



# The Green Sheet

The Financial Services Industry Source for Education, Inspiration and Actionable Advice

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Inside This Issue:

## ▶▶▶ NEW PRODUCTS

### Score One for Little Guy

WebConnect  
ADVANCED MERCHANT SOLUTIONS

#### ADVANCED MERCHANT SOLUTIONS

Advanced Merchant Solutions Inc. has a few nifty ideas for small businesses and mobile merchants interested in increasing sales. Its new systems for transaction processing solve a number of problems faced by delivery people, artists, contractors, taxi drivers and dealers at swap meets.

Merchants not hooked up to standard POS terminals and processing services are out of luck if their customers want to pay with credit or debit cards or write checks for purchases. They may lose the sale and could run the risk of getting burned by a fraudulent payment.

WebConnect is Advanced Merchant Solutions transaction software package for PDAs, allowing anyone to accept credit cards and checks anywhere. Because the application is designed to run on handhelds, WebConnect is a truly portable option for expanded retail capabilities.

The real beauty is that this system allows people to take advantage of the size and time-saving features of a Personal Digital Assistant. Dennis Ideue, CEO of AMS, said his company was founded in 2001 and is already "getting incredible feedback from end-users. When payment options open up, higher sales result."

AMS develops technology, including

software and hardware, to provide mobile solutions for businesses. Small and independent retailers from beauty salons, taxi and shuttle services, craftspeople and artists, to tool sales reps, mall carts, contractors and delivery services can have access to the same verification services and low card rates as a traditional retail store.

WebConnect uses the handheld's Internet connection to authorize and transfer funds. WebConnect supports Palm OS or Pocket PC-based handhelds. An attachment clips on to the PDA and transmits the card or check information for verification and reporting. Magnetic stripe cards — credit cards, debit cards and drivers' licenses — are swiped and read through an attachment that clips on to the PDA; swipe transactions currently use cables to transmit data. Card transactions are processed through First Data, Vital or Card Systems.

AMS knows that Palm and Compaq are not the only companies making PDAs. WebConnect is configured to be platform-specific, but a stand-alone accessory, called Pocket Merchant, will connect to any brand of PDA, including Palm and Compaq, and offers the same software package. "WebConnect is hardware independent, multiplatform and works with every card reader," Ideue said.

Pocket Merchant is smaller than a PDA, weighs only 7 ounces and provides thermal printing capabilities for standard 2 1/4-inch receipts. Ideue said WebConnect offers many additional features. Signature captures are displayed on-screen and can be stored for future access and retrieval. Transaction Manager, a database on the PDA, stores information for reporting or issuing

credits and voids and can locate individual transactions with a number of search criteria.

A tip-reporting feature allows mobile merchants to enter gratuities on-screen. Internet backend features offer versatile and complete reporting functions. Several merchant accounts (for example, in a beauty salon) can be stored on one PDA, and one merchant can use several PDAs to manage all sales, Ideue said. With WebConnect's Pocket CrossCheck program, mobile retailers can verify checks and have access to ACH fast and accurate processing.

For ISOs and resellers, "profit potentials are huge," said Ideue. "They can resell the products and link to merchant accounts using their own gateway, or they can connect directly to our gateway. It's very affordable — resellers can acquire the hardware through their own supply channels to get the PDAs into their merchants' hands, and we have a one-time \$79 licensing fee."

For small businesses and mobile merchants, Advanced Merchant Solutions WebConnect package provides truly portable, reliable and inexpensive opportunities to increase sales — just like the big guys.

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