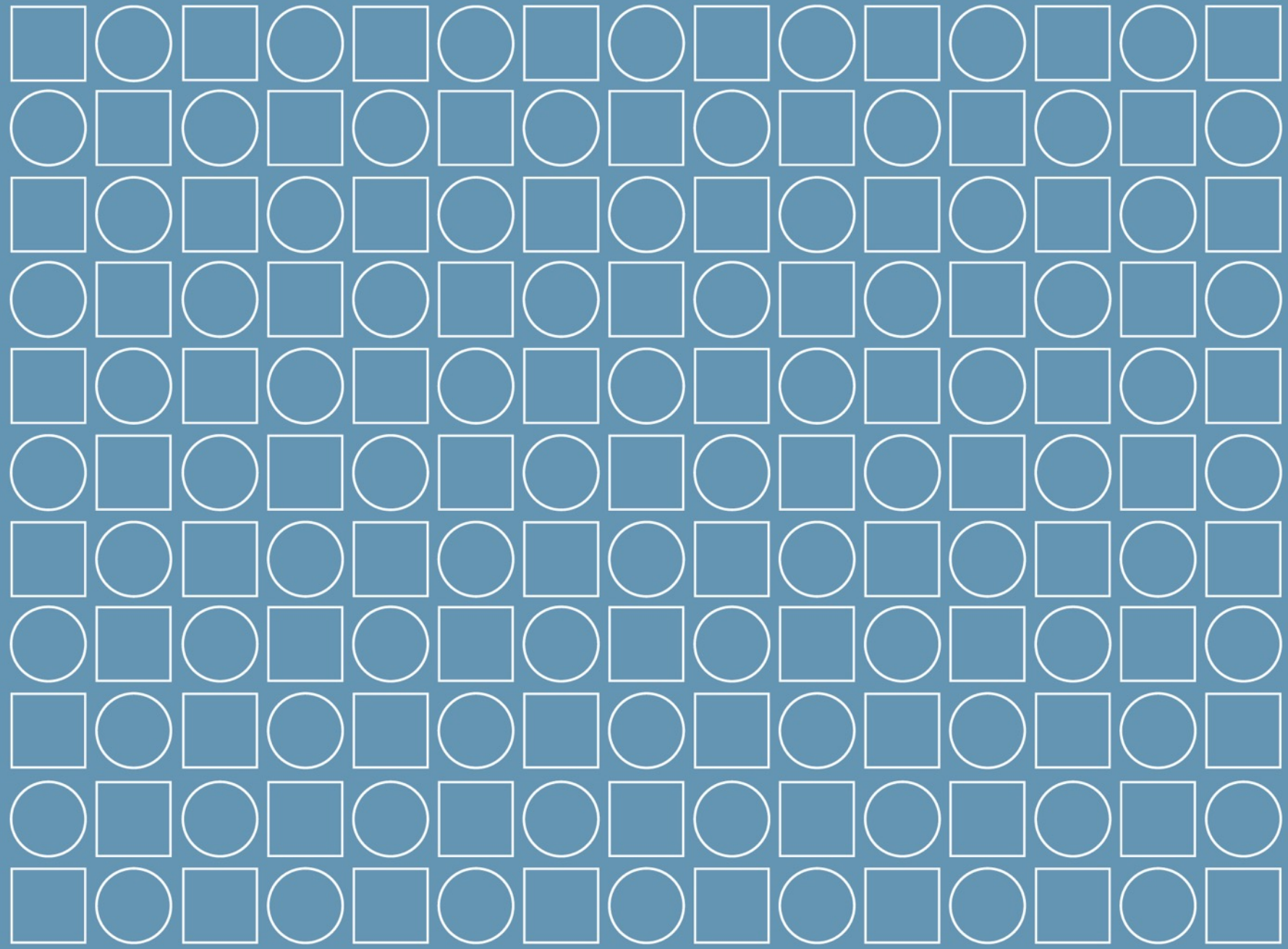


GCVA & PR  
Agency One

Press & Media  
Coverage

November



# Business Advice – #GiftCard500

## Trivial Benefits release

**businessadvice**

Expert advice for the engine room of the British economy

**Title:** Business Advice

**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> November

**Link:** <https://businessadvice.co.uk/hr/trivial-benefits-employee-rewards/>

**Circulation:** 6,630

**Domain Authority:** 50



Trivial Benefits: Tax-free ways to thank loyal staff and boost morale



How to take advantage of trivial benefits in 4 steps.

With the challenges of the past few months, margins may be tight for many.

However staff are arguably more in need of a pat on the back than ever before, and a little investment in this area can go an extremely long way in terms of employee morale, engagement and long-term productivity.

There is an existing legislation from HMRC that means that businesses can reward staff without feeling it in the pocket. Indeed, for rewards worth up to £50, the HMRC Trivial Benefits exemption allows employers to reward their staff without incurring additional costs, to help save on the things that matter most.

"At a time when staff are more in need of a pat in the back than ever, it is crucial for businesses to take every chance they can to show how much they appreciate the hard work of their team," said Gift Card & Voucher Association (GCVA) director general Gail Cohen. "HMRC's Trivial Benefits exemption is an effective, and often-overlooked platform for businesses to take advantage of, allowing companies to thank their staff without impacting their bottom line."

With this in mind, Cohen reveals four simple steps detailing how businesses can take advantage of Trivial Benefits to thank their staff.

**How to take advantage of trivial benefits in 4 steps.**

# Employee Benefits – Ben Jones Interview

## employee benefits

**Title:** Employee Benefits

**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Link:** <https://employeebenefits.co.uk/key-reward-benefit-issues-2021/>

**Circulation:** 10,030



## What key reward and benefits issues are on employers' radars for 2021?

### Need to know:

- Employers should not overlook the importance of a reward and benefits strategy in the midst of making major workforce changes, such as redundancies.
- Employers should use the changing face of the workplace to remove any expensive or legacy benefits that are no longer relevant.
- Organisations should avoid tying themselves in to long-term reward packages with an unknown future ahead.

### Short-term reward packages

Financial limitations and the unknown will also cause a long-term forecast of uncertainty when it comes to benefits strategy. Employers should be cautious when it comes to tying themselves into a **long-term reward package**, says Ben Jones, executive board member at the Gift Card and Voucher Association (GCVA). "In the past, employers would have three-to-five-year reward packages," Jones says. "I think that's going to be a little bit more short-lived and organisations will be more drawn to tactical promotions rather than strategic ones. I think it's going to be really really challenging to know what to offer employees."

### Motivating employees with limited budget

Overcoming the negative impact of **bonus and pay cuts** or a lack of pay rises will be an uphill battle but employees will still appreciate small tokens of recognition. Changing an employer's mindset to offer more digital benefits is not always that easy, says Jones. However, he has seen an upturn in organisations turning to digital reloadable cards since the beginning of lockdown and believes they have their role to play.

"I think recognition will continue to form a huge part [of 2021] for different reasons," Jones explains. "It's about retention and keeping employees happy, when maybe before it was more about reward, it's more about keeping the status quo. If [an employee is] at home shielding or we're on lockdown again, whatever it may be, gift card rewards are something that everyone can take part in."

# PA Life – #GiftCard500 Trivial Benefits release

# PALIFE

**Title:** PA Life

**Date:** 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Link:** : <https://palife.co.uk/news/revealed-four-simple-steps-for-businesses-to-thank-loyal-staff/>

**Circulation:** 10,000

**Domain Authority:** 40



## REVEALED: FOUR SIMPLE STEPS FOR BUSINESSES TO THANK LOYAL STAFF

There is an existing legislation from HMRC that means that businesses can reward staff without feeling it in the pocket.

For rewards worth up to £50, the HMRC Trivial Benefits exemption allows employers to reward their staff without incurring additional costs, to help save on the things that matter most.

With this in mind, Gail Cohen, Director General of the [Gift Card & Voucher Association](#), reveals four simple steps detailing how businesses can take advantage of Trivial Benefits to thank their staff:

How to take advantage of trivial benefits

1. Select your reward of choice

Firstly, it is important to stress that cash itself is not tax-exempt – a £50 cash reward for employees would still be subject to tax. There are a variety of cash-equivalent rewards available, however gift cards are a perfectly legitimate trivial benefit which fit HMRC's criteria which are arguably the easiest to give – all the business needs to do is order the gift card either in-store or online.

2. Select the value of the reward

This step is simple – simply select a value of £50 or less per employee and neither tax nor national insurance will apply, meaning that the employee – and, by reflection, the employer, does not have to shoulder the extra cost.

# Cambridge Network – SotN redemption figures



**Title:** Cambridge Network

**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Link:** <https://www.cambridgenetwork.co.uk/news/employers-encouraged-reward-staff-and-keep-money-local-love-cambridge-gift-card/>

**Circulation:** 55,950

**Domain Authority:** 65



## Employers encouraged to reward staff and keep money local with a Love Cambridge Gift Card

17-11-2020



Cambridge BID is encouraging employers in the area to consider rewarding staff with their Love Cambridge Gift Card for Christmas this year, keeping money local and supporting local economic recovery.

A survey published in *HR Review* found that less than one fifth of UK companies are still planning an office Christmas party for 2020. Ongoing restrictions surrounding the coronavirus pandemic mean that many employers are looking for new ways to reward their staff.

The Love Cambridge Gift Card can be redeemed with over 200 businesses in Cambridge, including independent and national traders, and is available for employers to buy from £10-£500. Recipients of the Love Cambridge Gift Card can use the card like local currency, in one transaction or many, and on retail, hospitality, services and leisure.

Each Love Cambridge Gift Card is a prepaid Mastercard which is valid for 12 months from purchase, offering employers a secure way to gift. Cards can be purchased online and delivered straight to the recipient. Employers are able to make bulk orders of the gift card directly with Helen Hames of Cambridge BID who currently have a 5% cashback offer\* (via Love Cambridge Gift Cards in January 2021) for companies spending over £1000 on Love Cambridge Gift Cards between now and the end of December 2020.

Employers in the area who reward staff with the Love Cambridge Gift Card can take advantage of the UK trivial benefits scheme. A business can give an employee a benefit of up to £50 without paying tax, but only if the benefit isn't in cash.

The Love Cambridge Gift Card is part of the Town and City Gift Cards programme from Scottish fintech Miconex. In November 2020, over 50 towns, cities and regions in the UK have Town and City Gift Card programmes with new schemes springing up around the UK and Ireland in response to the shop local movement. Town and City Gift Cards received the award for the best use of prepaid at the Incentive Awards in 2020.

The Gift Card and Voucher Association valued the UK gift card market at £7bn in 2019, also reporting that 98.6% of gift cards are spent within a year of being received and 65% will be spent on top of the value of the card received. The Incentive Research Foundation research placed gift card programmes at the top of incentive wish lists for employees.

# Bdaily – GCVA Connect winners release



**Title:** Bdaily

**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Link:** <https://bdaily.co.uk/articles/2020/11/17/gift-card-industry-heroes-recognised-in-gcva-connect-2020-special-awards>

**Circulation:** 126,000



Member Article

## Gift card industry heroes recognised in GCVA Connect 2020 Special Awards

The winners of the first-ever GCVA Connect 2020 Special Awards, celebrating the best of the UK gift card and voucher industry, have been announced.

The awards, organised by the Gift Card & Voucher Association (GCVA) and with a special guest appearance from comedian and actor Maria McBlane, recognised the extraordinary efforts of the GCVA members, which span the retail, leisure, incentives and payments sectors, during lockdown, across six prestigious categories.

Rewards and benefits platform Edenred Ltd won 'Best COVID Response Initiative', in partnership with rewards and incentive management platform Tilo, for their tireless work in enabling free school meal vouchers throughout the first wave of the pandemic. In an exceedingly limited timeframe, the businesses brought together the largest collection and distribution of eGift cards on record, to ensure millions of school children in need across the country could continue to be fed during COVID-19 lockdown. For this project, Edenred also took home the prestigious 'Best Lockdown Team' award.

OneAll Gift Cards, which was also highly commended in the above categories, won the strongly-contested 'Best New Product, Service or Innovation' award for its digital multi-store gift card, which can be sent, received and spent instantly. The product, which was commended for its convenience and sustainability credentials, is also reflected by a wider uptake in digital gifting, which soared in popularity during lockdown according to research from the GCVA and GlobalData.

M&S won the coveted 'Best Marketing Campaign' award, with judges praising the effectiveness and ROI of the brand's marketing efforts across multiple channels, including PPC, social media and direct mail.

The 'GCVA Shine a Light' award was won by technology-led rewards solutions provider GiftCloud, for its outstanding work with Carrot Insurance. The business provided a cost-effective, environmentally-friendly solution that was proven to improve both customer engagement and renewal rates.

Finally, Matt Howe, managing director, EMEA of Blackhawk Network, was recognised with the "honoured Industry Contributor" award, as voted for by the GCVA executive team.

Speaking on Matt Howe's award win, Eoin Whyte, chair of the GCVA, commented: "Matt is one of the most widely respected individuals in the industry, having forged possibly the most impressive career of any of his peers in the last ten years. He has led the Tursooan charge and significant expansion for Blackhawk through a combination of organic and acquisition-based growth, each year bolder than the last.

"Matt, has always been one who carries his authority effortlessly and never to excess. He deserves our recognition and appreciation for an outstanding career thus far, and long may it continue."

The awards, which took place in an online ceremony, were judged by an expert panel, comprised of both GCVA members and its executive team. The event was sponsored by Appreciate Group PLC, a market leader in the recognition and reward industry, and one of the largest business reward providers in the UK.

Gail Cohen, director general of the GCVA, commented: "In a year that has been, to borrow a tired term, 'unprecedented', it's been wonderful to see the brilliantly innovative work put forth by our members, which represents the best of the gift card industry. We were thrilled to be able to organise this event, and a special thank you must go to Appreciate Group as our lead sponsor, for their support.

"Our annual award ceremonies have always been a fixture in the industry calendar, recognising the very finest gift cards have to offer. In a year where the industry has done so much to keep the country running during lockdown – from free school meals, to volunteer shopping vouchers, through to bespoke, high-street-specific gift cards – we know we had to celebrate the fantastic work being done, with worthy winners and commendations across the board."

Commenting on his win, Matt Howe, managing director EMEA of Blackhawk Network, said: "It is a wonderful achievement to be credited with, especially as this was voted for by the members directly. I have to say that I've been able to grow with the ambition and drive of Blackhawk Network as a business and been lucky enough to build an incredible team that have supported that vision over the past 12 years."

# A1 Retail – GCVA Connect Winners release



**Title:** A1 Retail

**Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Link:** <https://www.a1retailmagazine.com/latest-news/gcva-connect-2020/>

**Circulation:** 7,170

**Domain Authority:** 36



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# The Eco Friendly Way – Xmas Sustainability figures

## The Eco Friendly Way

**Title:** The Eco Friendly Way

**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020

**Link:** <https://www.theecofriendlyway.com/post/23-eco-friendly-gift-ideas>



### Waste during the holiday period

Christmas and Thanksgiving holidays are widely celebrated, tis' the season for presents, good food and holiday spirit. However, more waste is created during these holidays than any other time of year.

#### 10. E-gift card

Gift cards are made of plastic and 1 in 5 Christmas gift cards go to landfill, unused. If everyone in the UK received 1 gift card each that's a demand for nearly 67 million plastic cards, although the [Gift Card & Voucher Association](#) produced a survey revealing the average person receives 2 unwanted gift cards for Christmas. If you are going to buy one, opt for an e-gift card. Alternatively, cash-in-hand isn't any less personal than a gift card, but gives them more freedom to buy what they want or need.



# HR News – SotN redemption figures

## HRnews

**Title:** HR News

**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Link:** <http://hrnews.co.uk/employers-encouraged-to-reward-staff-and-keep-money-local-this-christmas/>

### Employers encouraged to reward staff and keep money local this Christmas

Research has shown that less than one fifth of UK companies are still planning an office Christmas party for 2020. Ongoing restrictions surrounding the coronavirus pandemic mean that many employers are looking for new ways to reward their staff after a difficult year.



Employers can also take advantage of the UK trivial benefits scheme. A business can give an employee a benefit of up to £50 without paying tax, as long as it isn't cash. The Gift Card and Voucher Association found that 98.6% of gift cards are spent within a year of being received. Good news for communities is that people also spend more than the value of the gift card they receive, around 65% more in fact.