

THROUGH THE EYES OF A

# NEWBIE

## Gift Card Program for Dummies

(I mean newbies)

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**Well, I'm a couple weeks into this job, and I've been asked to write an article about my perspective. Let me tell you, starting at ground level in the gift card space allows a unique perspective on exactly how this complex industry operates.**

“**This industry paints itself like a planetary system**”

Similar to a solar system, it seems that launching, running, and supporting a gift card program from the ground up includes a daunting number of details. Who would've thought there were so many card processors, printers, and other vendors to choose from? There are tasks to find employees (if you have the resources) that can help support, and sales channels to establish, grow, and support each year. However, at this point I can honestly say I'm still struggling to understand exactly what a “card processor” even does. Talk about information overload for the first couple weeks on the job! Thank goodness I have the master gift card geek as a mentor to keep me on track and educate me on the intricate details of this fascinating industry.

I am a visual processor, and as I start to understand things, this industry paints itself like a planetary system. Merchants, vendors, distributors, (and any of the others i've forgotten) take their place revolving around the sun, in this case,

the consumer. They each have their own course to ensure that the relationships move smoothly. Consumers go CRAZY over the convenient gifting that these cards allow. Their light shines down on all the activities the planets do, shaping their development, path, and structure.

The best part thus far has been the human connection. Our team works with so many stakeholders through the **Gift Card Network**, and we speak to so many of them by phone or digitally. The positive feedback and appreciation that radiate from each phone call or email is motivating me to work even harder and learn even faster. Since I am still very new, my insight on gift card trends in the market is geared more towards a consumer mindset still. My hope is that I will be able to slowly but surely transition to support the key players (or planets) that help keep the gift card galaxy run smoothly!