



## Transforming the POS experience

**A**t Money 20/20 Europe in Copenhagen we conducted an interview with Nelson Holzner, CEO of AEVI, who told us how his path has led him to AEVI and why the company's mission is exactly what he was looking for in the Payments & FinTech domain.

**PCM: Tell us more about yourself. What is your story behind joining AEVI and what excites you so much about it?**

Nelson: I've been in the Fintech space for almost 10 years now. Before joining AEVI, I founded a company called Bill Pay that was focused on online payments with instalment solutions for e-commerce merchants. Back then, we always wanted to go from e-commerce to in-store solutions. Offline commerce is still far bigger than e-commerce and our merchants asked for omni-channel solutions. The challenge is, however, that it's hard to get to the physical point of sale because it's a very complex system as it currently stands. For the past few years I thought it would be great to build an app and leave it up to someone else to take me to the point of sale. When I came across AEVI, that was exactly the value proposition I was looking for, which is what attracted me most. I'm all about checkout optimisation and for Bill Pay I was just optimising checkouts at the point of sale in e-commerce, whereas now I'm looking after the checkout at the point of sale in the real world.

**PCM: What do you hope to achieve in this position?**

Nelson: AEVI is a hidden gem in the Fintech scene. It's a sizeable company as we already have a revenue of €80 million and have taken 1.2 billion transactions through our platform, but because we are a white-labelled solution our brand is not front and centre. This makes our first mission getting it out to

market and continuing to increase people's awareness of AEVI. We created a whole new market through our open Marketplace app store for business applications at the point of sale. We are the pioneers in this field, developing the first device which could take payments through a smart point of sale tablet solution as well as apply innovative B2B apps directly at the point of sale, making it both consumer facing but with the back-end functionality required to run a small business. Our value propositions are extremely powerful, and have been proven in the Australian market with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, and right now it is all about developing our solution further and continuing to expand into new markets. We are now far beyond the proof of concept stage, and it's time for us to take our solutions global. One of my key responsibilities is to enable the company to do just that.

**PCM: What markets do you currently operate in and what are your expansion plans?**

Nelson: We have a very solid footprint in Australia and we want to continue expanding there. It's very sizeable and working out very well, however, the growth potential is still exceptionally huge. In Europe, we also have a good chunk of business in various markets and are proud to serve large tier 1 retailers such as Tesco and Total, which establishes us with a very good customer base that I look forward to building upon further moving forward. The next area for expansion for us is the Americas, starting from the US market, which is very complex but also very interesting. Following that we will focus on adjacent markets where we have already developed some very interesting synergies and are currently having discussions with interested parties that are eager to do more at the point of sale. This is a natural trend and there are very few



## Nelson Holzner

### CEO at AEVI

Nelson Holzner is AEVI's first ever CEO, having joined the company in May 2017, and oversees all AEVI's business operations. Before joining AEVI, he served for 3 ½ years at private equity firm Cerberus Capital Management, before founding his own online payments company BillPay, where he served as CEO for 7 years.

organisations that can do what we are doing across multiple platforms.

#### **PCM: What are the three things you want people to know about AEVI?**

Nelson: First and foremost comes openness, which is our biggest value proposition and our global Marketplace is a poster for how open our solutions are. We invite any third-party developers to come up with great ideas about how they can transform the point of sale for the merchants and consumers, providing them with a platform to showcase their creations to some of the world's leading merchant banks and acquirers. It's a white-labelled solution, as we want to keep our customers brand in the focus of merchant's/consumer's attention, so that they can position themselves with an innovative solution at the point of sale. We are a Fintech supporting the big players in the market. Everybody wants to ride the app train, but most of the other players are in closed loops, so it's hardware manufacturers or vendors who would like to keep that as an extra functionality in their family of hardware devices.

Many of our customers typically have a family of devices from different vendors, and what they are looking for is to have apps across these devices, but nobody wants to explain to their sales force how to sell five different marketplace solutions. We want to connect as many devices as possible and be hardware agnostic. We see very interesting hardware devices with different price points, so our ultimate goal is to enable all those devices to interact with our Marketplace. The same philosophy of openness is in our payment gateway. We are agnostic and reduce complexity by connecting as many devices as possible so that merchants who want to serve multiple countries and currencies have one gateway to talk through. This is a great way of simplifying the very complex payment landscape.

#### **PCM: Why AEVI**

Nelson: It's definitely the great innovation we can bring to the merchant base, which is much needed. In terms of where e-commerce eats very much into the overall pie of commerce, it's very important for merchants to also have a line of defence. It's the human element, the interaction with the customer, which for me is the strongest proposition for a small merchant who has local customers, and wants to keep them coming back. By enhancing the in-store point of sale experience merchants can increase their customer retention, while cutting running-costs, thanks to the additional back-office apps and services made available to them through our Marketplace. The customer experience is becoming an integral part of how people shop, and it is vital that we provide merchants with the necessary means to provide the best point of sale experience possible.

At AEVI, we listen to the needs of our customers, and collaborate closely with customer's teams to deliver high quality products and services that they can rely on. Our collaborative, open platform connects merchants with the very best in innovative technology solutions that will enable them to optimise the way they run their business directly from the point of sale. We already delivered over 100,000 of our leading SmartPOS device, Albert, to merchants in multiple markets, and this number is continuing to grow.

#### **PCM: What is your main goal for the next year?**

Nelson: I've been with the company for seven weeks now and at first you look at the team, the product, our customers and app partners to get real feedback. I've been through that and I'm very pleased that we have taken the first steps in terms of changing the way we work together. We want to work

collaboratively across the two business channels, the payment business and the Marketplace business, because so many things can be done jointly, more effectively and successfully. We are also in the process of moving the headquarters to Berlin to attract more talent. We are already positioned in key Fintech hubs such as London and Prague, and we will add Berlin to the growing list. Finally, we are continuing to push the US side of the business and recently hired a team there for our expansion. We're making very good progress and I hope we will be live with the first customer in the US later this year.

**PCM: Any exciting news / announcements you would like to make?**

Nelson: Needless to mention, it's our second year at Money20/20 Europe and we have had very interesting discussions. Many people came by our booth and told us we made a lot of progress since last year, so we know that what we are doing has a clear trajectory, and it's great to see the team growing into that and shaping the future of payments at the point of sale. This was the best message we received at Money20/20 and that kind of market feedback is great. Alongside this we had some very good negotiations and meetings with customers. Everybody wants innovation and change to happen, but not many people drive that change, and I see AEVI as one of those drivers.

We recently announced several influential app partners who joined our Marketplace, most recently Moroku and Epos Now, who also joined us on our booth at Money20/20 Europe. Going forward we also have several major announcements that we will be making during Money20/20 Las Vegas, so stay tuned!



The "Albert" with PINpad

## AEVI

AEVI brings acquirers closer to their merchants, and merchants closer to their consumers, with an open Ecosystem that combines apps, payment services and a multi-vendor selection of payment devices. Selecting from a marketplace of high-quality apps and services, Acquirers can quickly create differentiated, innovative SmartPOS solutions under their own brand. Our centralized payments as a service platform eliminates obstacles, and helps Acquirers simplify the complex payment landscape with a single integration and access to a comprehensive suite of cloud-based, back office reporting tools for enhanced control and flexibility.



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