

The Latest on Current Financial Conditions Affecting Americans and What Lies Ahead



CompareCards Financial Forecast Report

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evolve²⁴



**FINANCIAL
INDUSTRY
ALERT**

In June 2015, more than 3.6 million conversations about personal finance were analyzed from various online mediums. Data was collected from social networking sites, blogs, forums, websites, TV, radio, magazines, and newspapers, to determine what consumers were talking about, what consumers care about, and emerging trends.

Discover what's new, what's changed, and where personal finance conversations are headed next.



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New Developments

Car Maintenance Questions

Car Maintenance Questions is an emerging topic this month, discussed 22,088 times in June.

CURRENT CONDITIONS: *Car Maintenance Questions*



VOLUME: 22,088

EMOTION SCORE: Medium

SENTIMENT: Positive

VELOCITY: Low

On average, this is a fairly positive topic, with many commenters on car forums having supportive commentary for one another as they seek to find out what is wrong with their car, and how they can cheaply and efficiently fix the problem.

VOLUME: TOTAL NUMBER OF DISCUSSIONS THAT TOOK PLACE.

EMOTION SCORE: THE POTENTIAL FOR THE ISSUE TO CHANGE BEHAVIOR.

SENTIMENT: THE AVERAGE VIEW OR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE TOPIC.

VELOCITY: HOW QUICKLY AN ISSUE IS ADVANCING.

CONSUMER IMPACT: The cost of transportation is a big sticking point for consumers. They need cars to get to work, school, the store, or even just to travel and get around (especially in the summer months, when road trips and vacations are on people's minds). However, Americans are also worried about savings, bringing many to seek car repair advice as opposed to buying a new vehicle.

DATA SAMPLE: "How much does it cost to get a vinyl top replaced? I thought one thread fairly recently had the price right around \$1,000. I'm sure it changes a lot by location but \$1,200 probably won't go very far if you need that vinyl top replaced."
CadillacForums.com, 6/1/2015

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The relatively high levels of emotion suggest that consumers may be looking to take action—settling for car repairs (especially at-home repairs) before going to a shop or buying new.

MEDIA ALERT

Highlight the saving potential of doing DIY repairs, or even preventative work on personal cars, such as replacing windshield wipers, regular oil changes, and checking fluid levels.

How To Prepare For These Conditions:

- [Credit Cards with Auto Protection](#)
- [Earn Rewards for Your Daily Commute](#)
- [When to Use Credit Cards for Automotive Expenses](#)
- [Lexus Pursuits Visa Rewards Card](#)

Vacation Planning and Pricing

Vacation Planning and Pricing is another emerging topic this month that was discussed 13,589 times in June.

CURRENT CONDITIONS: *Vacation Planning and Pricing*



VOLUME: 13,589

EMOTION SCORE: Low

SENTIMENT: Positive

VELOCITY: High


VOLUME: TOTAL NUMBER OF DISCUSSIONS THAT TOOK PLACE.

EMOTION SCORE: THE POTENTIAL FOR THE ISSUE TO CHANGE BEHAVIOR.

SENTIMENT: THE AVERAGE VIEW OR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE TOPIC.

VELOCITY: HOW QUICKLY AN ISSUE IS ADVANCING.

CONSUMER IMPACT: Discussions surrounding this topic have been generally positive, with consumers talking about not only wanting to get out and enjoy the weather, but to be able to do it on a budget.





BRAND IMPACT



DISNEY—Disney sees a neutral score in relation to vacation planning discussions. Though conversations around the company's parks are typically positive, there is some negativity from forum users claiming that Disney parks have become out of reach for the middle class consumer.

DATA SAMPLE:

“My family likes spending the day at public beaches, as opposed to staying at a resort or purchasing a day-pass at a beach club. This gives the family flexibility to come and go as we please and is by far the cheapest way to spend the day at the beach in Mexico.” Pinterest, 6/1/2015



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Consumers will have their eyes open for unique experiences that they can have for a discount, so they may be looking for free trip ideas, coupons, or travel discount websites that allow them to book their own vacations.

How To Prepare For These Conditions:

- [Earn Rewards for Summer Travel](#)
- [40% Off A Flight with Chase Ultimate Rewards](#)
- [How to Earn More Airline Miles with Dining Networks](#)
- [Use Credit Card Rewards to Make Travel Nearly Free](#)

Credit Card Inquiries–Billings & Accounts

Credit Card Inquiries–Billing & Accounts is another emerging topic this month that was discussed 2,679 times in June.

CURRENT CONDITIONS: *Billing & Accounts*



VOLUME: 2,679

EMOTION SCORE: Medium

SENTIMENT: Positive

VELOCITY: Low

VOLUME: TOTAL NUMBER OF DISCUSSIONS THAT TOOK PLACE.

EMOTION SCORE: THE POTENTIAL FOR THE ISSUE TO CHANGE BEHAVIOR.

SENTIMENT: THE AVERAGE VIEW OR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE TOPIC.

VELOCITY: HOW QUICKLY AN ISSUE IS ADVANCING.

CONSUMER IMPACT:

While this topic is more positive in nature with large amounts of content dedicated to informing consumers on how to pick a credit card that is best for them, more negative content focuses in on customer confusion with their bills and how to navigate the confusing world of APR's and interest.

For instance, one person in the personal finance sub-board of the popular site Reddit described their experience with Verizon, paying for internet, phone, and TV. Due to a snafu, they need to stop payments and have become concerned that their credit will be affected. Others on Yahoo! Answers search for help understanding what the differences are between a credit card and a debit card.

BRAND IMPACT



Exxon Mobil—Consumers report they enjoy using rewards credit cards. One of the most commonly reported rewards they enjoy are redeeming credit card rewards points for gift cards to Exxon Mobil gas stations.

Chase—Chase credit cards in particular are receiving praise for the rewards they offer to customers. Chase is also praised for rolling out chip-based debit cards that protect personal data.

DATA SAMPLE:

“I do not, however, understand APR, making payments, credit scores, penalties and the like. Like, can I link my credit card to a checking account so that I won't be late on payments?” Yahoo! Answers, 6/30/2015



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While there is blog content and news articles out there that already advise consumers on how to use credit and the best way to use credit lines in order to develop a good credit score, there are still leagues of consumers out there who are looking for more specific personalized advice. They would benefit from a hotline or online chat to ask questions and talk directly with credit experts for advice.

How To Prepare For These Conditions:

- [Credit Expert Q&A](#)
- [Credit FAQs](#)
- [Credit Concierge](#)
- [Understand Credit Card Interest](#)
- [What Determines Your Credit Score](#)
- Speak with a live Credit Specialist by calling (800) 747-3893

Personal Budget Discussions

Discussions around Personal Budgets is another emerging topic this month that was discussed 11,096 times in June.

CURRENT CONDITIONS: *Personal Budget Discussion*



VOLUME: 11,096

EMOTION SCORE: Low

SENTIMENT: Negative

VELOCITY: Low

VOLUME: TOTAL NUMBER OF DISCUSSIONS THAT TOOK PLACE.

EMOTION SCORE: THE POTENTIAL FOR THE ISSUE TO CHANGE BEHAVIOR.

SENTIMENT: THE AVERAGE VIEW OR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE TOPIC.

VELOCITY: HOW QUICKLY AN ISSUE IS ADVANCING.

CONSUMER IMPACT: Most of the comments are general statements about trying to make money and how money would improve their lives, with statements such as, "Make money, don't make money make you," and, "I'd dress nicer, but I don't have the money." Other comments seem to hone in more distinctly on their desire to save money for specific goals, with Twitter users saying they want to make money to spoil their girlfriends this summer, or go partying.

DATA SAMPLE:

“Ya’ll are leaving me broke though. I love spoiling my babies.” Twitter, 6/2/2015



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Millennials who use social media to express themselves are concerned with saving money to use on experiences as opposed to material things, like going out with friends or buying things for loved ones.

How To Prepare For These Conditions:

- [Smart Phone Apps for Debt Relief and Better Money Management](#)
- [Unexpected Effects of Poor Money Management](#)
- [26 Weeks to Save for Christmas](#)
- [How to Spend Less Dining Out](#)

Lack of Funds

A Lack of Funds is another emerging topic this month that was discussed 5,445 times in June.

CURRENT CONDITIONS: *Lack of Funds*



VOLUME: 5,445

EMOTION SCORE: Low

SENTIMENT: Negative

VELOCITY: Low

Conversations remain neutral and slightly negative, and is somewhat low in terms of emotion. This topic has the potential to change as the discussions evolve.

VOLUME: TOTAL NUMBER OF DISCUSSIONS THAT TOOK PLACE.

EMOTION SCORE: THE POTENTIAL FOR THE ISSUE TO CHANGE BEHAVIOR.

SENTIMENT: THE AVERAGE VIEW OR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE TOPIC.

VELOCITY: HOW QUICKLY AN ISSUE IS ADVANCING.

CONSUMER IMPACT:

The most emotional and negative discussions come from those who are describing their struggles to save money and their frustration with those they perceive as rich. One tweet describes “coasting” in their car so that they don’t run out of gas on the way to the bank. Another complains that fighting wars has diminished the cash flow coming to Americans. Yet another commenter seems baffled at the \$40 Trillion Dollar debt “the world” is in according to CNN. For these people, “cryptocurrency,” a medium of exchange such as the USD, seems to be a solution to money problems, and questions about Bitcoins are popular.

BRAND IMPACT



BMW – BMW is discussed positively as a result of their new fuel efficient hybrid that is described as the first hybrid you “won’t be embarrassed” to drive, by Business Insider.

DATA SAMPLE:

“As of right f#@king now in my bank and my wallet (down to the coins) I have \$585.63 I am going to scream” – Twitter, 6/12/2015

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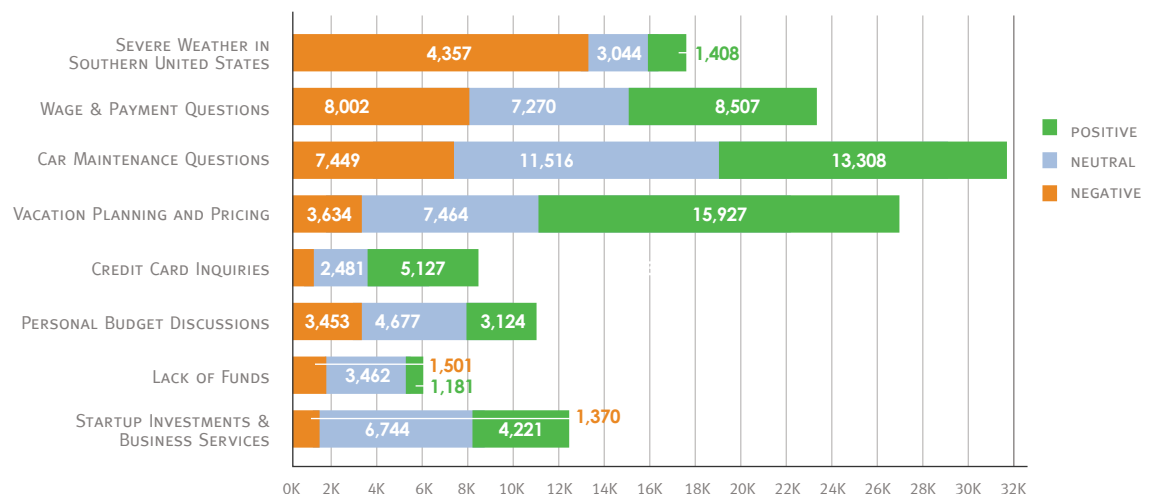


Of course, there is no easy solution for consumer complaints about the need for additional funds, and it’s an issue economists and politicians have been trying to solve for centuries. This is a topic to monitor especially from the angle of Bitcoin and cryptocurrencies, as consumers become weary about the national economy.

How To Prepare For These Conditions:

- [Ins and Outs of Bitcoins](#)
- [5 Tips to Shred Credit Card Debt](#)
- [Smarter Credit Card and Bank Account Management](#)

FIGURE 1 – This chart shows the volume and sentiment by topic for discussions that took place in the month of June.



The “I” of the Storm: Startup Investments & Business Services and Starting a Business

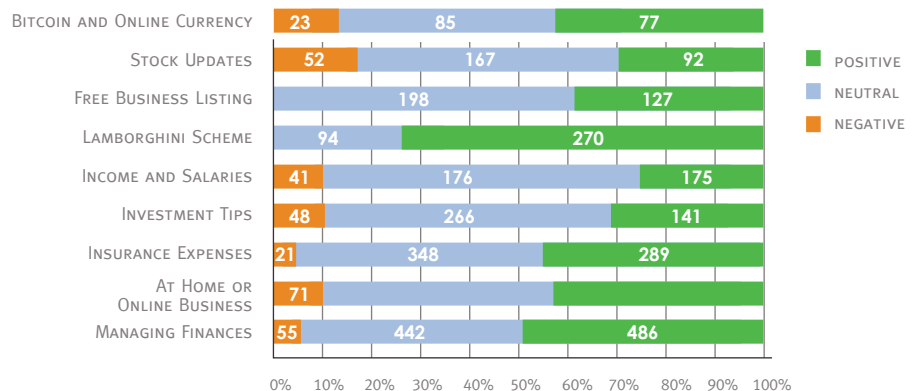
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The ‘I’ of the Storm is the monthly topic with the highest current and potential impact. These topics have staying power and have remained prominent month after month. These topics are still emerging, which suggests they have the potential to have an even greater impact on consumer hearts and minds. These topics are also highly interconnected with other highly important topics, which means their impact may be felt in many areas.

The big idea featured in the ‘I’ of the Storm for June, Startup Investments & Business Services, is responsible for nearly 20,000 articles combined with the topic, Starting a Business. With such a large data set, it is no surprise that the conversations are numerous and varied, ranging from more serious advice on handling income and salaries, to the notion that owning a Lamborghini would be a valuable investment in promoting your company.

FIGURE 2 – This chart shows the sentiment of sub-topics tied to Startup Investments & Business Services discussions. The colored squares show the percentage of discussions of a particular sub-topic within that topic. Green is positive, yellow is neutral, and red is negative. Topics are ordered by volume of mentions, with the last topic having the highest volume of conversation.



CURRENT CONDITIONS: Startup Investments & Business Services



VOLUME: 11,500
EMOTION SCORE: Low
SENTIMENT: Neutral
VELOCITY: Low

CURRENT CONDITIONS: Starting a Business



VOLUME: 8,310
EMOTION SCORE: Low
SENTIMENT: Positive
VELOCITY: Low

VOLUME: TOTAL NUMBER OF DISCUSSIONS THAT TOOK PLACE.
EMOTION SCORE: THE POTENTIAL FOR THE ISSUE TO CHANGE BEHAVIOR.
SENTIMENT: THE AVERAGE VIEW OR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE TOPIC.
VELOCITY: HOW QUICKLY AN ISSUE IS ADVANCING.

The biggest and most important of the subtopics within this discussion is Managing Finances. Though it is predominantly neutral and positive in content, a small percentage of negative content does exist, all related to confusion in regards to Individual Retirement Accounts, Annual Percentage Yields, and Roth savings plans. Tweets claim that picking an investment is tricky and that the future is unpredictable and risky. On the other hand, there is a wealth of positive content around tips for choosing an investment. Tweets link to blogs with advice on how to manage investments.

The second most voluminous sub-topic within our Big Idea is At Home or Online Business. These Tweets offer advice on how to be your own boss by starting online companies, or working freelance from home. Most of this content is also neutral to positive, with most Tweets expressing the potential of extra income by becoming an independent salesperson. Many of these Tweets seem to be targeted towards women specifically, with Avon sales being an example of a way to run your own business.

Overall, while this topic was discussed 100% on Twitter, it is driven less by organic comments of those looking to start their own business or discussing their experiences in starting one, and is instead dominated by those looking to offer tips or get others to join the movement of working from home to make money and retire early.

Some commenters on Twitter also note the irony of trying to apply for a loan and being denied for not having enough money to begin. Others are trying to manage their own small business and use social media as a way to question the prices and fines associated with e-Commerce.



BRAND
IMPACT



FDIC—The FDIC is looked at positively with regard to FDIC approved insurers, such as State Farm, and the FDIC Money Smart Workshop.

DATA SAMPLE:

“@QuickBooks Why should I be charged an extra \$9.95/mo for using you for my e-Commerce when I am an intuit customer and mobile payment customer?” Twitter, 6/1/2015

“If you’re interested in making extra money in your free time or are looking for a career, let me know! Avon has a lot of opportunities!” Twitter, 6/3/2015



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This topic points to an increased interest in getting away from traditional jobs, and moving towards the independence of self-management. With the employment market as difficult to navigate as it is right now, many individuals may consider starting their own business and becoming their own boss. With this in mind, there is a potential of further growth for this topic.

How To Prepare For These Conditions:

- [4 Credit Cards Your Small Business Needs](#)
- [Survival Kit for Your Small Business](#)
- [Business and Personal Finance: How They Interrelate](#)
- [Financial Pros and Cons of Incorporating Your Business](#)
- [Establish Business Credit and Raise Your Score](#)

On the Radar

Be on the lookout for the most emotional topics that have yet to become high in volume. If these topics gain attention, they tend to have a high impact on behavior and beliefs.

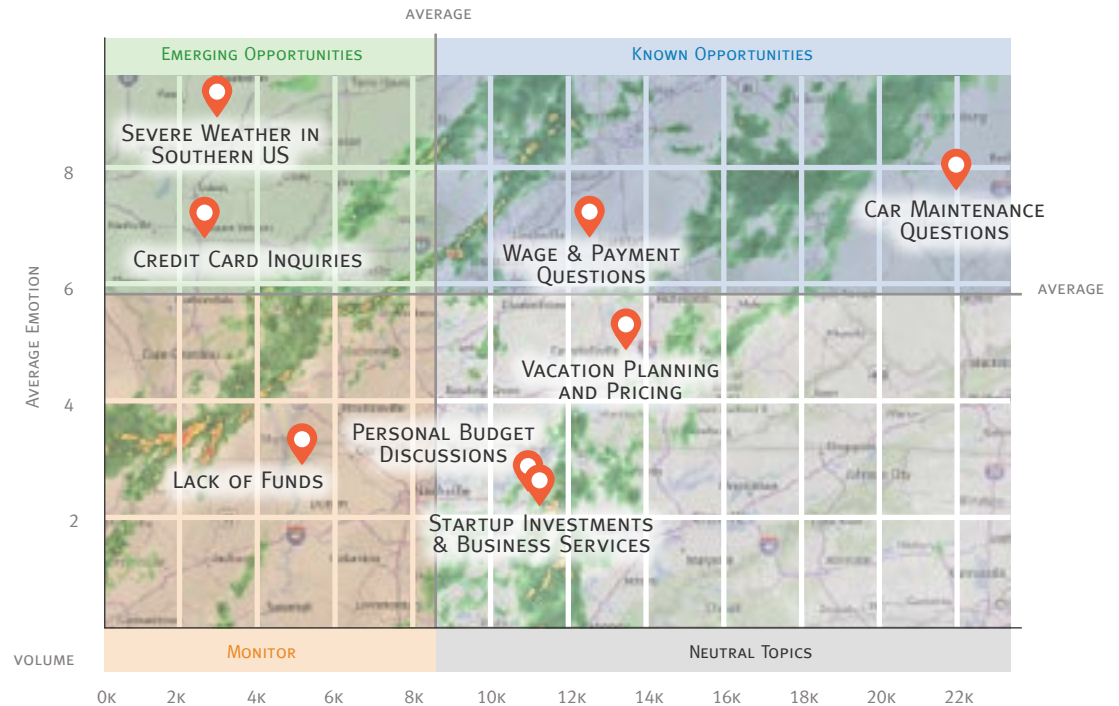
KNOWN OPPORTUNITIES – Topics with high volume and high emotion. These are topics on which consumers are passionate, there is a lot of awareness on the topic, and lots of conversations are taking place. Because of the high emotion, people are most likely to take action. Because of the high volume, this action may influence more people to act accordingly.

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES – Topics with high emotion and low volume that are beginning to become popular and have the potential to grow in volume. Because of the high emotion, people are more likely to act.

NEUTRAL TOPICS – Topics with low emotion and high volume. Companies need to be involved in these conversations and their competitors are usually already involved.

MONITOR – Topics with low emotion and low volume. These are topics to monitor that are winding down or newly emerging. Because of the low emotion, people are unlikely to act.

FIGURE 3 - What Topics are Most Emotional? This chart shows the most emotional topics that have yet to become high in volume.



This doppler radar shows emotional intensity. The lower the Average Emotion number, the lower the emotional intensity of the topic.

The Breakdown: Report Methodology



Each month millions of conversations about personal finance issues are collected by [evolve24](#). These conversations are measured and assessed using proprietary analytics to identify and measure audience perception.

We look for what people are talking about, what people care about, and what threats and opportunities are emerging for industry participants.

NUMBER OF ARTICLES & POSTS: More than 3.6 million conversations were collected that took place between June 1st, 2015, and June 30th, 2015.

SOURCES: These conversations were pulled from Twitter, Facebook, other social networking sites, blogs, forums, websites, TV & radio, magazines, and newspapers.

SEARCH STRING/ARTICLES COLLECTED: A keyword-based search was used across the sources outlined above to identify relevant conversations. This search generally consisted of personal pronouns, in conjunction with personal finance terms.

GEOGRAPHY: All articles and posts were based on an implied U.S. geography.

LANGUAGE: Articles were searched in both English and Spanish (using Spanish language keywords).