



What is a Best-in-class Issuer Processor?

An issuer processor is responsible for managing the authorization, clearing and settlement of credit and debit card transactions for banks, fintechs and financial institutions. The key benefits of using an issuer processor include efficiency, security and reliability. Here's a checklist to selecting a best-in-class issuer processor.

Best-in-class Issuer Processor

1 Non-disparate Architecture

Many payments platforms today are built as a result of mergers and acquisitions. These disparate systems have been pieced together to create a processing platform that offers a variety of features. It sounds good at first but consider the potential errors and problems: security vulnerabilities, issues and breaking points littering the system from end to end. Additionally, the problem resolution time frame could take hours—even days just to pinpoint the issue.

Partner with a reliable processor that offers a global, single-source code, cloud-based payment platform. Your issuer processor should not be dependent on other companies to process transactions.

2 Peak Performance

It's important that your payments processing platform is never operating at 100% peak performance at any point in time. Instead, the platform should be operating at 50% capacity or less to seamlessly handle any fluctuations during peak shopping periods.

3 24/7 Support

Ensure that your issuer processor provides support to its customers whenever and wherever they need it. Reliable processors keep both technical and support staff available at all times—24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

4 Compliance

Compliance activities aren't optional for you, and they shouldn't be treated as optional for your payments processor either. These activities and certifications should cover all government, industry, and card association operating rules, regulatory laws and statutory requirements across multiple international regions.

5 Service Level Agreements (SLA)

When you enter into an SLA with an issuer processor, there are agreed-upon service level guarantees, including penalties for not meeting the service level, to support all programs with optimal operating performance. Be sure to ask your processor about guaranteed system uptime as well as system outages for the past 24 months. Remember, 99.8% availability means 17.52 hours of downtime per year. 99.9% availability means 8.76 hours of downtime per year. 99.99% availability means 52.56 minutes of downtime per year. Unfortunately, you don't have the luxury of choosing when your processing platform experiences an outage. **"Reliability matters"**.

6 System Monitoring

Your payments partner should have processes in place to monitor all software, relevant systems, connectivity and networks at all times to maximize service availability and to track/resolve reported outages.

7 Infrastructure and Redundancy

It's imperative that redundancy is built into your processor's payment system, and it must be multi-processing and multi-node by design. Multiple application modules should be operational for load balancing and redundancy on multiple servers. Every network router and switch must have a backup; every network path and storage medium should also have a backup. Redundant network connections must exist with card associations and partners. Fully redundant active-active data centers with no single point of failure should be in place so if one data center fails, the second data center could run all applications until the failed data center was restored.

8 Authentication, Encryption, Security, and Monitoring

All systems must undergo regular internal/external audits and vulnerability assessments as well as multi-layered data and information security protocols applied to protect customers and their data.

9 Information Security and Risk Management

Intrusion detection and prevention systems, penetration testing, vulnerability scans, risk mitigation planning, governance, board oversight, internal and external auditing, and reporting, as well as disaster recovery and business continuity planning and testing are all essential components of a trusted processor partner.

Issuer processing plays a critical role in payment processing and provides banks and financial institutions with the platform to better manage cardholder accounts, authorize transactions and quickly settle payments.

It's important to select an issuer processor that has time-tested reliability, availability and the infrastructure in place to exceed your requirements to deliver an enhanced customer experience.

Contact us to learn more about i2c's reliable and secure issuer processing platform.