

Questions to Ask to Determine Merchant Surcharging Need

Merchants need surcharging. According to JD Power, [34% of US SMBs now surcharge today](#). 63% of enterprise merchants want a compliant surcharge solution, according to the NACM. More card adoption and higher interchange fees have led to a tipping point in the market. Given most merchants offer multiple payment methods, surcharging increasingly represents cost transparency and customer choice, and is more accepted by customers than ever before.

But every merchant is different, and their specific need or ability to take on a surcharging program *right now* will differ at different times. Listening for key phrases and asking the right questions will help you determine if a merchant is ready today, while countering early-stage objections will help set the stage for merchants in the future.

Key Phrases to Listen For

Merchants that can benefit most from surcharging will talk about a few key concepts: lowering or controlling costs, as well as challenges around accepting multiple forms of payment, are key indicators that surcharging can help. Merchants who are growing or considering expanding digital sales will also benefit, as their credit card volume will increase from new digital channels.

- “What options are available to lower my fee costs/costs in general?”
- “We’re seeing way more credit card usage than before.”
- “I’d like to accept card, but it’s too expensive.”
- “Are there any cheaper way to accept payments/move customer to cheaper forms of payments?”
- “Do you have tools to help with liquidity/days sales outstanding?”
- “We’re looking at expanding our digital footprint.”
- “We’re undergoing a payments modernization project and are looking for solutions.”

Qualifying Questions

Just a handful of simple questions can surface hidden merchant challenges that can be solved by surcharging.

- How are processing costs affecting your business today?
- Are reducing costs key priorities for your business?
- Would you accept credit card payments if the fees weren’t so high?
- What challenges do you face when optimizing processing fees & recovery?
- Would reducing processing fees in a customized approach be helpful to your business?
- Have you had hesitations surcharging or other fee recovery methods? Why?
- What concerns do you and your team have around the recovery of processing fees through surcharging?

Objections

The same objections over surcharging come up frequently, especially from merchants who have just started to consider surcharging. Answering them fast can make them more likely to consider surcharging in the future.

- “I’m concerned about how my customers will react to surcharging.”
InterPayments works with you to minimize the impact to customers. First, you get to pick and choose what customer segments to surcharge, limiting the program to parts of your business where customer acceptance and margin improvement will be highest. Using selective surcharging, you can also exclude VIPs and especially sensitive customers.

Second, InterPayments will recommend notifications and messaging to be used to drive customer understanding, so they aren’t surprised by the change and understand why it’s happening. This also gives time for customers to move to other forms of payment, and some will. Using these methods, InterPayments has never lost a company because of the reaction of the company’s customers.
- “I’ve never heard of InterPayments. How can I trust they will keep their promises/be there tomorrow?”
InterPayments is the approved Managed Surcharge Provider of many of the country’s largest financial institutions due to their rigorous approach to compliance and security. They are trusted by leading financial institutions and Fortune 1000 companies.