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No train, no gain

When asked to list the three most important strategies for success in the ring, a top-flight boxer once said, "Training, training – and training." His statement amused his audience, but it was also true. And for ISOs and merchant level salespeople (MLS), the need for proper training is no joke. With competition for merchant accounts getting fiercer every day, preparation and education are more critical than ever.

The payments industry is constantly evolving with emerging products and services, proliferating federal and state legislation, and expanding data security regulations. Consequently, training should be a top priority.

Some skeptics dismiss the benefits of offering more than rudimentary, on-the-job training. And during challenging periods, it is tempting to cut back on staff development. But to thrive in the current economy it may be necessary to expand both classroom and on-the-street training.

When asked about the benefits of book versus hands-on training, Christine Armitage, Director of Training and Education for Heartland Payments Systems Inc., said, "Well, number one, training is critical and two, I can't even comprehend an organization that says you can't have both."

 **See Training on page 63**





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Notable Quote

The card brands and other industry leaders have gone to great lengths to educate the entire stakeholder chain on the issues pertaining to PCI, and they have had limited success. The question is why?

See story on page 32



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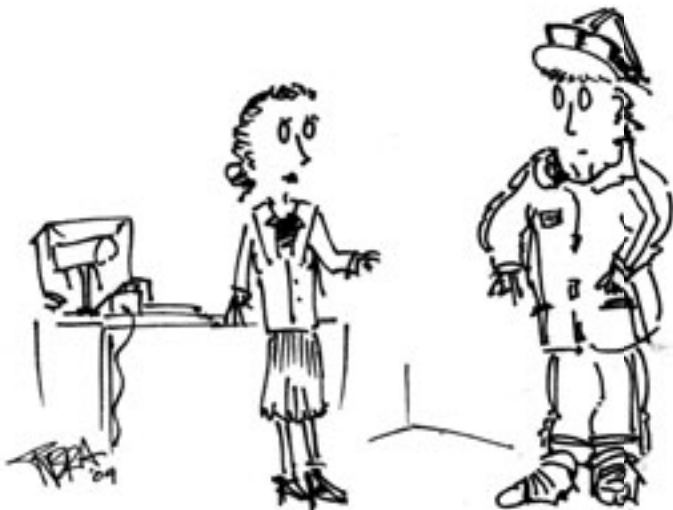
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Why not reduce interchange?

An article in the Jan. 13, 2009, issue in *USA Today* titled "During financial pinch, banks reduce credit card rewards" (www.usatoday.com/money/perfi/credit/2009-01-12-banks-credit-card-rewards_n.htm?loc=interstitialskip) notes that the card brands and issuers, in an effort to reduce costs, are eliminating or cutting back on the benefits of their rewards cards. (Hopefully, business owners read this article.)

The card companies tell us that they fund rewards programs exclusively by interchange fees paid by merchants. (Let's forego the marketing spin of more cards in the wallet plus how reward cards increase spending at the merchant.)

The card brands tell us fraud is down and the cost of processing is down – all components, they say, of interchange. The cost of cardholder reward programs is a pass-through to the merchant in interchange fees, and those expenses are going down due to elimination or reduction of the benefits.

So, what is their rationalization now for current interchange rates? Is my view of this incorrect?

Merchants are up in arms over interchange, and rightly so.

Will the card brands reduce interchange fees to help reduce merchant processing expenses during this tough economic time, or will they pocket the added income to increase profits (and pay fines)?

While MasterCard Worldwide and Visa Inc. are now private corporations, it is my opinion that the greed mentality of the banking industry coupled with that of the issuing side are still pervasive within them.

Which side of the mouths from which they speak are the facts – the truth? My advice to the card companies is to get their stories straight before inserting the foot of one area in the mouth of another area.

Biff Matthews
CardWare International

Biff,

Thank you for sharing your perspective on an issue that is not just on the minds of our readers but is also of great concern to merchants, who have taken their complaints to legislators on state and local levels.

If you broach the topic of lowering interchange on GS Online's MLS Forum, you might stimulate lively discussion and, hopefully, constructive action.

Editor

Correction

The publication date and issue number provided on the front page of *The Green Sheet's* second January 2009 issue were incorrect. The actual date and issue number are January 26, 2009, and 09:01:02, respectively. We regret any inconvenience or confusion this error may have caused.

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Cover Story

1

No train, no gain

When asked to list the three most important strategies for success in the ring, a top-flight boxer once said, "Training, training – and training." His statement amused his audience, but for ISOs and merchant level salespeople (MLS), the need for proper training is no joke. With competition for merchant accounts getting fiercer every day, education is more critical than ever.

View

32

The long fingers of PCI

The need to maintain secure credit and debit card transaction networks to prevent data breaches and protect sensitive information has been debated exhaustively. And the payments industry has offered a significant, focused and all-encompassing response. However, many in our industry don't appear to realize the time for debate is past; action is necessary.

View

26

Make security a small-merchant priority

Big data breaches get big headlines, but criminals are targeting merchants of all sizes to gain cardholder data that can be quickly turned to illicit profits. Smaller merchants should not be ignored when it comes to payment card security. What are you doing to ensure the small businesses in your portfolio are protected?

Feature

46

It's a wide, wide world of prepaid

The prepaid world continues to expand its reach, tapping new populations with innovative, useful products. The features in this edition of SellingPrepaid take a look at the U.S. prepaid market in 2009, compare and contrast the European and U.S. prepaid markets, and discuss the benefits of loading tax refunds onto prepaid cards.

View

28

Revisit that elevator speech

Haven't polished your elevator speech lately? Don't even have one? For those who need a quick refresher, the elevator speech, or pitch, is a 30-second personal commercial developed to help you promote yourself, your company and your solutions. This article provides guidelines for preparing and using this short, but essential, tool.

News

52

Heartland clamps down on breach

Heartland Payment Systems Inc. learned in mid-January 2009 that it was a victim of a security breach. Since learning of the attack, Heartland reported it has aggressively worked to ascertain the extent of the breach and its potential impact. This article discusses the steps Heartland is taking to ensure the integrity of cardholder data.



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News

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Money launderers game for online merchants

For online gambling merchants, money laundering and fraud rings are threats to profits and reputation. As a result, companies are taking proactive measures to identify and stop sophisticated money laundering techniques; a recent conference in London discussed effective strategies used in this regard.

Education

70

Street SmartsSM: Remain in service? Be of service

An old adage says that keeping clients is easier than replacing them. But that doesn't always hold true. No company is perfect. The question becomes, Will you go out of your way to resolve problems with merchants? This article discusses seven key principles to ensure customer retention.

News

57

Friendly fraud raises fears

As unemployment rates soar and consumer spending shrinks, payment processors report that e-commerce friendly fraud chargebacks are increasing significantly. What can ISOs and merchants do to avoid exceeding card company chargeback limits?

Education

78

Stand by your plan

If you are following a sales plan but are not seeing results, examine your plan and make adjustments. Set realistic goals that you can accomplish with your actions. Only you can control your actions. Don't let down times impact your confidence. If you follow your sales plan and do everything correctly, you are successful – whether you sell something or not.

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Education

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Helping merchants help themselves

Merchants are often not savvy marketers of their own services. In fact, most merchants are in desperate need of help with marketing and exploiting technology to their advantage. And if educating merchants on effective marketing strategies helps them become more successful, who do you think it ultimately benefits in the end?

Education

86

Collecting opportunities

This past year has been a stressful one for the merchant services industry, and many of the things we took for granted – a steady economy, rising stock market, healthy real estate prices and a booming job market – have changed direction, at least for a while. But why aren't there more stories about the incredible opportunities those recent changes have uncovered?

Education

90

Get the FUD out of PCI

Merchants are being unnecessarily frightened by the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standard (DSS). Some are ignoring PCI, hoping it will go away. This article provides steps that can lighten the burden and expense of PCI compliance and offers tips on how to tell when a vendor is spreading fear, uncertainty and doubt (FUD).

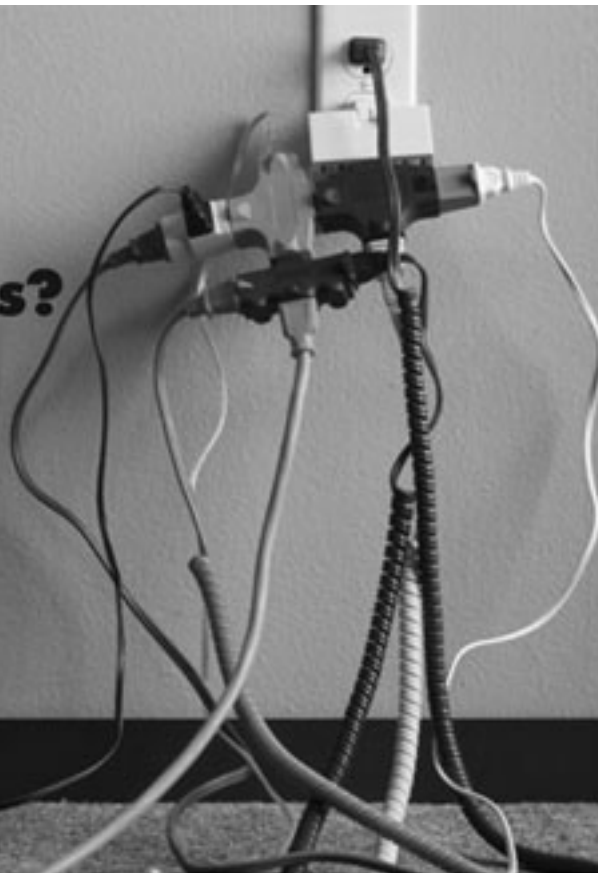
Inspiration

99

Ditch the dark side

If you're lucky, you work at an ISO that employs someone whose good nature is infectious and who radiates positive energy. From what reservoir do these rare individuals draw their upbeat attitudes? While inner joy cannot be acquired overnight, you can learn to do those little things that spread joy and peace.

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IndustryUpdate

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NEWS

Holiday cyber stats available

In January 2009, **Chase Paymentech Solutions LLC** released the results of its 2008 Cyber Holiday Pulse Index, which measured online shopping activity from Nov. 1, 2008, through Dec. 31, 2008.

The holiday season sales volume for 2008 increased 4.5 percent over 2007's totals. The transaction count increase was a healthier 16.5 percent. The average value per transaction decreased 10.3 percent.

The largest day for sales was Dec. 2, with more than \$218 million, topping Dec. 17, which saw more than \$217 million in sales.

"This holiday season challenged all retailers," said Forrester Research Analyst Sucharita Mulpuru. "Web transaction volume was up significantly from last year, but the relatively lower revenue numbers point to aggressive discounting by retailers and eager deal hunting by shoppers."

iPhone to process card transactions

Apple Inc.'s iPhone now has the capability to process mobile payments. The iPhone can be turned into a credit card processing device with ProcessAway, a software program developed by Randy Palermo of Information Technology consulting firm **Rapadev LLC**. The software is sold through Apple's iTunes App Store.

ProcessAway is a simple gateway that interfaces with network payment platform Authorize.net. Card transactions can be processed with the iPhone or through a virtual terminal for payment processing, with the option

to later download transaction information into Intuit Inc.'s QuickBooks. With ProcessAway, transactions can be processed at such venues as conventions, street fairs, antique shows or construction sites.

ProcessAway is not proprietary and is available only to Authorize.net account members. "What makes it nice is that you have a gateway like Authorize.net that allows you to process secure socket layer transactions and, with the iPhone, you're always on the network," Palermo said.

"And the nice thing is when you get a merchant account, you can download the application to your office that allows for Web interface and virtual transactions," he added.

Facilitating OBeP scheme global interoperability

The International Council of Payment Network Operators, which includes representatives of European and North American Online Banking Enabled e-Payments (OBeP) schemes, is working to establish common standards and rules for global interoperability of OBeP schemes.

The demand for this is coming from consumers seeking secure, confidential methods for making online payments. With OBeP, consumers use their trusted banks to facilitate online purchases. Merchants benefit from the real-time authentication such payment methods provide.

Representatives of **NACHA – The Electronic Transactions Association**, headquartered in the United States, and **Interac Online**, based in Canada, are working with their overseas counterparts from iDEAL in the

BOTTOM
LINES

HEADLINES
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- **EMarketer Inc.** estimated U.S. retail e-commerce sales for 2009 will reach \$142.4 billion, an increase of 4.1 percent over 2008, compared to increases of 7.2 percent in 2008 and 19.8 percent in 2007, year-over-year.
- According to **NPD Group Inc.**, video game industry total sales increased 9 percent in December 2008 over December 2007. The biggest percentage increase was in video game software sales, which increased 15 percent to \$2.75 billion.
- The **National Retail Federation** projects a 0.5 percent decrease in retail industry sales for 2009 compared to 2008. This figure excludes automobiles, gas stations and restaurants.
- **Leisure Trends Group's** SnowSports Industry of America Retail Audit reported overall snow sports sales declined by 1.5 percent to \$1.875 billion for August through December 2008, compared to the same period in 2007. The sharpest decline, 17 percent, was in current model ski sales.

Netherlands, giropay in Germany and VocaLink in the U.K. to define interoperability requirements.

The participating OBeP scheme operators are meeting regularly to analyze and discuss technology, international settlement, legal compliance, security, communications, fee structure and exchange rate mechanisms. The group hopes to have a completed interoperability framework by the second quarter of 2009.

IDology helps FIs with Red Flags

Identity and age verification company **IDology Inc.** upgraded its Expect ID solution to help financial institutions more efficiently detect which areas of customers' identification proofing and verification processes are compliant. To help diverse businesses meet the May 1, 2009, deadline for compliance with the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003 Red Flag Identity Theft Rules, Expect ID provides distinct levels of identity authentication.

"Protecting your business and consumers from ID theft is a constant battle," said John Dancu, President and Chief Executive Officer of IDology. "We've made it easier for our customers to know with certainty that their automated ID detection and fraud alerts technology is in compliance, as well as easily and succinctly demonstrate

this to their examiner. Fraudsters and identity thieves continue to warrant vigilant monitoring and assessment of their activity."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CUPDS to process for BEA

China UnionPay Data Services Co. Ltd., a joint venture between Total System Services Inc. (TSYS) and China UnionPay, signed a long-term credit card processing agreement with the Bank of East Asia. BEA is the first foreign bank to independently launch its own credit card program in China.

Clear Charge's Encore

Addison, Texas-based payment processor **Encore Payment Systems** recently released its flagship POS software, Clear Charge. According to Encore, Clear Charge turns computers into payment terminals and is capable of processing credit, debit, checks, electronic benefit transfers, and gift and loyalty cards.

The new software reportedly can process up to nine merchants on one system, a convenience for retailers who own multiple stores.

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Doin' it right

Small-business owners have many of the same concerns as their counterparts at larger companies, but they have fewer resources at their disposal. They and their handful of employees wear many hats to keep all aspects of their businesses running smoothly – from ordering to invoicing to customer service and collections.

PaySimple, a provider of software as a service, on-demand electronic payment solutions for small businesses, launched its new small-business resource center, the Small Business Growth Center, with just such business owners in mind. The site features:

- Tools: Free, interactive tools to identify trouble areas or find ways to save money
- Newsletter: Quarterly electronic newsletter covering free resources and tools
- Tip of the Week: Weekly tips available through a real simple syndication feed or iGoogle widget
- Small Business Dictionary: Definitions of common business and payments industry-specific business terms
- Information modules: Essential payments industry topics, including "The Secrets of Accepting Credit Cards," "Understanding and Achieving PCI [Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard] Compliance," and "What is ACH [automated clearing house] anyway?"

"PaySimple has made a significant invest-

ment in providing resources specifically designed to help small business owners increase the productivity and efficiency of their day-to-day efforts," said Eric Remer, Chief Executive Officer. "The result is an entirely new site segment that provides business owners an engaging, customizable, and proactive way to analyze and grow their current operations."

Extending themselves

After over a year of brainstorming and six to nine months in production, PaySimple's new resource center now serves as an extension of the company's core business philosophy of helping to make small business owners' lives easier.

Sarah Jordan, the company's Marketing Director, said PaySimple has always wanted its customers and even the small-business community to think of PaySimple as a small business resource and community member that wants to help them any way it can.

Remer and Allen Wolff, PaySimple's Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, co-founded what is now PaySimple to provide a way for landlords and others who collect monthly payments to accept payments in forms other than checks that are mailed in, hand delivered or even collected at tenants' doors. Both founders, being serial entrepreneurs, believe they understand the challenges that small-business owners face.

The company's biggest challenge to

creating the resource center was sifting through all the information available and finding what's most useful. The next hurdle was putting it into layman's terms. "So, [merchants] don't know what ACH is; what do they call it?" Jordan said. The Small Business Dictionary started out as a payments industry glossary.


As satisfying as it is for PaySimple to see the new resource center launched, the process of creating it was also rewarding. In researching topics, the developers refreshed their own knowledge base and began using the analytic tools they were developing in their own company.

Completing the puzzle

PaySimple partners with a number of software solution providers that have expertise in their market verticals but lack the electronic payment element. Commercial Legal Software, which serves many collection industry agencies, is one of PaySimple's top partners.

PaySimple integrates payment processing designed for seamless operation. ISOs also resell PaySimple services using the company's Web site.

We've all heard the Chinese proverb: Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.

Instead of just answering its customers' questions, PaySimple's new resource center also provides answers to questions small-business owners may not know to ask. PaySimple is endeavoring to teach them to fish – and stocking the pond. 

Digital Check marks 2008 with growth

Digital Check Corp. reported more than 500 banking institutions added its scanners to their remote deposit offerings in 2008.

During the year, 60 agreements were renewed with reseller partners; nine U.S. agreements and six international agreements were signed.

Fiserv ranked No. 1

Fiserv Inc.'s Fiserv Source Capture Suite is the top-ranked branch and teller capture solution in Aite Group's Branch and Teller Capture: A Vendor Overview report.

The study analyzed 14 solutions based on features and functionalities, including customer advocacy, integration with additional branch technology solutions and image capture integration.

Forbes likes Global

Forbes.com recognized **Global Payments Inc.** as one of its Platinum 400 – Best Big Companies. Forbes selected the Platinum 400 on such factors as sales and earnings growth, earnings outlook and stock market returns.

Global Payments signs more casinos

Global Payments Inc. will provide its suite of cash access services to the following U.S. casinos: Downstream



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IndustryUpdate

Casino Resort, Prairie Meadows Racetrack & Casino and Delta Casino. It will also provide services to Stampede Casino in Canada.

Kabira expands to Latin America

Payment processing solutions provider **Kabira Technologies Inc.** is expanding its partner and sales relationships throughout the Americas.

Based in San Mateo, Calif., the company plans to leverage its footprint to target electronic transaction opportunities in Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Mexico.

First Data honored by McDonald's

McDonald's USA LLC recently awarded its second annual U.S. Technology Supplier of the Year Award to **First Data Corp.** The award is given to the technology product supplier that makes the most significant contribution to McDonald's.

PaymentsGateway offers free e-commerce services

Dallas-based **PaymentsGateway** is offering its payment gateway services free of charge to all new resellers until January 2010. Additionally, the fee to become a reseller,

which is separate from service charges, will be waived for those who sign up before March 1, 2009.

PayPal offers extra security to U.K.

PayPal Inc.'s customers in the U.K. can now opt for an extra layer of security. The PayPal SMS Security Key texts a unique security code to customers' mobile phones for them to use to log into their accounts. This is in addition to a username and password.

Trustwave establishes Latin American HQ

Trustwave opened an office in São Paulo, Brazil, to serve as the regional headquarters for the company's Latin American operations.

Jarrett Benavidez, Director of Trustwave's Latin American operations, has responsibility for sales and business development in the South America, Central America and Caribbean regions.

Faber, Coe & Gregg picks ViVOtech

Faber, Coe & Gregg Inc. chose the **ViVOtech** integrated contactless and mag stripe payment reader, ViVOpay 4500m, for all of its East Coast U.S. food and retail store locations.



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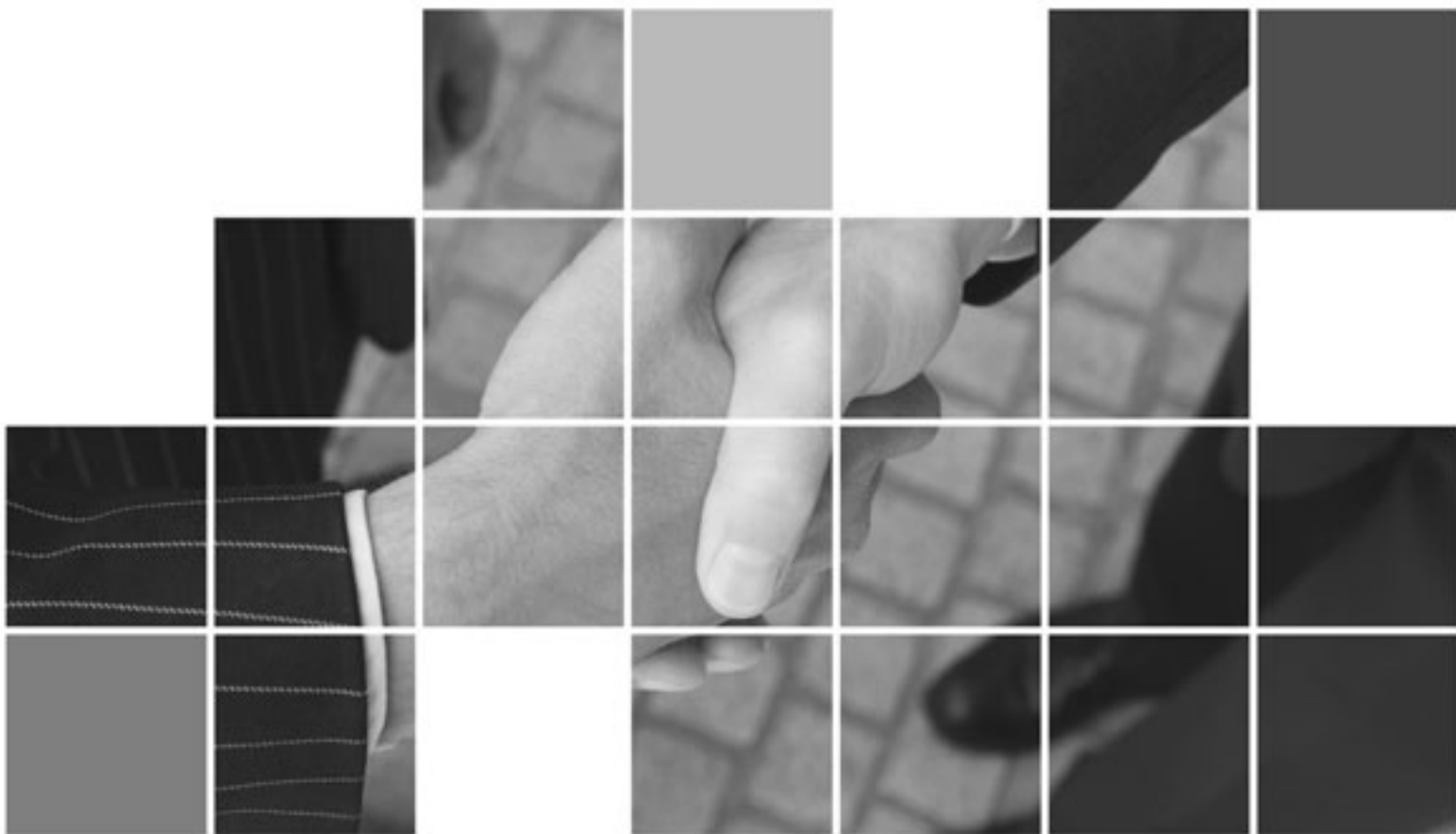
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Industry Update

The units accept mag stripe transactions, as well as contactless and NFC mobile phone payments.

PARTNERSHIPS

Accertify, Litle & Co. fight fraud

Accertify LLC's Interceptas platform is available for integration with Litle & Co.'s payment platform. This integration is designed to give Litle's customers greater flexibility in preventing and managing credit card fraud. Litle processes and manages card not present and alternative payments for direct-to-consumer brands.

Credit Union taps TNB

Carter Federal Credit Union is converting its card processing to TNB Card Services. The \$140 million credit union will convert 1,700 card accounts, with balances of \$2.4 million. Carter Federal will also implement TNB's Rewards2U loyalty program.

Charge Anywhere, Tripoint deploy wireless

Charge Anywhere LLC deployed its wireless payment terminals with Tripoint Communications in

the Bahamas and The Turks and Caicos Islands. The solutions include Payment Application Data Security Standard secure mobile payment platforms, signature capture and payment gateway services.

Comodo partners with European company

Comodo secured an exclusive agreement to provide secure sockets layer certificates to Host Europe, a European web hosting company.

The partnership supplies Host Europe with the ability to sell a wide range of SSL certificates while Comodo operates the certificate back-end issuance and validation processes.

ECHO Health, OptumHealth to provide payment solution

ECHO Health Inc. selected OptumHealth Inc.'s Electronic Payments and Statements solution to enhance ECHO's medical claims and settlement services and reduce customer costs.

ECHO Health will use OptumHealth Electronic Payments and Statements in conjunction with its Simplicity suite of products and services for its insurance and third-party administrator customers.



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HBNet chosen by RDM

HBNet, a subsidiary of leading payment technology provider **Hypercom Corp.**, will now provide high-speed transaction transport services for **RDM Corp.**

RDM is a developer of specialized software and hardware products for electronic payment processing and remote deposit capture solutions.

iPay partners with RCU

Bill pay provider for financial institutions **iPay Technologies LLC** formed a strategic bill-payment processing relationship with **Royal Credit Union** of Wisconsin. iPay will provide bill payment and small-business products to the credit union's 113,000 members.

MEPS to process for NPSA

The **National Portable Storage Association** recently partnered with **Merchant Essentials Payment Solutions**, which is now the only NPSA preferred credit card processor.

It's Precidia solutions for RDS, Cash Depot

Precidia Technologies Inc. will offer its TransNet pay-

ment engine to **Retail Data Systems LLC** customers. RDS has deployed the TransNet solution in several quick service restaurants using existing NEC cash registers and POS systems.

In other company news, ATM reseller and processor **Cash Depot** certified Precidia's POSLynx220 with the ATMs it provides to customers in the convenience store and other retail sectors. The router connects dial-based ATMs to Cash Depot's SSL gateway.

First American teams up with RDM

RDM Corp., a remote deposit capture (RDC) solutions provider, reported that **First American Payment Systems LP** has agreed to sell RDM's suite of RDC products, including ITMS Simply Deposit and WebClient. Simply Deposit is an RDC solution designed specifically for small businesses. First American said it provides processing services to over 100,000 merchants in the United States.

ACQUISITIONS

Sybase picks up paybox

Enterprise software and services company **Sybase Inc.**

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IndustryUpdate

acquired mobile solutions provider **paybox Solutions AG**. Sybase will now provide mobile operators, financial institutions and merchants with a suite of mobile payment solutions.

A privately held company headquartered in Raunheim, Germany, paybox will be integrated into Sybase 365, a Sybase subsidiary.

Tier buys ChoicePay

Payment solutions provider **Tier Technologies Inc.** agreed to purchase **ChoicePay Inc.**, an electronic bill payment services provider. The transaction was completed for \$7.5 million in cash at closing and is said to have an earn-out potential for ChoicePay shareholders capped at \$2 million, based on future business.

VeriSign to take Certicom

VeriSign Inc. will acquire all of the outstanding common shares of **Certicom Corp.** The aggregate purchase price is approximately \$73 million.

And VeriSign expects to gain a leadership position in elliptic curve cryptography, a type of public-key encryption technology.

APPOINTMENTS

Bates named President at Solveras

Brian Bates is the new President of Solveras Inc. He has more than 25 years' experience in the telecommunications industry and over 20 years' experience in the payments industry. Bates previously served as President and Chief Operating Officer of Transaction Network Services Inc.

UPS hires Borja

Anthony Borja joined United Payment Services as Director of Sales Services. Borja has been in the payments industry since joining Cardservice International in 1996. He has also worked for I-Payment and Maas Technology Group.

Claypatch joins Apriva

Kathy J. Claypatch joined Apriva Inc. as Senior Vice President of Information Technology for the company's POS division. Previously, Claypatch served as Vice President of Information Technology for TSYS Acquiring Solutions.

ClairMail appoints new CEO

ClairMail Inc. appointed **Pete Daffern** its new Chief Executive Officer. Daffern brings more than 20 years of operational and business leadership experience to ClairMail. He was CEO of Purisma and President of AIM Technology Inc. Daffern also spent more than 10 years at Seagate Technology LLC.

Merchant Focus Processing welcomes Nathan England

Merchant Focus Processing Inc. appointed **Nathan England** to the position of Vice President of Reseller Marketing. Previously England worked for CyberSource Corp. as Authorize.Net's Inside Sales Manager, and more recently as a Business Development Manager.

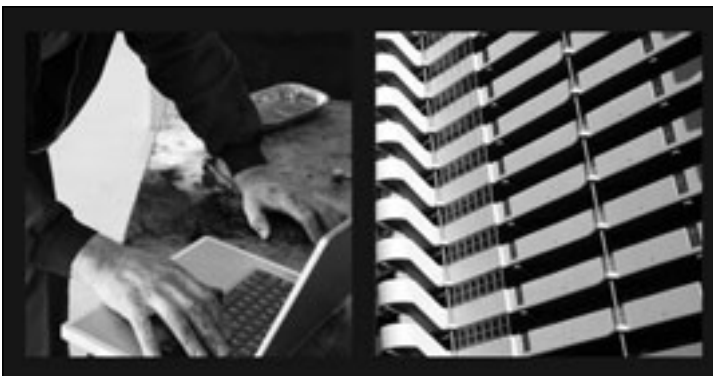
Goldleaf has Hart

Goldleaf Financial Solutions Inc. appointed **Alex P. Hart** to its board of directors. Hart has two decades of experience in the financial services industry.

He was Executive Vice President and General Manager of CheckFree Corp.'s Electronic Banking Services Division. He also served as President and CEO of Corillian Corporation.

Rosenblatt and Lambrix promoted

Jeff Rosenblatt was named President of EVO Merchant Services; **Kevin Lambrix** was named COO. Ray Sidhom remains as the company's CEO. ■



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Make security a small-merchant priority

By Scott Henry

VeriFone

Big data breaches get big headlines, but criminals are targeting merchants of all sizes to gain cardholder data that can be quickly turned to illicit profits. Smaller merchants should not be ignored when it comes to payment card security.

While sophisticated criminal organizations employ high-tech methods to infiltrate corporate networks, plenty of lower-level criminals are using any tricks and techniques they can to steal data.

Increasingly, ISOs and merchant level salespeople will be elevated – or forced – into becoming payment security consultants to small and mid-sized merchants who are confused by the complex array of industry mandates with which they are expected to comply.

Low-hanging fruit

While it may seem that mom-and-pop retail operators are a far cry from the large supermarkets and multilane retailers that have coughed up millions of card numbers, there's a basic, time-tested rule of crime: Criminals will go where the easy money is.

As the companies categorized under the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standard (DSS) as level 1 (over 6 million transactions per year) and level 2 (1 million to 6 million) approach 100 percent compliance with the PCI DSS and PCI PIN Entry Device (PED) security requirements, crooks will find it increasingly difficult and expensive to target larger organizations.

The easy pickings will be with the mom-and-pop organizations. In fact, Visa Inc. indicated 62 percent of known compromises during 2007 occurred in restaurants, the vast majority of which are level 4.

Another time-tested rule is that when it comes to accountability, the flow goes downhill to the point of least resistance. Many consumer and legislative groups are clamoring alongside financial institutions to place the cost burden of card attacks fully on merchants.

Card companies put the onus on acquirers, who in turn place the blame and the costs on merchants. Larger companies have clout to negotiate such costs, but smaller merchants do not.

PCI navigation

Many payment systems in use today were built long before criminals even thought of implanting electronic bugs in payment devices. These systems can still execute

payment transactions, but they are effectively obsolete with regard to security.

The card brands and vendors within the industry have recognized the need to replace outmoded, insecure systems. Hence the imposition of regulations: the PCI DSS, PCI PED and Payment Application (PA) DSS.

Larger organizations have information technology and compliance groups that can navigate the PCI legalese; smaller organizations are often left to fend for themselves.

PCI PED is readily understood: Effective Jan. 1, 2008, retailers may not purchase systems that are not PCI PED approved. Retailers are taking steps to lower their risk by implementing PCI PED-compliant credit and debit card terminals.

The card brands have mandated that retailers who deploy non-PCI PED approved terminals purchased after Jan. 1, 2008, will be liable in the event of a debit card information compromise that can be traced to non-PCI PED approved systems. This liability would include consumer card losses, costs incurred by card issuers for re-issuing compromised cards, card company fines and, potentially, civil penalties, not to mention the likely loss of customer goodwill and business from negative publicity.

Selling merchants on the need for an upgrade when they haven't felt any threat is no easy feat, but it is necessary. It's incumbent on all of us as an industry to educate them.

First off, the cost of legal representation alone could be enough to bankrupt a small merchant's business, and it's certainly a heck of a lot more than the cost of a new terminal or PIN pad.

Secondly, the clock is ticking on systems that predate the PCI PED requirements: These systems must be removed from service no later than June 30, 2010 – just a little over a year from now.

Brick-and-click issues

Many smaller merchants are moving to accommodate electronic commerce customers – in essence having both brick-and-mortar storefronts as well as virtual, click-based storefronts on the Web, along with internal networks and servers to support them.

Pizza stores, dry cleaners, limousine services, restaurants and so on are increasingly compelled by competition to offer online services, including payment. That exposes them to additional liability with regard to the storage and transmission of cardholder data.

To address such concerns, the PCI Security Standards Council (SSC) oversees the PCI DSS. The current PCI DSS is "a multifaceted security standard that includes requirements for security management, policies, procedures, network architecture, software design and other critical protective measures," according to the PCI SSC.

The focus on compliance has been primarily at levels 1 and 2 merchants, who do large volumes of card transactions. However, Visa has implemented a level 4 program that requires acquirers to identify, prioritize and manage overall risk within the large population of smaller merchants. That means acquirers will increasingly require merchants they deem the riskiest to undergo stricter compliance requirements.

In 2007, the PCI SSC formally adopted Visa's Payment Application Best Practices guidelines and codified them as the PA DSS.

Visa's PABP applied to the development of secure software applications that are intended to mitigate compromises, prevent storage of sensitive cardholder data and support overall compliance with the PCI DSS. PA DSS moved beyond that scope to encompass applications running on standalone payment terminals. At minimum, your customers need guidance on living in a PA DSS world. Get up to speed on overall PCI DSS and PA DSS requirements so you can educate customers regarding such things as firewalls and computer access management.

With the wide availability of commodity-priced networking equipment, it's tempting for click-and-brick merchants to save a buck and install their own Wi-Fi and even Ethernet local area networks. But in doing so they can set themselves up for costly exposure unless they have advice on how to properly set up and maintain their networks in accordance with the PCI DSS.

Networks are vulnerable points of

entry for criminals unless they are properly protected against worms, viruses, unauthorized entry and other assaults.

There are many broadband and Wi-Fi network compliant installation and management services available that you can draw into your portfolio of value-added services. In doing so, you will make it easier for your merchants to achieve compliance; you will also create for yourself an additional revenue stream and deeper customer relationships.

The payoff

There are two great benefits to investing in security:

1. It assures consumers their transactions are safe, encouraging them to make purchases with their credit and debit cards.
2. It encourages – and ultimately forces – merchants to swap out old, obsolete equipment in favor of new systems that meet today's requirements.

Those of you who can learn to sell security as a feature will be able to speed up the migration. However, those who can function as security consultants to smaller merchants will be able to gain market share. In turn, you can help your customers learn to sell security as a feature to consumers, giving them an edge over their competitors.

Ultimately, everybody will be happier – and safer. ☑

Scott Henry is Director, North America Product Marketing, for VeriFone. He can be contacted at scott_henry@verifone.com.



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Revisit that elevator speech

By Biff Matthews

CardWare International

I predict 2009 will be a year of unprecedented change in our industry. Among the losers: the unethical class, which will finally be pushed out, along with players who are too weak or unable to adapt to changing tides. The winners: those who embrace new mandates, use them to benefit customers and leverage every opportunity to communicate effectively with potential clients.

The latter group covers a lot of territory, but there's no better place to start than the ground floor. That's where you get on – on the elevator, that is.

Haven't polished your elevator speech lately? Don't even have one? Read on. For those who need a quick refresher, the elevator speech, or pitch, is a 30-second personal commercial developed to help you promote yourself, your company and your solutions. Thirty seconds is the length of the average elevator ride.

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Elevator pitches are critically important, both personally and professionally, for anyone whose mission is to improve sales, which is to say, all of us. Whether you are a sales newbie or tenured sales star, there now exist more compelling reasons for you to hone this sales tool than ever before.

Four guidelines

So, you're there – at a social setting or professional gathering, on a flight or in an elevator. Someone asks you what you do. How can you prepare for this opportunity? Here are four guidelines:

1. You have 30 seconds, or less, to make your case.
2. Your speech should be crisp and concisely focused on how you help customers and what you help them achieve.
3. Use only layman's language. Avoid industry-specific terms and alphabet soup. Forcing your listener to guess what you're saying because you've used jargon and acronyms is counterproductive. Craft your speech so that, whether your listener is a professor or a janitor, your meaning is clear.
4. Answer the question, but leave your listener wanting to know more.

If you're an ISO or merchant level salesperson, your speech may be something like, "We provide a variety of payment solutions to help reduce expenses and increase sales." That meets the short and crisp requirement and answers the question.

Once you have crafted your brief gem about what sets your solutions apart from your competition, practice delivering it. The pitch needs to be part of you; it needs to roll off your tongue with sincerity and enthusiasm. It can't sound canned.

Three variations

There are, of course, different audiences, and you can craft distinct pitches for each. I think three is the right number of speeches to prepare. The first is the original, the one you use in social and other public settings. The second addresses gatekeepers, the individuals who decide whether you are moving ahead in an organization – or not. The third version is for decision makers.

In talking with gatekeepers, ruthlessly zero in on solutions you provide that are directly relevant to the gatekeeper's company. The unspoken questions you have to answer are:

- What's in it for me?
- What's in it for my boss?
- Why should I tell your story up the line?

Decision makers call for a different approach, generally one dealing with the elimination of a "pain."

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Unexpected results

A friend of mine, the owner of the last imprinter company in the United States, was on a flight, talking with a seatmate. As this friend walked off the plane, a man stopped him and presented his card. "We need to talk," he said. "Call me."

The presenter of the card was Executive Vice President of one of America's largest retail chains.

It was the heyday of imprinters, and he was having serious problems processing credit cards. He happened to be seated behind my friend and had over-

heard the conversation. The moral of this story is easy to grasp.

You never know when your elevator speech is going to be heard – or overheard.

Whenever you use your well-crafted, 30-second pitch, it has the potential to generate opportunities you might never have thought possible.

Thoughtful edits

Elevator speeches, though powerful tools in the sales arsenal, are often difficult for sales professionals to appreciate. There is the tendency to tinker with them, even when they are producing good results.

Resist the temptation. The speech may be old to you, but it's not about you. "Fresh" is in the eye of the beholder.

This is not to say that you shouldn't review your content periodically and make sure your speech is as good as it can be.

There are always new ideas, new terms and new solutions to consider. Just be sure you make changes based on substance rather than on your own boredom with the original message.

So, make a resolution for 2009 that you'll do something that will positively impact your business while not costing you a cent.

If you do a good job crafting the first version of your elevator speech, this will give you impetus to write the other two. Then, be prepared to impress fellow travelers with whom you strike up conversations, as well as those who may be listening quietly nearby. ■

Biff Matthews is President of Thirteen Inc., the parent company of CardWare International, based in Heath, Ohio. He is one of 12 founding members of the Electronic Transactions Association, serving on its board, advisory board and committees. Call him at 740-522-2150, or e-mail him at biff@13-inc.com.



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The long fingers of PCI

By Ross Federgreen, CSRSI
Rick Allen,
Payment Processing Inc.

The need to maintain secure credit and debit card transaction networks to prevent data breaches, protect personally identifiable information (PII), and thwart identity theft and cyber fraud has been debated exhaustively in recent years. And the payments industry has offered a significant, focused and all-encompassing response.

This is evidenced by the implementation of the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standard (DSS) and Payment Application (PA) DSS, as well as the rapid growth of the PCI Security Standards Council (SSC). However, while a recent Internet search of the term PCI DSS yielded over 1,000,000 hits, many in the industry have not yet come to terms with the fact of life commonly known as PCI. Many merchants, ISOs and even some acquirers still plead ignorance.

The card brands and other industry leaders have gone to great lengths to educate the entire stakeholder chain on the issues pertaining to PCI, and they have had limited success. The question is why?

Mired in erroneous beliefs

The answer lies not in the failure to communicate the message but in the belief by many that PCI is of limited or no consequence and might even be damaging to business operations.

Small merchants who unknowingly store full card data within integrated payment systems are the most vulnerable to direct financial liability, yet they are the least able to pay the cost of noncompliance. And they often do not realize that adhering to the PCI DSS can protect them. Many ISOs believe any additional charge to merchants to help them attain PCI compliance will further

At least 13 separate pieces of proposed legislation were introduced in either the Senate or House during the 110th U.S. Congress, and three Senate bills were reported favorably out of committee: SB 239, the Notification of Risk to Personal Data Act; SB 495, the Personal Data Privacy and Security Act; and SB 1178, the Identity Theft and Prevention Act.

compromise a rather tenuous relationship; many acquirers have not determined their course of action.

And the card brands have, at times, been inconsistent in dealing with requirements and have propagated an alphabet soup of rules, regulations and acronyms. But with the formation and strengthening of the PCI SSC, the PCI message, rules and compliance procedures now exhibit a mature consistency of application and approach.

Government at attention

However, the results of our failure as an industry to effectively promulgate the necessity of PCI compliance throughout all levels of stakeholders can best be summed up by Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto's remarks following the attack on Pearl Harbor: "I fear all we have done is to awaken a sleeping giant and fill him with a terrible resolve."

A review of legislative and agency action reveals that the U.S. government has not been asleep. At least 13 existing federal laws impact issues associated with PII. These include the U.S.A. Patriot Act, the Federal Information Security Management Act and others.

Further, at least 13 separate pieces of proposed legislation were introduced in either the Senate or House during the 110th U.S. Congress, and

three Senate bills were reported favorably out of committee: SB 239, the Notification of Risk to Personal Data Act; SB 495, the Personal Data Privacy and Security Act; and SB 1178, the Identity Theft and Prevention Act.

From the industry's mouth

Of more important and immediate impact is the Federal Trade Commission's January 2008 consent decree in the case of Life Is Good Inc. As reported in "PCI, an aspect of PII," by Ross Federgreen, Ken Musante and Theodore Svoronos, *The Green Sheet*, Jan. 12, 2009, issue 09:01:01, "The FTC charged that LIG 'failed to provide reasonable and appropriate security for the sensitive consumer information stored on its network,' even though the company stated on its Web site that such information 'is kept in a secure file.'"

In nine specific orders, the decree covers all aspects of LIG's data protection policies, procedures and ethics, and it is being embraced as a minimum standard for operating entities going forward. The underpinning of this regulatory fiat is found at the core of several underlying, controlling payments industry documents pertaining to the issues of PII and the PCI DSS.

The first is CISP Bulletin 051407, which is better known as the Level 4 Merchant Compliance Program

Requirements document written by Visa Inc. It discusses the requirements of the level 4 merchant compliance programs. Acquirers were responsible for responding to Visa with relevant programs in the following five areas by July 31, 2007:

1. Timeline of critical events
2. Risk profiling strategy
3. Merchant education strategy
4. Compliance strategy
5. Compliance reporting

Of further consequence in linking our industry's initiatives to the FTC's consent decree are the 12 base requirements of the PCI DSS. Although the PCI DSS has evolved and matured over the last four years and now is in version 1.2, the core has remained. Its basic 12 requirements are divided into six goals:

1. Build and maintain a secure network.
2. Protect cardholder data.
3. Maintain a vulnerability management program.
4. Implement strong access control measures.
5. Regularly monitor and test networks.
6. Maintain an information security program.

The FTC's interpretation

The FTC consent decree pertaining to LIG requires entities to institute a "comprehensive information-security program" that incorporates administrative, technical and physical safeguards tailored to the size of the commercial entity, the nature of its activities and the sensitivity of the personal information it collects.

Specifically, the decree mandates an information security program that includes:


- Designation of an employee or employees to coordinate the information security program
- Identification of internal and external risks to the security and confidentiality of personal information and assessment of the safeguards already in place
- Creation and implementation of safeguards to control the risks identified in the risk assessment
- Monitoring the effectiveness of safeguards
- Development of reasonable steps to select and oversee service providers that handle personal information
- Evaluation and adjustment of the program to reflect results of monitoring, material changes to the company's operations or other circumstances that may affect program efficiency

It is clear the fingerprints of the CISP Bulletin 051407 and the PCI DSS are incorporated and preserved within the context of the FTC consent decree. This demonstrates alignment of the various governmental and nongovernmental thought leaders in this area. Analysis of legislative

initiatives also demonstrates a commonality of thought.

No time to dither

There is no longer any room left to argue the basic validity or applicability of PCI. The only issue left is how to achieve universal compliance with the specific mandates of the FTC and our own leadership. It is not acceptable or prudent to distract merchants from compliance by offering an ineffective, purportedly simple solution to a highly complex mandate.

The only acceptable solution must provide to merchants meaningful education, traceable task solving and consequential results. Simultaneously, the solution must provide to ISOs and acquirers risk stratification, risk analysis and measurable performance criteria for their merchant populations. The consequences of failure in this area are both real and draconian to stakeholders throughout the merchant services universe. 

Rick Allen, a Certified Information Systems Security Professional, is Director of Partner Compliance at Payment Processing Inc. in Newark, Calif. To contact him, please call 510-795-4977.

Ross Federgreen is founder of CSRSI, The Payment Advisors, a leading electronic payment consultancy specifically focused on the merchant. He can be reached at 866-462-7774, ext. 1, or rfedergreen@csrsi.com.

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ProPay Inc.

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Fax: 801-717-4401

ISO/MLS benefits:

- Micro-merchant solutions
- Corporate merchant services
- MicroSecure Card Reader for face-to-face transactions
- End-to-end data security services
- Alternative electronic funds processing
- Fully PCI compliant

Micro-merchant processing pros

In 2003, ProPay Inc. boarded Just Us Teachers, Chris and Belinda Slaughter's Baytown, Texas, business that supplies primary and secondary school teachers with font libraries of scientific and mathematical symbols for classroom worksheets. Just Us Teachers' Web site accepts online payments via PayPal. But to market their product to teachers in person, the Slaughters travel to tradeshow, fairs and educational conferences across the United States.

For face-to-face payments, the Slaughters used a knucklebuster (a manual card imprinter that predates today's POS terminals and electronic data verification and transfer systems), which was cumbersome to carry, slow to use for processing transactions and highly insecure in this Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standard (DSS) world. So when ProPay launched its new lipstick-sized, triple DES-encrypted MicroSecure Card Reader in October 2008, the Slaughters immediately purchased one. It worked so well they ordered three more.

According to Gary Goodrich, Chief Executive Officer at ProPay, this case illustrates ProPay's mission. "Our whole mantra is helping businesses grow and prosper by providing these innovative payment services," he said. "Everything we do is about that safety or security and tremendous simplicity for the small merchant."

Streamlining sales

Founded in 1997 and headquartered in Orem, Utah, ProPay jumped into the payments industry with FaxPay – a method that enabled small businesses to accept credit card pay-

ments via fax machines. In 2000, ProPay rolled out its first virtual payment terminal to serve micro merchants online. Its proprietary, customizable platform reportedly allows businesses to turn telephones or computers into virtual terminals at a fraction of the cost of standard, in-store terminals.

"We have really helped people avoid expensive terminals," Goodrich said. As an example, he cited the company's interactive voice response system, which he said enables someone to "pick up a phone and key in an order securely, or, more typically, turn their home computer or laptop into a virtual terminal. And that's been a core business."

Initially, ProPay targeted the online auction market and then branched out to owners of small and home-based businesses. As ProPay grew, it began to supply payment services to larger enterprises with billions of dollars in annual sales. But ProPay has continued to evolve, recognizing a void in card present, micro-merchant payments.

"We were just looking out at the 25 million people that don't even know what PCI means yet," Goodrich said. "They're taking card numbers increasingly, and so we thought we really need to have a physical, very inexpensive, robust encryption device for these face-to-face transactions."

Thus was borne the MicroSecure Card Reader (for more information, see "Payments in your pocket," *The Green Sheet*, Dec. 22, 2008, issue 08:02:12). The pocket-size, patent-pending device – which weighs 1.2 ounces – creates a unique encrypted key each time a card is swiped. Card

ProPay is looking to further diversify its partnerships. Until now, the company has marketed its services via a small, internal sales force. But Goodrich believes ProPay's expansion through the eBay partnership and the launch of the MicroSecure device will necessitate another selling channel.

data is decrypted only when it reaches ProPay's servers for back-end processing. Merchants never have access to the actual data, only to its unique identifiers.

Securing transactions

In case of chargebacks, merchants gain access to disputed transactions through ProtectPay, ProPay's PCI DSS-compliant reporting infrastructure. ProtectPay, therefore, is critical to using the mini reader. Goodrich said it took several years and millions of dollars to design and integrate the reader with ProtectPay.

After only a few months in the marketplace, the inexpensive reader is being used by about 3,000 merchants, "with almost no reports of technical difficulties," Goodrich added.

The reader is designed for individuals who sell jewelry, makeup, scrapbooks, nutritional supplements and so forth as a primary or secondary income. In one case, a ProPay customer's husband was a U.S. soldier deployed in Iraq.

"To bolster the household income, she started to sell jewelry on the side," said Scott Nelson, Vice President of Marketing at ProPay. "With the MicroSecure her sales have actually doubled."

Goodrich noted that sales in some cases have even tripled due to the impulse nature of discretionary purchases. Studies have shown consumers tend to pay more when they pay with plastic, but the reader reportedly helps merchants in other ways, too.

Greg Pesci, Vice President of Business Strategy at ProPay, said customers who use MicroSecure look "much more professional" than salespeople who still use order pads and write credit card information down with pen and paper.

The security of the device is another factor that can boost sales. Goodrich recalled people at tradeshows saying the following to him about the MicroSecure: "Wow, that tiny device is that robust and does all that?" and "It encrypts at a triple DES level on swipe and changes the encryption every time I swipe a card?"

Making friends

Despite the state of the economy, ProPay is expanding.

In October 2008, online auction giant eBay Inc. tapped ProPay as an alternative to PayPal for post-auction, online payments. With the integration of ProPay's platform with eBay's Web site, ProPay offers eBay's Silver-, Gold-, Platinum- and Titanium-tiered PowerSellers lower processing rates.

"We're not here to speak for these great companies, eBay and PayPal, but we like to believe the reason they chose us among over a dozen others was because of our security and ease of use and our technical abilities to integrate quickly and professionally into eBay," Goodrich said.

ProPay is looking to further diversify its partnerships. Until now, the company has marketed its services via a small, internal sales force.

But Goodrich believes ProPay's expansion through the eBay partnership and the launch of the MicroSecure device will necessitate another selling channel.

"We'll likely engage in the ISO community soon so that we can reach other markets that we have not been addressing," Goodrich said. "We can see this applying to many mobile service and sales markets that we currently do not serve."

ProPay has taken a different route than most other companies. It began as an online presence and branched out into the face-to-face POS world – not the other way around. But Goodrich believes that evolution has served ProPay well. Securing data in the early, Wild West days of online payments and making its payment method easy and affordable has informed ProPay's new foray into card present payments.

"We have grown rather organically and somewhat conservatively," Goodrich said. "But I think that that has been a useful mindset in how we handle cardholder data and please customers."

That dedication seems to have paid off. For the last three years, ProPay has been recognized as one of Utah's 100 fastest growing companies. And the processor reported its gross revenue has steadily increased every year since it incorporated in 1997.

With the micro-merchant population predicted to increase in the coming years, ProPay does not see its upward trajectory ending anytime soon. ■

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UNITED **Merchant Services**
Payment Processing Company

Company Profile



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Phone: 941-360-8859

Fax: 941-360-8892

Web site: www.achpaymentsolutions.com

ISO/MLS benefits:

- Revenue sharing programs
- Vested residuals
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ACH by design

ISOs and merchant level salespeople (MLs) have traditionally relied on the boarding of new merchants and the residuals generated from existing accounts to sustain and grow margins. But economic turmoil has upset that business model. To survive and thrive, ISOs and MLs would be wise to investigate other ways to entice new merchants and retain the ones they already have. One avenue to pursue is payments made over the automated clearing house (ACH) network.

Donna Ayers, Director of Marketing and Sales Administration for ACH Payment Solutions, has recognized a significant trend in consumer behavior: Cardholders are putting away their credit cards and paying with debit more often. One consequence of that trend is that payments are increasingly being processed and settled over the interchange-free ACH. Because transaction fees are lower when using the ACH, Ayers believes ACH processing makes sense for merchants.

Statistics back up Ayers' claim. The ACH network, which began over 35 years ago as a low-volume network transmitting large, recurring transactions, has risen in popularity over the years. In 2007, it was reported that more than 18 billion payments were made over the ACH.

According to Ayers, the third-quarter 2008 statistics from NACHA – The Electronic Payments Association, which oversees the ACH network, show a 7.7 percent increase in ACH transactions over the same period in 2007. Furthermore, much of the growth in ACH volume has been attributed to the rise in Internet-based and alternative payments.

Good timing

ACHPS has exploited that explosion in e-commerce by carving out a niche in ACH processing for small to large and regional e-commerce merchants and businesses that take telephone orders – merchants often overlooked by other ACH providers, Ayers said.

"With the state of the economy in our nation today, more and more ISOs and merchants really have been moving toward the ACH or alternative payment methods to lower their cost in comparison to the discount they pay on the credit card side, thus making ACH a very attractive service for ISOs to sell," Ayers said. "This is one more thing that they can add to their list of offerings as they go out to the merchant."

Ayers added that providing ACH services can increase merchant stickiness because the more products merchants have with ISOs, the less likely they are to switch processors. "Also, the margins are still there for the ISOs," she said. "So, it's a win-win for everyone."

In addition to the lower processing costs for ACH payments compared to standard credit card processing, merchants save trips to banks with the ACH's electronic check service, which sometimes results in merchants receiving faster deposits.

For small merchants with tight margins, ACH's benefits often make it an easy sell.

"Our biggest reward was seeing our ISO partners embrace ACH, with many of them now promoting ACH as their lead when prospecting a new customer," Ayers said.

CompanyProfile

Bill Smither, Vice President of Business Development at ACHPS, said ISOs and MLSs are using the ACH proposition to successfully target professional service businesses, such as multi-unit property owners and dental and medical offices.

Strong roots

According to Smither, ACHPS' President Rick Edelen and Chief Executive Officer James L. Plappert "have a solid footing in the ISO industry." The two executives – founding partners of ACHPS – saw the ISO channel as an ideal way to market ACH to merchants and increase ISO revenue, Smither said.

Edelen brings his experience as former owner of Commonwealth Payment Systems Inc. and The Merchant's Friend Inc. to ACHPS. Plappert's payments industry career has spanned 25 years, including a stint as President of the Electronic Transactions Association where he was a 15-year board member.

ACHPS was founded in 2002 to develop a national sales distribution channel for ACH payments.

"The challenge, just like any new business, was to build market share, convert the product to an offering that would interest an ISO and then educate ISOs on the benefits of the product," Smither said. The Louisville, Ky.-based company now works with over 65 ISOs nationwide. "Some of those ISOs in turn have multiple locations across the country," Smither said. "So, as far as sales reps that are actually selling our products and services, you're probably in to three or four hundred people."

Tight focus

ACHPS targets e-commerce and telephone order businesses because the two sectors create the largest margins for ISOs, according to Ayers. Smither added ACHPS excels in these areas partly because it underwrites and guarantees the ACH service. For an additional fee, ACHPS also handles administrative returns for its clients.

"When a merchant gets an ACH item returned for account not found, invalid account number, insufficient funds, et cetera, ACHPS can provide administrative management services where we'll actually call the consumers on behalf of our merchants and try and get the corrected information," Smither said. "We're about 73 to 75 percent successful in that endeavor. It's something that really differentiates us from a lot of our competitors."

Ayers said the return service is a primary reason for the company's account retention success. Additional value-adds include back office conversion. ACHPS also aggregates total

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Company Profile

payments for its partners to negotiate cheaper processing rates based on volumes customers could not achieve individually.

Although specializing in Internet and telephone-based transactions has worked for ACHPS, the company has seen an increase in its business-to-business market. ACHPS also intends to branch out into the brick-and-mortar retail world with a suite of POS services and a remote deposit capture product; both offerings will be made available to ISOs for resale.

ISO friendly

ACHPS knows the value of its ISO partners and treats them accordingly. "We

understand the ISOs," Ayers said. "We understand the industry. We understand the challenges that [ISOs] face, the types of tools, products, services that would entice them.

"First and foremost, we take pride in the fact that residuals are paid timely each month, which has earned us loyalty from our ISO partners. We also do not sell against our ISOs. There's no chance that they're going to run across us [competing against them] out in the marketplace. This also builds trust and loyalty from our ISOs."

The Director of Payment Operations for one of ACHPS' customers was overwhelmed with the service his company received and attributed its 2008 year over year decrease in returned ACH payments to ACHPS. "With previous vendors, NACHA changes were always a challenge that ultimately cost us customers," he said. "We simply do not have that issue any longer."

With regard to customer care, Smither said ACHPS partners with customers "to figure out the best solution for them. That may require pulling services from several partner companies that are the best in their specific product offering. It's not just, 'Hey, here's a check scanner or an ACH virtual terminal, plug it in, and let's start processing.' We really do offer our clients a customized solution."

A Mercator Advisory Group report projected that within the next five years, 35 percent of payments made online will come in the form of alternative payments, including programs that leverage the ACH.


As alternative payment schemes continue to proliferate, Mercator predicted ACH will continue to show solid growth and transaction volume.

ACHPS expects to process over 1 billion dollars in transactions in 2009; the time may be ripe for ISOs and MLSs to revamp their business models and reap the benefits of offering ACH payment solutions. ■

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SellingPrepaid

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Despite the travails of the U.S. and world economies, the prepaid world continues to expand its reach, tapping new populations with innovative, useful products.

The features in this edition of *SellingPrepaid* begin with a look at the U.S. prepaid market in 2009 from Paul Tomasofsky, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at the Network Branded Prepaid Card Association.

Next, John Goodale, Director of Business Expansion, TSYS Europe, draws comparisons and contrasts between the European and U.S. prepaid markets. The third feature returns to the U.S. market, where companies have taken note of the money to be made in loading tax refunds onto prepaid cards.



Prepaid in brief

NEWS

CAT buries hatchet with office retailer

Card Activation Technologies Inc., owners of patented POS technology for the activation and processing of transactions related to gift, phone and other stored-value cards, settled its lawsuit against **OfficeMax Inc.** Details of the settlement remain confidential.

Phone card scammers charged in Florida

A federal grand jury in Miami indicted five individuals for allegedly engaging in a fraudulent prepaid phone card sales operation, said the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. According to the indictment, the defendants were involved with **Global Resources Inc.**, a company that sold prepaid business opportunities. Potential opportunity purchasers were told that for approximately \$15,000, GRI would provide terminals, numerous prepaid cell phones, advertising material and other forms of assistance. They were purportedly also promised they would earn their invest-

ments back in approximately six months to a year. The nine-count indictment charged the defendants with conspiracy to commit mail fraud and wire fraud. Some of the defendants were also charged with aiding and abetting the fraudulent activities. If convicted, the defendants face a maximum sentence of 20 years on each count, possible fines and mandatory restitution.

MADD supports sober driving

Mothers Against Drunk Driving is promoting its Home Safe Card in advance of Super Bowl XLIII. Each time the prepaid, Discover Financial Services-branded card is purchased, a portion of the proceeds are donated to MADD to support education against drunk driving.

Check casher, distributor give back

At a Jan. 20, 2009, ceremony in Dallas, prepaid card distributor **NetSpend Corp.** and check cash chain store operation **ACE Cash Express Inc.** presented five Dallas-area families with \$100 March of Dimes prepaid reloadable debit cards.

The families selected to receive the cards had completed *Comenzando Bien*, a prenatal education program sponsored by the not-for-profit March of Dimes Foundation and the Dallas branch of Avance, an organization that serves families in low-income, at-risk communities.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Alliance Data teams with lifestyle retailer

Gift and loyalty card marketer **Alliance Data Systems Corp.** signed a multiyear deal to provide co-branded and private-label card services to the interactive lifestyle network and retailer HSN, a division of HSN Inc.

DCS increases customers, revenue

Dynamic Card Solutions LLC reported a 2008 increase in customers, number of product orders and revenue: Its customer base grew to more than 442 financial institutions; revenue increased 23 percent compared to 2007; DCS issued 72 CardWizard Software licenses for instant issue and had numerous existing customers expand their deployments of the company's software and hardware.

Event Innovation's revenues up

Event Innovation Inc. developed a stored-value solution for stadiums, arenas and performing arts centers.

The company's Ovation online social network integrates with existing POS and ticketing solutions. Event Innovation stated that, at domestic and international events where stored-value systems are employed, users typically increase spending from 18 to 40 percent.

Inside Contactless honored

Contactless chip maker **Inside Contactless** received global media company Red Herring's Top 100 Global Companies award. The Red Herring editorial team selected Inside Contactless after an evaluation process that included financial performance, innovation, management, global strategy and ecosystem integration metrics.

MoneyGram expands

In 2008, **Moneygram International** added 13 countries and territories and more than 33,000 locations to its global network. In 2006, Moneygram launched its "owned-retail" strategy in France and Germany. Countries and territories recently added to Moneygram's global network include Serbia, French-speaking Algeria, Central African Republic, Comoros, French Polynesia, Gabon, Madagascar and New Caledonia. Other countries include Angola, Bermuda, Bhutan, Czech Republic, Serbia and Slovenia.

PEX Visa card automates funding

Prepaid Expense Card Solutions Inc. released its administrative interface. PECS is the provider of the PEX Visa Prepaid Card, issued by The Bancorp Bank, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Bancorp Inc. The PEX Card administrative Web site helps companies control spending on cards issued to employees by setting merchant category restrictions, daily spending limits and, now, automated funding options for replenishing card balances.

TorFX launches travel card

Foreign exchange specialists **Tor Currency Exchange Ltd.** (TorFX) rolled out the MasterCard Worldwide-branded Travel Money Card. The prepaid card allows users to buy euros or U.S. dollars at commercial exchange rates by registering online and paying by debit card.

PARTNERSHIPS

Payoneer processes for Avangate

Payroll program manager **Payoneer Inc.** teamed with reseller management solutions distributor **Avangate** to offer Avangate's vendors and affiliates the Avangate Prepaid MasterCard.

Zbill teams with stored value provider

Zbill Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Payment Data

Systems, reached an agreement with an undisclosed company to add PDS' private-label bill payment services to its payroll card programs. The undisclosed company reportedly is a leading provider of stored-value cards and transaction processing services to a variety of industry segments.

APPOINTMENTS

i2c gets Diamond

Prepaid processor i2c tapped **Stephen Diamond** as its Vice President, Client Account Management. Diamond has 30 years' experience in the payments industry, with eight years of prepaid experience and a background in business and product development, strategic marketing and risk management. Diamond was a senior business leader of prepaid products at Visa Inc.

MasterCard lands Lanford

MasterCard appointed **Matthew Lanford** to the position of Senior Business Leader, Europe Prepaid Product Development. Lanford will assume regional responsibility for innovation, product development, go-to-market strategy and commercialization of the MasterCard portfolio of prepaid products.

Former big leaguer joins InComm

InComm hired **Mark Leonard** as its Executive Vice President of Business Development. Leonard will be responsible for developing new revenue opportunities, spearheading mergers and acquisitions; he will also oversee strategic projects. Leonard most recently served as Group Vice President of Alliances at Blackhawk Network.

MoneyGram names new officers


MoneyGram Intl. appointed **Pamela Patsley** Executive Chairman of its board of directors and named **Anthony Ryan** President and Chief Executive Officer. Ryan also was elected to MoneyGram's board of directors. Patsley spent seven years at First Data Corp., most recently as President of First Data International, where she was responsible for the company's business interests outside the United States. Ryan joined MoneyGram in 1995 and has been responsible for overseeing day-to-day operations of the company since June 2008.

eCommLink restructures

ECommLink Inc. reorganized its executive team. **Ennio Ponzetto** was promoted to CEO and will oversee all domestic business. **Victor Newsom** was promoted to COO, and **Paul Smith** was hired as Senior Vice President of Sales and Business Development.

In addition, **Raymond Lu** was appointed Senior Vice President, Engineering and named Chairman of the

SellingPrepaid

eCommLink Technology Steering Committee. And **T. Jack Williams** was named Corporate Development Officer. 



Features

The prepaid landscape for 2009

Want to know what's in store for the U.S. prepaid card industry in 2009? Who better to ask than Paul Tomasofsky, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at the Network Branded Prepaid Card Association.

Tomasofsky is also Chief Executive Officer at payment consultancy Two Sparrows Consulting LLC and will be a moderator at the 2009 Prepaid Card Expo in Orlando, Fla., March 9 to 11, 2009.

SellingPrepaid: Given the economic turmoil, what do you see for the prepaid card industry in 2009?

Paul Tomasofsky: Clearly prepaid purchase volume has not increased as much as predicted prior to the downturn. And we're waiting for gift card numbers to come out for the fourth quarter [of 2008]. But I think you're going to see them being less of a growth as anticipated, and some products may be even a negative growth. But I don't think that's a long-term trend. I think that the prepaid business is still really at its infancy. And the breadth of products it has and the market reach of products and what it's really trying to accomplish, I still think there's a very bright future there.

SP: One consumer group targeted for prepaid cards is the unbanked. Do you think their ranks will swell because of the recession, and will prepaid demand increase?

PT: I don't know if the size of the unbanked market is going to rise. But I do know that, in difficult economic times, consumers and businesses will look for different ways to do things that maybe are less expensive. Take, for example, something like money transfer. Traditionally, money transfer is an important feature of the unbanked, especially for the immigrant population.

The lion's share of money transfers right now are occurring in the person-to-person [arena], where someone walks up to a facility that does a money transfer, hands over cash, and then the receiver walks into that similar agent or facility outside of the country and receives cash.

This is an example where consumers might say, "Hey, you know what, if I can save a few dollars here, maybe I'll try this card-to-card thing that I heard about, that my neighbor was telling me about." I think that's where we're going to see more and more adoption because of the need to kind of economize on these types of transactions.

SP: Do you see the expansion of closed-loop gift cards used as personal budgeting tools?

PT: You know the old saying is once you break the twenty, it's gone before you know it. And you don't know where it went. So, prepaid cards, especially if you want to use it in the terms that you are talking about, where I'm going to put x dollar amount on a card at the beginning of the month and that's it – and I'm not going to do it again until the beginning of the next month – clearly that's a self-regulating budgeting system right there. Intuitively, I think it makes a lot of sense that we would see these products be used in that way.

SP: What about the budget saving aspect of prepaid cards for schools and government agencies?

PT: School budgets, whether in the public or in the private sector, are going to have to tighten their belts in many ways. You want to avoid cutting things like teacher salaries. ... You want to avoid making cuts in that area. But then you look at some of the ancillary services that you're providing and you say, "Hey, can we do these more efficiently?"

And companies have been calling on schools to try and put these systems in place and illustrating how they would save money in the long run. And now the schools are going to take another hard look at that and say this is a way to save budget money so that I can continue to keep my mission going. I think the urge to go electronic and get rid of the paper cash will take an uptake in these times. And it will continue even after the recovery because it is just smart business.

SP: The same holds true for government payments?

PT: Well, every government needs to be looking at being as efficient as possible. And when it comes to processing payments, electronic payment is better than paper. But there is only a certain amount of the population that has a checking account or has some type of a product that would allow you to do something electronically via ACH [automated clearing house] or some other debit card, et cetera.

So what do you do about that population that isn't banked, that's underbanked, and you still want to go electronic? Prepaid cards are the answer to that.

SP: As the economy worsens, fraud is expected to increase. What should prepaid companies do to prepare for this?

PT: There's a lot going on with fraud. First of all, you have to understand the aspects of fraud. You have to have risk mitigation procedures, policies in place. You're bringing out new products. You have to make sure that you vet them against the risk mitigation model that you have. So risk mitigation has to be part of your entire company.

You need to be able to have a business model for fraud that invests in keeping fraud down to the point where you're comfortable with it. So that's one aspect of fraud and risk mitigation. But the other aspect is what do you do about the catastrophic? I mean the stuff that nobody thought of. You need to keep an eye on that, keep involved.

You can't make an investment in something when you don't know if it's ever going to happen or the odds of it happening are very small. If it does happen, you need to have thought about it enough so that you can employ new solutions. It's not just about the company either. It's the whole industry. Fraud and risk mitigation covers everything. It covers the regulatory structure. It covers the brand business and what they're doing in that regard. It covers data security. So it's a whole continuum.

SP: How should ISOs and merchant level salespeople go about selling prepaid card programs in the current economic climate?

PT: They need to look at what their merchants' needs are – depending upon what the ISO's mix of merchants is – if they're smaller merchants, medium, what types of businesses they're in, face to face or retail versus non-face to face. And then ... what type of industry they're actually in: retail, products or selling.

Understand what the unique needs are of those businesses. And then find a processor ... that meets those needs at the price point that makes sense to do. 🍷

Lessons learned from European prepaid

John Goodale, Director of Business Expansion, TSYS Europe, said in an interview with *SellingPrepaid* that although the European prepaid market has developed quite differently from the U.S. market, U.S. players have learned from Europe's successes and failures.

According to Goodale, the overall European prepaid market is less developed in comparison to its U.S. counterpart. Many factors have hindered the expansion of prepaid programs in Europe, including language barriers, cultural differences and geopolitical issues. Unlike the United States' 50 states unified under a single government, Europe is a conglomeration of independent countries. That socio-political diversity can hinder a program

that is successful in one country from being adopted in another.

"The welfare state in the French market is completely different to that in the British market," Goodale said. Free banking services are also configured differently from country to country.

Additionally, most European countries have their own dominant languages and customs. While the United States prides itself on its cultural and religious diversity, one quasi-official language (English) and one loosely defined set of cultural mores are shared by the majority of its inhabitants.

Goodale claimed that is not the case in Europe. "The idea of giving gift cards in Germany is not a particularly big one," he said. "But in the U.K. it's huge. France it's quite big as well. So there are real big differences. Absolutely it's language. But also it's the infrastructure, the culture that people have, the expectations they have of what these products do. And they're all quite different."

In the U.K. and France, large retailers dominate their respective gift card markets. "It doesn't matter if it's supermarkets or department stores or fashion outlets, the old concept of giving a voucher has been replaced by the giving of a card," Goodale said.

"In Germany, the gift voucher concept just didn't really exist that much," Goodale added. "There are some, but not in as big a way as exist in some of the other countries. And it's just that idea. The German people are just less familiar with giving vouchers as presents."

Travel cards are another example. "In some countries some people will take cash, other countries will take traveler's checks," Goodale said. "In some countries there is not much need for currency because they're going into the euro travel [passes]. It's a very difficult market really to come up with a single product that would be appropriate across the market."

Gaining scale

Goodale said these political, economic and cultural barriers impede the prepaid market from reaching its full potential in Europe. Prepaid products in the United States can potentially reach the entire U.S. population. One open-loop gift card program can be rolled out to consumers in every state in the country.

"If I could do the same in Europe, I could get the same sort of scale that I can get in the U.S. market – 350 million," Goodale said. "The entire European Union is 400, 420-odd million people. That gives you scale. It gives you great scale. It means all of a sudden those low-margin products are suddenly very attractive because you're multiplying those low margins by millions of cards. It makes it much more exciting."

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But an entire market in Europe might top out at 5 to 15 million consumers, such as an island or a less populous country like the Netherlands. "It limits how much scale you can truly get for a prepaid program," Goodale said.

Goodale believes the solution is in a regional or pan-European market achieved through the passage of legislation and implementation of standards and procedures recognized across many countries. The Single Euro Payment Area (SEPA) is such an initiative. But SEPA has reportedly stalled with the European Central Bank expressing frustration at the lack of clarity in many of SEPA's directives.

A solid base

Despite the fragmented nature of the European prepaid market, the payment infrastructure that gives consumers access to prepaid services is robust across Europe – an area where Europe surpasses the United States, Goodale said.

"Every High Street, every village, town, city, has a terminal somewhere in it where you can pay a bill, top up a mobile phone," he said. "And therefore extending those organizations to top up a prepaid card is very simple. And all of a sudden you get thousands and thousands of additional outlets by talking to just one organization. So that's a very strong set of predefined mechanisms to update cards."

Through those terminal networks, prepaid services such as money transfers can be facilitated at low cost for providers and consumers, Goodale added.

Another area in which the European prepaid market has a clear advantage over the United States is in mass transit applications.

"Transporting in Europe is big, particularly in some of the major cities: London, Rome, areas like that," Goodale said. "And the adoption there of contactless payments runs into millions of cards.

"The idea of rolling that out into much larger-scale programs is much more feasible here than it is probably in some of the U.S. markets. I think that also extends in just the use of transporting in general. There's a lot of use in trains. There's a lot of use in metro. And there's good integration between many of them." 🗣️

The benefits of tax refunds on plastic

In recent years the Internal Revenue Service has pushed electronic income tax filing and direct deposit for refunds. But most of the 100-plus million refunds the IRS issues annually are still accomplished by mailing paper checks to recipients. The major-

ity of checks are mailed to lower-income individuals, a portion of whom can be termed unbanked.

But the unbanked are starting to receive their refunds on open-loop, reloadable prepaid cards. It reduces overhead costs for the IRS – paper, postage and handling. It also reduces the costs for recipients without bank accounts. Instead of having to cash checks at check cashing businesses that charge high fees, refund-loaded prepaid cards come with minimal fees.

Furthermore, refund cards act as alternative banking tools. Unbanked consumers can use Visa Inc.- or MasterCard Worldwide-branded cards to pay for goods and services online, as well as in face to face retail environments.

According to Brent Watters, Senior Analyst at Boston-based consultancy Mercator Advisory Group, the market for cards loaded with tax refunds can be lucrative. While still in the preliminary stages of exploring this market, Mercator estimates the load amount on open-loop, reloadable refund cards might exceed \$800 million in 2009.

On the bandwagon

Tax preparer H&R Block, with its Emerald Card program, is the leader in this market, accounting for more than half of Mercator's projected total load volume. In 2008, H&R Block reported 2.6 million Emerald Cards were in circulation. The IRS stated the average tax amount refunded to taxpayers was \$2,383 in 2008.

Watters combined those two statistics to come up with an approximate 2008 load volume for the Emerald Card at \$460 million. To account for the remaining portion of that \$800 million figure, Watters pointed to the potential amounts garnered by newer players in the market: Jackson Hewitt with its iPower CashCard and UniRush LLC with its RushCard, for example. Financial institutions recognize tax refund cards can act as a gateway product for establishing relationships with unbanked or financially underserved consumers.

"Just like the program manager or issuer of a general purpose reloadable card, they want to build a relationship, and what a great introduction," Watters said. "Get your tax dollars loaded onto here. Start learning the benefits of these cards. So, absolutely, it's a good way to promote additional services."

Just getting started

In 2008, The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Financial Service implemented a prepaid card on which Social Security payments are loaded.

"That was a major program, and we identified it in our prepaid benchmark study," Watters said. "We're going to see some pretty amazing growth out of various federal government agencies turning to the cards for making payments." 🗣️



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Heartland clamps down on breach

Hearthland Payment Systems Inc., one of the largest payment processors in the United States, learned in mid-January 2009 that it was a victim of a security breach. In late 2008, Visa Inc. and MasterCard Worldwide officials notified Heartland of suspicious activity associated with transactions the company processed.

Since learning of the attack, Heartland reported it has aggressively worked to ascertain the extent of the breach and its impact, as well as ensure the integrity of cardholder data.

Visa and MasterCard received reports of fraudulent card use from their issuing banks last November and subsequently notified Heartland. The two card brands then triangulated the path of the hackers' attack [tracing transactions back through cardholders, issuing banks and processors] and reportedly found sufficient evidence of a potential problem in Heartland's system.

Heartland hired two additional outside forensic audi-

tors to assist its internal team immediately after it was informed by the card brands the company could be ground zero for the breach.

Compromised card data contained

"We have isolated the issue, and our internal forensic team and the [outside] forensic auditors consider it contained," said Robert Baldwin, President and Chief Financial Officer of Heartland. "This is something that we have been working aggressively and diligently on, and we continue to undertake a number of improvements in our data security.

"However, as we move forward, we believe the problems have been eliminated. And there is no suggestion or hint that any merchant will suffer any damage whatsoever."

Heartland's processing platforms contain over 600 million cardholder records, but security experts suggest data from significantly fewer accounts had been accessed or extracted. Heartland stated it does not know the number of cardholder accounts compromised. Baldwin added that it has been a challenge to discover precisely how it happened.

Getting the word out

"After putting the pieces together, we discovered quite a sophisticated attack on our processing platform," Baldwin said. "Since then we have been working on gathering as many facts as we can, with a focus on getting something out as quickly as we could. We notified our merchants and the organizations that process with us as soon as it was humanly possible."

After the breach was confirmed, Heartland immediately began containment measures, implementing additional security and risk management tools, as well as notifying merchants of the situation via a company press release on Jan. 20, 2009.

"We're dealing with a cleanup, of course, and it's a challenge, certainly, because our standards are already tight," Baldwin said. "We were certified PCI [Payment Card Industry] compliant last April. However, clearly the measures we had in place were inadequate to stop the attack. So, we will take an even deeper focus – along with a new sense of urgency – on achieving that much more security in our system."

Heartland is also allowing unrestricted access to its forensic audits by any payment organization requesting them.

"Heartland is willing to share file structures as well as all the information they have to help those people that have Windows-based applications with anti-virus software to determine whether or not they've been compromised," said Paul Martaus, President of consulting firm Martaus & Associates.

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No magic bullet

According to Dr. Tim Cranny, Chief Executive Officer of security compliance specialists Panoptic Security Inc., there is no comprehensive cure-all against data breaches. "The first thing is that PCI does not make one bulletproof," Cranny said. "It puts you in the top category as far as the diligence and care that you're taking with security."

"There is real benefit in PCI, but remember that the mom-and-pops of the world have 1 percent of the expertise and resources that a Heartland does. It really comes down to taking a risk management approach, to look at all the things that can go wrong and try to deal with them. There's simply no pill you can take to make it all go away."

Payments could be paralyzed

Baldwin said Heartland executives have been in discussion with the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Secret Service and were informed that this breach was committed by an international organization that has also targeted other U.S. processors and financial institutions.

"I am finding it hard to believe that we are not responding to an obvious act of cyber terrorism aimed at trying to disrupt the payment system of the United States, and it just blows me away that nobody sees it," Martaus said. "All of these intrusions are the work of one Russian mafia gang. And 15 other processors apparently have been attacked and no one knows about it."

Martaus suggested, however, that federal officials do know about these attacks but they're not telling anybody. "This should be a national emergency, and the Pentagon, the National Security Agency, everybody should be involved in this," he said. "This could absolutely destabilize the payments industry and bring it to its knees. A cyber terrorist attack, while not meant to destabilize the government or the economy, can do just that."

Solidarity to survive

To best combat future cardholder data compromises, Martaus and other industry experts propose building a coalition of processors to formulate how to best approach this issue, supplement the PCI Data Security Standard to increase protection standards and thwart future cyber attacks.

"This is serious, and the steps we take now – or the ones we don't take – will either save or destroy this industry," Martaus said. "Heartland is a victim in all this and we need to be proactive, not punitive, because it could cost us our livelihood. This is no joke." ■

Heartland's call to action

Shortly after Heartland Payment Systems Inc.'s Jan. 20, 2009, disclosure that it had been victimized by hackers who compromised an unknown number of cardholder data accounts, the company notified its roster of over 150,000 merchants to help them understand the nature of the breach and what it means to them.

"We have a very dedicated staff here who believe solid, trusted relationships with our merchants are more important than anything else," said Jason Maloni, spokesman for Heartland. "This stands right alongside our respect and appreciation for data security, which we hold very dear. We here at Heartland are just sick about what happened, so we're acting as quickly as possible to make certain that it never happens again."



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News

Critical data missed

Heartland believes it was the victim of a global cyber fraud operation. But, according to Heartland, no confidential merchant data, Social Security numbers, unencrypted PINs, addresses or telephone numbers were stolen.

"As deeply regretful as we are, it is important to note that in most of the cases the information would be card number and expiration date only," said Robert Baldwin, President and Chief Financial Officer of Heartland. "The majority of the data breached did not have names or other personally identifiable information available to the bad guys. So there's nothing our merchants need to worry about."

Band together

Over the past three days, Robert O. Carr, Heartland's founder, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, has spent significant time on the telephone to personally support merchants. He has also been speaking to many payments industry leaders about working together to fight the cyber criminals who breached Heartland's system and continue to victimize companies and consumers worldwide.

"Up to this point, there has been no information sharing, thus empowering cyber criminals to use the same – or

slightly modified techniques – over and over again," Carr said. "I believe that had we known the details about previous intrusions, we might have found and prevented the problem we learned of last week."

Paul Martaus, President of payment consultancy Martaus & Associates, believes the best way to deal with this issue is to build a coalition of processors to create security measures that enhance the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standard (DSS).

But Martaus blames the card brands, which control PCI DSS and the PCI Security Standards Council that implemented the standard, for being inattentive to the global threat to data security.

"Those guys should be on top of this but they're not," he said. "So their efforts need to be supplemented and bolstered by the industry. We've got to get off this punitive bandwagon and get on with protection. We can bring those [cyber thieves] down if we work together."

More than just PCI

Carr has been a strong advocate for industry adoption of end-to-end encryption – which protects data in motion as well as data at rest – as an improved and safer standard of payments security. The Princeton, N.J.-based company

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is "more committed than ever before" to developing this solution and deploying it as quickly as possible.

Maloni echoes Carr and Martaus that the payments industry must go beyond the mandates of the PCI DSS to better combat future attacks.

"It's not an indictment on the industry," Maloni said. "It's just a statement of fact that the bad guys are simply very, very good at what they do.

"We know some good lessons are going to come out of this. We certainly have our eyes open to what we can learn, and we hope new standards and new procedures emerge in order to establish better and higher levels of security."

Beginning of end-to-end

In an effort to establish those higher security levels as quickly as possible, Heartland formed an internal department on Jan. 27, 2009, dedicated exclusively to the development of end-to-end encryption to protect merchant and consumer data used in electronic transactions.

For the past year, Carr has been advocating for the payments industry to adopt this technology – which will protect data at rest as well as data in motion – as an improvement to transaction security.

"PCI is an effective standard, but the bad guys have become so sophisticated that encryption of data in motion appears to be the next required step," Carr said. "There is no single silver bullet that will secure payment systems, and constant vigilance and monitoring of the infrastructure will always be required.

Outside expertise

"Nevertheless, I believe the development and deployment of this technology will provide the ability to implement increasing levels of security protection as they are needed," Carr said. "Heartland has been working on end-to-end encryption, but in light of our recent data breach and the impact cyber fraud has had on the public and processors nationwide, we are ramping up our efforts."

Heartland has brought in well-known payments expert Steven M. Elefant to spearhead the new department. Elefant is a member of the U.S. Secret Service Electronic Crimes Task Force and Infragard, a public/private partnership of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

"I have known Bob Carr for more than 20 years, and we gained respect for one another as competitors in the 1980s and 1990s," Elefant said.

"I believe Heartland's desire to bring end-to-end encryption to the market and work with other processors to share information about cyber crime incidents are significant steps for our industry." ■

Money launderers game for online merchants

For online gambling merchants, money laundering and fraud rings are threats to both profits and reputation. To help them combat these issues, Scott Olson, Vice President of Marketing for fraud management company iovation Inc., discussed strategies to curb money laundering related to online gambling at a recent conference in London.

Olson, whose company is based in Portland, Ore., spoke at the 5th annual Combating Cybercrime in Betting & Gaming Conference on Jan. 27, 2009. His presentation, entitled "Combating Money Laundering: Using Device ID to Expose Hidden Account Relationships," addressed the following topics:

- How fraudulent transactions can be unearthed across payment systems
- How device identification exposes fraudulent users and their associations with multiple accounts
- What measures online gaming sites are taking to prevent money laundering schemes

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As the online gambling industry faces more challenges in thwarting money laundering groups, many Internet gambling sites are taking proactive measures to identify and stop sophisticated laundering techniques.

The conference drew more than 100 payment professionals and online merchants. And the fear of potential long-term damage to the online gambling industry made for a receptive audience.

"The show went very well, in particular because it is something that merchants and service providers are regulated to deal with. Additionally, both online payment providers and merchants realize they are taking a lot of risk with any ties to fraud and need to combat the situation as quickly as possible," Olson said.

Caught in the middle

According to Olson, federal and state regulations pertaining to terrorism and organized crime require gambling merchants and their service providers to protect against and identify money laundering schemes. He said merchants and payment professionals expressed concern over regulatory mandates; it is difficult, at best, to identify these schemes, track them and report them.

"The basic problem with finding money launderers is

that it's very easy to create multiple accounts but virtually impossible to see the relationships that exist between those accounts," Olson said.

"And whether it's in the payments, gaming or banking industry, the challenge in identifying fraud rings is discovering whether the money flowing from one account to another is legitimate or if they are criminals colluding to provide a money laundering service."

Additionally, unless the fraud reaches a million dollars, law enforcement typically doesn't even notice. Even then, cases can take years to unearth and prosecute. "That's a lot of leeway for these fraudsters to come in under multiple accounts and do significant harm to the merchants without any risk of arrest or prosecution," Olson said.

Left in the cold

Financial harm hits the payments industry in the form of credit card chargebacks and the potential for online gambling merchants to lose the ability to take certain payments like Visa Inc.- and MasterCard Worldwide-branded cards.

"Criminals are defrauding online players by stealing their card information, using that money to flush their own funds in anonymous accounts, sending the money

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overseas, and they get back 10 to 30 percent of it squeaky clean. And moving it through the system, in many cases, is very easy," Olson said. "With a potential for significant chargebacks, online merchants could be subjected to higher rates or completely lose their ability to take payments altogether.

"And this is a critical issue in the online gaming industry and on poker sites because the money laundering tactics are creating unfair play, so it's damaging their site reputation and potentially defrauding their customers out of enormous amounts of money," Olson said. ■

Friendly fraud raises fears

Editor's Note: This story was adapted from "The Recession Is Sending Rates of Friendly Fraud Up, Processors Say," as published by Digital Transactions News, Jan. 28, 2009. Copyright Boland Hill Media LLC. All Rights Reserved"

As unemployment rates soar and consumer spending shrinks accordingly, payment processors report that e-commerce chargebacks stemming from friendly fraud are increasing significantly. Friendly fraud is committed when a con-

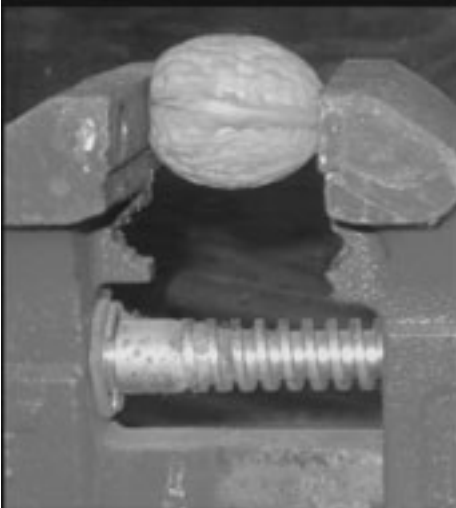
"In this current credit crisis market, the online industry as a whole needs to be far more proactive in pre-authentication of credit card transactions and staying ahead of consumers when it comes to friendly fraud loss."

- Andrea Wilson,
Chief Executive Officer
First Atlantic Commerce Ltd.

sumer who wants to escape liability for payment claims a valid credit card transaction was unauthorized.

And it isn't just online businesses that are damaged by cardholder fraud. Banks and other financial services providers, the card brands, payment processors and call centers are also prime targets for card fraud, whether it's from friendly fraud, skimming, phishing or identity theft scams. Additionally, the combination of rising chargebacks and falling retail sales is pushing some merchants above the allowable thresholds the card companies set for chargebacks.

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Not the norm

Merchants who exceed designated chargeback limits are required to submit plans for bringing their chargeback levels down. Failure to control chargebacks results in card companies imposing fines on acquirers, who pass them on to merchants.

Redwood City, Calif.-based e-commerce processor Vindicia Inc. said it has also seen an increase in friendly fraud; however, Sanjay Sarathy, Vindicia's Senior Vice President of Marketing, said this is not unusual before and after the holiday shopping season, but he added that the "economic recession has exacerbated this trend, which is why we are starting to see some of our merchants whose

friendly fraud is above normal."

Vindicia noted it can take up to 90 days to contest a chargeback, investigate it and determine whether it occurred for valid reasons or due to unethical consumer behavior.

The situation is aggravated given the lag time between the date of a sale and the arrival of the statement. During this time, the consumer contesting a particular transaction may have lost a job, been hit with a pay cut or reduced hours, or lost money from a bad investment.

Merchants disputed half of all fraud-coded chargebacks in 2008, up 47 percent from the year before, according to research by risk management firm CyberSource Inc. Of the chargeback cases CyberSource represented in 2008, merchants won 44 percent, the company attested.

Hard to prove

Friendly fraud is especially problematic for purveyors of online games, music and other digital downloads.

Product delivery can be difficult to verify, and this makes it tougher to defend against chargebacks. These factors can tempt consumers with financial woes to disclaim purchases.

"The balance of risk is now fluctuating at dangerous levels for acquiring banks globally," said Andrea Wilson, Chief Executive Officer of online payment provider First Atlantic Commerce Ltd. "Banks that never had merchants on the global chargeback monitoring program are now getting notification from Visa and MasterCard.

"Consequently, merchants are being fined for a situation they have absolutely no control over.

"In this current credit crisis market, the online industry as a whole needs to be far more proactive in pre-authentication of credit card transactions and staying ahead of consumers when it comes to friendly fraud loss." ■

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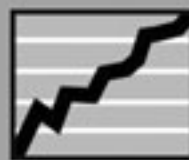
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Training from page 1

"Yes, your time out on the street is your training, but what we do is try to complement that with academia as well as one-on-one, street-sales training. The combination is invaluable."

For First Data Corp. Training Director Staci Hull, training is a multifaceted, vital piece of the organizational puzzle. "Training is just so much bigger than being in the classroom," Hull said.

"Our managers are involved in coaching and mentoring. We invest in the latest and greatest technology and training tools so that we can teach and reach our MLSs or ISOs even if they're thousands of miles away. Oh, yes, we take training very seriously here."

Seeing clearly

Shortsighted companies believe time devoted to training is time lost on the essential task of building residuals; when they hire MLSs, they expect immediate productivity. However, the irony is that this philosophy undermines ISO profits.

"The first mistake we make with training is that many [payment organizations] design programs to fit what they do, to meet their corporate bottom line, and give MLSs a minimal to nonexistent foundation of knowledge," said Jeff Fortney, Director of Business Development at St. Louis, Mo.-based Clearent LLC.

"You keep chasing the dollar without any thought to higher standards of training and preparation, and ultimately there will be some major upheavals in this business," he added. "That's not how you create success. We've got to keep our ISOs and agents in a consistent, educated position if we're to continue to thrive as an industry – it's more important than anything else."

Keeping secrets

Some industry veterans believe the absence of industry-wide, standardized training and certification programs could be detrimental to the industry's infrastructure.

"One of the ugly realities in the payments industry is that training is proprietary to each sales organization," said Mark Dunn, founder of payment consultancy Field Guide Enterprises LLC and creator of the Field Guide for ISOs training seminars offered at acquirers meetings throughout the country.

"There is very little industry-standard training for MLSs because ISOs are in the sales business, and salespeople don't want to convey their secrets," Dunn said. "They all compete with one another, and some think this is a barrier to effective training within our industry."

"Now I'm not advocating giving away trade secrets, but at the same time we have to find a common basis to coalesce.

All boats rise with the tide, it is said, and if we can somehow establish a better basis for training, then the whole industry gets better."

Customizing fit

Many payment professionals, both management staff and feet on the street, agree that for training programs to succeed, they must be customized to the individual ISO and processor. Indeed, training, mentoring and education programs are as varied as the payment organizations facilitating them.

Jerry Federico, National Product Manager for check processor ProfitStars, said he helped customize a training program centered on answering the question, Why would a merchant want this? Then product features and benefits are discussed.

"What's critical to the ISO is not so much knowing our system, but that the ISO believes in the business case," Federico said. "Once they get that, then they can start talking about equipment and value-adds. And we have a whole team of people whose mission is to strictly support ISOs and MLSs outside of the selling part. Their job is to support them, answer questions, and help them expand their geographic and vertical market footprint."

Fortney believes a cookie-cutter approach to training can be fatal, especially for small, start-up ISOs. "I always customize my training, because if you don't you're not going to be successful," Fortney said. "Make your training rote and inflexible, and you're only going to reach a third of your audience. And sadly, this is where we have some of our biggest failures as an industry."

Guarding candy

Advocates of customization see it simply as programs shaped and implemented to a given company's business model. Many processors and ISOs have in-house, core programs, but they encourage networking, too.

"We recommend our sales agents connect with their peers and other folks in the industry to understand some of the challenges and successes they go through," Hull said. "We also believe that it's important to share best practices with other organizations regularly."

Fortney said there is an old rule of thumb in the sales profession: Don't spill your candy. "What I literally mean by that is I am not going to train someone who is not in turn going to use me," he said. "You have to consider that every time you begin training someone, or you're just an unpaid consultant. Conversely, MLSs need to choose a partner to do business with, and then they need to stick with them."

In his continuing efforts to support his partners, Fortney writes a monthly newsletter on training and selling. "It's not public," he said. "I only send it to the people that are

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signed and submitting business with us. I don't see this as keeping secrets, but again I don't spill my candy to MLSs and ISOs that aren't with me," he added.

Getting started

Beginning MLSs who want to unlock the secrets of the payments industry can explore several avenues. "If you're a newbie, you might want to start looking for payment providers on the Internet, and possibly publications within the payment space, for related topics and materials," said Theodore Svoronos, Certified Fraud Examiner for Group ISO Inc.

"But your search doesn't really begin until you speak to providers," he said. "Ask them what are the governing bodies, relevant publications and associations in the payments industry. Ask them how they learned. Then go to the nearest regional association and say, 'I'm starting fresh, looking to become an ISO agent. How do I get more information, who do I contact and why?'"

Fortney suggested new MLSs do thorough research and find ISO partners who will work with them and get them up to speed on sales techniques, products and services, and security issues. "Find an ISO who will train you in the areas that interest you and that you need to know," Fortney said. "Also, and more importantly, find an ISO

who will give you access to people who have been there and done that, who are not afraid to help you."

Getting better

Additionally, new MLSs can gain basic industry knowledge in a short time through third-party training organizations. Consulting firm Glenbrook Partners offers a two-day "boot camp" that gives an overview of the payments sphere in the United States. "It's very intense, and we cover the whole payments landscape," said Carol Benson, Education Director at Glenbrook.

"And when you think about the training requirements you might face, there are really three types of knowledge that you will need: product knowledge about the services you are selling and implementing, high skill sets in sales and customer management, and a deep, broad understanding of this industry," she noted.

Federico believes improving as an MLS requires gaining technical knowledge and using that information as a value-add to closing deals. "I'll tell you one of the critical things that separate my sales team," he said. "And that is every one of them can go in, do a presentation and be able to explain most, if not all, information technology questions to merchants.

"Of course, we have product experts for higher levels of expertise, but when the salesperson doesn't know squat about the product, the merchant notices. So our mission is to train those salespeople on the basics of all our technical products and processes. You need to know enough to be a trusted advisor to your clients."

Getting settled

Technical expertise, polished sales techniques and security compliance knowledge are valuable assets when securing a niche in the payments world. But perhaps the most essential element to ISO and MLS success and growth is a sense of identity and connection with the organizations with which they work. Leading companies in the payments space endorse this perspective.

"I think what Heartland does better than anyone else is recognize the value of someone who comes to us with an entrepreneurial spirit, and they can really take advantage of that," Armitage said.

"We want to invest in that and build our training on the values we present to the client. Our company culture is unique because we are looking for people who are interested in that opportunity to build their own business."

Other industry veterans mirror that sentiment, honoring the values of community, unconditional support and continuing education to tap each MLS's full potential. "When someone signs with me, they know they have access to me, and I'll never walk away," Fortney said. "But it also

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brings up an interesting dichotomy that helps to reinforce that connection.

"On the one hand they can call me anytime; conversely, it gives me the ability to follow how they are learning and help them immediately if they need it. We're looking for partners to grow with us in that environment and stick with us, and this is a tremendous way to gauge that."

Tightening security

Unfortunately, the payments industry has recently – and inadvertently – gained some highly undesirable attention. High-profile data breaches of large corporate networks appear to have increased significantly of late. Such compromises can be attributed to several factors: more intelligent cyber criminals, more sophisticated hacking equipment and the lack of end-to-end data encryption.

Additionally, payment professionals are struggling with merchants who, due to budget constraints, indifference or ignorance, are still not Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standard (DSS) compliant.

"Something that has always been a mystery to me is why more ISOs and processors don't offer PCI training for both their staffs and merchants," said Walter Conway, PCI Consultant and Trainer.

"To say there is a dearth of PCI training in the payments industry is a kindness," he said. "There is a yawning chasm here, and I think this is crazy that security, compliance and risk management issues aren't a top priority. Proper PCI training would have tremendous benefit to ISOs, as well as value to the merchants. It would be cost-effective, and it's also a great way to competitively differentiate your service from other sales organizations."

Staying ahead

Conway said ISOs and MLSs don't need to know every nuance of security, but they need to have a reasonable understanding of PCI and other government and industry compliance mandates.

Merchants want ISOs to make PCI as easy and painless as possible, and they want to know what software packages are known to have been compromised.

"You can sell fraud all day long, but when merchants grumble about upgrade costs to achieve PCI standards, just remind them that compliance is a lot cheaper than a breach," Conway said. "That in itself is a value-add. And remember, PCI is a business issue; it's not a technology issue, so you have to approach merchants with that in mind."

To help ISOs with all security and compliance issues, Conway offers a one-day, "deep dive" PCI training overview. He noted that Visa Inc. and the Society of Payment Security Professionals offer compliance training as well. "Visa's two-day course is very technical but it's very good," he said. "And the SPSP offers a multiday course culminating with designations of the Certified PCI Security Manager."

To help ISOs and processors bring their merchant customers into PCI compliance, ProfitStars offers a comprehensive PCI education service called Gladiator that offers webinars on issues surrounding security compliance for check processing products. "We have a complete division dedicated to security compliance to better serve our clients – and explain why it's so important now," Federico said.

Staying enlightened

Payment processor TSYS Acquiring Solutions realized sales professionals had become secluded and fragmented. The company felt MLSs and ISOs needed more accessible educational, sales and technical information and that they were cloistered in a company, sector or vertical market. To remedy that, the company created the TSYS Enlightenment Program to assist professionals industrywide.

"We learned that people became well-versed in their own little silo, and they didn't even realize what their partner was doing," said Ed Dean, Market Support Manager for

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TSYS. "It started out as internal training, but then we found that our ISOs were having the same issues within their own staff, so we developed this program to reach out to them and assist them in training their sales reps."

The Enlightenment Program uses two-hour webinars along with full- and half-day personal training seminars from TSYS personnel to help ISOs expand their market footprints.

Webinar topics include remote deposit capture, automated clearing house, PIN-based debit, interchange, industry overviews, movers and shakers, Internet processing and information technology.

"Our goal at conferences and workshops is to help our merchant reps actually understand how to find merchants, how to talk to them, find their pain points, the players that are in a particular vertical and sales scenarios," said Karen Fisher, TSYS' Director of Client Education. "And with the feedback after the initial training, we kind of take their temperature to make sure that what they learned is helping them to be more effective."

Giving back

Svoronos believes successful training is a give-and-take process. He can give his sales staff all the pertinent infor-

mation, but he can't sell for them. "All of my agents' successes are based on their skill sets, yes, but on their tenacity level as well," he said.

"We can give them all the tools, but it really comes down to a tenacious desire to succeed. I can offer myself 24/7 and give you the knowledge, but I can't fuel desire."

Svoronos believes it is up to ISOs, processors and banks to keep people up to speed. "You can't leave a new agent by themselves," he said. "They may not know what to look for, and that's a classic defeatist attitude."

"It's up to me and my company to roll out new products to my MLSs, give them essential news, keep them well-fed in their brains so they understand new rules, mandates, products and services. It's up to me to do that, and if I don't give them the tools then I fail, not them. Training is not finite – it does not stop."

The payments industry, like most other businesses, will thrive only with an infusion of people bringing in fresh ideas, new technology and bold innovations.

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DigiCash files for bankruptcy

DigiCash, the first company to create a system for Internet cash transactions, declared bankruptcy, having amassed a \$4 million debt and reduced its workforce to six people. The company was founded in 1994, with the goal of creating "eCash micropayments" for small, Internet purchases, but failed to take hold, as consumers showed a heavy preference for checks and credit cards for online purchases.

Making a sale with multiple checks

CrossCheck Inc., a Rohnert Park, Calif.-based check guarantee company, introduced a service allowing merchants to accept up to four checks cashed out in installments for customers lacking the money to make full purchases up front. The system was set up for auto dealers and repair shops eager to close sales with customers lacking both available credit cards and the money to make down payments.

Go software processes transactions online

Go Software Inc. released a new program, IP Charge, allowing online credit card payments to be processed directly through the Internet and bypassing traditional payment processors. IP Charge helped signal a shift away from merely informational Web sites to full-scale e-commerce Web sites. IP Charge connected e-commerce sites directly to credit card processors for immediate authorization and capture.



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Remain in service? Be of service

By Jason Felts

Advanced Merchant Services Inc.

As merchant level salespeople (MLSs), you make the sales. But it's your job to keep them as well. It's often said it's easier to keep customers than replace them.

But that doesn't always hold true. Certainly no company, including Advanced Merchant Services Inc., is perfect. We make mistakes, and so will you. The question becomes: Will you go out of your way to resolve problems to retain customers?

Seven key principles should be remembered to ensure customer service.

1. Pay attention to details

Beginning with the application process, be sure to:

1. Capture correct data
2. Make certain you have the true average ticket, not just what you need for a low-risk approval
3. Ascertain a high ticket and expected volume
4. Include supporting documents whenever possible
5. Attain a fax number and e-mail address.

2. Ensure merchants go live

Personally install payment systems at merchant locations, and make sure they are up and running properly. Sure, most ISOs can do this over the phone.

But nothing replaces personal, professional installations from MLSs. I cannot tell you how many issues can and will be resolved by MLSs accepting responsibility for the install. Additionally, installation is a perfect time to discuss merchants' paper needs and explain to them when

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and how to order more paper. (Remarkably, some merchants forget about paper until they are out – or almost out – and move into hysterical mode.)

This is also an opportune time to secure referrals.

3. Care about merchants' well being

A caring mindset makes for active listening. By paying close attention and responding to the problems merchants have, you show basic respect for your customers. And you reinforce in their minds that if they have problems, you will help solve them.

And if you can't solve certain problems, you will find the people who can.

4. Return phone calls

Often merchants call their MLSs to no avail. If you are too busy to return calls within 24 hours, answer your merchants' questions via e-mail, or ask your assistants to return calls.

But don't assume merchants' calls mean bad news. I recall many occasions when merchants were calling MLSs to add new store locations to their service contracts, upgrade equipment or provide referrals. The

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sales reps would have missed these opportunities if they had refused to return phone calls.

5. Manage merchants

When is the last time you reviewed your portfolio to contact all of your \$0 processing merchants? Calling \$0 processing accounts to find out why they have stopped processing – or why they never started processing – can give you an immediate revenue lift and prevent attrition.

6. Be honest

If you are notified that a merchant is being terminated because they are on the Member Alert to Control High-Risk database (which contains information on merchants who have been terminated from transaction processing for cause), or you just learned a merchant's entire batch was held, what should you do?

The answer is be honest, even when the news is tough. You will always provide better service if you tell the truth.

7. Always deliver what you promise

If you guarantee a quote within 24 hours, get the quote out in a day *or less*. If and when you fail to make good on your promises, apologize to merchants and offer meaningful compensation, such as a discount, free paper rolls, free shipping and so forth. Overall, only make promises you are confident both you and your company can keep.

The forum speaketh

I sent a question regarding customer service to GS Online's MLS Forum. Here was the response.

"Be available if there is a problem, concern or question, and respond to an inquiry as quickly as possible. Visit all clients in person – at a minimum of quarterly.

"Communicate any developments that could or do affect a merchant, including PCI DSS updated info.

"Make a merchant clearly understand that you are providing far more than a monthly statement. Provide free paper to accounts that warrant it. Offer add-on services – as is often said, the easiest customer to market to is the one you already have.

"A vitally important component of providing exceptional service is that your ISO/MSP can do the same. Fortunately, mine excel in both customer and tech support.

"All of this leads to very high levels of retention, especially with larger accounts; they are much less likely to have an interest in reviewing or supplying the info for another processor's bid. And if they do, they are much more likely to call you before switching."

– Robert Dickerson

"It is far cheaper and easier to maintain the accounts you have, rather than always replacing one that left with a new one. I give all my merchants free paper, and I deliver.

"Let me explain this a little more. When I give my merchants free paper, I give them enough to last three to four months at a time. I have two reasons for this.

"First, they keep in contact with me every three to four months. Second, I trade paper for referrals... .

"I tell my merchants to focus on running their businesses, and I will take care of the credit card processing.

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"I recently had an ISO call me because they had questions for the merchant and the merchant told them to call me. I did not have the answers, so I did a three-way call with the merchant and ISO. Point being: A little service goes a long way."

– Sonny Gartin

"I've always believed that service is the most important issue in merchant processing. This past New Year's Eve, one of my restaurants called me at 9:30 p.m. because they ran out of paper and didn't realize it was their last roll. They were desperate.

"Good thing I'm a loser and I was home instead of at a party. I drove half an hour, dropped off the paper and went back home. They told me this is the reason they throw out everyone who walks in the store peddling credit card processing."

– Rob Appel

"It seems that we sometimes forget that service is the reason that we get paid residuals. So, naturally, the better we service our accounts, the greater the longevity

will be for our existing customer base, and the more referrals will flow in from happy merchants. As others have pointed out, there is nothing like a personal visit to the merchant's location.

"A smile, a handshake and a warm 'thank you for your business' goes a long way in maintaining loyalty. If you have merchants that are long distances away, a telephone call every three to four months to make sure all is well with them means a lot.

"I answer my cell phone seven days a week, even when I am in the middle of pitching a prospective new account.

"Of course I keep it very brief, and before I hang up I tell them, 'You see, as I told you, I am not here just to get you good competitive rates on your processing fees, but also to give you top-notch service. I *always* answer the phone promptly in case one of my merchants is having a problem with his or her credit card terminal, as I would for *you*.'"

– David Hanlin

"Jason, the main 'service' item I provide – besides the obvious answer *all* calls, return *all* calls promptly, et cetera – is conducting a two-times per year (and sometimes quarterly) business review.

"What I do when I land an account is show them their net effective rate with their current processor and what I believe will be their new effective rate with us. After the first three months of processing with us, I conduct a business review by pulling their statements and reporting to them how we are doing.

"In *all* cases, their new effective rate is lower than their previous supplier *and* lower than what I forecasted, as I make a habit of under promising and over delivering.

"I have been in this industry for a short two years, but all my merchants tell me that I am the only one who has ever provided this type of service for them.

"I have helped many merchants learn how to lower their costs by processing more efficiently, and they appreciate it and know I am looking out for their business."

– Niles Crum

Father knows best

David Felts, my father and the Vice President of Sales at AMS, is on the front lines with our sales partners every day. As such, I asked him to share a few thoughts related to service from an MLS's perspective. His remarks follow:

Jason did a great job of describing some of the methods of providing exemplary customer service. It is my privilege to discuss two primary reasons why it behooves

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Does your accountant think that:

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- An MLS is a website for looking up real estate?*
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Mike Laird is the CPA who gets you and your business. Mike has invested years educating himself about the industry. He even attended ETA this year. Mike has already advised ISO's and Agents on portfolio sales, partner buyouts and mergers.

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every MLS to invest the time and resources necessary to provide superior customer service to their existing merchant base.

1. To minimize attrition: Even the most optimistic among us must admit that current economic conditions threaten the stability of our portfolios. Businesses are failing at alarming rates. Unfortunately, there is nothing you can do about that.

Some of your merchants will not survive the economic tempest our nation is facing. You can, however, prevent one of the other sources of attrition.

Every day some competitor will be telling *your* merchants they can save money by switching their merchant account. If you are a "love 'em and leave 'em" kind of MLS, it probably won't take much of a savings to persuade them to jump ship.

If, on the other hand, you call, send a card or newsletter, or drop by to see them from time to time in an attempt to build a relationship, the odds of them being successfully seduced by a competitor radically diminish.

A wise man once told me, "The best time to kiss

your wife is before some other guy does." I will take the liberty of translating that into, "The best time to service your merchants is before some other rep promises to."

If you focus only on adding new merchants without giving attention to those you already have, you will certainly find yourself in the unenviable position one day of realizing it's next to impossible to add enough new merchants each month to replace those that are leaving.

If you want to keep your merchants, show them you value them.


2. To cultivate a rich referral vein: Business owners know other business owners; chief executive officers know other CEOs. Most merchants have been disappointed by broken promises made by their current or previous processors.

Once you have proven that you are an MLS of your word and are sincerely interested in them and their businesses, you have earned the right to ask for and expect referrals.

I recommend you reward merchants with a stipend for each new merchant you acquire as a result of their referrals. But most business owners will be much more motivated by the relationship you build with them than by the money you offer them.

I have seen a single merchant produce more than 30 referrals that led to sales. I am not talking about an association or referring bank, but rather a happy merchant who loved to talk.

Finding ways to make your merchants happy and get them talking will pay rich dividends to the MLS wise enough to rise to the task. Failing to do so is like discovering a gold mine and refusing or neglecting to mine it.

That concludes my father's remarks. I'd like to thank him and the MLS Forum members who contributed to this article. In closing, remember this anonymous quote: "To my merchant, I may not have the answer, but I'll find it. I may not have the time, but I'll make it. I may not be the biggest, but I'll be the most committed to your success." 

Jason A. Felts is the founder, President and Chief Executive Officer of Florida-based Advanced Merchant Services Inc., a registered ISO/MSP with HSBC Bank. From its onset, AMS has placed top priority on supporting and servicing its sales partners. The company launched ISOPro Motion, its private-label training program, to provide state-of-the-art sales tools and actively promote the success and long-term development of its partners. For more information, visit www.amspartner.com, call 888-355-VISA (8472), ext. 211, or e-mail Felts at jasonf@gotoams.com.



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Education (continued)

Stand by your plan

By Jeff Fortney

Clearent LLC

I'd like to share a story one of my mentors recently told me about a pivotal point in his career. In the 1980s, he was the top salesperson in his company. His weekly production exceeded the next-highest person by over 80 percent. And his commissions reflected his supreme level of achievement.

He reached a point where he was no longer selling; he was just taking orders from his existing clients.

Week one

One Friday, he realized he hadn't sold anything all week. This concerned him, but he figured it was just a brief anomaly. By Wednesday of the following week, however, when there were still no sales, he decided he had better make a few calls.

Week two

The end of week two quickly came and went, and he had still made no sales. He became very concerned. He started doing all the things he had done to originally build his sales:

- He made cold calls.
- He went to networking meetings.
- He called his referral sources.

Even with all this effort, his total sales still amounted to zero.

Week three

By the third Friday, he was feeling like a failure. He thought maybe his run was over, and he should consider obtaining a second job as a bartender – just to make ends meet.

He began to slump at his desk and stare at his phone, hoping it would ring. He dragged himself home at the end of each day, snapped at his wife, ignored his children and drifted slowly into a state of depression.

His sales skills began to decline. He was no longer selling from a place of confidence, but out of panic. This hampered his ability to reach out to new clients. His tone and attitude were obvious: He was desperate, and it showed.

Week four

But on the Thursday of the fourth week, everything changed. Sales flooded in at a pace he had never seen. His existing clients all placed orders, and prospects he had contacted during the slow period began placing orders, too.

You can control only your actions, not the actions of others. If you follow your sales plan and do everything correctly, you are successful – whether you sell something or not.

By the end of the day, his total sales exceeded any previous week's total. His commissions that Friday were the biggest he had ever received.

He was thrilled. He realized that he wasn't a failure. In excitement, he called his wife. "Honey, get a sitter," he said. "We are going out and celebrating."

Her response surprised him. "I will get a sitter, but we aren't going out," she said. "We are going to talk."

Reality check

Arriving home, he found the kids gone, but his wife was not dressed to go out on the town. He asked why she didn't want to celebrate when he had just had the biggest week of his career.

She replied, "Celebrate what? I am considering leaving you. For the past two weeks you have been miserable, and you have taken it out on us. We have all suffered, and it's not fair or right."

He was shocked. He apologized. He explained how his sales had plummeted. Consumed with worry about the future, he had been working twice as hard but with no sales. Her response was the best advice he ever received.

The advice

"You say you were doing all the right things," she said. "You say you were making your calls, attending your functions and still no sales? So what? Can you make them say yes? Can you make people buy who can't or won't? If you did everything you could do, why did you consider yourself a failure?"

She was right. He had done all the right things. He had made all the sales calls and done all the proper follow up. He couldn't make people buy anything; he could only push them to make decisions.

His wife's honest feedback made him stop and consider his approach to sales. He needed to change how he perceived success.

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Education

The lessons

His story is even more poignant in today's payments sphere. Let us remember the lessons he learned:

- You can control only your actions, not the actions of others. If you follow your sales plan and do everything correctly, you are successful – whether you sell something or not.
- Success is found each time you get a decision. Remember that a no is a decision. You still win when someone tells you no.
- You only fail when you don't follow your sales plan. Failure is not a slow period in sales; it's when you do not execute the proper steps to reach clients and get decisions.
- Your value is not found in the sales you make. Don't tie your self-esteem to the size of your commissions; instead, tie your value to the efforts you make. And make the right efforts.

Revamped plan

If you are following your plan but are not seeing results,

don't belittle yourself. Examine your plan, and make adjustments. Ask others to examine your efforts. The people you consult don't have to be in our industry, but if they are in sales – and are successful – they can help you evaluate your action plan.

One caveat: Pick someone who has the same values and understanding of sales as you.

Also, consider your goals. Set realistic goals that you can accomplish with your actions. Realize that getting a potential customer to reach a decision is a worthy goal for you, even if the decision is no or not now.

Longevity

My mentor's belief that he was failing, even though he was following his proven plan, impacted his confidence. It jeopardized his relationships with others and almost cost him his marriage.

He and his wife have been married for over 30 years now. For him, that's the true measure of success in sales. What's yours? 📧

Jeff Fortney is Director of Business Development with Clearent LLC. He has more than 12 years' experience in the payments industry. Contact him at jeff@clearent.com or 972-618-7340.



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Education (continued)

Helping merchants help themselves

By Christian Murray

Global eTelecom Inc.

Merchants are often not savvy marketers of their own services. They may be clueless about how to use value-adds to capture more sales. In fact, most merchants are in desperate need of help with marketing and exploiting technology to their advantage. But ISOs and merchant level salespeople (MLSs) might ask, So what? It's not our job to market their business for them.

But think again. If educating merchants on effective marketing strategies helps them become more successful, who do you think it ultimately benefits in the end? Answer – everyone.

Assisting merchants with marketing can pay big dividends to ISOs and MLSs over time. It helps increase portfolio size and volume along with driving retention and ISO-merchant relationships that last.

There is no better way to strengthen relationships and cultivate additional sales than by helping merchants succeed through planned and targeted programs designed to generate repeat business and increase cash flow.

Some might say, No way. It's too much work and it's not our core business. It will bog down our agents and hurt sales. The answer to that is times are changing and assisting in merchant marketing has become an essential component to doing business.

ISOs should employ follow-up teams after sales are completed that contact new merchants and brainstorm ways of helping them generate more income through marketing or value-added solutions.

Following are marketing ideas to help merchants:

Online advertising

Merchants benefit from marketing online. Many online providers offer affordable, easily implemented solutions. The goal for ISOs and MLSs is to promote the right online services to merchants. After merchants are signed up, they can be directed to the appropriate online vendor. In many cases these Web service providers are more than willing to share in revenues if ISOs are throwing them business.

Local advertising

Some merchants already focus on local marketing, but they may not be aware of the myriad advertising possibilities. A few examples: local newspapers, Better Business

Bureau listings, sports sponsorships, school and charity events, business lead meetings, flyers, TV ads and so forth. The key for ISOs is that they align with third-party marketers that can manage these channels for merchants. Creating effective alliances will limit ISOs' direct involvement.

Direct mail marketing

Merchants can also generate business by routinely sending out special offers and welcome letters to potential new customers. A great way of doing this is by ISOs helping merchants create welcome letters to be sent once a month to new home buyers in the area. Letters can welcome new families and offer special promotions to attract them to merchant locations.

New home buyer listings can be purchased from multiple lead sources and letters can be easily distributed using services that specialize in direct mail campaigns. Aligning with a few of these types of providers can offer merchants that extra marketing help they need.

E-commerce

More and more merchants are tuning up their sales efforts by utilizing online shopping carts. This solution best fits the retail and restaurant sectors and can greatly increase sales. Unfortunately, not all merchants take advantage of online carts because of cost, time or lack of knowledge. ISOs can easily align with providers; extra profits can also be earned for referrals.

Online food ordering

In some demographic areas merchants utilize online menu systems to help streamline operations and increase profits. Online menus assist merchants in accepting orders and payments made over the Internet or from personal digital assistants. This service is ideal for businesses located in metropolitan areas, where offices, colleges and professional buildings are prevalent.

Cash advances

Through merchant cash advances, merchants may be able to expand or buy additional equipment/supplies or put dollars into marketing their businesses. Nothing new, right? The goal is not to go after the sale only, but to help merchants see cash investments as a way to grow businesses and increase efficiency.

Rewards or loyalty

Selling rewards or loyalty programs to merchants and then walking away with no follow-up hamstring merchants to a 50 percent chance of success with these programs. But such prepaid card solutions can be profitable for merchants if ISOs and MLSs take a hands-on approach.

E-commerce Web sites

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Education

Web site services to merchants. This is another great way to increase residuals and earn online accounts. ISOs can partner with Web designers that will handle sales and support for merchants.

SEO services

For merchants with existing Web sites or ones in development, a good search engine optimization (SEO) solution can greatly increase exposure and bring in new customers. Partnering with SEO providers that handle the working relationships with merchants are a great value to them.

Online blogs

Localized or business-specific blogs can aid merchants in attracting business. Blogs now promote just about every town across the United States and are growing in popularity. Such blogs serve as a low cost, or in some cases *free*, resources that will build relationships within communities. But merchants must dedicate a few hours a week to manage blogs and add new content.

Chambers of commerce

Merchants can easily join local chambers of commerce, from which they often gain business and free advertising. This can be combined with special chamber offers that

attract new customers from local areas. Often chambers promote businesses active in their communities.

Drawings or raffles

Merchants can promote local drawings or raffles that bring in new customers and are easy to launch and manage. These programs often create a sense of excitement with consumers and get patrons to join mailing lists that can be used toward future marketing efforts.

Just the beginning

The marketing strategies just mentioned represent a small portion of possible solutions that ISOs and MLSs can offer merchants. Many other ways exist of bringing value to merchants without ISOs having to support their marketing efforts directly.

Partnering with good public relations or marketing firms that offer these types of solutions is the easiest way for ISOs to go. But researching low-cost, effective marketing options for merchants is essential.

The best way to begin mapping out marketing campaigns is by holding brainstorming sessions to come up with good ideas that will likely add value to merchants and help them succeed. So get your team involved. Identifying

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the types of merchants that would utilize these solutions is important. Then aligning with third-party marketing partners and value-added providers is critical to the cohesiveness of your efforts.

It's a good idea to create a simple, one-page information worksheet for MLSs to gather from merchants upfront. This is an excellent way of getting the right feedback from merchants to generate the right questions and probe merchants on what they are currently doing to promote business.

It can also include qualifying questions designed to find out if merchants can utilize marketing services ISOs already offer.

But launching marketing solutions for merchants will not work without ISOs and MLSs having a true desire to help merchants. The formula must include ongoing sales efforts, quality vendor selection and useful services. Initiatives will not take-off unless merchants feel confident in partnering with ISOs.

The goal is to build enough value that merchants view your ISO's services as more beneficial than your competitor's, and that your services go beyond just processing electronic payments. ISOs who realize this

merchant marketing need have already begun transforming the standard sales approach to include these types of additional, value-added services from which merchants can benefit.

So take the challenge. Begin researching marketing packages or a menu of solutions targeted toward helping merchants increase business and sales.

Come up with distinctive names for programs, such as the "Merchant Marketing Club." And make sure every merchant is pitched upfront on your marketing program, or at least on the back end after the install. Internal teams may have more time to support merchants and work with them to find the right mix of solutions.

The goal for ISOs and MLSs should always be to help merchants and, by helping them, help themselves. Working together, ISOs and merchants will reap the rewards of true business partnerships for years to come. ■

Christian Murray is the Director of Business Development for Global eTelecom Inc. He has more than 12 years' experience within the payments industry. GETI provides check processing and gift and loyalty solutions. For more information, visit www.check-training.com and www.giftcardtraining.com, or contact Christian directly at 877-454-3835 or cmurray@globaletelecom.com.



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Education (continued)

Collecting opportunities

By Curt Hensley

CSH Consulting

I am tired of hearing about how bad things are. Certainly, this past year has been a stressful one for the merchant services industry, our economy, and our political systems. I do agree that many of the things we took for granted – a steady economy, rising stock market, healthy real estate prices and a booming job market – have changed direction, at least for a while.

But why aren't there more stories about the incredible opportunities those recent changes have uncovered?

If you want to compare our current situation to other times and places (Iraq and most of Africa today, for example, or the time of the Great Depression) things are actually pretty good.

Based on unemployment numbers, over 92 percent of us have jobs, and most people have food, careers, education and many opportunities. For those who haven't been fortunate enough to keep their jobs or homes, there are safety nets and far more programs to assist them than ever before.

There is a time for all things, and layoffs, downsizing and recalibrating are cyclical and, in most cases, necessary events. Change can be messy, painful and tiring, but it almost always leads to something better. Change challenges people to rise above a fear-based mentality to one of courage, openness and acceptance.

I believe the changes that will follow this recessionary time will bring renewal to our professional and personal lives. Employees will value all of the good companies that give them so many benefits; the days of just doing enough to not get fired may be gone for a while.

I cannot do much about the way your company deals with change. But I can offer you some tips about how to cope with it. Psychologists who have studied and documented the change process describe four distinct phases one has to pass through to complete a change cycle.

1. Denial

Many of us saw the recession coming, and we denied it. We saw merchant sales decrease and heard rumors in our own organizations about how sales were down. The normal initial reaction is to discount this type of news, especially when it contrasts with how things have been.

In our professional lives, we have been given a surplus of new ideas, tools and approaches. Again, most people have the tendency to discount their significance.

For example, in my career as a recruiter, I have heard applicant tracking systems, Internet recruiting, and social networking all dismissed as fads. I had to threaten to leave a leadership position in a recruiting firm in the late 1990s because the business kept refusing to pay for Monster.com and other Internet resources that are now widely recognized as essential recruiting tools.

In our current situation, there is no more denying that changes have come. Make an effort to accept this, become informed and find out what tools are available to you. Try the following:

- Do intense research, get the facts, and make decisions based on verified data you collect about things you observe in your sphere, regardless of whether they have practical applications.
- Don't fail to act, hoping things will get better by themselves. Your actions will make things better or worse, and you'll learn in the process either way.

2. Resistance

Even when we acquire useful information, we still often decline to use the tools we have discovered, or we complain about their shortfalls. We revert to disputing the reality of what is happening and then dig in our heels, trying to hang on to the past.

It's hard to accept change and overcome discomfort that arises with new tools, processes or, in some cases, the need to find new employment.

As part of an organization working with many merchant service providers, I've heard great stories of ISOs and merchant level salespeople using new techniques and ideas to thrive in this market. I've also seen other firms resist the same successful ideas in hopes that things will return to the way they were.

The following should help you overcome resistance:

- Take a small step; use one new tool or process. Keep at it for a while, and measure the results.
- Ample resources exist in this industry, and many people are willing to help, so network and see how your peers are using new tools or processes. For example, if you are adjusting to a smaller staff or coping with the loss of a major client, others may have already found innovative ways to deal with similar situations.

3. Exploration

Only a small percentage of us can simply jump into new



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Education

You will know that you have entered the exploration stage when you begin to make small, deliberate changes. For example, you may start experimenting with minor process improvement, or you might adopt a new technology you have been uncertain about.

situations or embrace new solutions without any concern or hesitation. Most of us tend to be overly cautious and averse to change. You will know that you have entered the exploration stage when you begin to make small, deliberate changes. For example, you may start experimenting with minor process improvement, or you might adopt a new technology you have been uncertain about.

Exploration is the step at which you try out and then discard many approaches, keeping only the ones that bear fruit. And that's exactly what you should be doing. In fact, it's the best way to make good use of change and shape it to your advantage. Not everything is going to be a great fit for your situation.

Here are some ways to enhance the exploration process:

- Think of constructive ways to incorporate new

ideas and tools into your routine on a regular basis. Changes will seem less dramatic, and you will have enough time to learn how to master your new tools.

- Establish objective assessment criteria to evaluate whether a new approach is working.
- Reward those on your team who try new approaches, tools or ideas. Encourage them to share what they learn with everyone. This can help build energy, team chemistry and confidence.

4. Commitment

Soon you will come to see new approaches as standard, and you will struggle to remember the old days and old ways. Change and innovation will become a normal part of your business model, and this will greatly expand the potential for ongoing success.

Here are some ways to reinforce commitment:

- Now is not the time to stop. Make experimenting with new ideas your standard – even when you have just adopted something.
- Continuously scan the marketplace for changes, trends, new products and solutions.
- Use the creative powers you have unleashed with your team.
- Recognize complacency as your biggest enemy.

The recession will pass, and the economy will ramp up soon enough. Use this time to learn, adapt, examine your own practices and make the changes you think will make a difference. There is really no point to talking further about how bad things are. Go collect on the opportunities that these changing times bring. 📧

Curt Hensley is the founder, Chief Executive Officer and President of CSH Consulting, a recruiting firm exclusively focused on the payments industry. He and his leadership team have over 50 years of combined experience recruiting in the merchant acquiring arena. They have placed over 1,200 payments industry professionals since their inception eight years ago. Contact Curt at 480-315-8800 or curth@cshconsulting.com.



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Totally tailored presentations

By Daniel Wadleigh

Marketing Consultant

Each of us is unique. This is true of merchants, ISOs and merchant level salespeople (MLSs). Keeping this in mind as you plan your marketing strategies and sales programs will help you create the right presentation for each prospect.

Take a good look at your staff. Some people might be adept at setting appointments, but that doesn't necessarily mean they'll be good at closing.

Delegating

Good management means recognizing the skills and talents of your people and getting the most out of each individual. If you manage a sales force, identify each person's strengths, including your own, and use them complementarily so your team can overachieve.

And match MLSs to the specific challenges at hand. For example, if you want to increase your business in a Korean neighborhood, send in someone who is familiar with the Korean language and culture to knock on doors. If you want to break into the medical sphere, hire someone who is comfortable with medical professionals.

Prospecting

When it's your turn to be in the field, sharpen your powers of observation. All aspects of marketing and sales are based upon being able to put yourself in the place of the decision makers you want to impress. The better you see things from their distinct points of view, the more your efforts will pay off.

Base your conclusions on what people tell you and what you observe. For example, if a prospect has a picture of her family by her computer and says she cannot meet with you on Thursday afternoon because she coaches her son's soccer team, you can conclude your prospect is an involved parent.

You might also surmise that physical fitness, the life lessons a person can learn from playing team sports and community involvement are important to this particular prospect.

These issues can stir strong emotions in your potential clients. And tapping those emotions in a meaningful way can be the catalyst that spurs someone to buy what you are offering.

The point is to observe, draw tentative conclusions and tailor your presentations based on those conclusions.

While sex, ethnic identity and religion shape a person's life experience, it is best to avoid drawing conclusions based on these characteristics alone. Otherwise, you will be basing your communications on stereotypes, which is akin to trying to shave with a butter knife.

Presenting

Part of adapting presentations to individual needs is brainstorming about what you think a particular prospect's objections to your offerings are likely to be.

There are two kinds of presentations: One sets out to cover all major objections as a matter of course; the other is highly flexible and responds to objections as prospects voice them, turning the objections into advantages.

Until we become expert at closing, the majority of us need to create presentations that cover all the perceived potential points of resistance, based on our knowledge of individual prospects at the time.

▶ **The point is to observe, draw tentative conclusions and tailor your presentations based on those conclusions.**

But don't try to cover every conceivable objection. Doing so would make for long, unwieldy, boring presentations. Overprepare, but don't go overboard.

Communicating

And ask questions; listen to the answers; be interactive. You will learn exactly what your prospects want, as well as what they don't want. This will also demonstrate that you care about their desires and concerns.

In addition, incorporate interaction into your marketing materials. Asking visitors to your Web site to fill out a survey gives you an opportunity to collect useful information, including e-mail addresses.

And enlisting potential customers' assistance in this manner also fosters a bond between you and them, which can neutralize resistance and suspicion.

So, why have I talked about this? It's to drive home the point that people are different, and if you only have one way to prospect for business or do presentations, you will miss a percentage of potential customers. And why would you ever want to do that? 📧

Daniel Wadleigh is a veteran marketing consultant in the payments industry. He offers an educational program that is available on a PowerPoint presentation and designed to help ISOs elevate themselves above the competition. For more information, please visit www.morenewcustomers.net.

Education (continued)

Get the FUD out of PCI

By Tim Cranny

Panoptic Security Inc.

Merchants are being unnecessarily frightened by vendors trying to lock in the idea that the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standard (DSS) is always horribly complicated, and the only way to tackle it is to buy expensive hardware, software or services.

And misrepresentations involving PCI compliance are not just affecting merchants: They hurt ISOs, merchant level salespeople (MLSs), acquirers and others in the payments industry as well.

Too many ISOs and acquirers are taken in by talk of unavoidable complications and costs and are reacting in counterproductive ways. Some are ignoring PCI, hoping it will go away. Some are going to the other extreme: hitting their merchants with aggressive and tone-deaf requirements to the point at which some merchants are threatening to move to other acquirers or service providers.

Match method to merchant

It is true that for many merchants – particularly larger merchants – PCI is complicated. However, this need not be the case for everyone else, especially for small merchants. ISOs and MLSs can and should offer these merchants relatively simple, painless and inexpensive routes to compliance.

This article provides simple steps that can significantly lighten the burden and expense of PCI compliance. It also offers tips on how to tell when a vendor is making life more complicated than it really needs to be by spreading fear, uncertainty and doubt (FUD).

The right perspective will help ISOs and MLSs steer the proper middle course, giving each merchant the right level of service, laying out the right set of compliance and validation obligations, and, most importantly, ensuring cardholder information is protected against identity theft.

This means a one-size-fits-all strategy for dealing with merchants in a portfolio is never going to work. Some merchants are designated high-risk because of the number of transactions they handle or because they store cardholder data or are accessible over the Internet. PCI imposes a higher validation burden on these types of merchants.

It is likely such merchants need, and might even appreciate, a broad range of services. However, most merchants

live in a simpler world. Imposing the same broad range of services and costs on them is hard to justify.

Doing so might help vendors and simplify the decision-making process, but it also burdens merchants with unnecessary services and gives them the impression that PCI is an expensive, complicated process that is divorced from reality.

ISOs should therefore look for a solution package that recognizes, and gracefully handles, the diversity of merchant environments. For example, only merchants who use an Internet-accessible payment application need network scans, and only they should have to pay for them.

ISOs also need to help merchants adjust operations to deal with PCI in the smartest way possible – not by running headfirst into challenges and then hopefully overcoming them, but by avoiding them altogether.

This is almost always the most secure and cost-effective way to deal with security issues; it also causes the least disruption to business. I am *not* talking about trying to "trick" PCI by avoiding assessments but rather passing assessments with flying colors by avoiding exposure to risks in the first place.

Ease the compliance burden

Here are ways for merchants to make PCI compliance and validation a simpler, less expensive process. Not all are relevant to every merchant, but it's a checklist that all merchants should consider:

- Use only Payment Application DSS-certified payment applications. All merchants will be required to make the switch by July 1, 2010, anyway. But merchants should do this sooner if possible: It shifts some of the security and compliance burden from merchants to payment application providers.
- Restrict the extent to which computer networks are affected by PCI. To attain PCI compliance, merchants are not automatically required to take into account every computer system and device they own, just those that:
 1. Store, transmit or process sensitive cardholder data
 2. Are directly connected to a computer that *does* store, transmit or process sensitive cardholder data
 3. Are directly connected to a computer that is directly connected to a computer that stores, transmits or processes sensitive cardholder data

Basically, one should think of being within the scope

of PCI as a sort of contagion that spreads throughout the network and is only stopped by firewalls or breaks in the network.

Merchants who separate PCI issues from potentially risky activities such as surfing the Web or reading e-mail make their businesses much safer and make PCI a much simpler issue to deal with.

- Avoid wireless systems or keep wireless devices away from anything having to do with PCI. Wireless is easy to set up but not easy to set up in a safe way. PCI requires merchants to either carefully configure and manage wireless or avoid it altogether. All merchants should think seriously about avoiding wireless, since doing so is the simpler, cheaper, safer alternative.
- Do not store sensitive cardholder data in electronic form unless absolutely necessary for critical business functions (such as recurrent billing using in-house applications).

Storing this sort of data does *not* automatically make a merchant fail PCI, but it does expose the merchant's business to risk and makes the entire PCI-compliance process significantly more

expensive and technically complicated. Each merchant needs to seriously consider whether the benefits outweigh the complications.

Many merchants already have the suggested practices in place and live in a world in which PCI compliance can be relatively simple and painless. It's critical that ISOs avoid clumsy moves that punish these merchants with unnecessary cost and confusion just because *other* merchants need additional expensive services.

ISOs who strike the right balance, giving "simple" merchants streamlined, low-cost solutions while offering "complicated" merchants a broad suite of affordable services, will have safer, more satisfied merchants.

So remember, every time a PCI vendor tries to use FUD to make life unnecessarily complicated and expensive for your merchants, use the points provided herein to dispel the nonsense. ☒

Dr. Tim Cranny is an internationally recognized security and compliance expert and is Chief Executive Officer of Panoptic Security Inc. (www.panopticsecurity.com). He speaks and writes frequently for the national and international press on compliance and technology issues. Contact him at tim.cranny@panopticsecurity.com or 801-599 3454.

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Trade Association News

Strong LINC in the payments chain

Women Networking in Electronic Transactions (W.net), an organization devoted to empowering women in the payments industry, held two events in December 2008 to expand its networking capabilities. W.net hosted its Local Interest Networking Circle (LINC) in Atlanta on December 4; LINC socials provide a forum in regional areas for women payment professionals to network and share techniques.

"We also had a holiday social in Phoenix on December 10th as well, to give an additional opportunity for the women to kind of touch base with one another before everyone got too crazy at the end of the year," said Victoria Tobin, Managing Director of W.net.


"The main purpose of both socials was to make sure our agents and executives touched base before the holidays and keep those contacts fresh as we move into the new year." W.net plans to hold its LINC socials once every quarter in 2009 to provide consistency in its networking base and

remain a viable support organization. The next LINC meetings will be held in Phoenix and Chicago in March, though dates have not been set.

W.net has also scheduled a LINC meeting in Toronto for mid-February to extend its venue for networking and education to women working in the Canadian payments industry.

"We are looking at a February 17th date in Toronto and it's going to be very exciting," Tobin said. "We're looking to branch out our LINC events and really provide the same type of support network for women in Canada."

"Additionally, we have our annual Super LINC event for April that's going to be held in conjunction with the ETA in Las Vegas. We are looking forward to working together and taking women to that next level."

For more information, visit www.w-net.biz. 

One council, one voice

Executives of the Electronic Funds Transfer Association (EFTA) and NACHA – The Electronic Payments Association created a new council to represent organizations involved in the development and operation of electronic benefits transfer (EBT) systems, which replace government issued checks with a payment card. The merger, named the eGovernment Payments Council, will be managed by the EFTA.

"The genesis of the merger was really that many members belonged to both our EBT Industry Council and NACHA, and they felt that it was counterproductive to have two separate entities," said Bob Bucceri, General Partner at Chaddsford Planning Associates LLC and Senior Consultant to the EFTA. "One council can achieve more critical mass. We also get a wider range of representation that works for all members."

The eGPC includes representatives from state and federal governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, payment processors, POS manufacturers, security and risk management consultants and information technology specialists.


"It's a very interindustry council in that if an issue comes up, you've got everyone who is involved in designing, developing, implementing and operating these systems now with one voice around EBT," Bucceri said. "I think the merger makes it much more likely that program improve-

ments will happen. EBT is the next big program to see automation at the POS, so we've set our goal to find more adequate funding and convert to EBT right now."

The council's initial focus will be to work with the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service on cost models to convert the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition program to EBT technology. Currently, only five states utilize EBT for the WIC program, and Bucceri's goal is to see it implemented throughout the country.

"We'd like to see all 50 states and territories have EBT for the WIC, which is a supplemental nutrition program for children, pregnant women and nursing mothers," Bucceri said. "There are a lot of complexities because most states still issue paper checks." He feels the biggest obstacle right now is the startup cost.

"However, we believe EBT implementation does away with all that by improving the integrity and reducing costs in the long run, but we need to get people's attention," he said. "To that end, we're working with the federal government to help them understand ways and models to help fund this program. Ultimately, it will help save the taxpayers money."

For more information, visit www.nacha.org or www.efta.org. 

NewProducts

When taking debit becomes a snap

Product: Snap-on Mobile Payment Device

Company: Motorola Inc.

A recent Motorola Inc. study found that nearly one in four holiday shoppers in 2008 abandoned store purchases when items they wanted were unavailable. Stores either had limited merchandise, items were out of stock or store associates were unavailable to offer shoppers help in finding items and making purchases.

Motorola estimated brick-and-mortar shopping cart abandonment resulted in a multibillion dollar loss to retailers.

Motorola has launched a solution to ease that merchant pain point. It is called the Snap-on Mobile Payment Device, which literally snaps on to Motorola's MC-70 and MC-75 Enterprise Digital Assistants (EDAs) and transforms them into PIN-debit-card-accepting payment terminals.

Walking the floor

The EDAs are hand-held computers that run Microsoft Corp.'s Windows Mobile operating system. In retail and field service environments, the EDAs are used for scanning barcodes, checking inventory and signature capture.

"But what we have seen both in field service, field sales, and certainly retail, is that there's a greater need to be able to do more for the customer at the point of sale," said Sheldon Safir, Director of Marketing for Mobile Computing at Motorola.

Safir cited additional research indicating that during peak shopping periods, a large percentage of consumers will leave stores if checkout lines are too long. But by attaching the Snap-on, the EDAs become mobile terminals.

"A store associate or field service person can use the EDAs to both capture information, as well as to sell or upsell a person, or to complete a sale within a retail environment without the person having to wait in a long line," Safir said.

Ron Kaminski, Director of MCD Accessories at Motorola, offers an electronics retailer as an example. "Say you want to buy a new TV," Kaminski said. "An associate pulls up the specs on his EDA. He can check the amount of TVs they have in stock. He can set up a




delivery time for the TV. Then he takes your card, swipes it. You sign off.

"Now here the retailer's captured your name, address, your e-mail address, and the associate has made the sale. You've never even bothered going to a cash register. You walk out; you're done."

Jumping into payments

Motorola listened to its customers when developing the Snap-on debit card reader, which is Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard compliant.

Credit card payments are more expensive than debit for merchants. To reduce interchange costs, therefore, merchants prefer customers pay for purchases with debit. The PIN pad for customer entry of secret PIN numbers is on the back of the reader.

To see a demonstration of how the Snap-on works, go to <http://video.motorola.com>. 

Motorola Inc.

866-416-8545
www.motorola.com

A mobile printer for the payments jungle

Product: EM 220

Company: Zebra Technologies Corp.

During every interaction mobile merchants have with potential customers, they are being judged. When making sales, door-to-door salespeople's appearance and manner is as important as the products they sell.

Great sales pitches and killer products are likely undermined by crumpled shirts and bad haircuts. The same applies to the POS devices mobile merchants use to accept payments in the field.

Demonstrating professionalism with sleek new terminals is a no-brainer. But what about portable receipt printers? Many customers expect receipts at the POS to verify that purchases are correct; it seems paramount that portable printers also be compact, well-designed and reliable.

Zebra Technologies Corp. touts its new Economy Mobile 220 (EM 220) as having just those qualities. The EM 220 is a lightweight, pocket-sized, thermal receipt mobile printer with one-touch media loading, integrated card reader and light emitting diode screen. Zebra considers it an entry-level, low-cost device ideal for micromerchants and field service workers.



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Three verticals

According to Luis Rosales, Senior Product Manager at Zebra, the company is targeting three vertical markets with the EM 220: retail, government and the mobile workforce.

In retail, the EM 220 is designed for line-busting applications such as table-side payments for restaurants, event sales, and parking and rental car businesses. Government applications include citations, fines, and meter and utility readings.

As for the mobile workforce, Rosales heard from businesses that they didn't need the more rugged and complex mobile receipt printers that Zebra sells. What they needed was a printer that was small and light, "especially for people who have to carry the device for long periods of time," Rosales said.

"And especially for customer facing applications where the printer has to look small and nice and neat, not like a big industrial device."

Field service workers such as roofers, plumbers and water heater repairmen could use the receipt printer for proof of delivery or payment on delivery applications. "For example,

somebody who is repairing or installing something in the household where they can take a payment right there or leave a receipt for proof of service," Rosales said.

Two for one

Rosales believes the two-piece, mobile solution is superior to the one-piece payment terminals that integrate receipt printers into POS devices.

"If you drop the hand-held and you break it, you still have the printer and you can replace the hand-held easily and continue," Rosales said. "If you have a one piece device like a payment terminal ... if the device breaks, you are out of the printer as well."

The EM 220 is compatible with handheld terminals, such as those supplied by Motorola Inc., that run on Microsoft Corp.'s Windows Mobile operating system. But Rosales said Zebra provides a software development kit to assist companies in producing applications to configure payment terminals to function with Zebra's printers. ■

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Ditch the dark side

If you're lucky, you work at an ISO that employs one special person. Maybe it's the president of the company or a colleague in the call center who brightens the mood in the office just by entering the room. That person has a bounce in his or her step, smiles readily and radiates positivity.

From what reservoir do these rare individuals draw their infectious good natures? Are they making conscious efforts to buoy sullen coworkers nearby, or are they just exuding natural inner joy?

Luckily, it isn't essential to figure out why one person is sunshine and another rain, but it is useful to note that positive people share certain characteristics. They exhibit:

- Compassion
- Optimism
- Self-confidence
- Enthusiasm

You may look at this list and say, "I've got one, maybe two of these characteristics, but all four? Not on my best day." Well, join the crowd. But that doesn't mean you can't aspire to the examples set by truly positive people.

While inner joy cannot be acquired overnight, you can become more mindful of your moods and actions, develop better habits, and learn to do those little things that spread joy and peace.

Cool the reactor

It is a human tendency to react instinctually to difficulties

rather than respond reasonably. In a stressful situation, it is important to not snap at colleagues angrily, burst into tears, stomp out of the office or binge on junk food. Instead, cultivate a delay mechanism that allows a more controlled, sensible response to arise.

Delaying your reactions can prevent the utterance of harmful words. That is what "counting to 10" is about – playing for time, letting the anger, grief or fear subside, overriding that gut instinct to lash out or withdraw.

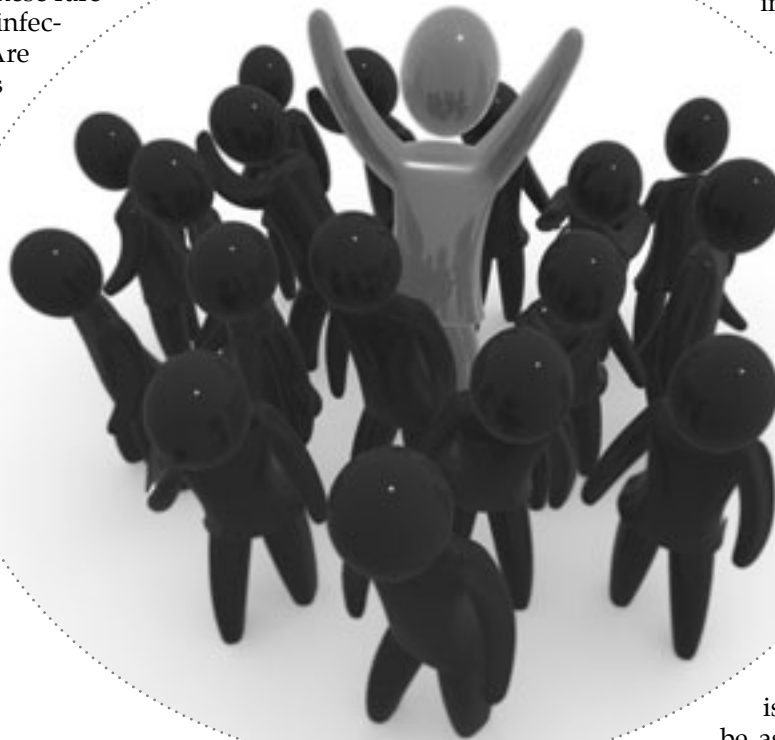
You can employ that same practicality in other areas. If you find yourself arriving at work in a bad mood every morning, take a step back and try to understand why. Is it because that agitating talk show you listen to in the car on your morning commute makes you grumpy?

Or perhaps it's time to cut down on the morning caffeine. Whatever the case is, changing your mood may be as simple as listening to classical music in the car or choosing orange juice over coffee at breakfast.

Share the love

Just as changing unproductive, habitual responses can be achieved with minimal effort, showing compassion can be easy, too. It's about the little things, like:

- Letting someone else go through the door first
- Listening to someone else's ideas
- Adopting a gracious tone
- Praising others for their accomplishments



Inspiration

As the bullet points suggest, the basis of all forms of compassion is putting aside selfishness and taking other people into consideration.

Keep it real

While positive people may be self-confident and self-assured, they are not self-absorbed. They don't spend time:

- Dwelling on their own problems
- Trying to impress others
- Acting the part of someone they aren't
- Making jokes at someone else's expense
- Taking the odd harsh word personally

Make it happen

There's no way to keep track of your every reaction and demeanor throughout the day, but you can increase your general self-awareness.

In time management procedures, the usual starting point is keeping an activity log. You can employ the log to remind yourself how you can achieve exemplary comportment at work.

Jot down goals in your task program, or put "sticky" notes in your pocket calendar. They might be something like:

- Respond, don't react.
- Encourage someone.
- Listen with full attention.
- Look for humor.
- See the positive.

Over the rainbow

Life, of course, can be rough. That life is often difficult and trying for all of us makes the few of us who really shine, shine even brighter.

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2009 Calendar of events

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2009 Event	Date	Location	Web site
Northeast Acquirers Association 2009 Winter Seminar	Jan. 27 - 29	Mount Snow, Vt.	www.northeastacquirers.com/Register.htm
ATM Industry Association Annual Conference and Expo	Feb. 10 - 12	Nashville, Tenn.	www.atmiconferences.com/Events
Southeast Acquirers Association 2009 Annual Seminar	Feb. 23 - 25	Orlando, Fla.	www.southeastacquirers.com
BAI Transpay Conference & Expo	Feb. 23 - 25	San Diego	www.bai.org/transpay/registration.asp
Commercial Payments International	Feb. 26 - 27	London	www.commercialpaymentsinternational.com/global-summit.htm
ETA eRetailer Summit	March 1 - 3	Miami	www.retailing.org/Summit
TowerGroup 2009 Annual Conference	March 4 - 6	Orlando, Fla.	www.towergroup.com/research/events/conferences.htm
Prepaid Card Expo 2009	March 9 - 11	Orlando, Fla.	www.iirusa.com/prepaidcardexpo/event-home.xml
Glenbrook Partners LLC, Payments Boot Camp	March 10 - 11	New York	www.glenbrook.com/bootcamp-payment.html
Merchant Risk Council 7th Annual Conference	March 10 - 12	Las Vegas	www.merchantriskcouncil.org
SourceMedia, National Collections & Credit Risk Conference	March 11 - 13	Orlando	www.sourcemediaconferences.com/NCCR09
NACHA, Payments 2009	April 5 - 8	Orlando	www.payments.nacha.org
ETA Annual Meeting & Expo	April 21 - 23	Las Vegas	www.electran.org/content/category/6/35/118
AFP Payments Forum	April 29 - May 1	New York	www.afponline.org/pub/pay/pay.html
Smart Card Alliance, Conference and Expo	May 4 - 7	New Orleans	sourcemediaconferences.com/CTST09
Midwest Acquirers Association 7th Annual Conference	July 22 - 24	Chicago	www.midwestacquirers.com
Prepaid Press Expo	Aug. 18 - 20	Las Vegas	www.prepaidpresseexpo.com
Western Payment Alliance, Payments Symposium	Sept. 13 - 15	Long Beach, Calif.	www.wespay.org
Western Payment Alliance, Operations Conference	Sept. 15 - 16	Long Beach, Calif.	www.wespay.org
Western States Acquirers Association, 2009 Conference	Sept. 24 - 25	Scottsdale, Ariz.	www.westernstatesacquirers.com/html/conferences.html



April 5 - 8



April 21 - 23



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Visit www.greensheet.com/gs_tradeshow_events.php for more events and a year-at-a-glance event chart.



Southeast Acquirers Association 2009 SEAA Annual Seminar

Highlights: The SEAA's annual meeting offers a congenial atmosphere in which to network with fellow attendees and vendors.

Breakout sessions and panel discussions led by industry leaders will offer advice and inspiration while addressing the latest payment developments and opportunities.

Vendors will include processors, equipment manufacturers, leasing companies and other third-party vendors.

When: Feb. 23 – 25, 2009

Where: Wyndham Orlando Resort, Orlando, Fla.

Registration: www.southeastacquirers.com



Electronic Retailing Association eRetailer Summit

Highlights: This year's summit will feature keynote presentations, solution-focused education sessions, networking opportunities and a business exposition.

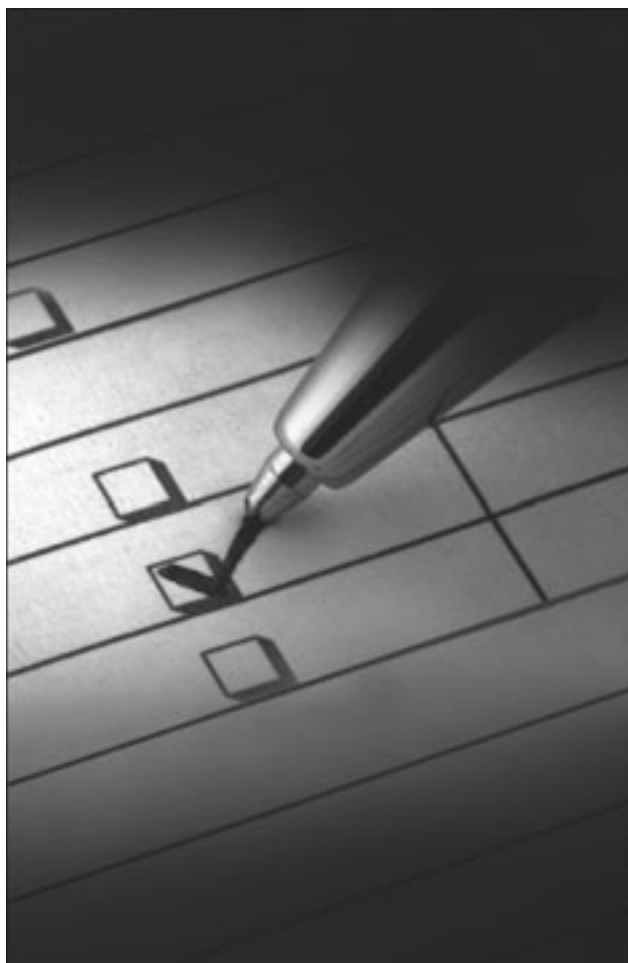
Slated educational topics include the art of the sale; lifecycle e-mail marketing; extreme Web site makeover and marketing. Some segments will fulfill ERA accreditation requirements.

Experts will enhance e-commerce sites while participants watch. Marketing experts will be pitted against marketing students in a format inspired by television game shows. And participants will be able to meet with industry experts on all facets of multichannel marketing.

When: March 1 – 3, 2009

Where: Intercontinental Hotel, Miami

Registration: www.retailing.org/Summit



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Prepaid Card Expo 2009

Highlights: This expo provides a chance to network with 2,400 attendees from over 25 countries, as well as share and explore new ideas in the prepaid industry.

The event will feature vertical market workshops, market focus sessions and cross-industry track sessions.

And the latest in prepaid technology, services and solutions will be displayed and demonstrated in a spacious exhibit hall.

Scheduled speakers include Ozzie Smith, former shortstop with the San Diego Padres and current broadcaster; Carol Kinsey Goman, Ph.D., author, coach and consultant; Mark W. Yusko, President and Chief Investment Officer, Morgan Creek Capital Management LLC; and Alpesh Chokshi, American Express Co.'s President, Travelers Checks and Prepaid Services.

When: March 9 – 11, 2009

Where: Orlando World Center Marriott, Orlando, Fla.

Registration:

www.iirusa.com/prepaidcardexpo/event-home.xml



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Payments Boot Camp

Highlights: This two-day look at U.S. payment systems features three sections:

- An overview of payment system designs, functions and uses, including payment system volumes and shifts in actual and projected usage. Perspectives of key payments industry constituencies will also be shared.
- A discussion of how payment systems in the U.S. market work. Card, check, automated clearing house, cash and wire transfer payments will be thoroughly covered.
- An examination of emerging and evolving payment markets and infrastructures, including e-commerce, chip and contactless cards, prepaid and gift cards, international remittances, mobile banking and payments, POS developments, and online bill payment.

Classes will be taught by industry veterans and Glenbrook Partners principals Carol Coye Benson and Bryan Derman.

When: March 10 – 11, 2009

Where: American Management Association Executive Conference Center, New York

Registration: www.glenbrook.com/bootcamp-payment.html



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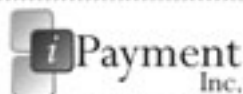
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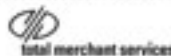
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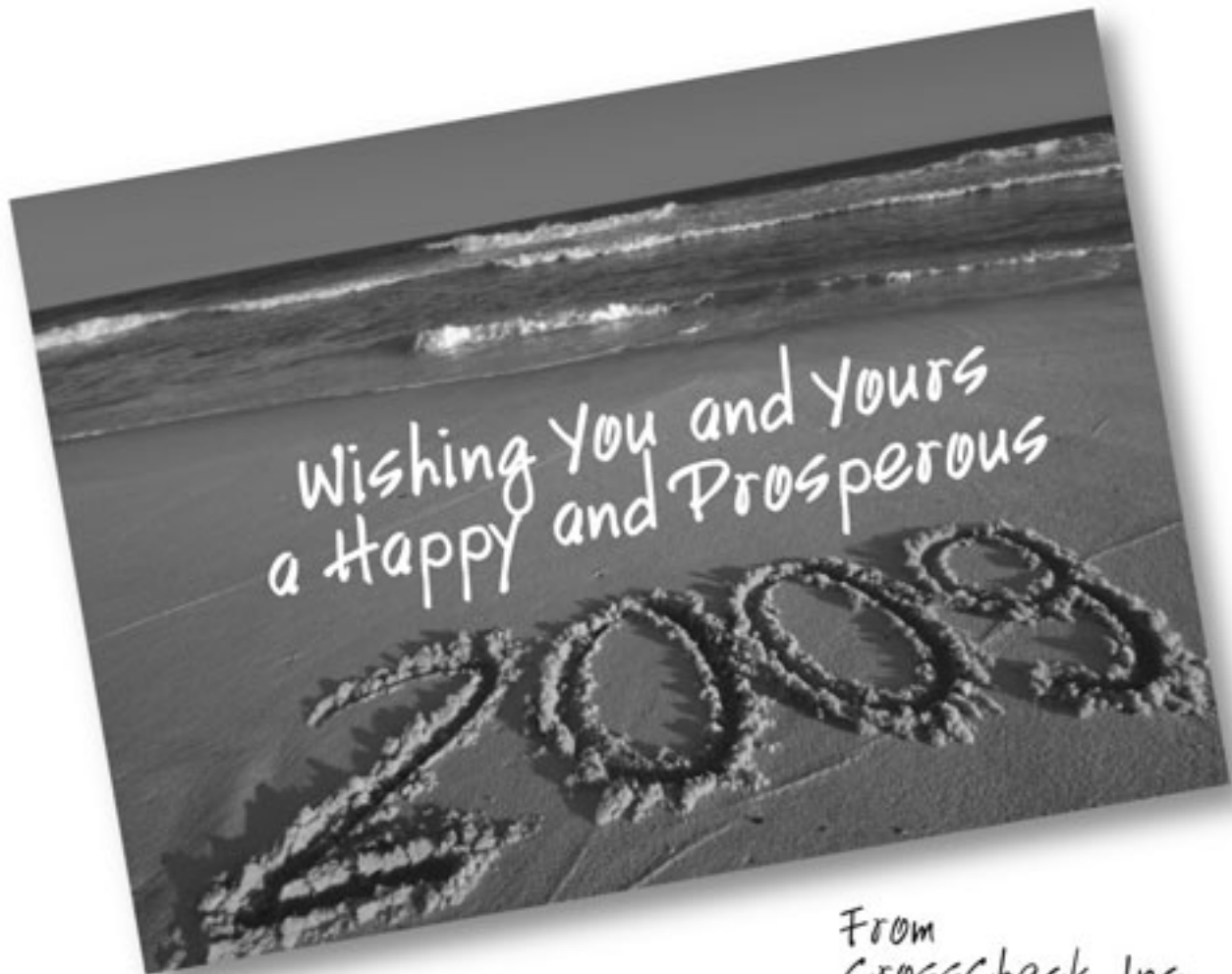
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... THERE WAS AN AD THAT HAD A GUY HOLDING A TERMINAL AND HE WAS WEARING A SPORT COAT AND THE PRICE WAS LIKE \$199 OR SOMETHING AND IT WAS BACK IN THE SUMMER. WHAT WAS THE COMPANY'S PHONE NUMBER ON THAT AD?*

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