

Aalto University
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Degree Programme in Automation and Systems Technology

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An open and general numerical control and machine vision based architecture for payment terminal acceptance test automation

Master's Thesis
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ABSTRACT OF

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<p>Software testing is a crucial part of modern software development and it is commonly accepted fact that the earlier defects and errors in the software are found, the lower the cost of correcting those will be. Early detection of errors also increases the possibility to correct them properly.</p> <p>Acceptance testing is a process of comparing the developed program to to the initial requirements. Acceptance testing of a system should be executed in an environment as similar as possible to the production environment. This master's thesis will discuss how to address these guidelines in automated acceptance testing environment of payment terminal software.</p> <p>This master's thesis will discuss the theories related to software testing, testing of embedded systems and the challenges stated above. Master's thesis will present a proposed architecture for automated acceptance testing of payment terminals including the needed hardware and software.</p>			
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<p>Ohjelmistotestaus on tärkeä osa modernissa ohjelmistotuotannossa ja on yleisesti hyväksytty, että mitä aiemmin virheet ohjelmistosta löytyvät, sitä edullisempaa niiden korjaus tulee olemaan. Aikainen virheiden havaitseminen myös nostaa mahdollisuutta korjata virheet oikein.</p> <p>Hyväksymistestaus on ohjelmistotestauksen vaihe, jossa kehitettyä ohjelmistoa verrataan alkuperäisiin ohjelmistovaatimuksiin. Ohjelmiston hyväksymistestaus tulisi suorittaa lopullista tuotantoympäristöä mahdollisimman hyvin vastaavassa ympäristössä. Tämä diplomityö käsittelee näitä ohjeistuuksia maksupäätteiden automaattisen hyväksymistestauksen ympäristössä.</p> <p>Tämä diplomityö käsittelee ohjelmistotestaukseen liittyvää teoriaa, sulautettujen järjestelmien testausta ja yllä mainittuja haasteita. Diplomityö esittelee ehdotetun ympäristön maksupäätteiden automaattiseen hyväksymistestaukseen ja käsittelee siihen tarvittuja ohjelmistoja ja fyysisiä komponentteja.</p>			
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A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'S' followed by a long horizontal stroke that tapers to a point.

Sakari A. Pesonen

Abbreviations and Acronyms

CNC	Computer Numeric Control
ATT	Automated Acceptance Testing
UI	User Interface
LCD	Liquid Crystal Display
BW	Black and White
PIN	Personal Identification Number
RF	Robot Framework
AAT	Automated Acceptance Test
PWM	Pulse Width Modulation
OCR	Optical Character Recognition
QA	Quality Assurance

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Software testing is a crucial part of modern software development and it is commonly accepted fact that the earlier defects and errors in the software are found, the lower the cost of correcting those will be. Early detection of errors also increases the possibility to correct them properly. (*Myers et al. [2011]*)

Acceptance testing is a process of comparing the developed program to to the initial requirements (*Myers et al. [2011]*). Therefore especially in agile software development, automated acceptance testing (AAT) plays important role as new versions of software are being developed constantly and AAT phase should be executed whenever new features are added. Automation can free valuable human resources from this process (*Haugset and Hanssen [2008]*) and therefore lower the overall cost of the software.

According to *Sommerville [2011]* acceptance testing of a system should be executed in an environment as similar as possible to the production environment of the final product. System should also be tested with real data rather than with simulated sample. When the software being developed is actually embedded software and the production environment is actually real embedded system, in this case a payment terminal, the acceptance testing should be executed on actual payment terminal with actually interacting through the user interface (UI) of the machine. This also leads to a situa-

tion where concerns pointed out above are actually being emphasized as late detection of defects in embedded software can considerably raise the overall cost of the system (*Ebert and Jones [2009]*).

Sommerville [2011] states that it is practically impossible to perfectly replicate the system's working environment and when considering an embedded system, this can be even harder. Buttons of the device have to be actually pressed and visual changes on the screen of the device has to be observed. In order to automate this, some sort of test environment has to be implemented that can observe and manipulate the device through physical word, i.e. not simulating the keystrokes nor reading the LCD communication line. Some kind of joint hardware and software solution has to be created and it also has to mimic real human user as realistically as possible.

This master's thesis will discuss the theories related to software testing, testing of embedded systems and the problems stated above. Master's thesis will present a proposed architecture for automated acceptance testing of payment terminal software including the needed hardware and software.

Research presented in this master's thesis was carried in co-operation with Eficode Oy and one of the main payment terminal software provider in the Nordic countries.

1.1 Problem statements

In order to survey the topic of this work in adequate level, this master's thesis will discuss four different problem statements. problem statements are as follows:

1. What are the benefits of using open source software and how can the architecture be designed to maximally exploit these benefits?
2. What are the distinguishing characteristics between different payment terminals that have impact on automated acceptance testing? How can the architecture be designed to adapt the system to different payment terminals with minimal effort?

3. What kinds of test automation approaches exist and which approach is best suited for payment terminal acceptance test automation?
4. How should test keywords used in test suites be defined to make the test suites compact and understandable? How should keywords be defined to make the tests reusable for other types of payment terminals?

1.2 Structure of the master's thesis

This master's thesis will first discuss the theories and literature related to the topic and will then present a proposed architecture of automated test environment for payment terminal software acceptance testing. In the first chapter of this master's thesis the topic will be introduced, problem statements will be presented and structure of this work will be explained.

Second chapter will cover the literature review of the topic of the master's thesis. Each problem statements will have related subsections and individual problem statements will be discussed on those sections. Each subsection will first give introduction on problem statement's point of view and it will be followed by the most relevant references around the topic. Subsections will point out what has been done earlier and how the fundamental aspects of these previous works can be used as a basis for this work.

Third chapter of the master's thesis will present the proposed architecture for automated acceptance test environment for payment terminal software based on literature review done on previous chapter. Chapter will present the fundamental parts of hardware and software needed for this kind of environment. This chapter will have diagrams of proposed software architecture as well as fundamental design of needed hardware.

Fourth and the final chapter will conclude the research done on this master's thesis and will summarize the benefits obtained by this kind of environment.

Chapter 2

Payment terminal acceptance testing

When developing software with agile methodologies for payment terminals, i.e for embedded system, testing is a crucial part of the process. The earlier the defects and errors in the software are detected, the lower the cost and needed effort will be for correcting those (*Myers et al. [2011]*).

Motivation for this research came from payment terminal software provider as they needed cost efficient and simple as possible automated acceptance test environment in order to lower the costs and speed up the acceptance testing phase of their software development.

In order to automate the acceptance testing of the payment terminals, test environment that can manipulate and observe the device through physical world has to be created. In other words, environment has to have some sort of a robot for pressing the buttons, screen of the device has to be observed and all this must be controlled by some kind of combination of software.

Test environment that can be used in acceptance testing of payment terminals has several challenges to tackle and matters related to physical and technical aspects of the payment terminals have to be considered. This chapter will discuss the background of these challenges. Customer also had a desire for open source technologies and this chapter will discuss the benefits

obtained by using open source software and hardware in acceptance testing environment for payment terminals. Chapter will also discuss the different approaches for acceptance testing as well as how should the test suites be defined in order to make them understandable and reusable.

2.1 Benefits of Open Source solutions

When designing automated acceptance testing environment from scratch, evaluation and availability of different possible components play significant role in terms of development speed and costs. Suitability of one individual software subsystem is hard to determine just based on manual or documentation of the product. Software has to be evaluated in terms of functionality, stability and performance and different software decisions have to be compatible with each other. Software components might also need some modification to suit the needs of intended environment. All this applies also in a sense to the hardware parts as well.

Open source software provides advantage on these matters over closed source products as the source code is easily available (*Morgan and Finnegan [2007]*). As open source software can be accessed free of charge, component can be easily evaluated by trying out whether they work for the purpose or not. Evaluation can also include an analysis about how easily the open source product can be modified to suit the need. This especially is hard to achieve with closed source products as the source code is not available.

According to *Paulson et al. [2004]* open source projects usually have fewer defects than closed source projects. Defects are found and fixed rapidly as they are reported openly to the open source community. If defect is found during evaluation of the product, it can be also corrected by the user and by doing this the user can contribute to the project. This on the other hand is hardly never possible with closed software.

Paulson et al. [2004] also states that open source projects foster more creativity than closed source counterparts. This means that number of func-

tions added over time is higher on open source projects. When using the product in some new field of use, this can be great advantage as user can report desired feature to the community and it can be added relatively quickly if the feature is considered needed by the community.

”Open source” hardware on the other hand means that details and plans of the product and parts are commonly available. This allows that parts can be manufactured and modified by anyone with knowledge and skills to suit individual needs. When detailed part descriptions are available, multiple manufacturers can fabricate the actual parts. This creates competition and therefore usually lowers the price of individual hardware components.

As the overall security of the payment terminals is a high priority, use of open source technologies can also be seen as an effort to fulfill this requirement. Open source products provide transparency to the actual users and therefore supports growing thrust amongst customers.

2.2 Common characteristics between payment terminals

When designing automated test environment for different kinds of payment terminals, different physical and technical features have to be taken into account. Environment has to be able to manipulate different types of payment terminals and test structure has to be designed to adapt to needs of different software and software versions running on payment terminals.

Majority of payment terminals share some common characteristics as they are made for same purpose: handling card payments. Scope of this thesis is to view those payment terminals that share three main features: keyboard, screen and card slot. Different types of terminals can be observed in Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2 bellow.

Screens of the payment terminals differ in terms of size, placement and type. Test environment has to take into account different screen placements and it has to support both black and white (BW) and colored displays.

Keyboards of payment terminals share majority of keys together as number keys are needed for entering the PIN code and accept and decline buttons are needed for accepting and canceling the payment. Keyboard layouts, however, differ between different manufacturers and even amongst different models of the same manufacturer.

Location of the chip card slot is usually on the lower edge of the payment terminal or on top of the screen of the payment terminal. Research done within this master's thesis is limited to those terminals that have the chip card slot at the lower edge of the payment terminal as this simplifies the hardware needed for test environment. This is described more in depth in Chapter 3.2. This study is also limited to only chip card readers and magnetic stripe readers or near field communication (NFC) payments are not addressed.



Figure 2.1: Two examples of payment terminals from different manufacturers. Left image from: <http://www.netskauppa.fi/images/t/24-85-PrimaryImage.image.ashx>



Figure 2.2: Example of a payment terminal which attaches to a smart phone.

2.3 Different approaches for test automation

Problem of testing the payment terminal software in automated way can be viewed at different levels. Most abstract division can be seen if the testing is divided into two levels: white box testing and black box testing. White box testing is a method where source code is investigated and test cases are written to test the internal logic of the program. Black box testing on the other hand concentrates only on the inputs and the outputs of the software. Everything between those is not in a field of interest and black box testing only focuses on whether the right input produces the wanted output. (*Myers et al. [2011]*)

Khan and Khan [2012] distinguishes these methods clearly from each other by stating that white box testing is a process where full knowledge of source code is needed in order to write the tests. Black box testing is described in a way that only fundamental aspects of the application has to be known and black box testing has no or only little relevance to internal works of the program (*Pressman [2005]*). Black box testing techniques can be thus

seen to apply for testing working product against the initial requirements of the software. In this way white box testing can be distinguished to cover unit and integration testing part of the software testing and the black box testing can be seen covering the acceptance testing part of the testing.

As black box testing is based only to the external exceptions and behavior of the software (*Khan and Khan [2012]*), acceptance testing of the payment terminal software can be seen to follow this methodology.

Therefore acceptance testing of a payment terminal software can be seen as a testing phase where the UI of the device and use cases of the device are tested at the final production level, i.e. through using the real buttons of the device under test and observing that the expected messages can be seen through the screen of the device under test.

2.4 Test suite syntax

Test suite syntax plays significant role in automated acceptance testing environment of payment terminals in terms of test readability, reusability and adaptivity. When building automated acceptance testing environment, the tests should be understandable enough that whole development team and people related to the project can easily adopt the test syntax.

According to the well recognized guidelines of test automation by *Bach [1996]*, test automation and the process that it automates should be kept carefully separated. Test automation should be built in a form that it is easy to review and distinct from the process that it automates. These guidelines should be taken into account also when determining suitable test framework and test suite syntax.

When evaluating suitable test automation framework, it should be recognized, that shared knowledge is a key factor of successful test automation. Software projects usually involves some sort of quality assurance (QA) or even individual a QA team. Projects tend involve also fair amount of people with no technical background or coding skills and still their responsibilities involve

guaranteeing the quality of the software. *Mosley and Posey [2002]* recognizes that high level test languages help to share the knowledge amongst the people that are responsible of the product. When information and knowledge is shared it helps in achieving the objectives of test automation and builds up the morale amongst the people that are involved.

Lowell and Stell-Smith [2003] states that acceptance tests should be easy as possible to write or otherwise people working with the project will not write the tests as the task is seen unpleasant. Tests must be also easy to maintain and also people that have not written the tests should be able to modify the tests to suit updated program features. For this reason the test cases should be human readable and understandable also to non-technical people. Test steps should be self explanatory and unambiguous.

Test cases of a payment terminal software acceptance testing contain relatively high amount of repetition as for example test step of inserting PIN code is the same whether right or wrong PIN code is inserted or whether the test case would validate credit or debit payment. For this reason, test case syntax should be as modular as possible in order to allow reuse of keywords with different parameters. Easily reusable keywords also allows fast creation of new test cases.

Robot Framework (RF) is an example of this kind of generic keyword driven test automation framework. RF allows creation of human readable test cases and reusability and extendability of high-level keywords is made relatively easy (*Stresnjak and Hocenski [2011]*).

Example of a Robot Framework test case can be seen in Figure 2.3 bellow. It is easy to see the intended test case execution by looking the test case and this will be the goal for the environment proposed later on in this master's thesis.

```
Settings ***
Documentation    A test suite with a single test for valid login.
...              This test has a workflow that is created using keywords in
...              the imported resource file.
Resource         resource.txt

*** Test Cases ***
Valid Login
    Open Browser To Login Page
    Input Username    demo
    Input Password    mode
    Submit Credentials
    Welcome Page Should Be Open
    [Teardown]       Close Browser
```

Figure 2.3: Example of a simple test suite. Source: <http://robotframework.org>

Chapter 3

Proposed architecture

Based on the aspects pointed out on Chapter 2, this part of the master's thesis will present a proposed architecture for automated acceptance testing environment for payment terminal software. Components of the environment can be divided into hardware and software components and this chapter is divided accordingly.

Research done in this master's thesis was carried out in co-operation with Eficode Oy and one of its customers providing payment terminal software in the Nordic countries. Motivation for this project came from the customer and Eficode Oy took responsibility of implementing the system according to the best practices of the industry. This proposal was initial plan for the project and it will be presented in this chapter.

3.1 Overview

When planning an automated acceptance test (AAC) environment for payment terminal software, environment has to be highly adaptive for different types of hardware and software features of different payment terminal models. This proposal was done for one payment terminal software provider and they had several different models of payment terminals and altogether 51 different software configurations for those devices.

Security is a top priority of payment terminal electronics and software and it is not possible to access internals of the payment terminal hardware. This means that AAC environment has to be able to manipulate the physical interface of the device. This also creates requirement for supporting different types of keyboard layouts and screen locations. In other words, environment has to be non dependent on single manufacturer or payment terminal model.

One of the requirements for the AAC environment was also use of open source technologies. For the reasons pointed out in Section 2.1, customer wanted that the environment is as open as possible. This also creates reputation and visibility regarding the security matters.

Other requirements for the AAC environment was simplicity, low cost, low need for maintenance and ability to run the tests 24/7.

3.2 Hardware

Hardware for this proposal was intendedly kept simple and low-cost as possible. This proposal presents the use of just one Raspberry Pi 2¹ computer as a main computer for AAC environment. Raspberry Pi 2 in relatively inexpensive compared to its computing power and it can also run full Linux operating system. It is small sized and does not require any cooling equipment. Therefore it suites well to this project as it can be situated easily to the environment and can be run over the clock without concerns about wearing cooling fans for example.

AAC environment also requires computer vision as changes on the screen have to observed. Manufacturer of Raspberry Pi offers low-price solution for this as a form of Raspberry Pi Camera Module². This module is proposed for use in computer vision tasks of the AAC environment.

¹<https://www.raspberrypi.org/products/raspberry-pi-2-model-b/>

²<https://www.raspberrypi.org/products/camera-module/>

3.2.1 The Robot

To be able to manipulate the physical UI of the payment terminals, some sort of robot is needed. Robot should be therefore able to accommodate different types of payment terminals and be able to press all types of buttons in question. Low cost and low need for maintenance are also requirements for this robot.

The master's thesis proposes the use of ShapeOko 2³ Computer Numerical Control (CNC) milling machine to be used as a manipulator. Though the machine is intended for milling purposes, it can be turned into a portal robot when milling tool is removed.

ShapeOko 2 is an open-source project and plans of the machine are openly available on their GitHub⁴. This allows easy modifications to the hardware parts of the robot if needed.

ShapeOko 2 has a working area of about 300 mm x 300 mm x 60 mm and this means that it can accommodate up to three payment terminals at same time to the working area. This allows parallel test case execution i.e. test cases can be run at the same time with different terminals.

ShapeOko 2 is controlled by an Arduino board running a program called GRBL. GRBL is an open source, high performance G-code interpreter and it is used for controlling CNC milling machines in general⁵. G-code commands are sent from Raspberry Pi 2 to the Arduino on the robot using serial communication.

Robot should be equipped with a pushing tool that can be manipulate the buttons. Pushing tool can be easily manufactured using for example 3D printing techniques.

³http://www.shapeoko.com/wiki/index.php/Shapeoko_2

⁴https://github.com/shapeoko/Shapeoko_2

⁵<http://www.shapeoko.com/wiki/index.php/Software>

3.2.2 Card Feeder

Insertion and removal of the credit card might be hard to accomplish in a simple way using just the robot described in previous section. This work proposes the use of generally designed card feeders to accomplish this task. Proposed card feeders consist of 3D printed base plate that attaches to the payment terminal, servo motor and 3D printed tray that attaches to the servo and to the credit card.

Card feeders are designed in a way that they can be used with any types payment terminals that have the card slot at the bottom edge of the device. Standard hobby servos are used as servo motors in order to keep the cost of the setup low.

Arduino board will be used to drive the servos as it can easily provide the needed pulse width modulated (PWM) signal for the servos. Raspberry Pi on the machine will communicate with Arduino through serial communication.

3.3 Software

For software part of this AAC environment, Raspbian Wheezy is proposed for operating system. Raspbian is the official supported operating system by the Raspberry Pi Foundation⁶. Raspbian is based on widely used Debian Unix-like operating system. This allows the use of components developed for Debian to be used with this AAC environment.

As different keyboard layouts have to be supported, some kind of configuration files are proposed. There should be two types of configuration files: one for device locations in the working area of the robot and one for each keyboard layout. In this way configuration of devices under test can be easily modified at test case level.

⁶<https://www.raspberrypi.org/downloads/raspbian/>

3.3.1 Test Framework

Robot Framework⁷ is proposed for the test framework. RF is an open-source, generic, keyword-driven test automation framework that has human readable test case syntax (*Nokia Solutions and Networks [2015]*).

Robot Framework also has highly modular software architecture (*Nokia Solutions and Networks [2015]*) and this allows the framework to be used with any kinds of testing libraries to connect to the system under test. This feature can be seen as a great advantage when implementing test libraries for machine control and computer vision (Chapter 3.3.2). Illustration of this modular architecture can be seen in Figure 3.1 below.

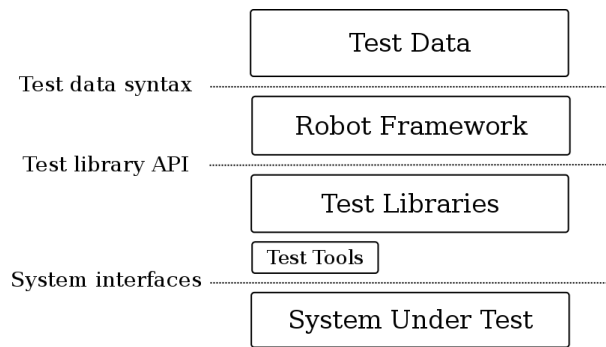


Figure 3.1: High level modular architecture. Source: <http://robotframework.org/img/architecture-big.png>

When RF tests are being run, it generates clear report and log files of the test case execution results (*Nokia Solutions and Networks [2015]*). These files offer high level view of all test cases and step-by-step descriptions of individual test cases in order to make the debugging more easy.

Example of intended test case can be seen in Figure 3.2. This test case describes automated RF acceptance test for entering invalid PIN code when trying to execute card purchase.

⁷<http://robotframework.org/>

```

*** Settings ***
Documentation  A test suite for testing the machine movement and OCR
Resource      resource.txt
Test Teardown Run Keywords    Remove Card    Go Home And Close Connection

*** Variables ***
${DEVICE_NUMBER}  1

*** Test Cases ***
Test Invalid Pin Code
    Set Home And Initialize    ${DEVICE_NUMBER}
    Press    red
    Screen Should Contain Text    Terminal ready
    Press    2    0    0    0
    Screen Should Contain Text    20,00
    Press    green
    Screen Should Contain Text    card
    Insert Card
    Press    1    4    5    2
    Press    green
    Screen Should Contain Text    failed
    Remove Card
    Screen Should Contain Text    Terminal ready

*** Keywords ***
Insert Card
    Card In    ${DEVICE_NUMBER}

Remove Card
    Card Out    ${DEVICE_NUMBER}

```

Figure 3.2: Example test case for invalid PIN code test

3.3.2 Test Libraries

As can be seen on Figure 3.1, architecture requires external libraries to connect to the system under test. In this case those libraries would be a library for machine control, a library for computer vision and a library for card feeder manipulation. All these libraries can be written using Python programming language that is supported out of the box by Robot Framework.

For machine control library the environment has to be able to send G-code command through USB serial communication to Arduino on the robot. For this pySerial⁸ library is proposed.

For the computer vision task of the environment, messages on the display

⁸<http://pythonhosted.org/pyserial/>

are usually those that need to be verified. For this character recognition is needed. Open source optical character recognition (OCR) engine called Tesseract OCR⁹ is proposed. It was initially developed by HP but since 2006 it has been developed by Google. In order to use Tesseract OCR with Python, pytesseract¹⁰ wrapper is needed.

Library for controlling the card feeders is the most simplest one of these three libraries. For this pySerial¹¹ library is proposed to send the serial communication command to the Arduino controlling the card feeders.

⁹<https://github.com/tesseract-ocr/tesseract>

¹⁰<https://pypi.python.org/pypi/pytesseract>

¹¹<http://pythonhosted.org/pyserial/>

Chapter 4

Results and Evaluation

This chapter will cover the subsystems and steps taken that were needed to achieve the testing environment described in Chapter 3. This chapter will first discuss the arrangements related to the hardware of the framework and then software related arrangements will be presented and described. After presenting the built framework, achieved results will be discussed and finally the test environment presented in this Thesis will be evaluated.

4.1 Hardware arrangements

4.1.1 The Robot

4.1.2 Camera arrangements

4.1.3 Computing hardware

4.1.4 Card feeder arrangements

4.2 Software arrangements

4.2.1 Software architecture

4.2.2 Robot Framework and libraries

4.2.3 Computer vision arrangements

4.2.4 Test syntax

4.3 Results

4.4 Evaluation

Chapter 5

Discussion

At this point, you will have some insightful thoughts on your implementation and you may have ideas on what could be done in the future. This chapter is a good place to discuss your thesis as a whole and to show your professor that you have really understood some non-trivial aspects of the methods you used. . .

Chapter 6

Conclusions

This seminar report presented a proposal for automated acceptance testing environment for payment terminal software and addressed the theories and problems related to the topic. Presented AAC environment was joint combination of open source hardware and software and was formed by the requirements of a Eficode Oy's customer.

Literature review of this seminar report addressed the four problem statements introduced in the beginning of this seminar report.

This seminar report also lays a promise of how commonly and inexpensively available components can be used in relatively demanding applications. By combining different open source products, highly adaptive AAC environment could be possibly created for the needs of automated acceptance testing of payment terminal software.

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