

SHARED PRACTICE GUIDE 018 – BANK CARD READERS

Rev 01- 03

1. Introduction

Shared practice guides (SPG) are a vehicle to share knowledge between the u3as in the London area. They are created by collating knowledge and experiences from those u3as. They are only a guide – what worked for one u3a might not work for your u3a. If in your experience something is wrong or you disagree with something, please write in to allow an update to be created and published. It's hoped these Guides will grow over time with more shared experiences.

2. Scope

This particular SPG addresses the aspect of Bank Card Readers.

3. Background

As more u3as move toward online banking and digital methods, there is more interest in taking payment (for annual subscriptions or events) by a physical means that avoids cash or cheque handling. All members will have a bank card (credit or debit) and are nowadays comfortable and willing to making a payment by a card reader. This SPG provides some experiences from various u3as of which card reader they have used and their experiences.

4. Learnings

4.1. General

There are many companies offering forms of bank card readers. They all work in the same way and provide the same basic service.

Their charge rates can be slightly different, and the form of charging can be different – making direct comparison of costs difficult.

4.2. Square (from Mill Hill and another u3as)

We have set up a bank card payment facility with a company called Square. Please see the link Here: <https://squareup.com/gb/en>

The account opening process was extremely easy. They just had to verify our Bank account details and we were open for business. We bought the most basic card reader for a one time payment of £18 + VAT and it links to a mobile phone via Bluetooth or Cellular signal. So you can take payments anywhere as long as you have wifi or a mobile phone signal.

We take payments over the phone and enter them into our virtual terminal on the Square Up website or we send members a payment link such as the one below which is easy to use as the amount is pre-populated. <https://square.link/u/1SUmSf42>

Charges are reasonable - cheaper than Paypal - and Square pay the money to our main account on the next business day.

And from Mill Hill u3a:

We use Square and I found it very easy to set up and we use it regularly with no problems. In addition to taking membership payments we also used Square to sell tickets for our Christmas function last year. We opened a Square account thinking that we would use the card reader for taking payment in person at our monthly meetings but surprisingly we hardly ever use it. It is very

useful for sending payment links by email and taking card payments over the phone from our 30+ members who are very old and do not have a computer or a mobile phone.

4.3. Zettle (Islington & HGS u3as)

We used to have a PayPal card reader but they then stopped supporting their own card reader system. This forced us to look to set up another supplier's card reader system. Our view was that they all seemed similar in charges but as Zettle seemed to have a tie up with Paypal and we wanted all funds to go to our PayPal Account, we selected Zettle.

It was a bit fiddly setting up the software. We had to provide sufficient bank authentication. So allow at least a calendar week before you want to use in earnest.

Further information available here: <https://www.zettle.com/gb/payments/card-reader>

Some additional features of Zettle :

- a) The card reader has to be linked to the U3A's bank account at the outset by the main account holder so all card payments using the card reader less PayPal's 1.75% transactional charge go directly to the U3A's bank account after about 3 - 4 Business Days lag. The bank statement will show PayPal as the payee.
- b) The device can create a receipt on request which can be sent by SMS or email to the the payee's mobile phone number or email address if the person paying with their card gives the card reader operator their phone number or email address.
- c) Member volunteers can be authorised to collect card payments at various functions using the U3A's card reader after the main account holder has invited each volunteer to open a 'staff account'. The volunteer would have to first pair their smartphone with the Zettle card reader via Bluetooth before they can accept any credit card payments. This takes about 1 minute and one would have to be close to the card reader for Bluetooth to work. Then the member volunteer has to follow the steps described for 'staff members' in this link after they have received an invite from the main account holder to create their own 'staff account'. The main account holder will receive a report on all credit card payments accepted by each 'staff member'.

<https://www.zettle.com/gb/help/articles/1084768-my-staff#for-zettle-account-owners>

4.4. Sum Up (Maghull & Lydiate u3a)

There is a strict limitation on this card system which probably makes it NOT attractive to most u3as:

Please be aware that SumUp does not support taking payments for membership fees (monthly/annual/etc. subscriptions). As a regulated entity, we operate under strict requirements imposed by the financial regulator, the card schemes (Visa, Mastercard and American Express) and our acquiring bank. Our license is not limitless, and we cannot support every business category.

Therefore, we kindly ask you to reply to this email and confirm that you will not use SumUp for processing membership fee payments and if you would like to use this SumUp profile for anything other than taking membership fees.

5. Reference Material

There are many helpful YouTube videos on card readers and each provider has its own website for further information.

The following link to an article might provide further useful guidance:

[7 Best Card Machines for Small UK Businesses Compared \(mobiletransaction.org\)](https://www.mobiletransaction.org/7-Best-Card-Machines-for-Small-UK-Businesses-Compared)

6. Contact Point

Contact Derek for further information (via webmaster.londonregionu3a@gmail.com).