

Q&A with Tristan Chiappini at PPRO

Ecommerce and online payment volumes have grown substantially over the past two years, and transactions have grown more complex as the number of payment methods in each market has increased rapidly.



PPRO reduces the complexity by making it easier for merchants in any one country to show a website that looks local in other countries and accepts payments using payment methods that are common in that other country. PPRO's acquisition of Alpha Fintech added to its capabilities by enabling even easier transactions and adding data across payment schemes in each market to provide better analytics to merchants.

Payments Consulting Network Research Director, Richard Hartung, caught up with Tristan Chiappini, Vice President, Partnerships & Head of APAC, PPRO, to discuss PPRO's expanding presence in Asia-Pacific, the importance of marketplaces and the need to support alternative payment methods relevant to local markets.

You can read the highlights of the conversation below and [here](#).

RH: Please provide a brief high-level overview of your business

TC: PPRO is the leading provider of digital payments infrastructure which globalises payment platforms for businesses, allowing them to offer more choice at the checkout and boost cross-border sales.

Payment service providers (PSPs), enterprises with payments platforms, and banks that run on PPRO's infrastructure are able to launch payment methods faster, optimise checkout conversions, and reduce the complexities of managing multiple fund flows.

Citi, PayPal, and Stripe are just some of the names that depend on PPRO to expand their platforms beyond borders. In 2020 alone, the company processed €8.84 billion for its partners.

PPRO has a growing global team of over 700 payment experts, based at 12 offices around the world. In Asia Pacific, PPRO has two core offices in Singapore, and in Melbourne.

Last year, PPRO announced that it had achieved unicorn status after raising US\$180 million from Eurazeo Growth, Sprints Capital and Wellington Management. Earlier this year, PPRO announced the acquisition of Alpha Fintech, a next-gen payments technology company, in a deal that will expand PPRO's offering, and strengthen its presence and networks in Asia Pacific (APAC), allowing it to deliver products and services faster to customers.

RH: What payments services do you offer merchants and not-for-profit organisations?

TC: PPRO's digital payments infrastructure enables its partners and their merchants to break into markets faster, reducing complexity and saving them valuable time, while increasing their checkout conversions. PPRO is active in over 80 markets worldwide with many APAC-based digital payments methods integrated on its platform, including Malaysian e-wallets, GrabPay, Boost and Touch 'n Go, GrabPay in Singapore and Alipay, WeChat Pay in China.

RH: Are there any industry sectors or client types that you focus on for merchant services?

TC: PPRO's partners can be broken down into the following categories: enterprises with payments platforms, payment service providers and their merchants, fintechs and banks. All of

these groups rely on PPRO's infrastructure to offer a range of digital payment methods at the checkout.

RH: What do you see as your key strengths with respect to merchant services?

TC: For payment service providers (PSPs), the most important thing is being able to offer their merchants a seamless customer experience. PPRO's digital payments infrastructure provides PSPs with the infrastructure they need to build better payment experiences for their merchants and customers.

With the acquisition of Alpha Fintech, a next-gen payments technology company, PPRO's offering has been further strengthened, expanding its presence and networks in Asia Pacific (APAC), allowing it to deliver products and services faster to its partners.

RH: What do you see as your key differentiators with respect to merchant services?

TC: Going beyond our broad offering – PPRO's key strength, like any business, is its people – all 700 of them. Our people are experts in their field – whether that's their technical expertise, their local market or regional market knowledge. By having a great team who really know their stuff, we're able to offer our partners a seamless service.

RH: What were your key achievements over the last 12 months in merchant services?

TC: A major milestone was reached earlier this year when PPRO acquired Alpha Fintech, a next-gen payments technology company, in a deal that has hugely expanded PPRO's offering, and helped us to strengthen our presence and networks in Asia Pacific (APAC), and to deliver products and services faster to our customers.

Alpha Fintech's cloud-based platform allows for the seamless integration of digital payments products and services, from payment processing and merchant management to risk management, fraud prevention, and data analytics. By adding Alpha's platform to its infrastructure, PPRO is now poised to offer a plug-and-play orchestration layer that will let its customers integrate products and services faster and at scale. Partners can look forward to more global payment flows, the ability to integrate third-party applications, stronger compliance and risk capabilities, and deeper data insights.

RH: What merchant services innovations do you have on your product and service roadmap for the next 12 months?

TC: Over the next 12 months we will continue to add new digital payment partners to the PPRO platform to expand our offering of local payment methods so that we can better serve our partners around the world. Further, following our acquisition of Alpha Fintech, we are working on expanding our offering and strengthening our network and presence in APAC. This will improve the speed at which we're able to offer our services and products to our partners and their merchants in the region. In addition, moving beyond our current client base, we are also putting a focus on marketplaces, and introducing new products to serve this market segment.

RH: What industry changes or trends do you see occurring over the next 2-3 years that will have a major impact on your business and/or your clients?

TC: It goes without saying that the past two years saw the ecommerce and digital commerce industries accelerate at an unprecedented rate as more consumers than ever before came online to make purchases for everyday items. As a result, online transactions soared, spelling good news for ecommerce and payment players alike. However, post-pandemic, as the world gradually makes its return to normalcy, things will change and consumers will adopt a more hybrid or 'online-to-offline' (o2o) approach to commerce. This will have a knock on effect for the ecommerce and digital payment industries. But, while changeable, consumer habits and

preferences have shifted during the pandemic – and it is expected that digital commerce, and thus digital payments, are here to stay and global cashless payments volume is expected to increase by 42% in the coming years.

Another trend we can expect to see more of over the coming years is that of alternative payments, but also alternative stores of value – for example, crypto and NFTs. The crypto industry is a buoyant one, but one fraught with difficulty for investors with market volatility and uncertainty. But NFTs are certainly interesting and an area to watch. Although some represent works of digital art, others have utility, and are used as a way in which to store value, shares, or even tickets to sought after events. The prospect for digital stores of value are endless and it will be interesting to see how this evolves over the coming years.

Finally, the payment industry is becoming increasingly fragmented with new payment methods popping up almost everyday. Nowhere is this more prevalent in Asia Pacific where today there are estimated to be close to 200 different digital payment methods for consumers to choose from. To manage this, and to ensure consumers are able to transact at the checkout with the payment methods they know and trust, businesses must keep up with changing payment preferences. This is where PPRO comes in – our team are experts in digital payments, meaning that they can advise your team, and take the hassle out of managing payments at the check-out so that you can focus on other business activities.

RH: What key criteria or features should a business consider when evaluating payments service providers?

TC: When it comes to evaluating payments, or put more simply, any transaction where money is changing hands – security and trust are paramount. When it comes to selecting payment methods, always do your due diligence of course, and ensure your provider of choice is both regulated and transparent about their security measures. Further, ensure that your payments infrastructure provider offers the deep market knowledge, regional experts, and round-the-clock support you need to make sure you can focus on running your business, safe in the knowledge that your payments are being taken care of.