

ICICI BANK CUSTOMER FIRST SERIES

A consumer education initiative

Credit Card Series I: Article 4 of 6

TIMES BUSINESS ASSOCIATE COMMUNICATION

The Elements of your Credit Card

Raveendra was out at a restaurant with his friends. When the bearer brought the bill, he gave his credit card to him. When the charge slip arrived, Raveendra scribbled his signature on it and took his card back. Did he sign the slip correctly? What happens to the charge slip signed by him? Many of us use the credit card without pausing to ask whether we are exercising due care and caution.

Merchants and Bankers

There are four entities in the business of credit cards – the issuing bank, the acquiring bank, the merchant and the payment gateway association. Organizations like VISA, MasterCard and American Express manage payment gateways that network with merchant establishments that accept credit cards across the world. The issuing banks, in partnership with these organizations,

Merchant establishments that accept the credit cards agree to verify the user from the signature on the back of the card. (See image.)

Card Owner and User

Card-issuing banks acquire customers after checking their creditworthiness. Credit cards are sent by courier to the address provided by the customer. As soon as Raveendra got his card,

Know the CVV

The key elements of a credit card are the 16-digit card number, the date of expiry and the three-digit CVV (card verification value) number on the back of the card. (See image.) If the CVV number is compromised somewhere and becomes known to a fraudster, then the fraudster can use it along with the card number and expiry date to make a purchase on the Internet. Memorize and

of strangers. Better still, he needs to go to Tools>Internet Options>Content> and ensure that 'auto complete' for forms is not checked. When he uses the card at a website, the URL should read https:// where the 's' indicates it is a secure website, and the site must feature a lock icon. It is recommended that one uses an Internet-use-only card, which one does not carry and use anywhere else, so as to prevent others from getting the key details and misusing the card.

PINs and Cash

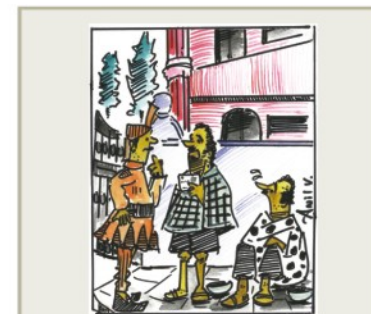
If Raveendra uses his credit card to draw money, he will use the four-digit personal identification number (PIN) of the card. This PIN is sent by the issuing bank in a separate letter. Raveendra should change the PIN on first usage. Writing the PIN on a slip and keeping it with the card is like having the house key and a tag with the complete address in the same key chain. One who finds the key or card, gets adequate information for a total clean-up!

Bill Verification

When his bill arrives, Raveendra should take the time to check it out. If he finds any errors, he should call the card-issuing bank's customer care phone number immediately. Issuing banks have a charge back policy, to verify and redress complaints. They will send the complaining customer a dispute form in which he provides the transaction details and the issuing bank will revert to him after inquiry. Some banks provide temporary credit to the customer even when the enquiry is underway. Keeping the charge slips till the bills arrive is a good practice.

Theft and Misuse

Raveendra can register for an SMS alerts. He will be able to identify his transactions before the bill comes in, and can know about any misuse as soon as it occurs. If he loses his card, calling customer care to block the card is the



Will you please keep my Credit Card in a safer place? I don't have any!

DID YOU KNOW ?

The magnetic strip of your card contains key information about you. When the time comes to throw the card away, you must cut the card into four through the magnetic strip and discard the pieces so as to avoid misuse.

FAQs

Who verifies the signature on the charge slip given to the customer?

The merchant who accepts the credit card is expected to verify the signature on the slip, with the signature on the back of the card, to be sure that the card is being used by the person to whom it was issued. Customers should not feel offended if some of them even ask for an identity proof, as is done in some parts of the world when using a card. On the other hand, do not be surprised if a merchant sometimes overlooks such signature verification.

What is the advantage of a photo card?

A photo card is easier to verify at a merchant establishment. It also doubles as simple proof of identity at airport terminals and such places.

If I am asked to provide the credit card details when I pay bills online or offline, am I giving away vital information?

As long as you do not give away the CVV of your card verbally, it is not possible to use the information you have provided. And when you do give CVV information, it should be through secure sites and secure payment gateways only, all of whom verify this.



issue cards and collect payments from customers. The issuing banks identify the card user with information stored on the magnetic strip on the card. The acquiring banks place the card swipe machines [point-of-sale (POS) terminals or electronic data capture (EDC) machines] at merchant outlets to authorize and settle the transaction.

he signed in the blank space behind it. If the blank card had got into the wrong hands, someone else could sign and use it. Merchants accepting the card would not know that the signature was not Raveendra's. Merchants are expected to verify the signature on the charge slip with that on the card.

blacken the CVV number before handing the card over. It is a good practice to be present when the card is swiped by the merchant.

Internet Usage

When Raveendra uses his card on the Internet, he has to ensure that he does not enter his card details in the presence

SMART BANKING

Protect your money.



Never keep your PIN and card together.



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