

## Case Study



### Client

Calii is a Monterey, Mexico-based marketplace that automates the food supply chain, connecting producers to restaurants and end consumers—from farm to city. Though it's a Latin American owned and operated company, Calii has roots in Silicon Valley. Its founders graduated from Stanford University, took Calii through the well known Y Combinator start-up incubator, and secured funding from top US based investors.

### Region

Monterey, Guadalajara, and Mexico City, Mexico

### Industries

E-Commerce

### Goal

Focus on core competencies and offload security overhead to the experts. Get payment functionality and compliance in place quickly as Calii expands their offerings.

### The Challenge

Set up a secure, compliant, and automated way to process B2B payments, like ACH transactions.

### The Solution

By using Very Good Security's infrastructure, Calii was able to automate ACH transactions for B2B customers, with enterprise-grade security and PCI Level 2 compliance.

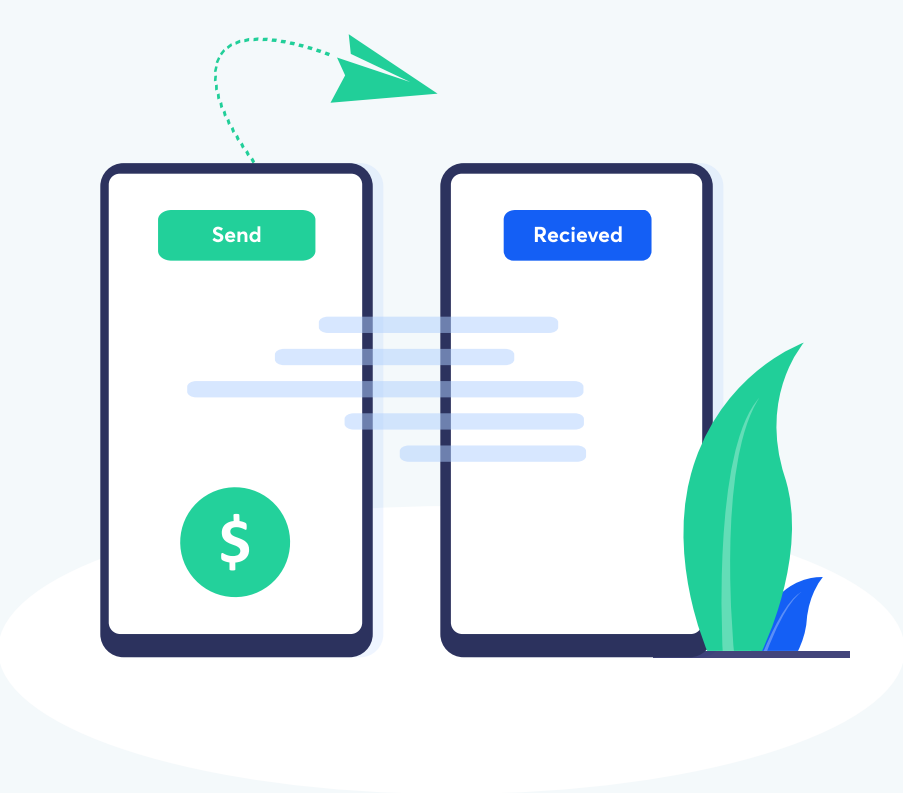
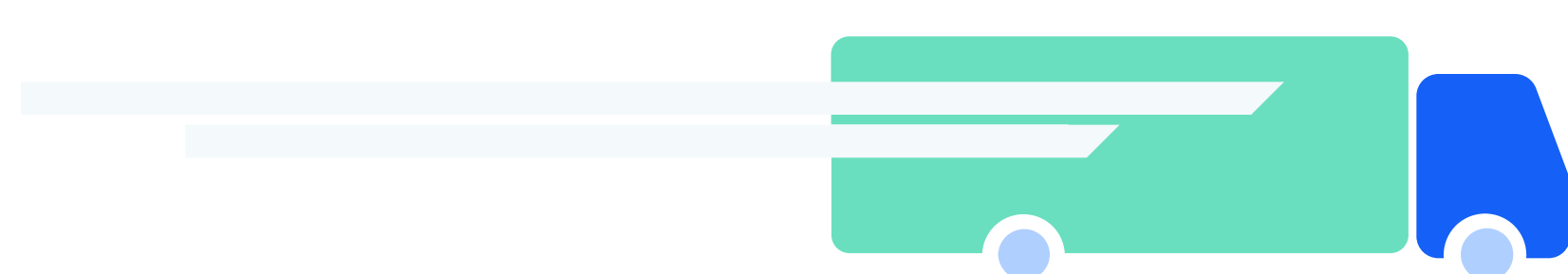
### The Results

Not only did Calii save time and accelerate their product development since they didn't need to hire data security engineers or maintain compliant infrastructure, but they were also able to save money and resources they could put back into the business.

## BACKGROUND

Calii was founded in early 2019, to connect farmers directly to consumers in Mexico. By condensing and automating this supply chain, Calii not only ensured fresher produce for consumers in large cities in Mexico, they also brought costs down by up to 30%.

Knowing this card would be a reflection on their brand and reputation in the market-place, and since this was their first in-house card, they needed an experienced team to ensure a smooth, secure, and efficient roll-out. One key step they took was to hire Ramona Hall, Senior Vice President of Commercial Card, to join Bill Kniering as part of the card leadership team. With over 20 years under her belt, certification in P2P processing, and a background in accounting and procurement, Ramona immediately got to work identifying a solution for a top project priority: the card's data security.



## CHALLENGE

### A New Market

With the decision made to offer an in-house commercial card, TCB quickly needed to determine exactly how they would handle sensitive client data. They knew that creating a data security and compliance solution from scratch would be too expensive and time consuming, with the initial in-house setup for a PCI Level 1 environment at a minimum of \$1M, and a timeframe of 6 - 9 months to build a DIY environment.

*"Businesses wanted to pay through ACH transfer, and we could only process those manually. As a company with a mission to automate, this wasn't going to cut it—not to mention the huge security and compliance issues."*

In fact, they wanted to avoid handling sensitive data altogether and get to market as quickly as possible. A data security partner could shrink or eliminate the costs for infrastructure and ongoing maintenance. It would also dramatically reduce the time and resources required to maintain PCI DSS compliance as well as lower the risks associated with storing the data.



**Maurizio Caló Caligaris,**  
Chief Technology Officer

So Ramona immediately went to work contacting vendors who could support TCB's 'PCI avoidant' framework.



## SOLUTION

As the B2B line of business took off, the Calii team knew they had to change the way they were handling payments. Not only were manual ACH transfers not scalable, they weren't secure.

*"VGS' value was clear. It would give us the business payment tools we needed, with enterprise-grade security and compliance, and we could get it up and running quickly and easily—it was a no brainer."*

In talking to VGS, Maurizio realized all of his problems were easily remedied. With VGS' Zero Data platform, where data never touched Calii's systems, they could quickly become PCI Level 2 compliant. All of the data Calii handled would immediately be secured, and there were a number of ways VGS helped them in automating ACH transfers specifically.



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First, VGS helped Calii build a custom, Calii-branded form to securely collect payment data. Then the platform enabled Calii to orchestrate real-time ACH payments with 3rd party payment aggregators and banks. Finally, using VGS helped Calii orchestrate the transmission of ACH batch files securely.

In turn, each vendor they talked to had these same limitations around vendor lock-in and expandability. Ramona said, "We had these teams trying to sell their products to us. And what wasn't really clear from them was how the whole picture was going to come together. Every vendor had a gaping hole—except VGS."



## RESULTS

From the very beginning, there were two principles the Calii team kept at the center of operations: you can't take short cuts with security, and as a start-up you have to move really fast (and lean). Maurizio shared, "We focus on the things that are core to our business. If it's not something that will differentiate us, we don't devote in-house resources to it." In fact, Maurizio went on to share that it didn't even cross their minds to hire a data security engineer. They work using a lean methodology, and resist anything that will slow down their product development, company growth, and customer experience.

*"The cost savings [versus building in house] was a nice benefit, but for us it was more that we wouldn't even be able to hire the right talent to get it done in-house. VGS let us provide the payment options our business clients demanded, with the necessary security and compliance."*

By using VGS, within a short period of time after the restaurant and retail side of the business began growing, Calii had an enterprise-class payment system in place. What could have been a massive business constraint was quickly turned into an opportunity to unlock the B2B market and foundation for future business endeavors.



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