

# INFORMATION SERIES

## E - C O M M E R C E F O R S M A L L B U S I N E S S

### FACT SHEET # 8

### ONLINE SECURITY FOR BUSINESS

Once on the Internet, ensuring the security of online payments for your business is an essential consideration. This Fact Sheet outlines the concept of secure payments and refers to several of the risks that should inform your decision in website enablement for accepting payments.

#### SECURITY FOR YOUR ONLINE BUSINESS

A number of considerations arise when determining how “secure” your Web site should be. Businesses can subscribe to an external hosting service to house the Web site (which is the course of most businesses) or Web sites may be hosted internally (as with many larger companies with existing IT departments or specialised staff).

Externally hosted Web sites used predominantly as a means of information dissemination probably have adequate security already. Hosting providers often have strict backup, server update, and security policies, which means your Web site is extremely secure.

However, Web sites set up for online transacting involve important security considerations:

- You should ensure that when customers are entering sensitive information (such as credit card details) your site is using SSL security. Such a system is indicated by a locked “padlock” or “key” icon at the bottom of the browser window, and effectively ensures that no one is viewing the current activity. If you are using a third party to automate payments, SSL will already be utilised.
- SSL functionality can be provided by your hosting service as an added cost. Site developers generally use SSL as a matter of course for transaction functions, however you should formally confirm this is the case before launching your site.
- Using a reputable site developer and/or third party payment gateway is recommended.
- Poor workmanship or sloppy security measures will result in uncomfortable online customers at best, and legal/commercial implications at worst, so ensure you have all bases covered.

## MAKE YOUR SECURITY POLICY KNOWN

Perhaps the most important aspect is to ensure your security policy is readily available online for your customers to see. Include a page devoted to explaining the use of SSL, and your policy on customer information (eg “We do not store credit card information, and would never divulge personal information to anyone” ).

## USEFUL LINKS

### “The Changing Nature of Fraud in Australia”

<http://www.ag.gov.au/agd/Department/Publications/publications/Fraud.htm>

This article by the Commonwealth Attorney-General provides an overview of the changing nature of fraud and its potential impact on new technologies, the increasing globalisation of markets and financial systems, business practices in the public and private sectors. Special attention is paid to cyberfraud.

### “Security Measures for Accepting Online Payments”

<http://smallbusiness.ninemsn.com.au/smallbusiness/online/step4e.asp>

This guide provides information on the various ways SMEs can take security measures for their online transactions.

### The National Office for the Information Economy (NOIE)

<http://www.noie.gov.au/projects/confidence/index.htm>

This is a useful resource detailing the issues surrounding trust and security on the internet including matters relating to online payments.

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