

From Bartering to Bitcoin

The evolution of cashless payments

Are we about to become a completely cashless society? From the humble beginnings of bartering for physical goods to the rise of digital wallets, we'll explore how society has transformed into a cashless one. Let's start back at when it all began...



8000 years ago the barter system is introduced

In the prehistoric age, the Mesopotamians introduced the barter system.

Shells, grains, salt, beans, livestock and even land were exchanged.

Fun fact: The Latin word 'sal' - meaning salt - is where we get the word 'salary' from!



The transition to valuable metals in the Bronze Age

3,500 years ago, metals such as bronze, silver and gold were used as a form of money.

Bars and rings and coins were produced.

Forgery - Gold was mixed with silver or other metals to increase the weight of the bars and coins.



Paper money is created

Chinese merchants invented the first form of paper money roughly 1,000 years ago.

Marco Polo introduced paper money to Europe in the 13th century.

14th - 18th century: The rise of cheques

The introduction of cheques as convenient bills of exchange allowing people to carry funds abroad without actually carrying the gold.

The first forms of cheques were handwritten and became quite popular by the 17th century.



Money transfers begin

Western Union launched the first widely used wire transfer service in 1872 using the telegraph network so people could send funds globally.

By 1877, almost \$2.5 million was transferred each year through this service.



20th century: The convenience of cards

In 1914, the US Western Union introduced the first-ever transaction metal card.

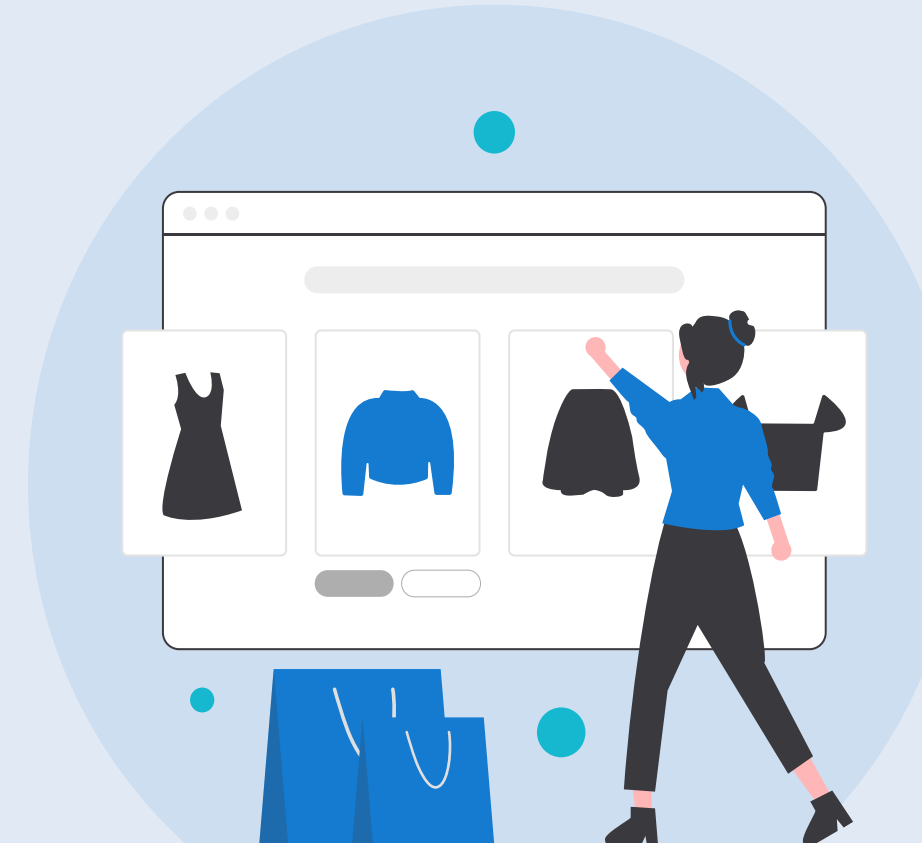
In 1946, the Brooklyn banker, John Biggins, introduced the first bank card, CHARGE-IT.

1967 saw the first ATM card issued by Barclays in London.

In the '70s, Lloyds Bank introduced cards with a magnetic strip using a PIN for security.

The mid-80s saw the introduction of electronic Point of Sale (POS) terminals.

The 21st century: Digital transactions



Online payments

In 1994, Stanford Federal Credit Union was the first bank to offer online transactions for all customers.

Paypal launched in 2000, following the merger of Confinity and X.Com.

In 2007, Western Union tied up with GSMA to develop mobile money transfers.

In 2022, 93% of people in the UK used online banking.

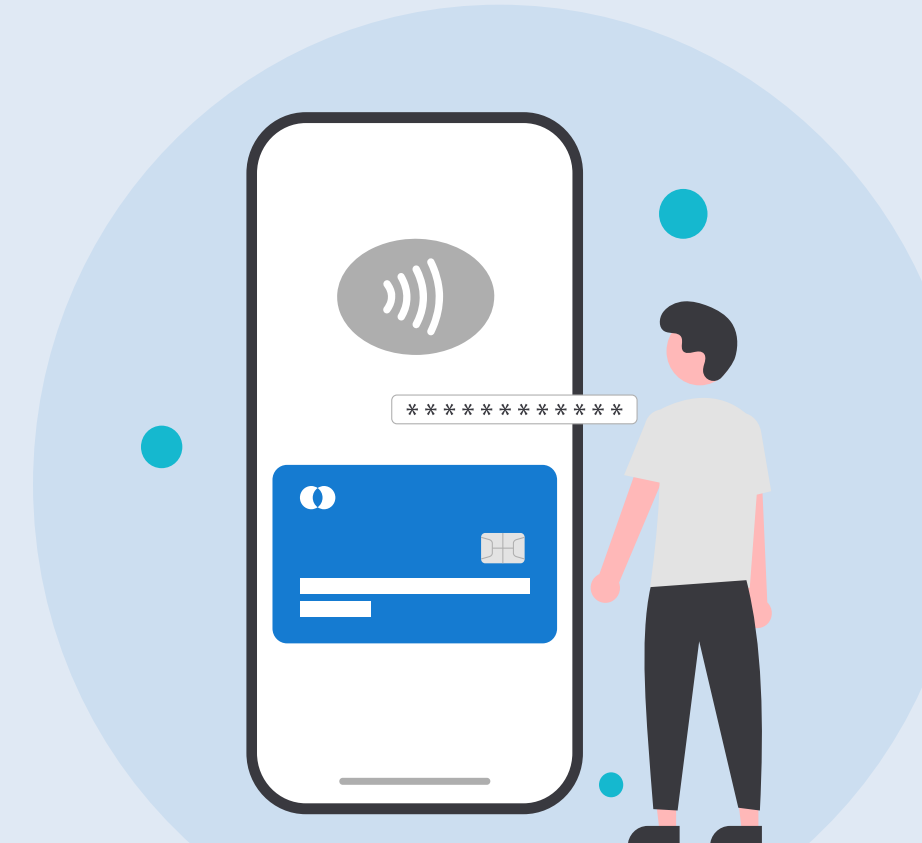


Cryptocurrency

Bitcoin version 0.1 was released in 2009; the first established cryptocurrency.

In December 2017, the price of one Bitcoin hit an all-time high of \$19,783.

Beyond Bitcoin, there are now over 20,000 cryptocurrencies in circulation.



Contactless & mobile payments

In 2007, the first contactless cards were issued in the UK by Barclays.

Google Wallet emerged in 2013, whilst Apple Pay launched in 2014, introducing mobile contactless payments.

Smartwatches and other wearable devices can be equipped with Apple Pay or Google Pay.



Stay informed about the latest payment technologies and simplify your business transactions with Total Processing's all-in-one solution. Visit Total Processing's blog to learn more.