

Led by Bank of America, Big Banks Sweep Top 5 Spots in Satisfaction with Financial AdviceDigital Financial Advice Becomes Key Weapon in Driving Customer Satisfaction, J.D. Power Finds

COSTA MESA, Calif.: 31 Jan. 2019 — As routine branch transactions decline, financial advice is becoming a key battleground in which big banks are outpacing regional banks. Satisfaction with advice is highest at Bank of America, while PNC, Wells Fargo, Citibank and Chase round out the top five. Among the six largest banks, only U.S. Bank finished below average, according to the J.D. Power 2019 U.S. Retail Banking Advice Study,SM released today.

More than three-fourths (78%) of U.S. retail bank customers say they are interested in receiving financial advice or guidance from their bank. Nearly six of 10 customers (58%) say their preferred means of receiving advice is digital content delivered through a bank website or mobile app.

The study, now in its second year, measures retail banking customer satisfaction with retail bank-provided advice and account-opening processes of six big U.S. banks and 17 regional banks.

“Retail banks that get the financial advice formula right are scoring major points with their customers in the current marketplace,” said **Paul McAdam, Senior Director of the Banking Practice at J.D. Power**. “Overall, we’re seeing both the consumer desire for financial advice and the satisfaction levels with the advice provided increase. Successful banks are moving from a sales focus to an advice culture. When that happens, there’s a considerable increase in new account openings, trust and advocacy. But, with wide variance in customer satisfaction scores between top and bottom performers, there is still a great deal of room for banks to up their advice games.”

Following are key findings of the 2019 study:

- **Customer satisfaction with retail bank advice rises, driven by big banks:** Overall customer satisfaction with the advice provided by a primary retail bank increases by 15 points to 819 (on a 1,000-point scale) in 2019 from last year. The increase is driven by big banks, which see an 18-point gain, compared with a 6-point gain among regional banks. Satisfaction with advice at big banks now stands at 826 compared to 800 at regional banks. Big banks not only lead in satisfaction with digitally delivered advice (e.g., website, mobile app and email), but also with face-to-face advice.
- **Digital advice in focus:** A majority of bank customers (58%) say they would like to receive financial advice digitally. Accordingly, advice delivered digitally (via website or mobile app) had the largest satisfaction point gain over the past year (+21 points) and the improvement was most profound among consumers under 40 years old (+30 points).
- **Investment-related advice resonates most:** Among the most common types of advice retail bank customers seek are investment-related advice (41%); quick tips to help improve their financial situation (39%); retirement-related advice (38%); advice to help keep track of spending and household budgets (33%); and saving for a large purchase (27%).
- **Advice satisfaction directly linked to trust, retention and advocacy:** Overall, 58% of customers who have received advice say they have acted on it. Among retail bank customers who are highly satisfied with the advice provided by their institution, (overall advice satisfaction score of 850 or

higher), 86% say they “definitely will” reuse their bank for another product; 86% are identified as Net Promoters®¹; and 44% say they have opened a new account based on the advice received.

- **Transparency is critical in new account opening, a common venue for delivering advice:** When new accounts are opened, transparency about customer benefits and fees is critical. Overall satisfaction with the account opening process increases 161 points when benefits and features are explained completely and 144 points when fees are clearly explained.

“Individual bank performance on financial advice varies considerably, with a 67-point spread between top and bottom performers, indicating that some banks have recognized the potential and have put programs in place to capitalize on their role as trusted advisor,” said **Bob Neuhaus, Vice President of Financial Services at J.D. Power**. “One clear example of that approach is on clear display in Bank of America’s 26-point improvement in 2019, which can be traced back to its ‘Life Priorities Model’ that tailors financial advice for customers at different life stages.”

Study Rankings

Bank of America ranks highest in customer satisfaction with retail banking advice with a score of 839. **PNC** ranks second with a score of 833 and **Wells Fargo** ranks third with a score of 828.

The 2019 U.S. Retail Banking Advice Study surveyed 3,719 retail bank customers in the United States who received any advice/guidance from their primary bank regarding relevant products and services or other financial needs in the past 12 months. The study also surveyed 3,405 retail bank customers in the United States who opened a new account within the past 12 months. It was fielded in October 2018.

For more information about the U.S. Retail Banking Advice Study, visit <https://www.jdpower.com/business/resource/us-banking-advice-satisfaction-study>.

See the online press release at <http://www.jdpower.com/pr-id/2019013>.

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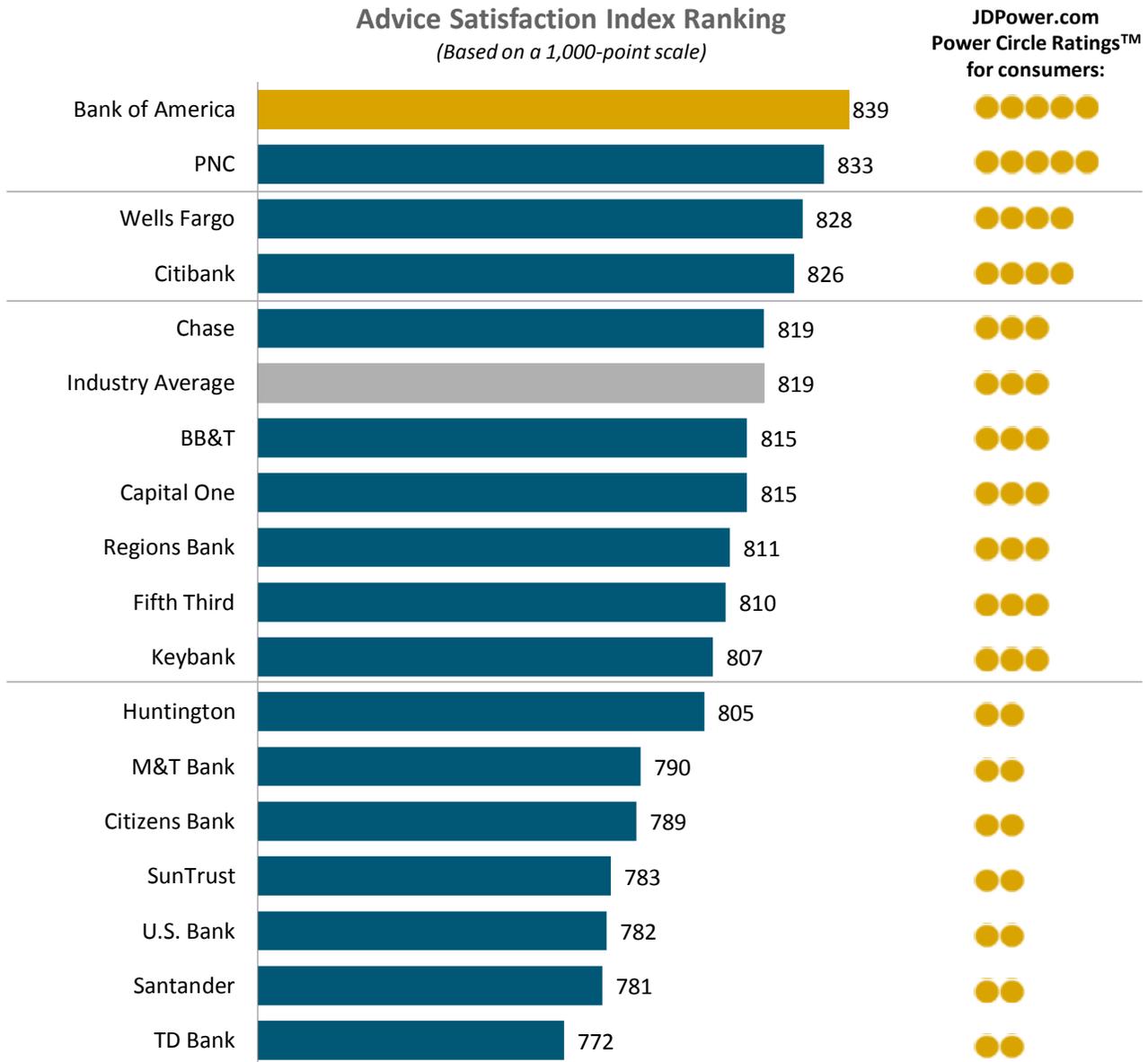
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NOTE: One chart follows.

¹ Net Promoter,® Net Promoter System,® Net Promoter Score,® NPS,® and the NPS-related emoticons are registered trademarks of Bain & Company, Inc., Fred Reichheld and Satmetrix Systems, Inc.

J.D. Power 2019 U.S. Retail Banking Advice StudySM



Power Circle Ratings Legend

- Among the best
- Better than most
- About average
- The rest

Source: J.D. Power 2019 U.S. Retail Banking Advice StudySM

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