

Full Service Electronic Payments Processor for Small and Large Businesses



Derek Garvin - CEO

About Expect Payment Solutions

Expect Payment Solutions is an Independent Sales Organization located in Vancouver Washington in the East Ridge Business Park. We are a full service processor of all major credit and debit cards, facilitating electronic payments for businesses of all sizes from Mom-and-Pop to large corporations.

We have chosen to partner with one of the largest merchant service providers in the world for our processing needs, thereby forming a strong alliance that allows us to offer our merchants the ability to process on every platform.

With over 30 years of industry experience at EPS, we know that not every merchant has the same wants and needs, but with our strategic planning we can customize programs that serve each merchant's specific needs.

Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine

CEOCFO: Mr. Garvin, what is Expect Payment Solutions?

Mr. Garvin: Expect Payment Solutions is a full service, merchant service company. Our goal is to help small to medium sized businesses. Whether someone processes five thousand dollars a month or a million dollars a month, our goal is offer up to them an affordable way to accept electronic payments. We are also able to do gift cards, online processing and essentially any type of electronic transaction. We can set people up to accept electronic payments with the goal of affordability and a real focus on the customer service aspect of the business.

CEOCFO: You are in a business that has become a commodity. What do you understand fundamentally about how to do all of this that makes Expect Payment a good choice?

Mr. Garvin: I think the biggest reason that I got involved in this specific business is because I had worked with previous companies and there was not a whole lot of focus on the service side. I found that to be very frustrating. That is why I thought that I could do this, we can do something that is going to make a difference by simply answering phone calls when people have issues and taking care of their problems and helping them, rather than signing people up and running away, which I think is the standard for this industry. I feel like the service that we can offer to people is much better than what they typically are going to get.

CEOCFO: Would you give us an example of what someone may encounter when they call you that is unlikely to be found somewhere else?

Mr. Garvin: I think that when most people call someone in this industry, especially because there are some companies that are a little bit larger, what they are typically going to get is an automated system, which I know for me, can be very frustrating at times. We do have an automated system in the event that our customer service people are currently assisting others. However, we have four people here that can all answer the phones. They will take care of your issue by guiding you to whomever it is that you need to talk to, but you are actually going to talk to a person. We are not going to put you onto the automated system. We are not just going to send you some directions but rather walk you through how to fix the issue. They are going to narrow down the problem, then depending on which department you need, they are going to put you physically in touch with a person who is going to get on the phone and walk you through the problem to help you fix it and they will make sure that you are satisfied before they hang up.

CEOCFO: Your site indicates full service credit card processing as opposed to what?

Mr. Garvin: The concept behind the full service is something that I think has really evolved; the industry changes so frequently. By full service, we want to make sure that people understand that it is no longer just going into a restaurant maybe with a stand-alone unit. You have iPhones, iPads, POS systems, gift cards, and checks that you can run. There are many different areas that have evolved with this industry. Therefore, we want to make sure that people know that any type of electronic transaction that you run, we are capable of setting you up with. It is no longer just, "Here is your machine, plug it in and run a card." It is much more complex now. We want to make sure that people do know that we can

set you up with any of those options, they are all available. We like to sit down and say, "Okay, what is the best option for you, do you have an online gateway or do you need the stand alone units. They are still around. People still use them. Is this what you need?" Therefore, by full service, we want to make sure that it is not just about wanting to get you for your money. We want to put you in a situation where you could be successful or if you already have cards we want to fine tune what you are doing and make sure that we are saving you the money and giving you the service that you expect to get.

CEOCFO: *Are many of your customers changing from a different service or are there still people who are starting up with credit cards that may not have accepted them before?*

Mr. Garvin: Most of the people we get are switching their service. I think nowadays, it is pretty rare for businesses to not accept cards. I know there have been many different studies done on the fact that if you walk in to places with a twenty dollar bill you are only going to be able to spend twenty dollars. If you have a debit or credit card you are going to spend whatever you want to spend in there, depending on what you want to get. Therefore, I think it is rare to find people that do not accept credit cards. I would say that a good chunk of our customers are currently switching services.

CEOCFO: *How do people find you and how do you reach out?*

Mr. Garvin: We have a pretty active marketing department. I feel like we have a very solid marketing plan and we do rely heavily on referrals. In this industry, most of the sales reps are independently contracted and we do not do that with ours, we actually employ them. We are able to offer 401K, insurance plans, and profit sharing, therefore, we search for people who want to be here, who are willing to go out and market themselves through various functions and groups that involve other business owners. We have a referral program, if someone refers a merchant to us and we sign them up, we will actually give them a commission. We really try and keep those people that we have signed happy as we feel they are our best marketing tool. In addition, we do have a marketing department that takes care of calling and setting appointment so our people can effectively focus on selling our product.

"We are going to give the service that you want and make sure that you are saving money. We are going to make sure that we cover the areas that are important to you."

- Derek Garvin

CEOCFO: *What is your geographic range today?*

Mr. Garvin: Right now, our focus is the Pacific Northwest. We do have a couple of people that started with us that have since moved to Utah and California and we have a person in Texas. It is important to me that we tie it together with our customer service, especially with my name being attached to the business, I want to make sure that the people I have out there are representing what I want and really what I consider our fundamental morals and values. Therefore, we do keep it tight. I would say that probably eighty percent of our business is in the Pacific Northwest area: Oregon and Washington. We are starting to branch out a bit, but it is important to me to not just throw anybody out there because we want to try and make a dollar. We will continue to make sure that we are putting people out there that are well trained, that are bringing to the table what we want to represent, which is service and how we can fine tune your business and make sure that you are happy and saving money.

CEOCFO: *Do your customers appreciate that concept; in that it is local or is it really what you are able to do for them and being local is just a little bit of a bonus?*

Mr. Garvin: That is an interesting question with many answers. We have had everything. We have people that said, "I really do not care what you offer as long as you are saving me money." On the flip side of that, we have people who have said, "I do not really care if you are costing me more money, I want to know that if I have a problem I can call and I can get hold of someone to fix it." Therefore, it would be tough to put a number on that, because we have had everything in between those two. I would say that the local service is a big selling point for us. It is something that we really push and that is why it is important that we have people answering the phones. We have sales reps assigned to certain territories, therefore, if they come sign you up and you have a problem, you know who to call. You are going to get a hold of someone, and someone is going to come out and fix it. That is where I think the local comes in. Many of our merchants appreciate that they are not just a number; they are represented by a person who is going to come out and see them. We also do frequent quality control calls, this allows us to stay in touch with our client base. Every two months we are going to give you a call to make sure that everything is working well, if not, you are going to get your personal rep to come out and see you. I do think it is important to our customers to know that we do care, we are not just out to make a dollar.

CEOCFO: *Security and compliance are always big issues. How do you insure the best that can be?*

Mr. Garvin: We are working with First Data Merchant Services, whom I believe is still the largest processing company in the world. They have all of the security balances in place and really for us it is pretty simple. You just have to fall in line with what is asked of you from them. As long as we make sure that our machines are compliant and that we follow the proper procedures, our merchants should be as safe as you can be. FDMS has done all of the homework, we just need to follow the guidelines they give us; it has worked very well.

CEOCFO: Are you concerned that the European method or the chip in the card that would require new equipment is going to take over or is that really on the back burner?

Mr. Garvin: No. It has been talked about for a few years but sounds like it is actually going to happen. In fact, we have already started using machines that are compatible because it is something that will take effect in October of 2015 officially. That date has been changed back a couple of times; however, I do not want to wait. I do not want to get into the bind of having to go switch out a large number of merchants in a small period of time. We are just using the machines that right now are considered to be compliant, so if and when that does happen, we are not going to have to worry about scrambling around. We want to stay ahead of the game.

CEOCFO: A portion of every transaction goes to the Doernbecher Children's Hospital. Why is that important for you and for the company?

Mr. Garvin: That is important for many different reasons. My wife used to work there and that was arguably the biggest based on the times I would go to see her, what they do, and what they stand for. To be able to give back is very important to me. It sounds a bit silly, but when I started the business that was one promise I made to my parents because I felt it was important to give back to the community that is supporting you through their choices. Additionally, there are two or three other events that we are doing. We are sponsoring a golf tournament as the title sponsor with all proceeds going to cancer research. That is another ten thousand dollars going to the Knight Cancer Foundation, which is also at the same hospital as Doernbecher and where my father spent a good chunk of time before he passed away in August last year from cancer. So for me, anything that we can do to give back and help make a difference is very important. We can save people money and in addition to that, for you giving us your business, we are going to make sure we do something that is good and right. As far as I am concerned, if you process with us, you are just as responsible for the donations as I am, it is a win, win situation.

CEOCFO: How do you encourage your customers to use more of your services without being pushy salespeople?

Mr. Garvin: It is making sure they understand what is out there. Many merchants don't understand concepts such as gift cards and check processing. It is a similar situation to what banks try and do. They want to make sure you understand that they can do a car loan, a home loan, a checking account, and a savings account. We want to make sure that people know that we can do your processing, get you set up with gift cards, get you a cash advance, and make sure the checks you are taking all clear. It goes back to the concept of how can we can help. I do not just want to focus on just the fact that we can save you money, but rather, assist you in making sure you are adding value to your client base. I want to say, "Have you considered using gift cards, have you thought about a merchant cash advance which is a way for you to expand your business, hire more people or lease another office space?" I think it is about opening the doors and getting them to ask the questions, not us trying to force ourselves on them. "This is what you are interested in. Let me explain it a little bit more. Here is what we can offer. What would you like to do?"

CEOCFO: What do you look for in your people? How do you make sure you are getting people that understand the quality and depth that you want for the company?

Mr. Garvin: Training. To me it is all the training. From the minute that we meet them, finding out and understanding what their values are and what is important to them. Is this a person that I feel is just out to make a dollar or is this a person that is really out to make a living? I would prefer not to be just a stepping stone for someone to move on to another company, I would like to be a landing place. We look for people who want to make a career out of this. By making it a career, they can be trained properly, their ability to learn and to understand that if they do what we ask we are going to do what they are out there promising. When you get those people and they realize that you have those same values, it is very easy to get on the same page. That is because they are telling the customer something and we are supporting that and we are doing that. It makes it very easy and frankly, it makes them proud to go out and represent us in an industry where service is not necessarily the most important piece.

CEOCFO: Why pay attention to Expect Payment Solutions?

Mr. Garvin: I would say to pay attention to Expect Payment Solutions because we are going to give the service that you want and make sure that you are saving money. We are going to make sure that we cover the areas that are important to you. As I said earlier, it is not always about the savings. Sometimes it is about the local service and the trust factor tied to it. Therefore, Expect Payment Solutions is here to make a promise to you and we are going to live up to it. I am going to put that in writing. If anyone has any issues or any requests, I have no problem signing a letter stating that if we cannot save you the money and we cannot live up to the other promises, that we will release you of your obligations. Not many companies out there will do that. They will not stand behind their product like we will. Sometimes you get burned by it, but it is more important to me and my name and the company's reputation to live up to what we say we are going to do. That is why I would go with Expect Payment Solutions.



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