

## Customer Top Wants and Biggest Satisfaction Gaps

Top Performer Financial Stores for Customer Satisfaction; Growing Awareness of Pricing

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(Oct. 1, 2026, Rye, NY) – Customers increasingly desire financial stores that understand them and have shared values, according to a new market intelligence report by [H&W](#), the independent data and benchmarking firm that specializes in market intelligence for the U.S. wealth management industry. The report also identifies leading financial stores that are winning the hearts, and wallets, of customers.

*Wants & Pricing: Service Attributes that Matter Most Today and Top Performer Financial Stores* examines what customers want from their financial stores, satisfaction with those wants, and understanding of pricing. This report draws from the H&W Investor Quantitative™ (IQ) Database, recognized as the largest single dataset on saving, investing and advice behaviors with over 135 million data points from over 90,000 U.S. households, trending back 15 years.

### Top Wants and Satisfaction Gaps

“Understands me and shares my values” is the service attribute, or want, from financial stores with the biggest year-over-year increase in high importance, up 3 percentage points, to U.S. households. On a net basis, “has good mobile apps” is the No. 1 top-changing attribute nationally over the past decade. Among newest attributes added to IQ™ Database in response to competitive market trends, “strong cybersecurity practices to protect accounts” is highly important to more households – 76.1 million households with \$57.2 trillion in total investable assets – than “personalized content that is helpful to me,” which is highly important to 56.8 million households with \$37.7 trillion investable assets.

Top wants differ by investable assets/age segment. Households with under \$100,000 and under age 45 prioritize “fees are clear and understandable” above all else, while households with over \$10 million of all ages focus on “unbiased, puts my interests first.” Looking at gaps between importance and satisfaction, households with \$500,000 to under \$3 million ages 55 to 64 face gaps on 10 on the over 20 attributes tracked, creating opportunities for firms that fill those gaps. For households with \$10 million, the only major gap “is unbiased, puts my interests first.”

“Customers want to work with financial stores that anticipate their needs,” Laura Varas, CEO and founder of H&W, said. “On the customer journey from consideration to advocacy, the importance of wants and satisfaction gaps by asset/age groups reveal ways for firms to compete more effectively by managing to customer segments.”

### Financial Stores Winning Hearts and Wallets of Customers

[Ameriprise](#) (NYSE: AMP), [Edward Jones](#), [LPL Financial](#) (NASDAQ: LPLA), and [USAA](#) achieve distinctively higher-than-average customer satisfaction nationally, earning Hearts & Wallets Top Performer designations, on 5 or more attributes. [Charles Schwab](#), [Chime](#) (NASDAQ: CHYM), [Fidelity](#), [Merrill](#) (NYSE: BAC), [Morgan Stanley](#) (NYSE: MS), [PNC](#) (NYSE: PNC), [Vanguard](#) and [Wells Fargo Advisors](#) (NYSE: WFC) are Top Performers on 1 or more attributes.

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## Top Customer Wants and Biggest Satisfaction Gaps/2

To earn a Top Performer designation, a firm must receive satisfaction ratings from their customers that are distinctively higher than national average satisfaction rating. To ensure large sample sizes, only the top 25 saving and investing stores, defined by national household penetration, are considered for Top Performer designations.

Top Performers this year for selected attributes include –

- “Understands me and shares my values” – Ameriprise, Edward Jones, LPL, USAA
- “Unbiased, puts my interests first” – Ameriprise, Edward Jones, LPL Merrill, USAA, Wells Fargo Advisors

## Growing Pricing Awareness

On customer understanding on pricing, Merrill Edge and E\*TRADE by Morgan Stanley have the fewest customer who know how they pay, well below the industry average being 31%.

Customer awareness of pricing is at a peak since IQ™ Database tracking began. Today, only 21% of customers who don’t know how they pay their most important financial stores<sup>1</sup> vs. 28% in 2017. For the first time since H&W tracking began, more customers report store relationships are priced as services than “through the products I own.” In store relationships where customers report paying as services, flat fees are reported for about 40%, up from 24% in 2017. The rest are reported to be priced in bps, in stable ranges year over year, or “commissions on activities, such as trades.”

“Customers are taking a more consumer approach to finance, with improved awareness of pricing,” Beth Krettecots, H&W Subject Matter Expert, said. “Understanding how financial stores make money is strongly linked to intent to invest more, regardless of pricing mechanism, shifting the advantage to firms that clearly explain value.”

See the full report for breakdowns of wants by importance, market sizing of wants by investable assets/age, satisfaction gaps, and more pricing trends.

### Methodology

Wants & Pricing: Service Attributes that Matter Most Today and Top Performer Financial Stores examines the importance of wants, customer satisfaction and pricing. This report is based on the H&W Investor Quantitative™ Database, recognized as the largest single dataset with over 135 million data points on saving, investing and advice behaviors from over 90,000 U.S. households the past 15 years. The 2025 wave was fielded Jul. 17-Aug. 9, 2025, with 5,981 U.S. households.

### About H&W

H&W is the market intelligence and benchmarking firm that specializes in powering growth for saving, investing and financial advice businesses with competitive buying pattern data. Leading firms rely upon H&W market intelligence data, reports, software and benchmarking to make strategic decisions that lead to growth by making products and services more consumer centric. Long-term H&W subscribers have 5-year asset growth that is 55% faster than non-subscribers. For more, visit [www.heartsandwallets.com](http://www.heartsandwallets.com).

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<sup>1</sup> “Most important financial stores” defined as the primary store, where the household has the most investable assets, and the secondary store, which is either where the household has the second-most investable assets or the main source of retirement advice, if not already the primary store.