



# AN OPEN WINDOW FOR GLOBAL BUSINESS

**Allied Wallet CEO Andy Khawaja is securing the future of e-commerce and connecting global merchants at lightning speed**

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Andy Khawaja admires the fast pace of New York City. On a recent Friday afternoon, fresh off a flight from the West Coast, Khawaja was in the Big Apple, where his company, Allied Wallet, recently opened a new office.

"I like the way people do business here," Khawaja says. "They're very fast, and speed is what the Internet is all about. E-commerce doesn't sleep, and neither does New York."

Allied Wallet is making its presence felt in e-commerce. The company processes payments in 196 countries and 164 currencies. Approximately 52 million users take advantage of Allied Wallet's services by sending money, accepting payments and shopping online. The company offers its services to any business, regardless of size.

Khawaja, who was born in Lebanon and raised in Switzerland and Germany, is the founder and CEO of Allied Wallet, which has grown at impressive annual rates even during the recession. The company continues to expand globally, and is heavily involved in Brazil, India and China.

By having a wide international presence and a clear understanding of how e-commerce works, Allied Wallet is able to bring online merchants into the global marketplace. "You can't decline money just because it's from a different country, which is what happens sometimes with banks," Khawaja says. "No matter where a company is located, it's very important to have its products sold around the world. We need to be connected for that to happen, and that's

what Allied Wallet does. We are a window to the world for merchants. We understand e-commerce better than anybody."

Also helping Allied Wallet's growth is the fact that business is increasingly being conducted via mobile payment. Khawaja predicts a 25 percent rise in mobile payment transactions this year as it becomes easier and more secure to complete transactions on a smartphone. Says Khawaja, "You don't see as many people walking around with laptops these days. It's all about phones and tablets."

Khawaja speaks several languages, which is helpful as he travels, building up Allied Wallet's global presence. Allied Wallet has offices in cities such as London, Frankfurt and Hong Kong, and Khawaja is

Andy Khawaja, CEO,  
Allied Wallet



no stranger to airline travel. He likens himself to George Clooney's character in *Up in the Air*. "He's the domestic version, and I'm the international version," Khawaja jokes.

No matter where Khawaja goes, his style remains casual. He doesn't pretend to be someone he's not. He rarely wears suits and says he feels most like himself when he's comfortably dressed.

"When I go to Japan for a meeting, there'll be 25 people dressed in suits and ties, and I'll be the only man in jeans, shirt and a jacket," Khawaja says.

Despite his laid-back appearance, Khawaja knows where e-commerce is heading—a vision that has kept Allied Wallet ahead of the game. "I like to listen to new ideas, and understand why ideas exist."

One idea the company is currently working on is the development of fingerprint verification software—additional fraud protection for Allied Wallet's users. When logging in to Allied Wallet, users won't need to repeatedly enter their personal information. Instead, to access an account, one tap of the finger is all it will take to use this technology that is set to launch later this year. "Fraud accounts for about \$80 billion in loss each year," says Khawaja, "and if Allied Wallet can implement fingerprint verification to get rid of at least half of that, we'll be making a major contribution to global business."

Khawaja's vision for the future of e-commerce is part of the reason for Allied Wallet's success in the market. By staying one step

ahead of the competition, the company is able to deliver solutions that merchants are sometimes unaware they need.

"Ten years ago," recalls Khawaja, "I was in a cafe in Beverly Hills talking to some friends, and I said to them, 'One day we're going to have a high-tech phone with applications and the ability to download items.' They looked at me like I was crazy, but look at where we are now with the iPhone. I tell people that 20 years from today, you'll be able to execute transactions on your phone just by using your fingerprint. Technology is improving, and our job is to have a role in that and make consumers' lives easier and more convenient." — *Betsy Vereckey*

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