



Why Every Small Business Must Embrace Digital Payments

Post-pandemic it's more important than ever that your company offer contactless payment options, and here's how

Soon after the COVID-19 quarantine began in March, Kevin Phalen, SVP, Global Head of Visa Business Solutions at Visa, began receiving a flurry of questions from small business owners about how to take their companies online. "A lot of businesses had to build their digital presence from scratch," Phalen says. "They came to us saying, 'How can you help?'"

According to Visa, half of America's small businesses had no online presence before the pandemic. While that has increased, companies in the U.S. and beyond are still trying to figure out how

to get more digital, including creating a larger web-based presence and offering contactless payments, where clients can tap a card on a point-of-sale device to pay for an item.

Embracing digital commerce is neither complicated nor expensive. Where to start? Here are some ideas on how to get going:

1. Enhance your online shopping experience

Pandemic or not, everyone needs an online store. Fortunately, it's not difficult to create one. Visa, which developed a Small Business Hub to help small businesses find the tools they need to digitize,

lists a number of website-building and e-commerce partners, including Wix and Shopify, that can help get a digital store up in no time, Phalen says.

2. Go contactless

Since the pandemic, demand for contactless payments has skyrocketed, and for good reason—no one wants to touch cash that other people have handled. Several financial companies now offer contactless-enabled, point-of-sale devices, Phalen says. Visa, on its Small Business Hub, lists a number of payment processing partners business owners can contact. They can also call Visa for help. "We support them whether it's connecting them to a local fintech company or helping them connect to their financial institution," he says.

3. Make use of data

With digital, a small business can also mine data related to their customers' purchasing habits. This information can give them more insight into when their customers shop and what products they like to buy, which can then be used to create more targeted promotions and improved product offerings. Formerly, "companies didn't know, in an automated way, the frequency of their customers' buying habits," Phalen says. "Many of these providers are now giving that data to them in a simple-to-understand way, so they can stay in better contact with customers."

4. Have a clearer view of cash flows

There's another benefit to digitization: better cash flow management. Owners who accept cash or check have to make a trip to the bank to make a deposit, which they may not do in a timely manner. Also, "Waiting for checks to clear will slow you down from getting your money," Phalen says. With digital point-of-sale systems that feature Visa Direct, money gets moved into a company's bank account immediately. "It becomes faster to receive cash, and it's easier to manage cash flow."

While COVID-19 may have pushed more businesses toward digital commerce, it's a trend that won't disappear when the pandemic ends. "Those who adopt digital," Phalen notes, "will be in a solid position to succeed."

Increasing your ecommerce swagger. **That's a better normal.**

There's a whole online world of opportunity for your small business brilliance. To thrive online, connect with partners through the [Visa Small Business Hub](#). There, you can also find tips and resources to help manage your money, ways to help keep everyone safer with contactless payments, and more.

Learn how to put your digital prowess on full display. Go to visa.com/smallbusinesshub