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President's Message

Going Global and Beyond

By the time you read this message we probably will know the outcome of the presidential election. The new president will take office in January facing a set of difficult local and global issues, not least of which are the ongoing economic turmoil and the uncertainty that surrounds it.

It isn't likely we will understand the full impact of the current economic crisis on the electronic payments industry for several more months. It may be relatively mild or much more serious than many now believe. One thing, however, is certain: The effects will be global. That's the nature of the larger financial services business and, increasingly, the nature of the payments business.

That makes this month's cover story on globalization very timely. While there are plenty of articles warning of the perils of going global, and plenty more touting the profit potential of international business, authors Todd McGuire and Marc D'Annunzio, both attorneys who practice in our industry, take a slightly different tack, focusing on some of the pitfalls you're likely to encounter if (or when) the allure of going global becomes irresistible.

And in the wake of the discussion at last month's Strategic Leadership & Networking Forum regarding the future of POS hardware, our feature on the adoption of integrated POS solutions by small businesses and the opportunities it presents for ISOs offers a bit of practical follow-up for those who came away from the Forum excited by the innovation in that industry. Author Julie Ritzer Ross concludes that while it may be a while before smaller businesses implement second-generation POS systems as a matter of course, "ISOs that tap the potential of these systems to open new doors now rather than later stand the greatest chance to entrench themselves firmly in the market and reduce their reliance on residuals"—a lofty but reachable goal.

Finally, this month's *Transaction Trends* includes a look at the latest in mobile payments. Despite much buzz and rapid acceptance beyond the U.S. borders, widespread adoption of mobile is still some time away. Could the latest generation of phones and wireless card readers bring the much anticipated tipping point? There are many who think so, and our feature describes what those devices look like.

As always, we've got a full complement of departments, including a look at chargebacks in Risk in Review, health care in Vertical Markets, and agent retention in ISO Corner. All in all, it's a timely and informative issue.

Sincerely,
Nick Baxter

*Nick Baxter serves as president
of ETA and is senior vice president of
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about *Transaction Trends* and
share your story ideas. E-mail:
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