



How Internet Merchants Can Reap Big Benefits (Savings) from the Right Credit Card Processing System.

Systems integration and compatibility are important issues for anyone running an ecommerce website. Are you implementing the right credit card processing system? A mismatch between the business application and Internet processing system can result in wasted time and money. Internet merchants fall in 1 of 3 categories. Find your category and see if you have the right credit card processing system for your business.

Internet merchants can be divided into 3 different categories:

1. Selling a tangible, physical product
2. Offering a service with recurring billing
3. Offering a product or service downloaded or delivered immediately via the Internet.

Merchants falling in the first category often accept credit card information via the web and process it later by hand-keying transactions with a credit card terminal or PC software program. It doesn't make sense to spend a lot of money on fancy processing systems if the volume of transactions is low (less than 25 transactions per day). This applies to start-up businesses working on a part-time basis with limited financial resources as well as large corporations that may be new to accepting credit card payments.

Using an inexpensive credit card terminal or PC software is a great way for new businesses to test their business concept or existing companies to determine if their customers will pay using credit cards. Set-up of these systems is quick and easy.

Merchants in category 2, processing high volumes of Internet transactions and merchants offering a service that has recurring billing, are ideal candidates for PC software or AAMS' MultiLink™ Batch. Typically, the high processing volume web sites are interfaced to the PC software or MultiLink™ Batch products, avoiding re-keying of cardholder information. This saves time and reduces errors. These systems require IT and programming expertise to implement. When operational, this is a very efficient and cost-effective way to process transactions.

One TRI customer, an Internet Service Provider, processes thousand of transactions monthly using MultiLink™ Batch. A new customer can choose services via the web, input their credit card information, and quickly be up and running. The ISP gathers the credit card information from their new customers and processes the transactions. Also, throughout the month they are sending batches of credit cards for existing customers.

Category 3 merchants needing or wanting real-time processing of credit card transactions can use Authorize.net, Verisign, SkipJack, or other payment gateways. Real-time approval is necessary if products are delivered immediately via the Internet. Real-time systems are also beneficial if volumes are greater than 25 transactions per day; eliminating the need to hand-key transactions.

Most of the popular shopping cart software has standard interfaces already certified with these payment gateways. These processing systems can also interface directly to order entry and shipping systems further reducing errors and speeding customer shipments. Unlike several years ago, now many web programmers are familiar with real-time processing and can help implement these systems.

One TRI customer provides mailing lists for direct marketing services. Clients can log onto the merchant's web site, select data based upon specific criteria, find the cost, pay via credit card, and receive the data ready for use in a matter of minutes. This system is completely automated and runs 24/7.

Want to check if your credit card processing is aligned with your web business? Looking to maximize efficiency, minimize cost and improve sales? Contact TRI today for a free, no-obligation analysis. We'll either recommend a more efficient and cost effective approach or confirm your current system meets all your needs.