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Payments Experts. Powerful Data.
THE STRAWHECKER GROUP



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The Cost to Golf in America [Infographic]

Check out Greens Fees at America's Public Golf Courses, an infographic produced by TSG. The analysis was created by leveraging TSG's database, which is populated with purchase data on over 2,500 golf courses in the United States.



[Click here for the infographic.](#)

The states with the **highest costs** for a round of golf are Nevada, Hawaii and Alaska, while the **lowest costs** go to Tennessee, Utah and Ohio.

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This Day in History: 1916 Easter Rebellion Begins

On this day in 1916, on Easter Monday in Dublin, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, a secret organization of Irish nationalists led by Patrick Pearse, launches the so-called Easter Rebellion, an armed uprising against British rule. Assisted by militant Irish socialists under James Connolly, Pearse and his fellow Republicans rioted and attacked British provincial

The EMV liability shift date is approaching. Get the whole story.

This week, TSG released a guide to help industry participants and new players understand what EMV is, who is impacted by the EMV migration, and how the shift to EMV will impact the payments environment.

[See some highlighted findings from TSG's guide.](#)



This 86-page guide cites over 200 sources that were analyzed and reviewed to provide readers with a comprehensive view of the state of EMV in the U.S. Want the whole story?

See the content preview [here](#) and order [here](#).

House Passes Cybersecurity Bill Despite Privacy Protests

4/22/15 *Wired*

Congress is hellbent on passing a cybersecurity bill that can stop the wave of hacker breaches hitting American corporations. And they're not letting the protests of a few dozen privacy and civil liberties organizations get in their way. On Wednesday the House of Representatives voted 307-116 to pass the Protecting Cyber Networks Act, a bill designed to allow more fluid sharing of cybersecurity threat data between corporations and government agencies.

Related: [House Passes Second 'Threatsharing' Cybersecurity Bill](#)

Conflicting Decisions on Surcharging Emerge in State Courts

4/23/15 *The Green Sheet*

"All of these things are going to be appealed and depending upon how the various appeals courts decide in each of these four cases, if they remain split, then it might end up going to the higher court, the Supreme Court," said **Gerritt Kerkstra, Senior Management Consultant at The Strawhecker Group**. "Merchants want the ability to characterize their ability to surcharge on their own terms and not have them dictated to them by the state."

Why Square's Greatest Ambition Has Become Its Biggest Threat

4/20/15 *PYMNTS*

Lots of companies enter payments with an ambition to disrupt the "status quo." But perhaps none caused more heartburn than Square back in 2009 when it launched. The combination of Jack Dorsey's Twitter pedigree, its San Francisco "cool" factor, high profile Silicon Valley backing and giant PR and media machine unleashed an avalanche of queries from Board members to CEOs and from CEOs to executive management about their "Square strategy." Just about every presentation I made to CEOs and Boards in the first few years of Square's existence included at least one 15-minute discussion on Square and whether it was, indeed, a threat.

EMV Push in U.S. Moving Forward

4/23/15 *Bank Info Security*

Eduardo Perez, Visa's senior vice president of risk services, says the U.S. push for EMV is moving forward, even though a majority of U.S.

government headquarters across Dublin and seized the Irish capital's General Post Office. Following these successes, they proclaimed the independence of Ireland, which had been under the repressive thumb of the United Kingdom for centuries, and by the next morning were in control of much of the city. Later that day, however, British authorities launched a counteroffensive, and by April 29 the uprising had been crushed.

Nevertheless, the Easter Rebellion is considered a significant marker on the road to establishing an independent Irish republic.

Following the uprising, Pearse and 14 other nationalist leaders were executed for their participation and held up as martyrs by many in Ireland. There was little love lost among most Irish people for the British, who had enacted a series of harsh anti-Catholic restrictions, the Penal Laws, in the 18th century, and then let 1.5 million Irish starve during the Potato Famine of 1845-1848. Armed protest continued after the Easter Rebellion and in 1921, 26 of Ireland's 32 counties won independence with the declaration of the Irish Free State. The Free State became an independent republic in 1949. However, six northeastern counties of the Emerald Isle remained part of the United Kingdom, prompting some nationalists to reorganize themselves into the Irish Republican Army (IRA) to continue their struggle for full Irish independence.

[Click here to read more.](#)

merchants will not make the October 2015 liability shift date. In an interview recorded at RSA Conference 2015, Perez discusses what Visa is doing to help merchants with their EMV migration.

[Discover CEO Defends Amex's Decision to 'Walk Away' From Costco](#)

4/22/15 ISO & Agent

American Express Co., down 10% since announcing it would end its U.S. partnership with Costco Wholesale Corp., has a defender in Discover Financial Services. With competition mounting for tie-ups with retailers, Amex is in a better position than other banks because it negotiates the so-called swipe fees it reaps as the creditor to cardholders, Discover CEO David Nelms said in an interview late April 21. Rival payments network Visa Inc., which wrested away Costco, agreed to fees that banks - as the lenders that issue Visa cards - will now have to live with.

[The Entrepreneur Who Wants to be the Banker to the Marijuana Business](#)

4/21/15 Denver Business Journal

David Dinenberg had some success in Philadelphia as a real estate broker and developer. But in October 2012, he was looking for something new. "I was really trying to figure out what the next opportunity for David Dinenberg and his family would be," Dinenberg, 42, told me. An opportunity hit him while watching a "60 Minutes" report on the emerging legal marijuana business. He learned pot businesses faced a huge obstacle: Financial institutions shy away from it. And Dinenberg knew what he wanted to do next - become the banker for the marijuana business.

[Where Americans Don't Know How to Write Checks](#)

4/22/15 The Washington Post

Writing a check has always been a fundamentally strange act. There's the fussy ceremony of writing out the amount in words and drawing the squiggly line across the remainder of the space, ostensibly to protect against a type of fraud - tampering with individual digits - that's quaint by today's standards. There's the questionable business of handing a complete stranger a document with your bank account and routing number printed plainly across it.



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[Mobile Payments & Bitcoin](#)

[Apple Pay Takes Hold as PayPal Dives](#)

4/21/15 SlashGear

The mobile iteration of PayPal is taking a dive - and has been taking a dive the for past year - as Apple Pay begins to take a firm grasp on mobile payments. Thus says the data presented by 451 Research in a study conducted over the 3-month period ending this March, 2015. In it, 451 Research's ChangeWave service had 4,168 respondents "primarily based in North America" answer questions about their planned use (over the next 90 days) of mobile payment applications as well as issues of security therein.

Rand Paul Chides 'Naysayers' Who Want to Regulate Bitcoin

4/21/15 *BTN*

Presidential candidate Rand Paul describes himself as a politician who bridges old ideas and new technology, and he sought to get that message across at a fundraising get-together with Bitcoin enthusiasts this week. "I'm not an expert on Bitcoin, but I'm open to new technology," Paul told a small but intent crowd of mostly twenty- and thirty-somethings at the Union League Club in New York on Sunday. "To me it's intriguing to actually eliminate cost somehow in the transfer of money and buying things."

Apple Watch App Store Launched: 7+ Payments and Commerce Apps

4/24/15 *LTP*

Apple launched the app store for its amazing new product category, the Apple Watch, yesterday. It features 3000 apps currently, and financial institutions don't want to be left behind. So what are some of the payments and commerce apps?

Twitter Begins Selling Sports Tickets, Starting With the NBA Playoffs

4/20/15 *Recode*

When Twitter first announced plans to sell stuff in tweets, sports tickets seemed like a logical fit because of the large followings professional teams have on the social network. Now, the NBA's Atlanta Hawks are tapping into the potential demand, announcing today that they're selling a limited number of tickets to Wednesday's playoff game against the Brooklyn Nets directly from a tweet. Fans can select ticket quantity and pay with a credit card without leaving Twitter.

CIOs Embrace Cloud - Mobile to Transform Stores

4/22/15 *FierceRetailIT*

In the next two years, more retailers will adopt customer-facing mobile services to enhance the shopping experience, according to a study from Boston Retail Partners. The report found that the number of retailers offering advanced mobile technologies, including mobile point-of-sale terminals, geo-location and proximity payment solutions, will proliferate. Localization technologies, such as beacons and radio frequency identification, are also expected to grow, de Vries said.



Regulation & Security

New Costs Imposed on Banks by Same-Day ACH Could Reshape Pricing Approach

4/23/15 *Digital Transactions*

The proposal, which members of NACHA, the regulatory body for the ACH, are expected to vote on some time in the coming weeks, will create a system to clear and settle most ACH transactions the same day rather than the next business day. But it will also force banks to reckon with new

costs. NACHA for example estimates receiving financial institutions will incur \$49 million in net new operating costs and \$118 million in implementation costs related to the same-day plan by 2027.

Google Uses Algorithm To Flag Suspicious Payments

4/21/15 The Wall Street Journal

May require subscription. Google Inc. compliance chief Andy Hinton said Tuesday that the company has applied its expertise in data analysis to compliance, developing an algorithm that it uses to flag suspicious payments. Mr. Hinton, speaking at a Wall Street Journal Newsmaker's forum in New York, said the algorithm, which looks across the payments database for patterns of suspicious transactions, hasn't found a corrupt payment, but it has improved the efficiency of Google's compliance efforts, and it brought the internal audit department into the compliance sphere of influence.

Backlog Forces CFPB to Slow Down New Investigations

4/22/15 American Banker

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's enforcement attorneys have pulled back on new investigations in order to clear out a slew of pending cases, according to multiple current and former officials at the agency. The officials say the agency essentially bit off more than it could chew when it began ramping up investigatory efforts three years ago, and has struggled to clear through the backlog of investigations as hundreds of referrals are also coming in.

POS Vendor Reports Malware Attack

4/22/15 Data Breach Today

"The incident involved the installation of malware on certain point-of-sale systems," the Allentown, Pa.-based company said in a statement provided to Information Security Media Group. "The advanced malware was designed to avoid detection by the anti-virus program running on the POS system. Within hours of detecting the incident, Harbortouch identified and removed the malware from affected systems."

Retailers Adopt Proven Strategies to Curb POS Breaches

4/22/15 FierceRetailIT

Security breaches at the point-of-sale don't just impact business operations and customer loyalty, they strike an expensive and damaging blow to a retailer's bottom line. As a result, POS security has taken top priority for many retail executives, Chris Ciabarra, co-founder and chief technology officer of Revel Systems, told FierceRetailIT. Best practices such as those involved in point-to-point encryption, Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards and the new EMV chip cards combine for a robust defense against cyber attacks.

Major Retailer Selects New Point of Sale System to Support EMV Compliance and Enhance Customer Relations

4/21/15 The Point of Sale News

Town Pump Inc. recently finalized the rollout of the Gilbarco Veeder-Root Passport POS system at each of their 97 locations across Montana. The retailer, headquartered in Butte, Mont., selected Passport as the best system to enhance customer service and prepare for upcoming EMV liability shift deadlines. Town Pump leadership had been searching for a POS system that would support evolving credit networks, loyalty programs, enable remote management and provide a foundation for pending changes due to the EMV liability shift.

Economy

Why You Can't Put Faith in Reports of First-Quarter Economic Slumps

4/23/15 *The Upshot*

We have heard this story before: The recovery gathers momentum, but then as the new year gets underway, the reported pace of growth in gross domestic product stalls. It's happening now. It happened in the first quarter of last year. And it happened in 2010, 2011 and 2012. Indeed, the pattern of weak first-quarter growth has occurred so often that it has led some economists to ask whether there's a problem in how the government calculates its G.D.P. numbers.

U.S. Economy Isn't Growing Fast Enough

4/22/15 *CNN*

Here's one matter that Democratic and Republican economists agree on: America's economy could be doing a lot better. "The good news is we're growing, we're creating jobs, property values are rising. The bad news is we're not growing quickly enough and there's tremendous income disparity," Hank Paulson, the former U.S. Treasury Secretary under President George W. Bush, told CNN's Fareed Zakaria on Sunday.

The U.S. Economy Keeps Disappointing

4/20/15 *Bloomberg*

The U.S. economy had a disappointing start to the year, and for now there isn't much evidence of a strong comeback. U.S. indicators are continuing to undershoot analysts' estimates, according to the Bloomberg Economic Surprise Index, which made fresh lows late last week. The Bloomberg ECO U.S. Surprise Index, which measures whether data is beating or missing forecasts, is sitting at its lowest level since the Financial Crisis.



Payments Press

Costco Said to Get Sweet Deal from Credit-Card Companies

4/20/15 *The Seattle Times*

Costco Wholesale has attained a goal that retailers have sought for years: near-zero expenses for credit-card payments. In a deal with Visa and Citigroup, Costco's acceptance costs will be about zero, according to people familiar with the arrangement. That compares with the roughly 0.6 percent of each transaction the retailer pays its current partner, American Express. While Costco will still incur small fees on Visa cards

issued by other banks, incentives from Citigroup and Visa will offset them, the people said.

PayPal Tops EBay's Marketplace in Sales for First Time

4/22/15 The Wall Street Journal

EBay Inc.'s marketplace and payments division are veering in opposite directions ahead of the planned split into two companies. For the first time, quarterly revenue from the PayPal payments division exceeded that from the core marketplace, which essentially makes up the main eBay.com website. And while PayPal is growing, the marketplace business shrank for the first time in more than five years.

China to Open Bank Card Clearing Market to Foreign Firms From June

4/22/15 Reuters

China has announced it will open up its market for clearing domestic bank card transactions, a move that should allow foreign players such as Visa Inc and MasterCard Inc direct access to a market valued at \$6.84 trillion last year. Foreign firms will be able to set up their own clearing companies in China and apply to the central bank for licenses for bank card clearing businesses from June 1.

NACHA Announces 2015 Payments System Awards Recipients

4/21/15 PRWeb

NACHA-The Electronic Payments Association® today announced the recipients of its 2015 Payments System Awards, which recognize the highest degree of achievement in the development, implementation and advancement of electronic payments. These prestigious awards celebrate excellence, outstanding accomplishments and superior leadership in innovation to further the ACH Network.

NCR Considering Strategic Alternatives Including Sale of Company

4/22/15 Atlanta Business Chronicle

Technology giant NCR Corp. is considering "strategic alternatives" as the Duluth, Ga.-based technology giant pivots from hardware to software and services. NCR is considering options including the spinoff or sale of assets, or a return of cash to investors through a dividend or share buyback, The Wall Street Journal reported, citing people familiar with the matter. A full sale of the company is also on the table, but some of the people cautioned that is a less-likely outcome.

First Data and Sam's Club Collaborate to Fuel Small Business Growth

4/22/15 First Data

Small businesses are the heart of enterprise around the world. In line with its efforts to help clients grow their businesses, First Data, the global leader in payment technology and services solutions, today announced an extended agreement with Sam's Club, a leading membership club for the small business community, to improve member access to First Data solutions and technologies.

TSYS Announces Full Service Processing for American Express OptBlue® Program

4/21/15 TSYS

TSYS announced the enablement of full service payment processing under American Express OptBlue, the small merchant acquiring program

from American Express. This new program allows our eligible direct merchants and small merchants from our third party clients to accept and process American Express Card transactions the same way they do other payment card transactions from major card networks. Merchant benefits include improved cash flow, easier and faster reconciliation and one easy-to-read statement for all card brand activity.

Heartland Collaborates with PAX to Offer Secure EMV Terminals for Merchants

4/23/15 BusinessWire

Heartland Payment Systems, one of the nation's largest payment processors, announced it has teamed with PAX Technology, Inc., one of the fastest-growing terminal providers in the world, to provide Europay, MasterCard, and Visa (EMV)-compliant payment terminals through its Heartland Secure™ card data security solution and comprehensive breach warranty.

Capital One and Uber Partner to Bring Simplicity and Savings to Customers

4/21/15 PRNewswire

Capital One Financial Corporation and Uber announced a unique new partnership that offers Capital One cardholders and Uber riders simple new ways to save. This partnership brings together the common focus that both companies have on creating products and experiences that seamlessly deliver value and make people's lives easier.

Element Receives PCI Council's P2PE Solution Validation for TransForm® P2PE Encompass

4/20/15 Vantiv

Element Payment Services®, a leader in PCI compliant processing solutions, and a Vantiv, Inc. company, announced its TransForm® P2PE Encompass solution has received the PCI Security Standards Council's (SSC) P2PE solution validation. As one of the payment industry's first validated solutions, TransForm P2PE Encompass continues to simplify and secure payment processing for developers and merchants by helping them minimize the risk and liability, associated with credit card acceptance.

POSSible POS teams with North American Bancard

4/20/15 The Green Sheet

POSSible POS Inc., headquartered in Stafford, TX, is extending the distribution of its innovative POS software and hardware solution through its new partnership with North American Bancard, the nation's leading merchant services company, and its front-end gateway, Velocity Exchange.

P2P Lending Site Funding Circle Raises \$150M Led By DST At A \$1B+ Valuation

4/23/15 TechCrunch

Time to make way for another startup juggernaut out of the financial world. Funding Circle - a London-based peer-to-peer platform for small businesses to get loans, and investors to put up money to finance those loans - is today announcing that it has raised \$150 million in venture funding, in a round that we have confirmed values the startup at over \$1 billion.

Wells Fargo Startup Accelerator Taps 3 New Early-Stage Companies

4/22/15 Wells Fargo

The Wells Fargo Startup Accelerator program announced the selection of three early-stage U.S. companies for its spring 2015 program, in which they will learn to commercialize and market their ideas to enterprises. The news came at a global fintech conference in London. Wells Fargo & Company also said it now is accepting applications worldwide until June 20 for the program's fall class.

Acculynk Awarded Significant NFC Patent for Out of Band Payment Authentication

4/22/15 KXNews

Acculynk, a unique technology driven payment solutions provider, announced today that it was issued Patent number 8,978,975 on March 17, 2015. The patent protects the use of a merchant NFC device to prompt a consumers NFC device for the entry of a personal identifier, which is sent on for approval and the approval code is transmitted back to the merchant.

Moneris Enables UnionPay Payments for Half-a-Million Chinese Visitors to Canada Each Year

4/20/15 CNW

Moneris and Brooks Brothers welcome Cai Jianbo, CEO of UnionPay International, as he makes the first UnionPay transaction at the Toronto flagship store. With 4.7 billion cards issued globally, UnionPay, in partnership with Moneris, opens the market to 500,000 Chinese visitors who travel to Canada each year.



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