How to stop Card-Not-Present fraud over the Internet

Card-not-present (CNP) fraud is now the most prevalent form of payment fraud. The risk is ballooning as consumers have become more comfortable using their cards online and in the process, divulging more and more personal details which are being used against them by cyber criminals.

CNP fraud amounted to $53M in Australia in 2007 and is up 68% on the previous year. Overseas the problem is even worse; in the UK, CNP losses in 2007 exceeded a quarter of a billion pounds. The raw materials for CNP fraud—credit card details including CVV numbers and personal data—are being stolen on a massive scale, and traded on international cyber crime bulletin boards.

Current strategies to deal with CNP fraud require merchants to ask for increasing amounts of personal detail to try and establish ownership of a credit card. This information is often irrelevant to the transaction, invades cardholder privacy, wastes everyone’s time, and adds to the compliance burden and risk for merchants who must then safeguard all this personal data. Perhaps worst of all, these countermeasures only exacerbate the problem. The more personal data that is collected, the more ends up being stolen and exploited by cyber criminals. Gathering more cardholder details to curtail CNP fraud is like trying to put out a fire with gasoline.

The Lockstep solution

Lockstep Technologies’ four year R&D program has resulted in an innovative, economical and uniquely effective weapon against CNP fraud. Our product Stepwise is a specially formatted digital certificate that, when loaded onto an EMV smart credit card, turns it into the best available defence against CNP fraud and ID theft in general.

The diagram illustrates a Stepwise CNP transaction.

- Fill out order, insert EMV card, enter PIN
- Secure transaction with Stepwise seal, and transmit
- Verify that seal matches issuing bank master key
- Send regular CNP instruction to acquiring bank

Stepwise encapsulates each cardholder’s personal details and credit card number in a tamper proof digital seal. The seal is carried within an EMV chip and applied to each credit card transaction to prove the card details are genuine. The Stepwise seal can be processed by any e-commerce server to validate the card details; the seal cannot be replicated unless the bona fide smartcard is present and the PIN entered.

✅ Stepwise requires no change to the interface between merchant and bank.

✅ Stepwise requires no special card scheme authentication server.

The Stepwise seal tells the web merchant everything they need to know, instantly, to be sure that a transaction is valid. It proves that a bona fide credit card was present, and that the credit card details cannot have been replayed by an impostor or simply made up.

Benefits of Stepwise

**For cardholders**
- simple, fast, EFTPOS-like online shopping experience
- better protects their privacy, with less disclosure of extraneous personal details in routine e-commerce
- cuts exposure to ID theft arising from compromise of merchant servers or payments processors.

**For merchants**
- removes the risk of CNP fraud over the Internet
- simple, low cost implementation; no change to the existing interface with acquiring banks; Stepwise processing occurs in standard merchant server software
- only collect information actually needed for the business; reduced exposure to attackers seeking to steal customer financial data
- better compliance with Payment Card Industry (PCI) security obligations and privacy legislation.

**For financial institutions**
- reduced losses from CNP fraud
- improved ROI on EMV cards
- lower cost implementation compared to any other online payment scheme (since no authentication server is required).