*MasterCard*
# Joan Kelly, Group Executive

*By Mark A. Browne*



Making mobile phone transactions easier, reaching the un-banked and eliminating the use of cash and checks are the major challenges for capturing credit card market share, says Joan Kelly.

Having a payments transaction-processing infrastructure that is robust and flexible enough to launch new products and reward cardholders is the key to success.

"That's part of our whole view of technology: Anticipate the infrastructure you will need and then innovate by putting the pieces together for product development," explains Kelly. She is the senior-most female technologist at MasterCard Worldwide.

Today, MasterCard is reaping the benefits of a payments transactions processing platform that Kelly, Group Executive of Systems Delivery, Global Technology and Operations at MasterCard, and her team have spent years re-engineering.

The results can be seen in new products and technologies launched by MasterCard for both corporate and consumer cardholders, apart from the fact that the platform processes approximately 140 million payment transactions on a peak day.

Visa remains the top brand, according to figures released by the Nilson Report, but MasterCard increased its share as measured by purchases made on both commercial and consumer credit cards issued in the US, maintaining its #2 position in the consumer category. MasterCard reported a net revenue of 27 percent to $2.4 billion at the end of June and an 11 percent increase in the number of cards issued, to 951 million.

With the commercial segment of the market growing, purchase of commercial cards issued to businesses topped $527.05 billion, up 17.6 percent over the prior year, according to Nilson.

"Adding value," to business-to-business credit card usage is critical, Kelly says.

She cites MasterCard's Easy Savings and inControl products as prime examples. Easy Savings automatically rewards small business owners when they use their business credit and signature credit cards at participating merchants.

"We integrated existing technology to set up reward programs for small businesses with very little work on their part," Kelly says.

inControl gives participating commercial card members highly specific controls on commercial card use by employees, including expenditures monitoring and limits, restrictions on eligible purchase locations and the ability to issue card numbers for one-time or limited-time use by vendors or employees.

The Royal Bank of Scotland is the first card issuers to announce it will use inControl for its corporate cardholders.

Technology decisions at MasterCard, Kelly says, are based upon a collaborative relationship between the systems and the product marketing groups.

"We have a concept here we call a business technologist: it's imperative that the leading technologist understand the business problem they are trying to solve."