicate with cardholders effectively by using different channels
11. Establish ghost card programs with high-volume vendors
12. Use purchasing cards for other niche-supplier payments
13. Network with other purchasing professionals to gain insight into their challenges, successes and learning experiences

## Purchasing Card Best Practices for University Procurement

Higher-educational institutions of all sizes are being asked to do more with less. With enrollments skyrocketing, state schools are fighting the impact of state budget gaps, while private institutions face shrinking endowments. The results are staff reductions and hiring freezes that must be offset by increased efficiency. As boards of trustees increase budget scrutiny, they must examine every possibility to reduce expenses, while maintaining the highest levels of academic achievement.

The procurement process is an effective area for colleges and universities to target for cost savings opportunities. Traditional purchase orders (POs), invoices, management approvals and manual accounts payable (A/P) entries are cumbersome, paper-driven processes that can delay deliveries and drive internal administrative costs through the roof.

Purchasing card programs simplify existing purchasing processes with an effective complement to any institution's procurement strategy. Many manual tasks associated with traditional POs are eliminated, while delivery of goods can be accelerated by as much as six days. An efficient card program can be the catalyst to help meet budget objectives and better manage spending for all departments and campuses.

As a result of implementing a purchasing card program, department heads are spending less time authorizing, tracking and processing purchase data. Financial administrators are reducing overhead and significantly minimizing administrative tasks so staff can focus on other responsibilities, improving payment flexibility, and making purchasing more efficient at all levels of an institution.

JPMorgan Chase surveyed dozens of its purchasing card customers to gather and share some of the Best Practices as universities continue to institute new programs or enhance existing ones.

## Best Practices

### 1. Secure buy-in and involvement from upper management.

Demonstrate cost and time benefits to senior management by providing insight into current spending and man-hours devoted to purchasing and P/O processing. Communicate and provide insight into the financial successes seen by other universities that have established purchasing card programs. In addition, assemble a strong implementation team.

The University of Pennsylvania saw the use of a purchasing card as its first step toward administrative excellence in financial applications. According to Ralph Maier, director of purchasing services, the purchasing card was at the forefront of the university's process redesign and now is complimentary to their larger purchasing application. The purchasing card is now a complementary buying method to the electronic purchasing system as the university seeks to totally eliminate of paper checks and invoices.

Prior to establishing its card program, the University of Pennsylvania established a cross-divisional implementation team consisting of Maier's counterparts in IT and in the Comptroller's office with the ultimate goal of sharing ownership of all procure-to-pay initiatives. By setting levels of expectations, responsibility and accountability on the front and back-end, the university prevented unnecessary finger pointing or shifting of workload as the project progressed. Today, approximately \$21 million of the university's \$1 billion annual spend is applied to the purchasing card. Maier and his team continue to strategize on opportunities to better leverage the card.

*Approximately \$21 million of the University of Pennsylvania's \$1 billion annual spend is applied to the purchasing card. The University continues to strategize on opportunities to better leverage the card.*

### 2. Secure key influencers for your program rollout and continued expansion.

Whether you are launching a pilot program or building on an existing initiative, the involvement of influential university personnel is critical.

According to Anna Griffin, associate director of university procurement at Drexel University suggests gathering a sampling of the most influential people on campus to be part of the pilot group. If this pilot group finds that purchasing cards are easy to use and allow you to operate with greater controls, they will help advertise the success of the program by word of mouth. News of Drexel's purchasing card successes even spread beyond campus as Griffin found that counterparts at other universities or private businesses who approached her to learn more about the program.

Arizona State University created a purchasing card advisory board that comprises 15 influential users from across the university, including representatives from the services, education, athletics and research departments. According to Phil Carrano, purchasing card coordinator for ASU, said the team meets on a quarterly basis with a representative from its card issuer to provide feedback and strategize on how to better grow and leverage

the program. The program is likely to succeed as users throughout the university share their experiences. In addition, regular face-to-face involvement with top end-users provide the university with another avenue to communicate and educate program or policy changes and improvements, resulting in decreased misuse of the card. In 2006, ASU captured approximately \$35 million in total purchasing card spend, a 30 percent increase from the previous year. The program logged more than 113,000 transactions in 2006.

In February 2006, the University of Pennsylvania launched a Procure-to-Pay (P2P) Enhancement Project, which was led by Purchasing Services in collaboration with the Office of the Comptroller, and Information and Systems Computing. Comprising approximately 35 P2P senior-level business administrators from every school and center on campus, the initiative built on past successes to further enhance the campus-wide purchase-to-pay process. The project identifies opportunities to increase process efficiencies, provide new and enhanced training and support tools for system users, maximize strategic supplier relationships, ensure compliance with internal requisitioning requirements and identify new cost containment opportunities.  
<http://www.purchasing.upenn.edu/buytools/p2p.php>

*Best-in-class procurement operations use purchasing card systems that enable cardholders to view their transactions online, while allowing card program managers to access card usage reports and run necessary queries electronically. – The Aberdeen Group*

### 3. Increase visibility into spend with online payment management tools.

Universities should seek to partner with an issuer that provides a Web-based commercial payment management tool designed to support all areas of card program management from a single, easy-to-use application. Program administrators can reduce the time spent authorizing, tracking, evaluating and processing payments, plus benefit from greater reporting capabilities, flexibility and program controls.

Best-in-class systems provide the following capabilities from a single online system:

- Administrators can order new cards, modify spend limits, instantly adjust cardholder profiles and monitor corporate compliance
- Administrators gain access to a variety of standard reports that provide the transaction detail needed, including vendor analysis, unusual activity analysis, hotel spending, car rental spending and delinquency reports
- Cardholders can view their statements and authorizations in real time
- The system can replicate complex accounting rules and can fully integrate with a company's existing general ledger, enterprise resource planning (ERP) or other accounting system without additional data entry.

According to Beth Enslow, senior vice president of enterprise research and supply chain practice leader for Aberdeen Group, best-in-class procurement operations use purchasing card systems that enable cardholders to view their transactions online, while allowing card program managers to access card

usage reports and run necessary queries electronically. This lets managers effectively monitor card usage in real time and increases responsibility among card users now that their behavior is visible to their managers at all times.

Increased visibility can also result in additional savings. According to Enslow, the next level of savings comes from increased visibility into spend. When moving to more automated transaction reporting and processing, universities can significantly reduce maverick spend, eliminate unauthorized employee purchases, and monitor transactions almost in real time. For example, as a result of moving eligible spend under a purchasing card, a company can save approximately 1.2 percent in financial fees, reduce maverick spending by 6.4 percent, and reduce the supplier base by an average of 8.5 percent. These “soft benefits” have a tangible financial value, which depends on the volume of spend for each particular university.

#### **Case study: Drexel University**

Drexel University implemented a purchasing card program to gain control over its spending and streamline its entire procurement process. Designed to reduce the time and costs associated with managing the university’s high-volume, lower-dollar purchases, Drexel has shifted an estimated 95 percent of its total procurement spend to the card and reduced PO requisitions by 80 percent within three years. When Drexel first implemented the purchasing card program, the university was managing more than 12,000 purchase orders a year. Three years later, that number dropped to 2,700.

*Drexel University shifted an estimated 95 percent of its total procurement spend to purchasing cards and reduced purchase order requisitions by 80 percent within three years.*

More than 700 staff members use Drexel’s purchasing card, including department heads, admissions, athletics and institutional advancement personnel, plus grant holders and researchers. The card facilitates the purchase of approved items valued under \$2000 without the need to use petty cash, purchase orders or out-of-pocket funds.

Drexel has significantly improved spending control and visibility by using JPMorgan Chase’s online PaymentNet® management tool. Anna Griffin of Drexel University offers: “Due to the robustness of JPMorgan Chase’s PaymentNet system, we are able to store, manage and retrieve actionable data that helps us continually strengthen our procure-to-pay operations. As we manage more than several thousand different accounting codes, JPMorgan Chase provides us with better insight into spending trends, resulting in real-time analysis of departmental budgets and greater negotiating power with our vendors.”

#### 4. Use technology to help better leverage vendor discounts and then mandate usage of certain vendors.

Comprehensive reporting provides a wealth of data that can change the way you conduct business. Reports can be generated to help track spending with approved vendors. This data can be used as powerful evidence during vendor negotiations. The result: reduced costs from preferred merchants. Vendor relationships are better negotiated, more profitable and longer lasting.

According to the Aberdeen Group, best-in-class operations most often have a defined purchasing card use policy that mandates card use for targeted categories. Such a policy results in better control of spending. Once preferred vendor relations are in place, promote those vendors with your user base.

Arizona State University advertises a list of preferred vendors on its internal procurement Web site. Phil Carrano, purchasing card coordinator for ASU explains: "Our cardholders have access to our vendors' Web sites and our negotiated contract pricing. Instead of spending the time and energy to work through the P/O process, cardholders can order an item online without prior approval and have the item delivered more quickly. For example, a computer ordered through the P/O process may take three weeks to arrive, while one bought online with a purchasing card can take only five days."

*Arizona State University advertises a list of preferred vendors on its internal procure web site, while Yale University has established an online Buying Guide that highlights best approaches to take when buying certain goods.*

Yale University has established an online Buying Guide that highlights best approaches to take when buying certain goods. Segmented into various categories of spending, the guide promotes categories and vendors where purchasing card usage is the best "buy-pay approach." For example, business meals, car rentals and equipment maintenance should be procured using purchasing cards, while other categories are best procured using contracts via other buying approaches. ([http://www.yale.edu/procurement/buying\\_guide/buying\\_guide\\_complete.html](http://www.yale.edu/procurement/buying_guide/buying_guide_complete.html)).

Scott Lucker, purchasing card manager, said Yale offers a university-wide initiative to help the environment by promoting a greener campus. In partnership with several strategic vendors, Yale Procurement identified products that are made with recycled content, have reduced packaging, are energy efficient and do not create hazardous waste. Cardholders and other purchasers are encouraged to purchase these suggested goods and services for research and education ([http://www.yale.edu/procurement/green\\_purchase.html](http://www.yale.edu/procurement/green_purchase.html)).

#### 5. Seek best-in-class technologies that enable integration of all purchasing activity.

An institution's over-extended staff should not be weighed down by multiple purchase processes and reporting systems. Separate reporting programs for procurement, travel and fleet can be costly practices. New, more efficient platforms consolidate the administration of all expense reporting into a single system. These applications are as important to automation and expense

control as the financial institution and card itself.

According to Beth Enslow of the Aberdeen Group, best-in-class companies are reconciling purchasing card transactions online. An electronic card management system is integrated into the company's general ledger, thereby allowing accounting entries for card transactions to be automatically fed into the enterprise-wide financial reporting system. This ensures the highest level of spend visibility and control over card program activity.

For any expense management solution to succeed, technology needs to be integrated into a broader financial supply chain. Leading applications can be integrated with existing Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems to offer a more complete picture of purchasing with details such as travel expenses as well as faculty and staff spending. With older software, changes to the general ledger required a manual rewrite of data files. Now software can be tailored to automate many administrative tasks from monitoring and reporting to spending analysis. These increasingly versatile platforms minimize manual intervention and back-office processes, saving valuable time, money and resources. Today's card management systems take financial reporting to new heights. Schools not only can retrieve basic information, but they also can manage more complex spending programs within the same system.

#### **6. Partner with a provider that takes a consultative approach to ramping up and growing your program.**

While some providers take a hands-off approach once implementation is complete, others serve as partners that are available to help your program succeed. A consultative approach relies on a clear understanding of an institution's objectives, processes and philosophy. Established providers invest in a service model that not only meets client-specific objectives, but also leverages valuable client feedback to further shape their service model and technology offering.

Look for a purchasing card issuer that can custom tailor training to help launch a new program or enhance an existing one. Training programs could include (a) cardholder training to facilitate the understanding of policies and procedures to ensure maximum cardholder usage within proper guidelines or (b) program administrator training to provide guidance, useful tools and resources, thereby enabling administrators to effectively manage and control the program. Some providers will even help you write policies and procedures.

In addition to training sessions, seek out a purchasing card provider with industry subject matter experts who are available to conduct a comprehensive quantitative analysis and qualitative review of your existing program. This valuable team will recommend Best Practice methodologies to address your needs and be available to help deploy agreed-upon next steps.

*Find a purchasing card issuer that will help your program succeed. A partner with a consultative approach can custom tailor training or perform quantitative analysis to help launch a new program or enhance an existing one.*

**Case Study: Top 20 Public Research Institution**

One of the nation's top 20 public research institutions had deployed a purchasing card program that reached a plateau of approximately \$18 million in procurement spend. Knowing that the program could be better leveraged, the university switched to a new provider, JPMorgan Chase, and worked with the company's Expansion Services team to design a stronger program. A number of initiatives were rolled out to help grow the program from \$18 million to approximately \$100 million within two years. These initiatives included the following:

- **A quantitative analysis in which JPMorgan Chase reviewed the university's complete vendor list and a year's worth of transaction level A/P data files.** Which suppliers were accepting the purchasing card? What was being purchased? How much was being spent within the different categories? Who was contributing to the spend? Which cost centers and departments were spending the most? This data provided invaluable insight and direction for building the program growth recommendations.
- **Communicating and strategizing at a two-day off-site meeting with a broad network of university stakeholders.** Some in attendance resisted using the purchasing card and these meetings provided a forum for all to share their concerns. Through educational dialogue, these shareholders learned about the advantages of the program, that they would not lose control of their spending as a result of using the card and that they would have better control over rogue or rampant spending.
- **A review of existing policies** in which some restrictions and guidelines were modified, with university approval, to broaden or open up previously restricted merchant category codes or commodities and raise limits for certain types of spending. As a result of policy changes, purchasing cards are now being used by approved cardholders to procure lower-end furniture and construction materials. Central travel and car rental was moved from the university's Travel & Entertainment card to its purchasing card. Cell phone and telecommunications spending are now applied to the purchasing card.
- **A campaign to educate suppliers.** Some departments were not using their purchasing cards because vendors were not forwarding receipts properly. Suppliers adjusted their practices to ensure that receipts were correctly delivered.
- **A campaign was conducted to influence departments and cardholders to use the university's network of preferred vendors.** Top vendors are highlighted in "Supplier of the Week" and "Supplier of the Month" communications that are delivered to all cardholders. Ongoing reviews of departments or cardholders that are not using the card properly are included in distributed lost opportunity/leakage reports. These users are then further educated about proper processes and procedures.

*The top 20 public research institution grew its existing card program from \$18 million to approximately \$100 million within a two-year period by engaging the Expansion Services team at JPMorgan Chase.*

## 7. Establish effective controls and business rules.

The Aberdeen Group reports that the fear of inappropriate card usage is the primary reason why purchasing card programs are not implemented. Universities are concerned that spending will run rampant with few controls in place. While the implementation of an online payment system, as described above, works to address the issue of rogue spending, universities also are putting other control measures in place. Here are some highlights:

- George Washington University's program has grown from 30 cards and \$700,000 in spend to 800 cards and \$25 million in spend over a six year period. The university promotes the card as the preferred method of obtaining goods and services under \$2500. According to George Bedford, assistant director of supply chain, every dollar of spend is audited once a month. To guard against card abuse, the university's payroll list is run against the list of purchasing cardholders once a week. If discrepancies are found, the status of the cardholder is investigated, often resulting in a terminated account. If a cardholder changes departments, he or she needs to reapply for a new card. Restrictions on the card include prizes, gifts, flowers, research animals, leases or personal purchases.  
<http://www.gwu.edu/~supchn/pcard.htm>
- As of 2006, Yale University issued 4,100 purchasing cards and tallied 175,000 transactions and \$45 million in card spend. The Yale purchasing card program segments its user base into two distinct groups, providing greater control over usage and spending limits. Individual Cards are issued only to university faculty, postdoctoral associates and staff who are authorized to purchase travel-related services or miscellaneous small-dollar supplies and limited services, up to pre-approved limits. Department Cards are issued to a primary user within a department and can be used to pay for business meals, food or catering expenses, miscellaneous supplies, air and rail travel, and hotel/conference deposits to secure space. In general, Individual Cards have a \$2000 limit, while Department Cards have \$500 and \$1000 limits.
- Scott Lucker of Yale University says that reviews of both desktop and on-site purchasing card documentation are performed regularly by the university's associate director of procurement quality assurance, resulting in year-over-year compliance performance improvement since the position was created.
- Texas Woman's University blocks certain types of vendors from procurement card use. Vendors are assigned a Merchant Category Code (MCC) based on the type of business they operate. The purchasing card program restricts usage with certain type of supplier and merchants. Even though a vendor may sell something, cardholders may not be authorized to buy it. Examples of prohibited MCCs include 4121 – taxicabs and limos; 4722 – travel agencies; 7298 – health and beauty spas; and 7011 – lodging hotels, motels

and resorts. Restricted purchases include memberships, temporary personnel, utilities, telephone services and equipment, and tips and gratuities.

- The University of Michigan highlights an extensive list of restricted commodities on its Web site. They also include tips and general guidelines for Best Practices. For example, put a collection process in place when cardholders leave the university or advise cardholders to black out the card number when it is displayed completely on a receipt. <http://www.procurement.umich.edu/pcards.html>

#### **8. Mandate training for cardholders and card managers before a purchasing card is released.**

Education and compliance are critical. Once an application is received and processed, applicants should be notified of future purchasing card training classes. At George Washington University, card applicants must first receive signed approval from two senior level executives before an enrollment form is submitted. The card applicant will not receive a card until he or she participates in a face-to-face one hour training class with the university's assistant director of supply chain. At Yale University, training also is mandatory. While one-on-one training is offered to the university's deans and other senior level staffers, the university's Learning Center offers in-class training twice a month to cardholders. Online training also is available (<http://www.yale.edu/procurement/training.html>).

#### **9. Build a strong Web presence for your card program administration.**

To help promote your initiative and save time answering participants' questions, establish a Web site dedicated to your purchasing card program. Include an overview of the program; detailed information on policies, procedures and restrictions; enrollment instructions; cardholder responsibilities; FAQs; and a list of Procurement department contacts.

Examples of best-in-class purchasing card Web pages include the following:

- Drexel University – <http://www.drexel.edu/procurement/card/>
- The University of Pennsylvania -- <http://www.purchasing.upenn.edu/buytools/card.php>
- Vanderbilt University -- <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/procurement/pcard/default.shtml>
- Yale University -- <http://www.yale.edu/procurement/ec/index.html>

## 10. Communicate with cardholders effectively by using different channels.

Best-in-class universities also look beyond the Internet when publicizing their purchasing card program. In addition to promoting its program online, Arizona State University has produced a monthly newsletter since 1993 titled “PCUTS – Purchasing Card User Tips”. Examples of topics addressed in the publication include updated policies and procedures, FAQs, lists of restricted items, tips on fraud prevention, training class schedules, and other reminders (<http://www.asu.edu/purchasing/pdf/currentissue.pdf>). The University of Michigan issues a monthly purchasing card newsletter containing helpful hints and reminders (<http://www.procurement.umich.edu/pcardnews.html>). Purchasing card news is often included in “The Bottom Line”, a quarterly newsletter published by the University of Pennsylvania’s Division of Finance ([http://www.finance.upenn.edu/ftd/Bottom\\_Line/Sep06.pdf](http://www.finance.upenn.edu/ftd/Bottom_Line/Sep06.pdf)).

*In 2005, George Washington University placed approximately 45 percent of its procurement spend on ghost card accounts.*

## 11. Establish ghost card programs with high-volume vendors.

Several universities have streamlined their procure-to-pay process by negotiating discounts in advance with major vendors and assigning those vendors ghost card account numbers. A ghost card is an account number assigned to a specific vendor for high volume purchases with larger spending limits. All ghost card charges are initiated by the vendor and an individual employee account is not used. Ghost cards allow purchasing card program managers to track and reconcile activity on the account without putting plastic in the hands of every single buyer in the organization, thus delivering additional controls over the use of purchasing cards.

George Bedford of George Washington University saw increased payment efficiency and control as a result of establishing ghost card accounts with major vendors, such as providers of office supplies, uniforms and cleaning supplies, and travel services. In fiscal year 2005, approximately \$9 million of the university’s \$20 million procurement spend was placed on ghost card accounts. An example of enhanced control of spending: When ordering goods, George Washington University cardholders must go to a supplier’s storefront Web site and pass through a series of security checks before items can be acquired. For example, each cardholder is assigned a login, allowing the user to purchase only those goods that are cleared for his or her profile, and all shipments must be made to a university address. In addition, to prevent misuse, Bedford once a month runs his list of approved ghost card users against the university’s most current payroll list. If an employee has left the university, that name is removed from the ghost card account.

## 12. Use purchasing cards for other niche-supplier payments.

In addition to using purchasing cards to cover traditional costs such as office supplies, travel services or cleaning supplies, look at shifting other major spending areas to the card to capitalize on further time and cost savings.

Ralph Maier of the University of Pennsylvania continually strives to enhance his existing program and is looking to add several niche suppliers to the school's purchasing card roster, especially in categories where low-dollar, high-volume transactions occur. For example, the university currently spends approximately \$65 million annually on utility payments. These payments are now processed through paper-based internal disbursement requests and do not go through the eProcurement system, resulting in additional administrative effort. Another niche area where he is already using the purchasing card is for the purchase of research animals. Although research animal purchases are not conducive to the PO environment, Maier consolidated purchases from his six suppliers through the university's large animal resource center where all such orders are placed on one card.

### **13. Network with other purchasing professionals to gain insight into their challenges, successes and learning experiences.**

In addition to attending conferences sponsored by groups such as the National Association of Educational Procurement and the National Association of College & University Business Officers, many university procurement officers are finding valuable connections in their own back yard. For example, 14 universities in Pennsylvania, including Drexel University and the University of Pennsylvania, meet regularly as part of the Philadelphia Area Collegiate Cooperative (<http://www.purchasing.upenn.edu/pacc/index.php>), a cooperative purchasing organization comprising representatives of local higher-education purchasing officers who incorporate coop Best Practices to leverage combined buying power for its member institutions. Perhaps such an organization exists in your state.

In addition to local groups, some universities have joined the Ivy League Purchasing Group (<http://www.purchasing.upenn.edu/about/ilpg.php>) to share purchasing strategies and knowledge, to identify and investigate new purchasing related technologies and to explore the possibility of leveraging combined purchasing volume while supporting individual-school business requirements. Originally limited to the Ivy League schools, the Ivy League Purchasing Group has since expanded its membership to include other colleges throughout the country. Among its members are Brown, Stanford, Tufts, Yale and the University of Pennsylvania.

Finally, seek to partner with a provider that hosts regular networking opportunities such as annual user conferences or user groups that meet weekly or monthly. Purchasing card providers want your input and feedback as they develop new offerings or strengthen existing solutions.

Ralph Maier of the University of Pennsylvania adds: "While we take great pride in our own work, we realize that we are not alone in the challenges we face. Our philosophy is to take a look at strategies, processes and techniques that other organizations have used. While we try to develop as many homegrown ideas and concepts as possible, we also complement what we have done with the best of what others are doing, thus making our deliverables much more

valuable to management and customers. There is clear value in looking at what other people are doing and not falling into a trap of thinking that only your ideas are the best ideas that would work. Networking helps validate business direction and philosophy and helps validate business decisions one way or another. It's always interesting to see how other organizations have approached similar opportunities or challenges. At the end of the day, we are evaluated for the results and capabilities we delivered. Of less importance is who came up with the idea."

## Summary

According to Hanover Research's report on Purchasing Practices in Higher Education, institutions are continually seeking ways to better manage purchasing and incorporate more efficient, cost-effective purchasing systems in order to save on both purchases and back-end support costs. Many institutions have found that a standardized, controlled purchasing system based on an institution's purchasing strategy is the best way to eliminate problematic purchasing like rogue spending or vendor partiality.

By following the Best Practices and innovative strategies shared by JPMorgan Chase's University customer base, higher-education institutions are better positioned to launch an effective purchasing card program, grow an existing one, accelerate efficiency and further overcome budget challenges.