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Time and Money Will Drive Wireless POS Success

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VeriFone Inc.

Time and money are the two key drivers at the heart of commerce. They will also likely drive adoption of wireless technology at the POS. In 2004, wireless services surpassed toll services for a second year, according to recent data from the Telecommunications Industry Association. The continued migration of landline subscribers to relying exclusively on wireless, along with a loss of business lines, affected the increase.

In the United States, it seems that everyone has gone wireless, so why not also the payments industry? Our industry has shown reluctance to embrace it because of frustration over earlier mobile POS devices and networks that failed to live up to promises.

As a result, many processors have been wary of developing the infrastructure to deploy and support wireless POS. This is unfortunate because the rapid expansion of wireless Internet protocol (IP)-based networks and the continuing decline in wireless rates add up to a tremendous opportunity for you as ISOs/merchant level salespeople (MLSs) to more rapidly sell payment solutions to new or expanding customers.

A Wireless Connection

The opportunity that wireless presents combined with the lack of supporting infrastructure within the payments industry prompted VeriFone Inc. earlier this year to roll out a service enabling both portable and countertop wireless POS payments. The service is called VeriFone Connect, and the company designed it for you to resell.

Merchants don't have to set up wireless POS through this service to use VeriFone wireless terminals, but it will save you additional time and effort, eliminating the need to pull together separate service agreements with carriers and line-up support.

Retriever Payment Systems, a Houston, Texas-based payment processor, used VeriFone Connect earlier this year to set up a short-term wireless payment solution at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, attended by more than 1.7 million people over three weeks. Retriever deployed VeriFone's V 610 mobile payment solution with Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) service from Verizon Wireless in the large Reliant Park entertainment complex. Volunteer staff pro-

cessed thousands of electronic transactions in the stadium, parking lot and convention center during the event.

Changing the POS

Consumers worldwide use credit and debit cards at an ever-increasing pace, and merchants struggle to handle those transactions more efficiently during peak times to increase sales and provide better customer service. Merchants also want to accept more types of cards, including gift cards that drive customers into stores and loyalty programs that entice them to return.

IP-based POS delivers an entirely new level of speed, security, breadth of connectivity and mobility, and ease-of-use. IP solutions open new markets, inspire innovation and introduce new value to the POS. The speed, transportability and versatility of IP-based wireless payment terminals extend card payments far beyond the store countertop and into new revenue-generating venues such as sidewalk sales, outdoor garden departments, or even airport, mall or stadium kiosks.

Wireless phone companies now offer advanced digital cellular technologies that deliver IP connections via CDMA and general packet radio service (GPRS), the same network infrastructure that supports millions of wireless telephones. Wireless creates opportunities to quickly deploy payment solutions and generate revenue. How long does it take to have a phone line or broadband connection installed? If the wiring is not already in place, the time and cost will serve as major barriers to closing a sale.

Wireless POS needs to be effortless and as reliable and simple to use as wired POS out of the box. This will minimize training with merchants and leverage the existing POS help desk and documentation, too. The goal is to instill confidence in merchants using your wireless solutions.

Turnkey service offerings are the wave of the future for wireless POS. Provide merchants with bundled offerings that aggregate services in a single solution: one bill and one point of contact for service and support, without the hassle of multiple contracts. This reduces organizational costs and streamlines set-up time while giving you complete control over how to ultimately serve and support customers. ■

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