



## Use your Merrill Lynch Visa<sup>®</sup> Business Cards to automatically pay your bills

Instead of writing checks every month, start paying your bills automatically with your Merrill Lynch Visa<sup>®</sup> Business Signature card with Business Signature Rewards, or with your WCMA Business Access Visa card. You won't have to worry about late payments or due dates—especially when you're away on business or vacation.

There are so many bills you can pay this way: vendors, telephone, cell phone, subscriptions, insurance, memberships and more.

### Automatic bill payment can be very rewarding

If you have a Merrill Lynch Visa Business Signature card (available with a WCMA<sup>®</sup> account for a \$95 annual fee), you could earn hundreds of Signature Rewards points every month. Just look at the example in the chart below.

Type of Bill	Average Payment	Rewards Points Earned
Telephone	\$200	200
Car Insurance	\$1500	1500
Internet	\$70	70
Cell Phone	\$500	500
<b>Monthly Total</b>	<b>\$2270</b>	<b>2270</b>

The more your points add up, the faster you'll get your next reward.

### Paying bills with your card also...

*Puts you in control*

You decide how you want to pay. You can make automatic payments



or pay bills one at a time on your own schedule—either over the phone or online.

### *Gives you peace of mind*

Every automatic payment is on time. No more worries about late fees or due dates.

### *Simplifies your record keeping*

All your transactions are conveniently listed in detail on your monthly statement.

### *Saves you time and money*

No checks to write. No stamps to lick. No envelopes to mail.

### It's easy to get started

To set up automatic bill payment with your Merrill Lynch Visa Business Signature card or WCMA Business Access Visa card simply:

- Call the companies that send you bills and tell them you want to pay with your Visa card.
- Provide your card number and expiration date.
- Look for each payment on your monthly statement.

For more information and to view a list of merchants that accept Visa for bill payment, visit [www.visa.com/billpay](http://www.visa.com/billpay).

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## Did you know?

Our cash management calculator helps you compare a conventional checking account with sweep features to an automated central asset account with sweep features. Fill in the required information and see which account can help you maximize potential interest income. Check it out along with our other financial calculators on the Business Center.

# Micro Solutions Enterprises: Dedicated to quality and customers

When Avi and Yoel Wazana came to the U.S. from Israel, they had few resources but a burning drive to succeed. They grew their company Micro Solutions Enterprises (MSE, Chatsworth, CA) from a single garage in 1994. Today, it's one of America's fastest-growing small businesses, with offices on both coasts, as well as in Canada and Mexico. Their plans for expansion are on target, thanks to a relationship with Merrill Lynch Business Financial Services.

## Success is no accident

MSE started modestly as a printing cartridge reseller. Yoel (president) managed production based on his past experience. Avi (C.E.O.), who had studied business and marketing, handled finances. They had no customer base, so sales came from long hours and lots of cold-calls.

Along the way, the brothers met obstacles that might have stalled a less dedicated team. Because their suppliers' quality control was a major problem, the Wazanas decided to take up manufacturing the cartridges themselves. This decision put them ahead of the competition. "We didn't have a magic formula," Avi Wazana said. "We've just focused on engineering and research and development of our products. That's what drives the quality." All MSE cartridges, whether toners or inkjets, are manufactured to original equipment manufacturer (OEM) standards. The products perform so well that MSE is recognized as a quality brand in its own right. Yoel improved even on OEM standards by instituting what he coined "Intelligent Reengineering."

## Focusing on customers

In the third quarter of 1996, the company realized a solid profit, and the Wazanas looked more closely at their revenue sources. They discovered that 14% of their 1,200 accounts gave them 91% percent of their business. Despite their hesitancy to drop hard-won accounts, Avi urged that MSE move from serving end-users to concentrating on wholesale and distribution. That decision paid off handsomely in the years since as the company has won and retained a growing customer base. MSE has a remarkable record as one of America's fastest growing privately held companies on the Inc. 500 list for four consecutive years.

But success also meant investing in more equipment and more space as the company's manufacturing operations and clientele grew. Avi Wazana wanted a



*Avi (C.E.O., left) and Yoel Wazana (president),  
of Micro Solutions Enterprises*

financial service that not only recognized the company's vision but one whose people listened. That's why he was happy to work with Merrill Lynch Financial Advisor Steven Port of the Benell Group of Century City. "They have a very personalized approach to service," Avi remarked. "The whole mentality of Merrill Lynch Business Financial Services is in line with our entrepreneurial aspirations. They're not nervous when we talk about our plans. They want to help us grow, and they have the resources to do it."

## Streamlined financial service

To expand owner-occupied space, MSE was approved for financing with a WCMA Reducing Revolver<sup>SM</sup> loan. It's a term loan that operates like a revolving credit line, unlike any offering their bank had. Avi especially liked the Working Capital Management Account<sup>®</sup> (WCMA<sup>®</sup> account) which is integrated with the loan. "It's a sophisticated way of handling finances," he said. "With a WCMA account, it's one operation, and the money sweeps automatically," he added. "It's the most efficient cash management platform I've seen." MSE is also benefiting from the use of the Merrill Lynch Visa<sup>®</sup> Business Signature card, which draws on the WCMA account. It has delayed debit and a comprehensive rewards program.

The Wazanas are considering future growth through acquisitions. What has fueled MSE's enviable run of sustained growth? "Our dedication to quality," Avi Wazana said, "which keeps customers loyal. We have a very high rate of customer retention and customer attraction. We keep quality high by hiring and holding on to the most skilled employees. And we establish brand recognition." That recognition has earned MSE four Reader's Choice

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## Consider the source of your retirement income

Have you identified all potential sources of your retirement income from your perspective as a business owner? Are they working together to help you achieve the retirement you envision?

Relying on one source of income for your retirement could be a costly mistake. You should consider all possible income sources when planning your retirement such as:

- **Social Security:** Funded by payroll taxes, Social Security provides retirees with a monthly income that increases with the cost of living. Review the annual Social Security Statement you receive from the Social Security Administration to see your estimated benefit. Keep in mind, however, that many reform plans for Social Security are under discussion that could change these estimates or when you receive payments.

- **Selling your business:** This sounds like the most convenient solution, but it could be a poor one over the long term. If the business has appreciated significantly and you are confident that the proceeds will last throughout your life, fine. (One rule of thumb is that you will need 70% to 80% of your pre-retirement income each year in retirement.) If not, you may outlive your income. And by using your business as a major source of your retirement income, you'll miss a chance to transfer your wealth to your heirs after your death. Consider having a professional business valuation to assess your business, and consult your tax advisor about the ramifications of selling.



- **Former-employer-sponsored plans:** In the event you were once employed by someone else, have you accounted for any employer-sponsored retirement plans, such as an old 401(k)? If you've moved, does your former employer have your current address? Have you reviewed the investments in this account recently to determine if any adjustments are needed?

- **Your current retirement plan:** Have you established a new business retirement plan, such as a SEP, SIMPLE or owner-only 401(k)? This will help prepare you for retirement and provide current tax benefits. Depending on the plan, you also have the flexibility to modify your contribution rate, including making "catch-up" contributions if you are age 50 or above. You also may be able to roll over any employer-sponsored plans into your current plan, making your recordkeeping easier.

- **Other investments:** Check the performance of any other investment accounts you have. Is your asset allocation mix in line with your retirement goals, timetable and risk profile? If you feel you need professional guidance, consider a managed money service.

- **Insurance:** Consider assessing your insurance needs now, both personal and business, for more peace of mind during retirement.

Analyzing your total retirement picture now can help ensure that your income is sustained throughout your lifetime.

*These are general guidelines. Neither Merrill Lynch nor its Financial Advisors offers tax advice. Your Merrill Lynch Financial Advisor can work with you, your attorney and your tax advisor to craft the retirement solutions that are most appropriate for you and your business.*

### Micro Solutions Enterprises: Dedicated to quality and customers

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awards from *Recharger Magazine* and a five-star rating in the VarBusiness Partner Program. "The key is customer loyalty and our people," said Avi Wazana.

*The client's testimony is his own experience and may or may not represent that of others. It is not indicative of future performance or success.*

## Important Notice for Unlimited Advantage® Clients: Fee and Service Changes Now in Effect

As announced in the October 2004 issue of *Business Life*, the modifications explained below have been made to the Unlimited Advantage® Agreement over the past four months.

**Maximum Annual Fee Rate.** All Unlimited Advantage Groups subject to the minimum annual fee of \$1,500 are now charged the lesser of \$1,500 or 2% of the Group's total eligible asset value. This may result in a lower Unlimited Advantage fee for certain clients. For new enrollments in Unlimited Advantage beginning on September 27, 2004, the maximum annual fee rate of 2% became effective with the initial fee charged the month following enrollment. For current Unlimited Advantage Groups, the maximum annual fee rate of 2% became effective with the first quarterly fee of 2005, which was charged on January 11.

**Underwritten Offerings.** The Unlimited Advantage annual fee applies to underwritten offerings such as initial public offerings, fixed-income securities and market-linked investments created by Merrill Lynch that are bought or held in any enrolled account. Effective November 5, 2004, the Unlimited Advantage fee will not be assessed on the value of underwritten offerings for a period of 190 days from the date of purchase. Clients may still sell those positions during that period within Unlimited Advantage without paying a commission at the time of sale. After 190 days, the value of those securities will be included in the calculation of future Unlimited Advantage fees and may be sold

without paying a commission while held in the Unlimited Advantage account.

**Minimum Asset Requirement.** For new enrollments in Unlimited Advantage, a minimum asset requirement of \$50,000 per Unlimited Advantage Group became effective December 2004. This minimum asset requirement also applies to current Unlimited Advantage clients, effective during the fourth quarter of 2004. If the total eligible asset value of the account(s) in your Unlimited Advantage Group is less than \$25,000 at the beginning of a quarter, then you will be notified of the need to transfer additional assets into your account(s) in order to continue your participation in the service. If, at the end of that quarter, your total eligible asset value is less than \$50,000, then the account(s) in your Group will be removed from the Unlimited Advantage service and you will pay our standard account fees and commissions. A closing fee may be charged upon termination.

The Unlimited Advantage service is Merrill Lynch's alternative to transaction-based pricing. In transaction-based pricing, you pay annual account fees, other selected service fees, and transaction charges on a per-trade basis. Unlimited Advantage is not right for every investor. We may periodically contact you to determine whether the service is still meeting your needs. As provided in the Service Agreement, either you or Merrill Lynch may terminate the service at any time.

Please retain this notice for your records. If you have any questions, please contact your Financial Advisor.

*Merrill Lynch Business Financial Services* refers to a broad range of products and services offered by or through various subsidiaries of Merrill Lynch, including Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated, and certain unaffiliated third parties. Unless specifically indicated, *Merrill Lynch Business Financial Services* is not intended to refer to Merrill Lynch Business Financial Services Inc., which provides certain commercial loans for the Merrill Lynch Business Financial Services group.

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