

FINANCIAL SERVICES

MasterCard exec: Selfie payment verification is viable for in-app purchases

May 27, 2016



MasterCard's selfie pay option

By [Alex Samuley of Mobile Commerce Daily](#)

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

NEW YORK A MasterCard executive at Mobile Moments NYC May 25 discussed the company's continued innovation in payment authentication methods as well as biometrics, naming its selfie pay option as particularly effective for consumers making in-application purchases.

During the session, "Mobile Commerce in an Age of Connected Devices," the executive stressed the growing global acceptance surrounding contactless payments, and pinpointed some of MasterCard's efforts to guard its customers' personal data. The financial brand's selfie pay option, which enables users to verify a transaction by snapping a photo of themselves, is one of these methods, bolstered by MasterCard's increased focus on biometrics and tokenization.

"I think [selfie pay] is incredibly viable for in-app purchases in particular," said Karen Pascoe, senior vice president of user experience at [MasterCard](#).

The Mobile Moments NYC event was organized by Swrve and AppsFlyer.

Mobile security reigns supreme

Since many consumers feel wary about keeping their credit card details within mobile payment platforms such as Apple Pay or Samsung Pay, MasterCard is attempting to assuage these concerns by innovating heavily within the digital security realm.

"We think it's critical that your MasterCard credentials can travel with you beyond the plastic," Ms. Pascoe said.

This has prompted MasterCard to work on advanced security tools including card tokenization and EMV-like technology. To combat credit card fraud, MasterCard customers are assigned a token for each card, which doubles as their ability to pay. That token is then secured with cryptography.

The financial brand has also transformed a popular mobile-first behavior into a verification method for purchases. MasterCard's selfie pay tool allows consumers to snap a photo of themselves via a biometric app to authenticate a transaction, eliminating the need to input passwords or usernames.

mas 420

MasterCard's selfie pay has received positive feedback from users

Selfie pay has undergone tests in the United States and the Netherlands. MasterCard is currently scaling this technology and implementing it within its MasterPass digital wallet platform.

Per Ms. Pascoe, the financial institution is also interested in wearable commerce and connected home devices.

MasterCard is ramping up its smart technology presence with a Samsung partnership for a smart refrigerator, connecting customers to grocery retailers through an app ([see story](#)).

Meanwhile, the company's ability to input secure payment chips into almost any type of item could pave the way for a new generation of commerce-friendly wearables.

"Fashion overall for us is really interesting when it comes to commerce," Ms. Pascoe said.

She also highlighted MasterCard's newest mobile initiative, which forays into the world of artificial intelligence.

Pizza Hut in Asia plans to begin piloting a new in-store experience later this year that links a humanoid robot to MasterCard's MasterPass via a smartphone, enabling customers to place and pay for orders ([see story](#)).

The future in commerce

Mobile commerce will continue to reach meteoric levels of usage and engagement by consumers and merchants alike, especially with the expectation that 2018 will see 18 billion connected devices permeate the market.

Meanwhile, individuals will own more than 6 billion smartphones by 2020, opening massive opportunities for brands to roll out relevant mobile moments.

"When you think about commerce, commerce is really what follows you in your daily life," Ms. Pascoe said. "At MasterCard, we think about this from a really extensive perspective."

mas oth 420

MasterCard is planning to experiment more with wearables

She tapped contactless payment ability as a top growing trend in the commerce sector. While contactless payments are not yet as popular in the United States, they have seen significant customer adoption rates in Britain and Australia.

Additionally, browser commerce will continue to proliferate as consumers becoming more accustomed to purchasing products on small-screen devices. If merchants keep optimizing their mobile sites with seamless checkout options and enticing imagery, this trend will gain even more traction.

Most importantly, marketers must remember that mobile devices frequently act as the catalyst in consumers' path to purchase.

"We also need to think about how mobile is really connected to the whole purchasing and shopping experiences," Ms. Pascoe said. "Mobile doesn't stand on its own. Often times, the smartphone is really where it starts."

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.