

Credit Union Travel Money Playbook

Unlocking New Non-Interest Income Through Foreign Exchange and Travel Money Solutions

Executive Summary

Credit unions and mutual banks are under increasing pressure to diversify revenue, deepen member engagement, and compete more effectively with major banks, fintechs, and specialist foreign exchange providers. Travel money and foreign exchange services represent a significant yet often underutilised opportunity.

Every year, millions of consumers purchase foreign currency, prepaid travel cards, and related services before travelling abroad. When credit unions do not offer a compelling travel money solution, their members turn to third-party providers—airport currency exchanges, shopping centre foreign exchange retailers, online FX specialists, digital wallets, and neobanks. This not only results in lost fee income and foreign exchange margin, but also weakens member relationships at a critical point in the customer journey.

This playbook outlines how credit unions can launch a modern, fully branded travel money solution that delivers:

- New non-interest income streams
- Enhanced member loyalty and engagement
- Improved digital experience
- Competitive differentiation
- Rapid deployment with minimal operational complexity

Chapter 1: Why Travel Money Matters

The Market Opportunity

International travel remains strong and demand for foreign currency remains resilient. Despite the growth of digital payments, travellers continue to value access to physical cash for:

- Arrival expenses
- Small merchants and local markets
- Transport and tipping
- Emergency backup funds

- Destinations with lower card acceptance

For credit unions, this creates a high-margin, recurring revenue opportunity.

The Revenue Potential

A typical credit union with 80,000 members can generate substantial annual revenue from travel money services.

Assumptions:

- 35% of members travel internationally each year
- Average foreign currency purchase: \$2,000
- Average gross margin: 4%

Potential annual results:

- Travellers: 28,000
- FX transaction volume: \$56 million
- Gross revenue opportunity: \$2.24 million

Chapter 2: The Competitive Threat

Who Is Winning Your Members?

When credit unions do not provide a competitive travel money offering, members often choose:

- Specialist FX providers
- Airport foreign exchange retailers
- Online travel money brands
- Digital banks
- Prepaid card issuers
- Global money transfer platforms

These providers are not just taking FX revenue—they are capturing valuable customer engagement and wallet share.

The Hidden Cost of Inaction

Lost opportunities include:

- Foreign exchange margin
- Cross-sell opportunities
- Brand relevance during travel planning
- Ongoing transaction relationships
- Member loyalty and retention

Chapter 3: The Modern Travel Money Solution

Travel Money as a Service

A white-label solution enables credit unions to offer a complete travel money service under their own brand, without building infrastructure internally.

Core components include:

- Online foreign currency ordering platform
- Home delivery and branch collection options
- Competitive real-time FX pricing
- Wholesale banknote supply
- Optional prepaid travel cards
- Optional foreign exchange ATMs
- Integration with digital banking platforms

Chapter 4: Key Benefits for Credit Unions

Revenue Growth

Create a new, scalable source of non-interest income.

Member Retention

Keep travel-related financial activity within your ecosystem.

Digital Differentiation

Offer a modern, seamless digital experience.

Speed to Market

Launch quickly with minimal internal resources.

Low Operational Burden

Leverage outsourced infrastructure, logistics, compliance, and fulfilment.

Chapter 5: Product Solutions Available

1. White-Label Online Travel Money Platform

- Fully branded digital storefront
- Real-time pricing and ordering
- Home delivery and branch pickup

2. Wholesale FX Cash Supply

- Competitive wholesale banknote pricing
- Branch inventory management
- Secure logistics and fulfilment

3. White-Label FX ATMs and Kiosks

- Anytime foreign currency access
- Branch deployment
- Incremental revenue generation

Chapter 6: Implementation Roadmap

Phase 1: Discovery and Strategy

- Assess member demand
- Define product mix
- Build business case

Phase 2: Solution Design

- Branding and UX customisation
- Pricing strategy
- Compliance and operational alignment

Phase 3: Deployment

- Platform implementation
- Staff training
- Marketing launch

Phase 4: Growth and Optimisation

- Performance monitoring
- Product expansion
- Revenue optimisation

Chapter 7: Success Metrics

Track performance across:

- FX transaction volume
- Gross margin
- Online conversion rate
- Member adoption
- Average order value
- Repeat purchase rate
- Customer acquisition cost
- Return on marketing investment

Chapter 8: Why Act Now

The travel money market is growing, but competition is intensifying. Fintechs, digital banks, and specialist FX providers are aggressively targeting your members.

Credit unions that act now can:

- Capture new revenue streams
- Strengthen member relationships
- Improve competitive positioning

- Enhance digital offerings
- Future-proof their travel money proposition

Those that delay risk losing both revenue and relevance.

Next Steps

Calculate Your FX Revenue Opportunity

Use our FX Revenue Calculator to estimate your institution's revenue potential.

Book a Strategy Session

Meet with our team for a tailored assessment of your travel money opportunity.

Launch a Pilot Program

Start with a low-risk pilot and validate the opportunity quickly.

About Our Solution

We help credit unions and mutual banks launch world-class travel money and foreign exchange solutions, including:

- White-label digital FX platform
- Wholesale banknote supply
- Foreign exchange ATM and Kiosk solutions
- Marketing and growth support

Our turnkey model enables rapid deployment, minimal operational complexity, and scalable revenue growth.

Call to Action

Ready to unlock a new source of non-interest income?

- Download Product Information
- Book a Private Strategy Session