

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Forter?

Forter provides the world's first fully automated, real-time fraud prevention solution. That's an instant approve/decline decision for every transaction, covered by a full fraud chargeback guarantee – highly accurate fraud prevention that doesn't add any friction to shopping. We call it Decision as a Service®.

What is Decision as a Service®?

Online fraud prevention has always resulted in delays and frustration for consumers, and lost sales for online merchants due to overly aggressive rules engines and labor intensive manual review processes. Forter's vision has been to completely change the current approach to fraud prevention. Our system is fully automated, there are no delays caused by manual review, and every decision is real-time; customers never even know they were screened. The Forter decisioning engine is so accurate that cases of false positives, when good customers are rejected mistakenly, virtually disappear.

Although the technology behind it is complex, the product itself is very simple. Instant, automated approve/decline decisions, for every single transaction – covered by our chargeback guarantee. We call it 'Decision as a Service®'.

Merchants shouldn't have to be experts in fraud prevention – it's a distraction, and staying ahead of today's clever fraudsters takes tremendous expertise and effort. With Forter's Decision as a Service®, they have peace of mind that their fraud is being handled by experts and a system that is designed to optimize customer experience, and maximize sales.

We think of it as Decision as a Service® because it takes all the hassle and delay out of making the decision. The decision and the fraud liability are no longer concerns for the merchant. The decision simply becomes a service, provided in real-time by Forter.

How does Forter work?

Machine learning, sophisticated algorithms, a huge amount of data, behavioral analysis, cyber intelligence and elastic identity – all leveraged and combined in just the right ways through the human expertise, experience and insight of our researchers, both analytical and technical.

The idea behind it is that we don't look at individual transactions – that was the manual review approach. We look at trends, patterns and people. For example, we know what a traveling student buyer looks like – we know how they behave, how they order, what to look for. So if there's a fraudster pretending to be one, we'll know, because it's so difficult to get every single detail right when you're pretending. You'd need to ace it on more than 7000 data points and all the complex interlacing connections between those points.

How is Forter different from other fraud prevention solutions?

The easiest way to explain this is to think about how online fraud prevention has evolved.

There are legacy fraud prevention companies, who rely on traditional fraud prevention methods like inflexible rules engines and manual review, and provide risk scores that leave the responsibility and liability with the retailer.

Then there are companies which run according to a similar model, but use more advanced technology – machine learning as well as, or instead of rules engines. Then there are companies who are able to offer decisions instead of scores, and can take care of the fraud for a retailer and offer a chargeback guarantee. Then there's Forter – we use highly sophisticated technology that's updated many times a day, we offer decisions for every transaction in real-time, and full automation. It's not outsourcing manual reviews, it's abolishing them completely. That's the only way you can be truly accurate, truly real-time, for truly excellent customer experience, and truly scalable, so that that excellent experience remains even in the busiest holiday sales season of a huge retailer. Quite simply, no one else is able to offer that.

What immediate impact I can expect when starting to use Forter?

You can see the Forter impact across various key business KPIs, from reduced chargebacks to increased approval rates and revenue, as well as savings on manpower and other costs. The immediate impact specifically should be results much like you're getting now, but with instant decisions rather than the delays caused by manual reviews. Many clients have noted that customer satisfaction improves immediately as a result of this smoother, faster checkout.

After the first month, you can expect these results to improve; in general clients see higher approval rates and lower chargebacks. Naturally this varies between industries and between specific companies. For example, if you already have a 99.5% approval rate, but also high chargebacks, you likely won't see higher approvals with Forter; you'll see similar approvals but accompanied by far lower chargebacks. Similarly, if you have low approvals and very low chargebacks, your approval rate will improve, but your chargebacks would probably stay about the same. On average, though, clients experience a 4-6% increase in approval rates.

The reason that this improvement takes a month or so to kick in is that the machine learning component of our system, refined and guided by our expert analysts, takes about that long to tailor itself fully to your unique risk profile.

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What is the value in a fully automated fraud prevention solution?

There are two main advantages: accuracy and speed.

Full automation is possible when the power of machine learning is leveraged and continually refined by fraud domain expertise and research. The combination is highly accurate, drawing on decades of experience, thousands of data points and millions of past transactions to decision every order – in less than a second.

The delays caused by manual reviews have long been a sore point with consumers and business professionals alike. Friction at checkout and a delay in confirmation and fulfillment increases the likelihood of a lost sale and a dissatisfied customer. Full automation removes that delay, replacing it with frictionless checkout and instant fraud decisions.

How long does it take you to provide a decision?

Most decisions are provided in 300-800 milliseconds. That's the final decision, remember – not a score that you have to put further rules or manual reviews to work on afterwards. It's so fast the customer never even knows it happened. And it's covered by a full fraud chargeback guarantee.

Forter's decisions are uniquely fast, and that speed is made possible by full automation – something we're the only company able to provide. There are three general benefits arising from automation, in addition to the instantaneous decisions:

- **Accuracy.** Forter is able to employ full automation for decisions thanks to a combination of machine learning and human expertise. Forter's fraud prevention system is based on machine learning combined with human experience, expertise and research which are "baked into" the machine. The machine makes instant decisions taking into account both the domain expertise of Forter's highly trained analysts and the big data received from transactions. You can see how powerful that would be in terms of accuracy.
- **Security.** Every manual reviewer is a potential vulnerability in an organization – a weak point from the information security standpoint. Even leaving aside internal fraud (which accounts for nearly half of data losses) manual reviewers are great targets for a hacker because they have access to and work with large amount of personal customer data, all the time. It's a growing fear – over 2 billion records were stolen in 2016 alone. Full automation is the only way to completely plug that leak. With fewer ways in, the data is less vulnerable.
- **Scale.** A fully automated system returns instant decisions for every transaction, every time, no matter what time of night it is, whether it's the weekend, or how busy the season. With Forter, Cyber Monday is just another day from the fraud prevention perspective. This allows companies to scale effortlessly, not dependent on slow manual reviews or on hiring extra reviewers to cover holiday periods.

What is the risk in manual or human intervention in the fraud prevention process?

There are three main risks: it's slow, which can lead to lost sales; it exposes customer data; and it's less accurate, which can lead to revenue lost to fraud and false positives. Automation is faster, more accurate, and safer.

Only full automation can provide the full real-time benefit for every customer and every transaction. Partial automation leaves some customers going through manual review. And every time data is pulled up for manual analysis, there's a security risk attached – something that only full automation can remove. In a time of frequent data breaches, it's not wise to increase the number of vulnerabilities unnecessarily.

What is the Forter 100% guarantee? Will you pay me back for every chargeback I receive?

The Forter 100% guarantee says that we're so confident in the accuracy of our system that we'll cover any fraud chargebacks resulting from transactions we've approved. That doesn't mean every chargeback you receive, though.

Some chargebacks are service chargebacks (for example, the customer wasn't happy with the speed of delivery, or the color of the item) and we don't cover those – we only cover cases of fraud. And if we decline a transaction and you decide to go ahead anyway, we won't cover that chargeback.

Does it work globally?

It does. Forter's solution works for any transaction, no matter where in the world it comes from, and no matter what currency is being used.

In fact customers in different countries have different behavioral and payment norms, and Forter's system is sensitive to those, able to distinguish just as accurately between a good Chinese/British/Russian/Nigerian/etc. customer and a fraudster as would be the case with their U.S. equivalents. This is important because if you don't take these nuances into account your system will reject a lot of genuine international customers simply because they don't behave like good U.S. customers do. You can read more about this (and why blacklisting by geography is a bad idea) on the Forter blog.

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What chargeback reason codes do you cover?

MasterCard Codes:

Code #37 – Fraud Transaction No Cardholder Authorization

Code #63 – Cardholder Does Not Recognize Potential Fraud

Visa Codes:

Code #62 – Counterfeit Transaction (for Card Not Present transactions only)

Code #75 – Cardholder Does Not Recognize Transaction

Code #83 – Fraudulent Transaction: Card Not Present Environment

American Express:

FR2 – Fraudulent Transaction

R03 – Fraudulent Transaction

F29 – Fraud – Card Not Present

Discover (including Diners Club International):

Code UA02 – Declined Authorization

Code 7030 – Fraud card not present transaction

PayPal:

Unauthorized Transaction – Account Holder did not Authorize Transaction

Unauthorized Use – As a result of fraudulent activity

Other Payment Systems:

JCB Co., Ltd – Code 546 – Unauthorized Purchase

How can Decision as a Service® improve customer experience?

Essentially, Decision as a Service turns the fraud decision, which used to be a time-consuming, delay-inducing process, into an invisible, instant part of checkout. Where customers were once frustrated by having to wait for confirmation or fulfillment of their order due to manual fraud reviews, or even infuriated by being unfairly rejected, they are now unaware that they were even analyzed. It's totally smooth.

How much does it cost to use Forter?

Forter charges per approved transaction. That means that our interests are always aligned with yours – we only get paid for orders that we approve, so you can always be sure that we're maximizing your sales.

The cost per transaction varies depending on the industry and the company's risk profile. Some industries, of course, are higher risk than others, and some companies are more attractive to fraudsters than others. This is taken into account during the pricing discussion. Rest assured, however, that you should expect a positive ROI.

The chargeback guarantee plus the high level of accuracy of Forter's system means that your chargeback costs disappear from the start, which for most companies makes a material difference to the bottom line – and that's before you even start to evaluate the gain from increased approvals and more sales.

If you'd like to get a pricing quote for your business, to find out what your ROI could look like with Forter, get in touch.

Will I see an ROI?

Absolutely. A Forrester TEI study found that Forter provided a 153% ROI. This comes from 3 distinct areas: fraud losses decrease; sales increase; and fraud prevention costs decrease.

Fraud losses decrease because Forter's system is simply extremely accurate. It's very good at stopping fraud.

Any chargebacks which do get through are covered by Forter's guarantee.

Sales increase because Forter's system is accurate, not risk-averse, and because it removes friction from checkout. So more orders are approved, and they're approved instantly, without the delays that lead to customer cancellations.

Finally, since most fraud departments spend about half their budget on manual reviews, it's easy to see how a fully automated solution cuts the costs.

Do you have an integration fee?

No. Integration is free. Additionally, since Forter is a SaaS product, you will always have the latest version of the system without any need to update on your side.

Will my decline rates increase when I start to use Forter?

No, our clients generally find that the opposite happens. Declines decrease and approvals increase with Forter. That is because our system is accurate, not risk-averse – we are able to analyse each customer on their own terms and work out whether or not fraud is present without having to reject good customers out of an abundance of caution.

What does the integration look like?

There are three onboarding stages. The first is Integration, when a JavaScript snippet must be added to your site, integration with Forter's APIs completed, and historical data provided by you and then analyzed by Forter and used to train the machine. The second stage, "Listen Mode," is rather like a dry run – Forter has the system return real-time decisions in order to validate the integration and to fine-tune the model. Once everything is working perfectly and all agreed metrics are met, we move to the third and final stage – Launch.

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How long does the integration usually take?

In general, integration takes 2-4 weeks. Once integration is complete, the system is ready to start providing live decisions in real-time from Day 1. The machine is trained on historical data, and our expert analysts review and research the historical data, so that the system starts off as effective from the very beginning. Results will become even better over time as the machine, refined by the research of our analysts, optimizes for your unique risk profile.

Why aren't you plug and play?

Forter's solution is not built on the plug and play model – it is designed to be tailored to each and every business's unique requirements, from Day 1, for optimal results. Forter invests considerable effort into optimizing the system for each customer before even going live on the merchant's site. The system is tailored to every customer's risk profile, risk appetite and flow preferences, providing a service is carefully calibrated to serve each customer's unique needs.

This is why many of Forter's customers think of Forter as a partner rather than simply a technological solution – they know that their individual circumstances and requirements are accommodated and prioritized. To ensure that this level of service is maintained, each merchant is provided with a dedicated support team, including a fraud expert and a system developer.

Will it take you a few months till your product starts working (since your solution uses machine learning)?

No, the solution will work from Day 1. During integration the system is trained on historical data, which also undergoes intense analysis by our fraud experts, and so it is able to be highly effective from the very beginning.

In general we find the initial results are comparable to the results the company experienced before Forter. After the first month, once the system has become even more closely tailored to your unique risk profile through more data input and the expertise and research of our fraud domain analysts, approval rates usually increase and chargebacks decrease, compared to the pre-Forter results.

Do you have shopping cart extensions?

We do. We offer Magento and Demandware extensions, as well as plug-and-play options for chargeback submission with Braintree and Stripe. We've got others in the works as well, so talk to us if you'd like to integrate and use a different platform.

Do you have any case studies?

We have case studies for a number of industries available on our resources page. Please note, however, that many of our clients prefer not to advertise their work with us, and are only willing to discuss their satisfaction on a one-to-one personal level. If this is relevant to you, this may be possible to arrange during the final selection process.

Do you have a dashboard? What information will I be able to see?

Definitely. The Forter Decision Dashboard shows in-depth data relating to individual transactions, including details like behavioral data, geo-location, payment info, account data and so on, and insights into your transactions as a whole. For example, approval rates, decline rates, chargeback data, geographical breakdowns, payment segmentation and so on. We are happy to set up a demo for you – just get in touch.

What is behind your technology?

The really important thing to understand about our technology is that it would be utterly ineffective without our team of research analysts. They draw on their tremendous experience and expertise in the fraud domain and engage in constant research into transaction data, consumer buying patterns, technological possibilities and the fraudster ecosystem, continually improving the system and adapting it to meet the latest fraudster techniques. They are the "secret sauce" that makes the technology so powerful.

We'll admit, though, that we're proud of the technology itself as well. When the company was founded, it wasn't clear that it would be possible – it was a huge challenge, something no one else had ever managed. All other fraud prevention solutions rely on a manual review component. After 8 months in stealth mode, the team proved that full automation was possible – and that the results were impressive.

It's based, of course, on machine learning, in order to leverage the power of big data, and has a triple-layered structure of cyber intelligence, elastic identity and sophisticated behavioral analytics. Really, the machine and our analysts are looking for everything. And they turn what they see into millions more connections, and patterns. And from that, the true picture emerges.

You can see more about this on our [technology page](#).

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How will I know that my information is safe?

Forter is committed to protecting the privacy of individuals who visit our customer websites and those whose personal information we receive through the use of the Forter Enterprise platform.

Forter is PCI Level 1 certified, the most stringent PCI certification level available, and approved to process over 6M transactions/year. Forter is also in the process of completing a SSAE16 – SOC 2 report. Maintaining the privacy of customers' data and ensuring their trust in Forter is crucial for Forter's successful partnerships.

Forter is built on industry standard technologies, and is constantly improving technical and operational safeguards designed to protect the security, confidentiality, and integrity of data submitted to Forter. We rely on information from organizations like CIS, OWASP, PCI-SSC, and the CSA to provide guidelines, as well as third party audits from companies like Comsec Group Ernst and Young (E&Y) and Comodo as to the best practices for protecting our services.

How will I know that your JavaScript won't affect my site?

How we ensure that we are not influencing your site:

- Our script is loaded before the closing `</body>` tag in an asynchronous way, and only after the page finishes rendering, without delaying the `onLoad` event.
- We have tested our script with Selenium on dozens of devices and browsers.
- We make sure our JavaScript does not conflict with any 3rd party libraries.
- We add your site to our external monitoring system and measure it regularly.
- Upon request we can deploy the JS script incrementally. We have a mechanism that allows us to provide dynamic script from our end to specific audiences. We can use this mechanism in order to make sure that page load is not affected. This is a 3 step process:
 - 1 – Open the script only for Forter IPs and monitoring system.
 - 2 – Open the script to merchant's IPs in order to allow you to check that the script is not influencing your customers.
 - 3 – Open the script to all customers and closely monitor the page load subsequently.

Are you designed to handle large scale?

Absolutely. In a sense, Forter's is the only system that really is designed to scale effortlessly. Every other system in the world relies on manual reviews, which are by their manual nature not easily scalable.

Holiday periods highlight this strain – teams struggle to keep up with the unusual flood of orders, and staff who are taken on for this period in particular are often slower and less accurate in their reviews, leading to poor customer experienced and reduced revenues. With Forter, by contrast, holidays are just like any other time of year from the fraud prevention perspective.

Technologically speaking, Forter's system was designed for large scale from the start, using industry standards and best practices. As the system is a cloud-based SaaS, increasing computing power is a matter of simple configuration-only change.

Do we have an obligation to use your service exclusively from competing vendors?

We're open to discussion on this point, but we usually cover the entire relevant traffic (for example, all credit card orders). You are welcome to purchase other services, but as we will cover all the relevant transactions, and we charge for all those we cover, there is generally understood to be no need for further tools.

Do we commit to a service term with you? Is there a termination fee?

There is no specific termination fee but as Forter invests considerable effort in building a model specifically tailored to your data and your needs, we do expect a certain commitment from your side as well. In general, this takes the form of yearly contracts.

That said, the initial period is different as we do not want merchants to feel that they need to take a leap of faith with this solution. So that you can judge on results, we are willing to offer exceptions to the standard commitment for the first 30/60/90 days of live service.

How do we ensure that our rate of processed fraudulent transactions stays below 1% to avoid any risk of issuer penalties?

It is in Forter's interests just as much as yours to make sure that that does not happen! It would be bad business, and unsustainable on our end. If this is a specific concern we can commit to it in the contract.

What happens if our rate of fraud changes due to external factors such as a fraud ring finding a specific vulnerability, or or the other hand product features introduced to disincentivize fraud. Would our rate change?

It is very rare for a change, whether product or any other, to have a noticeable impact. Using Forter's solution does allow merchants to be more flexible with the options they offer (expanding to new markets, offering new payment methods, even sometimes reducing the number of fields that customers are required to fill in). This can mean more fraud attacks but not mean an increased rate of successful fraud since the system is designed to deal with these situations. Similarly, Forter's system is very fast at catching fraud ring patterns and blocking their future attempts, so the impact in such cases is likely to be very short-term as well.

The contract is renewed annually which gives all parties the opportunity to open pricing discussions if it is believed that something has materially changed.