A peek into the
ACME Payment and Checkout Platform

A modern Omnichannel Cloud Solution for enhancing SaaS applications selling digital goods and services

www.acmepayments.com

IMPACTFUL SOFTWARE

BETTER. FASTER. CHEAPER.

Most transactional SaaS applications built over the last few decades do not fully monetize payments. They are often poorly integrated with payments to deliver the best user experiences. These legacy applications do not materially share revenue back with the software company. They don't provide omnichannel features, so seamless payments can flow from online, mobile to point of sale or APIs-based sales channels. However, with rich checkout flows and owning payments, software companies can drive increased revenue.

And yet accessibility to these capabilities has been limited to only the largest software application vendors. They can afford the multi-million dollar investment required to integrate and build these checkout and payment capabilities and the ongoing overhead.

As a leading cloud ticketing, membership, and payment provider at ACME Technologies, Inc., we have consistently enabled our clients to grow faster with lower integration and management costs.

Better, faster, and cheaper is how we see impactful software. We set out first to build this new class of embedded payment and checkout infrastructure for our ticketing and membership applications. Now, we are extending this infrastructure to B2B SaaS companies who transact digital goods and services in low-risk market segments.

Customer
NEEDS and
SOLUTIONS

Payments should vertically integrate with applications to deliver a better user experience with richer functionality.

In the past, the traditional deployment model for a software company was to ask their clients to set up a merchant account connected to a payment gateway and then loosely integrate it into the application code.

The issue with a gateway approach is that an application still needs to connect to multiple gateways, which means that the application can only deliver payment features driven by the lowest common capabilities of the underlying gateways.

Payment revenue can be highly profitable for SaaS transaction applications.

A gateway deployment model cannot fully monetize payments since it lacks economies of scale. However, modern payment providers will share material revenue with a SaaS company that delivers a high volume of transactions.

Payment technologies are rapidly evolving.

Thanks to innovations in the industry, a cloud-based approach to application development has opened up new payment opportunities that did not exist a decade ago. This includes rapid feature upgrades with low integration costs thanks to easy-to-use APIs.

Globalization is a requirement for successful SaaS companies to grow.

Software that can be localized to scale globally. However, payment gateways tend to be local, which forces software companies to code to different payment providers per country, increasing costs, and time to market, and preventing it from rapidly scaling globally.

SaaS companies that sell digital goods and services want embedded payment workflows and reduced development costs.

Integrating into a generic payment provider still requires considerable engineering time. Instead, application makers want advanced integrated payment workflows, such as checkout, bookings, reservations, order management, and reporting to accelerate the time to market while minimizing the demands on engineering teams.

Since many adjacent SaaS verticals share common payment-related use cases, specialized best-of-breed payment and checkout providers are required to best meet those specific vertical needs.

BUILT FROM THE GROUND UP
NATIVELY ON THE CLOUD

The genesis of the ACME payment platform was to develop what was needed for our applications since there were no payment infrastructure products to meet our needs. Thanks to a talented team, we set out to create a platform for our first users, our application development team.

Our requirements were...

- API-centric architecture to make it easy for internal and 3rd party application developers
- End-to-end payment flows from onboarding to payment acceptance, reporting, and payout.
- Low transaction costs

From an economic standpoint, we could only achieve our low transaction costs by being the merchant of record (MOR) for all of our merchants. We process their transactions under card schemes (Visa, MasterCard) classifications to minimize interchange costs. Interchange represents the majority cost component of card processing.

API CENTRIC

END-TO-END PAYMENT FLOWS

LOW TRANSACTION COSTS

Our MOR infrastructure allows ACME to own our merchants' chargeback risk since that risk translates into costs charged to the MOR when realized. Successfully managing that risk resulted in ACME building a fraud shield natively into our payment stack to minimize fraud-related costs.

With our payment stack as the foundation, we could layer a rich checkout functionality based on a unified shopping cart paradigm. Our API checkout product can be used for any transaction type and order, from retail to events, ticketing, membership, and donations, on an omnichannel basis.

UNIQUE & THRIVING

As it turned out, our infrastructure was unique and optimized for visitation-based segments, including reservations, events, ticketing, membership, and donations. It was also ideal for any segment selling digital services or goods, with low chargeback risks. Given those segments share common use cases such as payment, checkout, and scanning, we could now offer our APIs and SDKs as infrastructure to other SaaS companies. Using such capabilities, these companies can thrive as we did, thanks to our financial economies of scale, passed on with lower transaction costs and integrated into a better product via omnichannel features and a robust checkout.

ACME
PayFac and Checkout as a Service

What we built is now commonly called a PayFac, or a payment facilitation platform.
This PayFac-as-a-Service allows SaaS companies to become a PayFac themselves without any upfront costs or need for ongoing management while generating payments revenue and removing risk and liability. The service facilitates payments from boarding to payment, fraud, checkout, reporting, and payout.

The ACME platform delivers the following capabilities:

DEVELOPMENT

Faster integrations thanks to developer-friendly APIs. Our JSON-based REST APIs are flexible and come with powerful back office configurations.

CHECKOUT

Omnichannel digitalization of merchant processes makes it easier for a cardholder to buy, update and refund online or at the point of sale. It also improves merchant operational processes, away from vouchers or paper-based legacy methods.

COMPLIANCE

Our PCI-based technology platform removes the SaaS company from being concerned about expensive PCI certification cycles. Instead, we make it easy to file a self-assessment PCI filing, given our stack foundation is token-based.

We additionally conform to federal guidelines by encrypting at rest any PII data, and finally, we are an AWS technology partner with explicit high-security approvals from AWS.

SECURITY

Our token-based stack for payment-related flows hides the transmission of the card number to be seen only once. Our entire flows from DNS-Sec to HTTPS and into our databases are encrypted.

Any request into our infrastructure has to traverse a web application firewall (WAF) that reduces bots and DDoS attacks and is configured for strict OWASP10 protections.
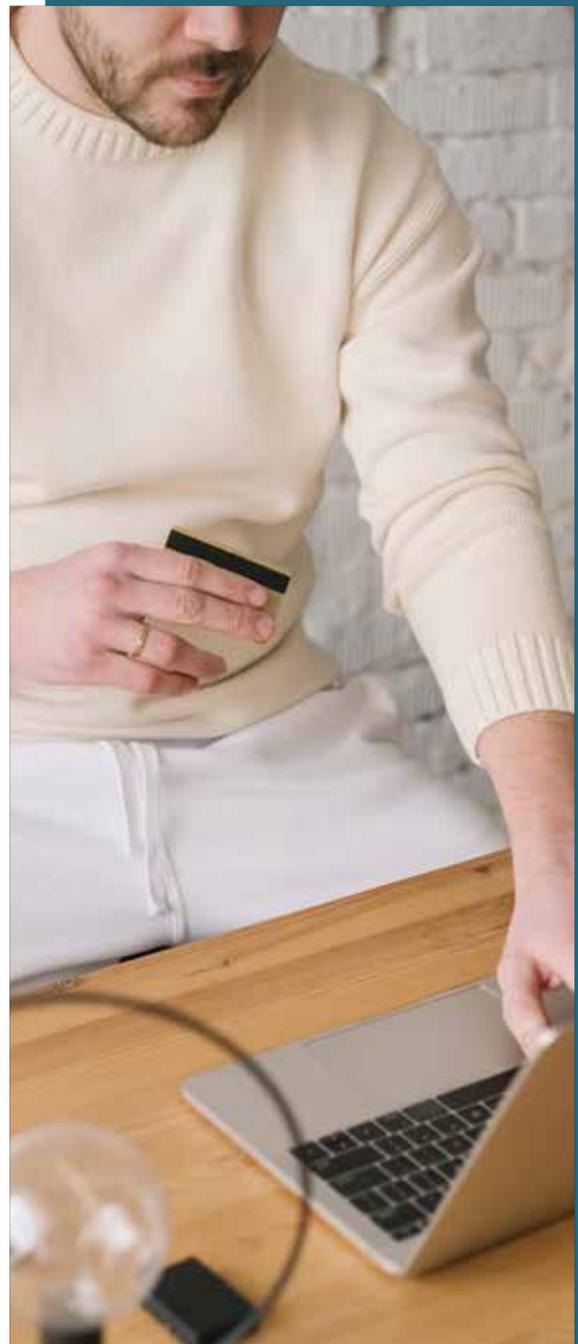
GLOBAL

Our single unified API layer enables SaaS companies to expand overseas, where we support local acquiring connectivity with a single integration, leading to a more standard product experience.

ADVANCED CHECKOUT

Our omnichannel checkout product includes order management, buyer confirmation communications, and QR code generations for seamless access to scanning capabilities and updates, reservations, rebooking, ticketing, and membership rules. The powerful checkout rules are easily configured in our back office user interface.

The checkout features can be seamlessly integrated via a few checkout-related endpoints, giving you access in a short period.

OPEN INTEGRATIONS

Our transactional data is based on GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) via an immutable journal entry-based data model. We make extracting data from our system easy with our search and reporting capabilities, APIs, and a back office so you can seamlessly integrate with external systems. We also make it easy to import data into our system via our bulk API or back office.

The Need for A Specialized Payment and Checkout Provider

What started as a logical decision to build a payment and checkout platform for the ACME application has evolved into creating a specialized payment and checkout platform for SaaS companies that sell digital services and goods.

We re-invented our payment and checkout infrastructure to be optimized for SaaS companies in low-risk verticals such as ticketing, events, membership, and fundraising. These distinct verticals combined to create a "super vertical" that leverages the same payment and checkout use cases.

Our platform is an alternative that is faster and cheaper to integrate with than horizontal payment providers focused on generic use cases. This native cloud technology enables software companies to extend their capabilities and generate revenue by owning payments and delivering a rich integrated checkout capability to their clients.

ACME PAYMENTS

LEARN MORE

To learn more about the ACME Payment platform, please check **acmepayments.com** and our API documentation at **developers.acmeticketing.com**