BUSINESS

Editor: Brett McLaughlin | brett@dailyjm.com | (864) 882-2375

Wednesday, August 4, 2010

Mortgages

Mortgage rates are the lowest in decades. High demand for Treasurys has pushed down yields and helped lower rates on mortgages, which are loosely tied to government debt.

30-year fixed rate

Now	**4.56%**
July 2007	6.69

5-year adjustable rate

Now	**3.79%**
July 2007	6.30

Savings products

Banks have little incentive to offer higher rates to savers because they can borrow money for next to nothing from the government. When the Fed raises rates, banks will likely do the same on money market accounts and CDs.

Money market account

Now	**0.21%**
July 2007	0.85

1-year CD

Now	**0.67%**
July 2007	3.70



Low Rates For Now

Interest rates can't get much lower, but nothing suggests that they'll start heading upward in the near future. Credit card rates are higher now than during the credit-fueled boom times before the 2008 market meltdown. But rates on nearly everything else are below where they were back then.

Auto loans

It's becoming easier to get a car loan as carmakers work with banks to expand lending. Car lenders' exemption from new financial regulations may also make it easier for them to keep rates low.

36-month new car

Now	**6.90%**
July 2007	7.70

36-month used car

Now	**7.67%**
July 2007	8.55

Credit cards

Lenders are sending out more credit card offers to consumers. But many of those are for variable-rate cards that don't carry interest rates that are particularly high right now. That will change, sooner or later, though.

Balance transfers

Now	**12.88%**
July 2007	11.41

Average card rate

Now	**14.42%**
July 2007	13.10

SOURCES: Creditcards.com; Bankrate.com

Chip Cutter • AP