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Last Updated: 5:03 pm | Sunday, March 23, 2008

# IT glitch loses some debit card charges

## Second vendor to make credit error

BY HOWARD MCEWEN | ENQUIRER CONTRIBUTOR

**HIGHLAND HEIGHTS** - Two campus vendors have given Northern Kentucky University students lessons in practical finance and customer service.

On Dec. 6, 2007, the student bookstore failed to process 96 debit card transactions totaling about \$3,500. The students swiped their cards, but nothing was taken out of their bank account.

"In a nutshell it was an IT error and quite an anomaly with our systems," said Elio Distaola, director of public relations for Follett Higher Education Group, which manages the bookstore. "We've built a robust system of checks and balances to catch this. It also allows us to go through due diligence to notify our customers if there's a problem."

ADVERTISEMENT Distaola said the error was caught quite early. However, since many students don't balance their checkbooks, processing the debits at a later date may have overdrawn some of their accounts.

That's what happened last year when Chartwell's - NKU's outside dining service provider - didn't process debit card transactions during the summer months. Once the error was caught, all the transactions were processed at once. Charges that occurred in May were hitting students' accounts in September.

Chartwell's ended up reimbursing 30 students a total of \$9,200 in overdraft and other bank fees.

Follett handled the situation differently. The debits were not processed until March 10. This allowed them time to notify the campus through several communications.

"We did it through the blast e-mail and we also notified the students, faculty and administration through their online and campus newspapers," said Distaola.

Distaola said his company has not received any complaints.

"We've actually been kind of quiet," he said.

Follett Higher Education Group manages 770 college bookstores across the U.S. and Canada.

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