

# MERCHANT PROCESSING NEWS



## PURPOSE OF THIS NEWSLETTER

It is my desire to both educate and assist business owners on the subject of “merchant services”.

## WHAT ARE MERCHANT SERVICES?

In a nut shell, merchant services are basically any service that you as a business owner utilize to drive customers through the door so they will purchase a product or service that you offer.

These services may include gift and loyalty card programs, check conversion, check guarantee, websites, website tools, internet gateways, consumer financing programs, instant credit, POS computer-based systems or terminals, credit card processing, just to name a few.

In my travels I am often amazed at the number of businesses who don't accept checks. Checks are still the number one method of payment preferred by consumers. Taking advantage of a check conversion program allows you to take a check with no risk and no NSF fees. There is even a 2 day float to help your customers. Gift and Loyalty programs are a must today in most retail locations simply because they increase customer retention and most importantly, the bottom line.

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## What's Inside:

- Purpose of this newsletter.
- What are Merchant Services?
- What is a merchant account?
- Are Merchant Accounts all the same?

## WHAT IS A MERCHANT ACCOUNT?

A Merchant Account is basically having the ability to accept credit cards from your customers. There are several methods to accomplish this such as having a POS system or device in your retail location commonly known as a “swiped account”. You may also have a “gateway” connected to your website and accept credit cards online or commonly known as a “keyed account” that results in real-time transactions.

## ARE MERCHANT ACCOUNTS ALL THE SAME?

The most important advice I would offer at this point is that rates and fees are *NOT* the most important factor in choosing a provider. There are many considerations that play a part before selecting a provider but the first should be the reputation of the provider you intend to do business with. For this reason, I highly suggest you conduct a Better Business Bureau search online to ensure that the service provider takes care of their clients; ask the representative for referrals for clients they currently work with. It is worthwhile to do your homework *before* arbitrarily signing with the first agent that comes along.

*... I'll have more next month ...*

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