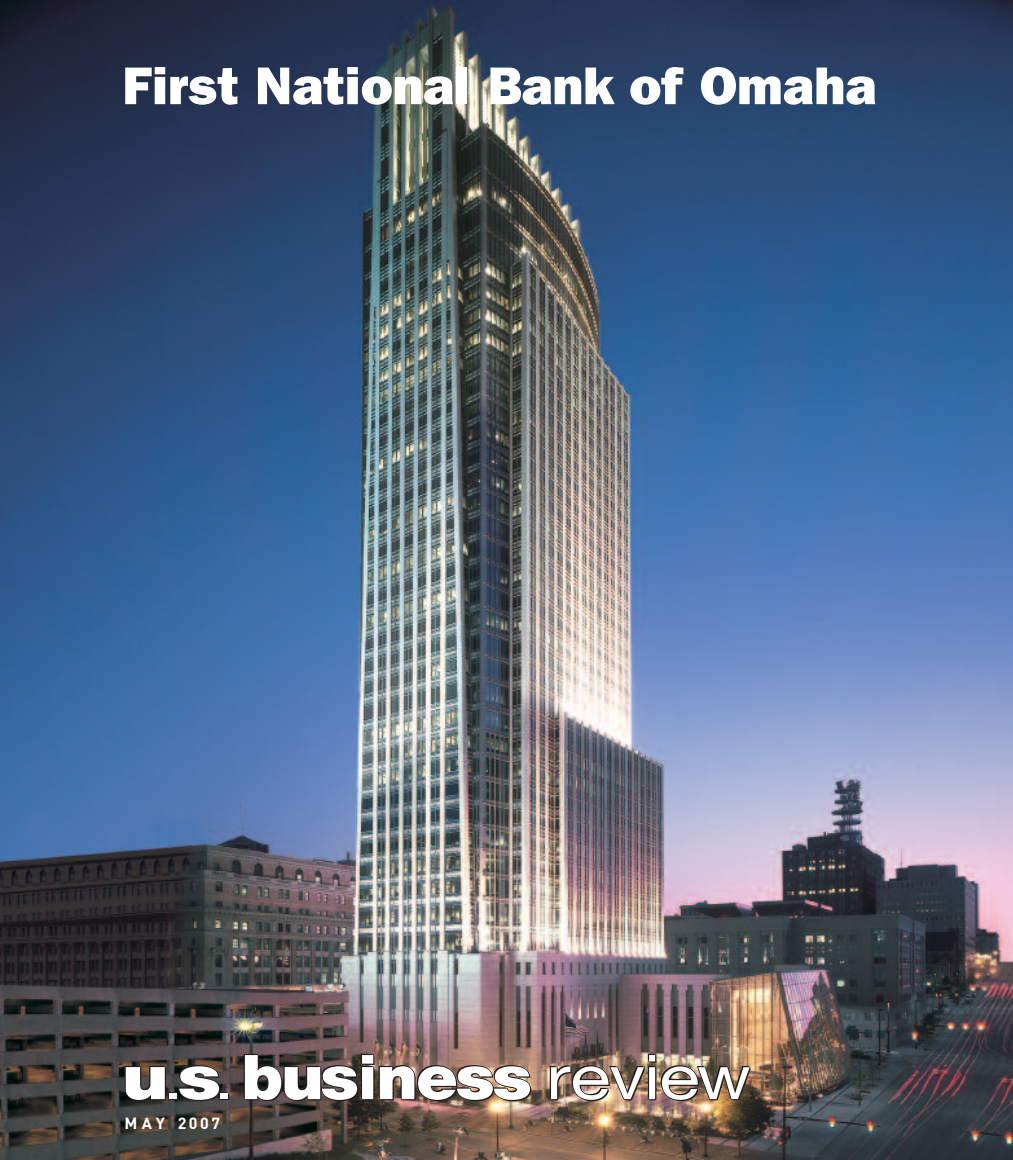


# First National Bank of Omaha



**u.s. business review**

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## BANKING ON IT

First National Bank of Omaha provides products and services designed to meet a variety of banking needs, the company explains.

by **Hanna Aronovich**

In the heart of downtown Omaha, Neb., First National Bank of Omaha is the flagship of the largest private banking company in the United States, First National of Nebraska, which has been providing financial services for almost 150 years and currently serves more than 6.6 million customers.

First National manages more than \$18 billion in assets and employs more than 7,000 people. First National serves customers in all 50 states, and operates more than 90 banking locations in Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Colorado, Kansas, South Dakota and Texas.

### PROFILE

**First National Bank of Omaha**

**www.firstnational.com**

**Headquarters** Omaha, Neb.

**Employees** 4,000

(companywide)

**Services** Banking

**Rajive Johri, president**

“Our [future] strategy is to be a best-in-class, high-performance bank.”

Nebraska-based First National Bank of Omaha currently serves more than 6.6 million customers.

First National is the fifth largest in-house credit card processor, the seventh-largest merchant processor, a top-10 commercial card issuer, the 11th-largest issuer of bank credit cards in the United States, a top-20 electronic funds processor, the fifth-largest agricultural lender with customers in 49 states, as well as one of the leading providers of project finance to the ethanol industry, the company states.

President Rajive Johri says the bank’s history dates back to 1857 when Herman and Augustus Kountze founded the Kountze Brothers Bank. The bank became known as First National in 1863 when it became the first federally chartered bank west of the Mississippi River.

Bruce R. Lauritzen, chairman, First National Nebraska, represents the fifth generation of family leadership and has had an active role in the company for 40 years.

First National achieved many firsts in its history, including being one of the first banks to hire female tellers to attract female customers in 1913. The bank also was one of the first to issue credit cards – which it introduced in 1953.

Johri says First National attributes its longevity to its guiding principle of providing customers with quality products and superior service. “Our primary strengths include our pioneering spirit, which continues as a defining characteris-

tic today, and innovation," he explains. "We are guided by our values, which are passion for our customers and our community; integrity in everything we do; and our independence, which allows us to always put our community and customers first."

Being the largest private banking company in the country allows First National to have the independence to better serve its customers. "We can make business decisions designed with the customer in mind, rather than decisions that are influenced by outside interests," Johri explains. "Also, our relationships are customizable and focused on the long-term. That's why we have customers who have been with us for 40 years or more, ranging from a farmer to a restaurant owner in Omaha's Old Market district to companies like TD Ameritrade."

Johri stresses that innovation has been a hallmark of the company's philosophy of customer relationships.

"Before FDIC, we offered account insur-

ance," he notes. "We were among the first to offer credit cards. Today, we are a leading provider of financing to the ethanol industry."

"Clients choose First National Bank because we are like a mountain – we are always there," Johri adds. "But more importantly, we are always there for them – to protect them, to deliver our quality products and superior service. In many ways, we are the same as we've ever been, yet we are new, constantly reinventing ourselves."

In April, the bank launched First National Investment Bank, which "[brought] an investment bank to our wide range of products and services serving the middle market," Johri explains.

To address the competition, First National introduced FNBO Direct this year. "A number of the large, national banks have been competing with us on our turf by buying up local banks and establishing their presence here," Johri says. "Now, with FNBO Direct, our new

online savings product, we can use Internet technology to compete on their turf, bringing a well-established, all-American bank to customers across the country in a leading-edge way."

First National continues on its path of success. The company achieved a nearly 100 percent increase in earnings from 2005 to 2006.

Its credit card division also saw a major turnaround and opened a record number of new accounts, Johri notes.

Additionally, the company signed a long-term agreement with SunTrust Banks Inc., one of the nation's largest banks, to create a proprietary credit card portfolio for SunTrust.

"First National generated strong earnings performance across all major business segments," Johri says.

"Our [future] strategy is to be a best-in-class, high-performance bank by diversifying our portfolio of business, diversifying geographically and operating as a company of the future." *usbr*



## First National Bank



Rajive Johri - *President*

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*Celebrating 150 years of commitment to customers, community, employees and innovation.*

### National Business Rankings

- Fifth largest in-house credit card processor
- Seventh largest merchant processor
- Top Ten commercial card issuer
- Eleventh largest issuer of bank cards in the United States
- Top Twenty electronic funds processor
- Fifth largest agricultural lender with customers in 49 states
- Largest commercial bank finance provider to the ethanol industry
- One of the top three banks serving the credit card needs of other financial institutions