New Online Services:
Payment and Reporting Portals

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KeyNet Web Payment Issues

Overview

- Online payment systems allow the public and customers to conduct financial transactions with the City via the web portal. However, the incentive for residents to leverage online payments was limited due to the following:

    - High transaction processing fees – 3.4%;
        - With higher utility and personal property bills, residents unwilling to pay additional fees associated with paying online.
    - User experience – Process involved a Keystone KeyNet ID/Password login, followed by the need to link all user accounts within KeyNet, then "checkout" via a PayPal integration (leveraging a merchant service called iConnect).
    - No card retention. Unable to save card data for monthly transactions in portal (i.e. for recurring transactions)
    - No digital ACH ('E-check') functionality (i.e. automatic transfer for regularly scheduled bills)

- The City also uses two vendors for card payment transactions (Web and Over the Counter), which led to reporting discrepancies, multiple sources of downloadable and reconcilable transactions

    - City would have to collect all revenue for base services AND merchant fees, book to separate GLs, then reimburse merchant vendor for all collected fees. Leading to reconciliation issues.

- No Interactive Voice Response (IVR) functionality for over the phone payment processing

- Not mobile friendly – KeyNet was not built for having a dynamic Responsive Web Design

GOAL – Develop an interface that provided multiple incentives to process transactions online.

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Other Takeaways

City Payment Behavior and Strategy

- Total card payment adoption of 10.9% over past 6 years (FY17-22)
  - Utilities (~10,900 transactions p/year)
    - OTC Card – 4.7% (~2,200 transactions p/year)
    - Online Card – 19.0% (~8,700 transactions p/year)
  - Taxes (RE & PPTX) – Vast majority PPTX
    - OTC Card – 12.6% (~2,500 transactions p/year)
    - Online Card – 4.5% (~850 transactions p/year)
  - Consistent card payment rate from FY 2017-22 for OTC and Online
    - No noticeable uptick of online payments during COVID

- Benchmark is ~25% minimum for card payments (City strategy to increase from 10.9%)
- Biggest opportunity to improve online payment adoption for Utility and Personal Property
  - Lower fees
  - Ease login constraints
  - Enable saved card payment information
- Biggest opportunity to improve online payment adoption for Real Estate
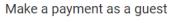 - ACH payments

New Payment Portal

Benefits of New Payment Portal

Residents

- Lower fees
  - Old rate – 3.4%
  - New rate – 2.15% +$1.00
- Pay easily as a guest or create login to associate accounts
- Electronic notifications
- Scheduled payments and embedded payment data
- Customers will have the ability to view their past bills and payment history when signed in
- Users will be able to make payments with Credit/Debit Card or via ACH/eCheck.
- All payment service types
  - Current
    - RE, PPTX, Utility, Parking Tickets, Building Permits/Development Fees
  - Future
    - Pet Licenses, FM Permits, EMS Billing
- Roadmap
  - IVR service for phone in payments with English and Spanish language options.
  - ACH payments (NIC VA & Sandy Spring)

Old vs New Card Fees

Base Service Amount	iConnect Old Rate (3.4%) Total Fee Amount	NIC VA New Rate (2.15% + 1.00) Total Fee Amount	Net Savings
$ 25.00	$ 0.85	$ 1.54	(0.69)
$ 50.00	$ 1.70	$ 2.08	(0.38)
$ 75.00	$ 2.55	$ 2.61	(0.06)
$ 100.00	$ 3.40	$ 3.15	0.25
$ 150.00	$ 5.10	$ 4.23	0.88
$ 300.00	$ 10.20	$ 7.45	2.75
$ 600.00	$ 20.40	$ 13.90	6.50
$ 1,200.00	$ 40.80	$ 26.80	14.00
$ 2,400.00	$ 81.60	$ 52.60	29.00

Average Web/OTC Card Payment Amounts (FY 17-22)
- RE - $2,200.00
- PPTX - $357.00
- Utilities - $176.00
- Parking Tix - $40/88

- Incentive is for larger payments the new fee structure offers incremental savings. However, even with lower amounts, worse case is ~$0.69 more
- True value add will be for ACH payments, which is only $1.00 per transaction, regardless of base service amount (no merchant card fees)

Benefits of New Payment Portal

Staff

- NIC VA serves as Fiscal Agent for City for all payment portal transactions
  - Itemizes out all collected fees, reimburses merchant vendor (FiServ) for card fee and $1 p/transaction as the portal provider
  - Auto deposits all collected fees directly to the City's Sandy Spring checking accounts based on service type
- Ease of reporting
  - One central reporting function with all payment detail
- Eliminates KeyNet IT Helpdesk issues for login/passwords
- Centralized payment tool for all payment types for all vendor platforms
  - Integrations with Keystone, Tyler InCode, SmartGov
  - Future integrations with Avenity and Edmunds

New Payment Portal Issues

Issues to date

- Portal "404 error codes" when users attempting to navigate to portal – **CORRECTED**
  - There were ~10+ links on the City website to the old KeyNet payment portal that had to be updated with the new link
  - KeyNet has since been "deactivated" but not terminated, but is still available as a failsafe
    - Users with a saved ("Favorites") KeyNet URL most likely to experience this issue

- Utility payment date error – **CORRECTED**
  - Initial live file included a data error, making all dates incorrect (and the same), Keystone has since corrected this issue
    - Interesting takeaway, there were people that still paid the correct bill amount, even with a wrong date

- Kiosk time out error – **CORRECTED**
  - NIC VA payment kiosk software was set to "auto-default" back to the home screen and "time out" on a transaction after 30 seconds
    - This was a staff miscalculation, as 30 seconds was believed to be sufficient time to enter in the payment details during the checkout process
    - Default is now set to 120 seconds, which is a more conservative time interval, but still secure enough from a controls standpoint to make sure the screen cycles back to the home page (if needed, a lower time interval can be set)

- Real Estate due date error – **CORRECTED**
  - Data attributes sent to the portal were not synched with the adjusted due dates and P&I dates
  - Treasurer adjusted the new dates in the tax billing file which informs the daily payment batch file sent from Keystone

Demos & Questions

1. Payment Portal

2. Asset Essentials

3. SmartGov