

It's time to Upgrade to EMV Card Readers

In the wake of the October 1st liability shift, a lot of people are concerned about EMV card reader upgrades.

Merchants are being contacted by salesmen trying to convince them that they must upgrade their EMV card terminals now, but about half of merchants haven't upgraded yet. That may raise some questions for retailers.

One of the biggest questions that merchants have is, "If I don't have EMV card readers, will I be in trouble?"

Take a deep breath, and listen up because the answer to that question has two parts.

1. Despite the fact that certain sales organizations will call on your small business, trying to convince you that you will be fined unless you get their product...it's simply not true.

Visa and MasterCard have not stated that merchants have to upgrade. In fact, it's estimated that only 47% of merchants in the U.S will upgrade their terminals and implement chip cards by the end of 2015.

2. Don't relax yet. What *will* happen if you don't upgrade is that you may be liable for card present fraud on your older machines if your processor and bank have their ducks in a row and you don't.

That means that if a criminal presents a counterfeit or stolen card and you accept it with just a swipe then you, the merchant, are responsible for the fraud loss instead of the bank. You don't want that to happen.

Just because a lot of other merchants haven't upgraded their readers yet doesn't mean that you shouldn't make it a priority. Although merchants aren't going to be forced to upgrade to EMV card readers, the liability shift has already occurred. Unless you have EMV Chip card readers in place...

You, the merchant, are now liable for card present fraud!

Knowing this should provide the motivation to make the switch. And, now could also be a great time to consider changing credit card processing companies.



Make a Game Plan

So there is a valid reason to upgrade, but don't panic and take any EMV reader. You want to work with a reliable vendor who understands your network and the complete data security picture.

Make a game plan for upgrading, evaluate your vendors and determine the cost of the new hardware. Also realize that if you are a merchant that does all phone or online orders, this change will not affect your business.

With increased demand, processors may have raised their rates and equipment costs. So you may want to compare rates.

Optional, but not Advisable

Since merchants won't be forced to comply, making the switch to EMV card readers may seem optional. But it's optional like walking down a dark alley is optional. You could get mugged.

Although you're not going to get fined for failing to upgrade to EMV, like not having health insurance, it does mean that you could get socked in the gut (a large fraudulent transaction) and have to pay the bill out of your own pocket.

Save Money, Earn More

It's time to move, but carefully evaluate your options, and see if you can get better machines and a better processor while you're upgrading! You may also want to assess your [network security](#) status and verify [PCI compliance](#).

An improved customer experience with a corresponding increase in sales and a reduction of theft will more than justify the effort and expense to upgrade to EMV card readers. Those merchants that have done so will most likely see the biggest positive effect on their bottom line from increased credit card security.

Still have questions about EMV?

We've got you've covered. [Read about EMV](#) on our blog. You may also want to take a look at our [retail technology services](#).

If you'd like to learn more about what steps to take with your own business, or would like a free EMV and credit card processing consultation, [contact us here](#).

