

## Local Walmarts launch app-based payment system

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The new app-based Walmart Pay featured was rolled out in mid-June.

Walmart customers can forgo their wallets. Now, all that is needed at the checkout line is a smartphone.

The mega-retailer recently launched the Walmart Pay system, a new feature of the Walmart app that allows app users to input their credit card or gift card information and then pay for their items with their phone. Customers using the new system simply press a button to scan their QR code at the register and voila, everything is paid for and a receipt is sent to the smartphone.

Local Walmart stores started accepting the Walmart Pay method in mid-June.

Mike Buchta, the store manager at the north Fresno Walmart on Ingram Avenue, said the customer feedback received so far has been overwhelmingly positive.

“Customers feel it is convenient,” Buchta said. “A mom can even preload a set amount of money to an account for her college kid to use as an allowance, and that is awesome.”

While Walmart isn’t the first retailer to offer a payment method via smartphone app, Walmart’s Director of Communications Anne Hatfield said the Walmart Pay system has fewer kinks. For example, other systems may only work on iPhones or Androids, while Walmart Pay can be used on both operating systems. The other benefit is that any payment method can be used through Walmart Pay—any credit or debit card or any Walmart gift card, which can be preloaded with cash.

“It is flexible and that caters to customers,” Hatfield said.

The system also ensures credit card information stays secure.

“The payment information is not stored on the phone itself. It is secured within our Walmart server so if your phone is ever lost or stolen, no one can access that information,” Hatfield said.

Another perk of Walmart Pay is a feature called the Savings Catcher, which compares the price of your purchase to the price of the same items at other stores to make sure you are getting the best bargain.

“If there is a better price somewhere else, Walmart will honor that price,” Hatfield said.

The system is also paperless and receipts are sent right to your phone. Hatfield said this is also a plus for returning or exchanging items because there is no need to worry about losing the receipt.

For Buchta, who says he never knows whether to insert or swipe his chipped credit card when he visits other stores, the Walmart Pay system is easy and saves time—it isn’t just a gimmick for tech-savvy teens and young adults.

“Things are changing,” Buchta said. “When I first got my smartphone, I had to have my kid set it up for me, but now I get it and a lot of older people are becoming very familiar with their phones so the customers using Walmart Pay are across the board.”