



# 101 QUESTIONS FOR YOUR BILL PRESENTMENT AND PAYMENTS PARTNER



# SUMMARY

The mobile payments industry is always evolving, and we know that it's tough to gauge whether your partners on this front are keeping up. Knowing the considerations that go into maintaining a comprehensive strategy that addresses your business needs and new technology considerations, all while meeting consumer expectations, is a huge challenge. Billers agree that all of these factors are becoming more and more complex and are difficult to manage without true expertise and insight.

It's important to ensure that you're positioned to remain at the forefront of the market, and that all of your suppliers are willing and able to be consultative partners to you in this new market opportunity. Whether you're seeking a new payments and presentment partner and are preparing to issue an RFP, are trying to understand your provider's full scope of offerings relative to industry trends or are simply wondering if you're getting the most from your current partnership, it can be difficult to know where to start and which questions to ask. For this reason, ACI compiled a list of 101 questions to ask your present or potential payments and presentment partner.

We recognize that every business has different needs and that those priorities can vary considerably from biller to biller. To account for this, we interviewed our clients, alliance partners, consultants, industry experts and marketing leadership in order to compile this checklist. Their responses ranged from basic functionality to less obvious considerations, all of which will help to give you the confidence that your presentment and payments partner is well-positioned to help you create the most value from your billing and remittance strategy, both now and well into the future.

## COMPANY BACKGROUND

- What is their primary business?
- How many years have they been in the presentment and payments business?
- Are they financially stable?
- How many years have they been working with your industry?
- What is their market presence in the payments industry?
- What is their market presence in your industry?
- What is their client relationship philosophy?
- Can they provide strong references?

## PAYMENT TYPES

- Do they accept ACH (drawing from checking, savings and money market accounts), credit card (Visa, Mastercard, Discover, American Express), debit card (Visa, Mastercard) and PIN-less ATM (STAR, NYCE, Pulse, Accel) payments?
- Do they offer flexible fee models?

## PAYMENT CHANNELS

### INTERNET

- Do they require pre-registration to use the payments site?
- Do they provide site logging tools?
- Do they offer an electronic wallet with multiple payment types and management capabilities?
- Do they offer an online payments history view?
- Can the consumer sign up for complementary solutions (e.g., eBill enrollment and paper suppression, payments by SMS) while making a payment?
- Do they capture an email address with the payment?
- Do they offer customized, simple URLs?

### IVR

- Do they offer separate sites with flexible branding options and fee structures for subsidiaries?
- How is the customer passed from the biller's IVR to the payment IVR?
- Can the customer zero-out?
- Do they offer call drop tracking for troubleshooting purposes?
- Is the IVR call flow customizable?
- Do they offer remembered payment features?
- Can the consumer sign up for complementary solutions (e.g., eBill enrollment and paper suppression, payments by SMS) while making a payment?

## PAYMENT CHANNELS CONT.

### CSR AND MANAGEMENT-FACING TOOLS

- Do they offer a browser-based payments acceptance and management portal?
- Does it support role-based access with unlimited users?
- Does it support customizable miscellaneous fields?
- Does it support complete auditing tools?
- Do they provide call center services to help consumers?
- Does it support access to end users' stored payment accounts without PCI exposure?

### RECURRING

- Do they offer flexible recurring schedule frequencies?
- Do they offer flexible start and stop options?
- Do they offer flexible payment amount options?
- Through which channels do they offer recurring payments?
- Do they send electronic communications to consumers to notify them when a recurring payment processes?
- Are these payments processed and funded in the same manner as one-time payments?
- Do they offer specialized reporting on recurring payments?

### MOBILE

- Do they offer payments via text message?
- Do they work with all major carriers?
- Do they offer mobile-compatible websites?
- Do they offer a payments app? For which smartphone platforms?
- Do they offer digital disbursements for payment refunds (B2C)? If so, what payment methods are supported?

### eBILLS

- Do they provide both push and pull eBilling solutions?
- Do their eBills have integrated payment options or will the customer be sent to another page to make a payment?
- Are there solutions in place to maximize deliverability for push solutions?
- Are there reporting tools in place to measure and address eBill activity?
- Do they provide marketing opportunities in the eBill?
- Do they have a comprehensive eBill adoption strategy?
- Do they offer the ability to present eBills in customers' Apple Pay and Google Pay mobile wallets?

## INTEGRATION

- Do they offer payments integration for clients that host their own interfaces?
- Do their APIs support retrieval of stored payment accounts?
- Do they support real-time payments notifications to clients?
- Which integration options are available? Real-time? Batch? Both?

## REPORTING

- Is on-demand reporting available through an online tool?
- Is reporting available in real time?
- Is ad-hoc reporting available?
- Is the reporting data exportable into multiple formats?
- How many standard reports do they provide and are these reports fully configurable?
- Will they send daily summary data files in addition to on-demand reporting?
- Is an eLockbox solution available?

## CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS

- Do they help to design a comprehensive consumer adoption marketing strategy aligned with your business goals?
- Do they provide proactive email notifications with configurable messaging?
- Do they provide outbound call notifications with payment options?
- What types of consumer marketing do they support? Through which channels?
- Do they have a mobile messaging strategy?
- Do they provide email append services?

## PROCESSING AND FUNDING

- Are processing times configurable/flexible?
- Is next-day funding available?
- Is a single remittance available?
- Are they merchant-processor-agnostic?
- Do they offer flexible funding options?
- Are reversals and NOCs automated? Representments?
- Do they provide an in-house DDA account validation service?

## HOSTING ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

- Is it a fully cloud-hosted solution?
- Are there any hardware or software requirements?
- Do the data centers operate in co-production (i.e., across two hot sites)?
- What is the approach to redundancy?
- What is their business continuity plan?
- How does their total capacity compare to current throughput?
- Are the standards flexible?
- Are they compliant with all applicable standards (Nacha, card association rules, PCI-DSS, Reg E, FCRA, SOX, GLBA)?
- What kind of application monitoring is in place?
- How long is payments data retained so it is available through the front end?
- How much downtime have their clients experienced in each of the past five years?

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## ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

- Do they charge for hosting, implementation and upgrades?
- How do they approach client support?
- Do they sponsor user groups or industry consortiums?
- Do they provide regularly updated business intelligence?
- Will they advise on industry best practices throughout the relationship?
- Will they help create a payments strategy that will create more value for your business?
- Is a fraud detection tool available?
- Will you have the same account management and project management contact post-implementation?
- Do they follow documented, industry-standard project management protocols?
- Is technical support available on a 24x7x365 basis?
- Where is their support team located?
- What are the escalation paths?
- Is support accessible on the web and via phone?
- What other departments support the end-to-end service?
- What is their ongoing product strategy?
- What additional value can they provide?
- How do they differentiate themselves from their competitors?