

Gentek Global Secures Payment Systems with Application Shielding



Industry

Payments Industry

Locations

Melbourne, Australia and
Montreal, Canada

Solution

Intertrust whiteCryption®
Secure Key Box™

Intertrust whiteCryption®
Code Protection™

Customer profile

Gentek Global is an international product development firm with offices in Melbourne, Australia and Montreal, Canada.

Gentek specializes in cybersecurity, mobile payments, and Chip and PIN technology. As the world of e-commerce and mobile payments continue to grow at an exponential rate globally, the opportunities and risks grow along with them. The products developed by Gentek are designed to capitalize on both the growth and risks present in the market.

The firm has a suite of patent-pending products that enable traditional retail and e-commerce businesses to accept payments by turning mobile devices into EMV (formerly Europay, Mastercard and Visa) capable payment terminals.

Felix is a payment processing technology that enables customer payments to be processed on consumer-grade Android phones by tapping contactless bank cards against the back of the smartphone.

The Felix product suite includes a SoftPOS application for Android—enabling merchants to accept customer payments on their smartphones—as well as web and Android SDKs for ‘tap to phone’ e-commerce payments on customer devices.

Felix provides the user interface and contactless card-reading capability using Near Field Communications (NFC). After reading the card data, Felix encrypts it, and sends the payment data off to the firm’s innovative middleware application, Hector, which is running in a secure cloud environment.

Hector provides the PCI-compliant security infrastructure and back-end messaging layer that enables Felix to be linked up with the traditional payment systems used by financial services providers.



The challenge

Traditional mobile point-of-sale (mPOS) solutions have, until now, required costly and inconvenient card readers or dongles to be used in conjunction with a mobile phone to interact with payment cards, particularly for transactions requiring a PIN code. These devices add unnecessary cost and complexity to the solutions in both the cost of the hardware itself, the hardware certifications required, as well as distribution and maintenance of the infrastructure.


However, the majority of Android handsets deployed today already include an NFC interface. This creates an opportunity, as this interface can be used to communicate directly with a contactless card or other contactless payment instrument like Apple Pay or Google Pay. Mobile phones equipped with Gentek's Felix application can become a complete payment acceptance device, with no need for specialized additional hardware.

The Felix mobile application communicates with its back-end counterpart—Hector—running in the cloud. All of the transaction processing occurs on Hector, with the phone mainly acting as a user interface and card reader.

Because sensitive data and payment information is transmitted back and forth between Felix and Hector, some of the immediate challenges and needs from a security perspective were as follows:

- **Increase** security depth for Felix and Hector to secure any financial and personal data being sent through the app.
- **Find** a common security solution which could be easily integrated into the code base of both products, one on a mobile device, the other in the cloud.
- **Secure** all data transmitted back and forth between Felix and Hector.

- **Protect** Felix and Hector from reverse engineering and tampering.
- **Ensure** the encryption keys are protected at all times on both Felix and Hector.
- **Adhere** to or exceed card brand and PCI security guidelines and compliance restrictions.
- **Provide** proactive security on Hector before onboarding multiple high-traffic high-transaction clients around the world.
- **Build** solid pilot projects with positive results that negate any security threats or attacks.



“Intertrust’s whiteCryption is very well supported and highly regarded inside the major card brands,” notes Gentek founder and CEO Owen Newport. “By going with whiteCryption, the credit card security assurance groups and PCI allowed us to utilize PIN validation when required.”

The solution

Gentek considered six security solution providers in its quest to provide the highest possible level of application shielding for its Felix payment system. Gentek and Intertrust Technologies started working together in early 2019.

Intertrust’s **whiteCryption Code Protection** and **whiteCryption Secure Key Box** solutions protect both Felix and Hector.

The whiteCryption security solutions were implemented and deployed by Gentek and enable both Felix and Hector payment systems to adhere to the security requirements of the payments industry, including full compliance with PCI Data Security Standard (PCI DSS).

Application shielding to secure the Felix payment system

whiteCryption Code Protection

whiteCryption Code Protection (CP) is a development tool deployed into the application build process for Felix and Hector to deliver a self-defending and protected mobile application. It employs advanced code obfuscation and control flow flattening to remove any hard-coded messages or strings, replacing them with unrecognizable versions.

The application flow is radically changed without affecting the logical functioning of the app, making it hard to understand the logic and deterring hackers from understanding the code or being able to extract any sensitive IP.

In addition, thousands of overlapping integrity checkers are embedded into the code, each one checking a section of the binary. These checkers are very hard to find and extremely time consuming to remove, so if the application is modified, Felix will detect it and run a custom defense function, terminating the application or executing preferred code. The Felix payment system can also detect whether it is being executed in a debugger or running on a rooted device.

whiteCryption Secure Key Box

whiteCryption Secure Key Box (SKB) is an advanced white-box cryptography (WBC) library that protects cryptographic keys from being accessed or extracted. The keys are always encoded, even when in use.

Felix’s technology suite supports card scheme (Visa/Mastercard/AMEX) host card emulation (HCE) and the creation of PIN authorization blocks. The use of SKB technology ensures that all cryptographic aspects of the product are secured, making it almost impossible to access or tamper with the keys in any way.

whiteCryption Secure Key Box is the market leading white-box cryptography library, ensuring attackers cannot gain access to cryptographic keys. SKB is regularly tested by top-tier pen testers at Intertrust customer sites and through third party labs such as Riscure.

“By partnering with a market leader like Intertrust, we have shortened our path to market considerably,” says Gentek CEO Owen Newport. “We know that whiteCryption will continue to be there to support us at every stage. We’re confident in the security of our applications, our transactions, and our customers’ data.”

The results

The Felix payment system is running a live pilot within a number of countries where EMV cards are widely used, including Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia. It is estimated that 80 percent of transactions that take place in these countries are conducted using contactless (tap-and-go) technology.

Intertrust whiteCryption solutions have saved Gentek hundreds of hours in development time and provided faster market acceptance among major payment card brands.

Additionally, the whiteCryption application shielding solutions provide Gentek and its Felix payment system with these essential benefits:

Deeper Capabilities

- **Ensures secure exchange of information** between Felix and Hector, fully protecting the end user’s financial and personal information.
- **Increases security depth** by protecting the Felix codebase from penetration by static and dynamic analyses, hacking, and piracy.
- **Introduces proactive security** to avoid unexpected circumstances which could distort the image of the brand, the merchants, or the card issuer.

Attaining Security Compliance

- **Security compliance** for fast market acceptance was accelerated thanks to whiteCryption’s market leading position and certification to the highest standards.

Easy Integration with Wide Platform Support

- **Cross-platform, cross-language capability** provided easy integration and was a key deciding factor for Gentek. It meant whiteCryption solutions easily supported Felix’s Android Java and Hector’s C++ code, saving time and resources.



intertrust[®]

Building trust for
the connected world.

Learn more at: intertrust.com/whiteCryption
Contact us at: +1 415 209 5057

Intertrust Technologies Corporation
920 Stewart Drive, Sunnyvale, CA 94085

Copyright © 2019, Intertrust Technologies Corporation. All rights reserved.