

The 5-Minute Merchant Statement Checkup

*A quick guide to finding out if you're overpaying on credit card
processing*

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What You'll Need

1. **Your most recent merchant statement** — paper or PDF
2. **A calculator** (or your phone)
3. **5 minutes**

STEP 1

Find Your Total Volume

Look for **“Total Sales Volume”** or **“Total Transactions”** — usually on the first or last page of your statement. This is the total dollar amount your business processed that month.

YOUR TOTAL VOLUME:

STEP 2

Find Your Total Fees

Look for **“Total Fees,” “Total Charges,”** or **“Amount Due.”** This includes everything — interchange, markups, monthly fees, all of it.

YOUR TOTAL FEES:

STEP 3

Calculate Your Effective Rate

The single most important number on your statement — and it's not printed anywhere. You have to calculate it yourself.

$(\text{Total Fees} \div \text{Total Volume}) \times 100 = \text{Effective Rate } \%$

Example: $\$472 \div \$15,000 \times 100 = 3.15\%$

YOUR EFFECTIVE RATE:

STEP 4

How Does Your Rate Compare?

EFFECTIVE RATE	WHAT IT MEANS
Under 2.5%	Generally competitive — but could still be lower depending on volume and card mix. Worth a closer look.
2.5% - 3.0%	Average — there may be room to negotiate.
3.0% - 3.5%	Above average — you're likely paying hidden fees.
Over 3.5%	Red flag — you're almost certainly overpaying.

STEP 5

Red Flags to Look For

- PCI non-compliance fee (\$19.95-\$99/mo)** — Charged for not completing a simple annual questionnaire?
- “Non-qualified” surcharges** — Transactions being downgraded to higher rate tiers?
- Monthly or statement fee over \$15** — Push back — many processors will reduce or waive these.
- Batch fee over \$0.25** — Should be \$0.10-\$0.20 max.
- “Regulatory” or “technology” fees** — Often pure markup with no real cost basis.
- Annual or “account maintenance” fee** — Varies widely. Ask a professional if you’re unsure whether yours is reasonable.
- Early termination fee clause** — Check your contract — know what you’re locked into.
- Billing notices or pricing increase alerts** — Processors bury rate increases in small boxed notices most merchants never read. They take effect whether you notice or not.
- “Technology upgrade” or equipment fees** — If a new fee appeared that you didn’t agree to, call and dispute it immediately.

What To Do Next

UNDER 2.5% — NO RED FLAGS

Generally in good shape, but still worth a professional look — there may be savings you’re missing. Check again in 6 months.

2.5% - 3.5%

Call your processor and ask them to explain every line item. Many fees can be removed just by asking.

OVER 3.5%

You need a statement review. Upload yours at paymentswithal.com/statement-review for a free, no-obligation breakdown.

Got questions? Email me at al@paymentswithal.com — I read everything.

PaymentsWithAI.com

"Payment processing explained, not sold."
