



GCVA PRESS RELEASE

Gift card sales outpace retail as businesses drive demand through staff benefits and rewards

- Gift card sales climb 11.8% year-on-year to reach £1.98bn in H1 2025
- Growth fuelled by employee benefits and workplace incentives as businesses look for flexible ways to support and reward staff
- Digital gift cards increase 26.5%, showing the growing sector innovation to match consumer preferences for digital-first products

Gift card and voucher sales continued to outperform wider retail in the first half of 2025, according to the latest analysis from the Gift Card & Voucher Association (GCVA) and GlobalData.

Sales among GCVA members grew by 11.8% year-on-year in H1 2025, reaching £1.98bn, more than four times faster than total UK retail sales, which rose by just 2.4% over the same period (GlobalData).

The figures show that businesses are driving much of this growth. In the first half of 2025, the B2B market accounted for nearly two-thirds (64%) of all sales, worth £1.27bn, as employers increasingly turn to gift cards to provide practical financial support and motivate their people.

Employee benefits grew by 9.8%, while rewards and incentives rose by 20.4%, underlining the central role gift cards play in workplace wellbeing and engagement strategies.

Digital adoption also continues to accelerate. Digital gift cards grew 26.5% across the market, with consumer digital sales rising by nearly 50% (47.9%). This reflects changing consumer expectations for flexible, instant and mobile-first formats. At the same time, physical gift cards remain a key part of the sector, with in-store and gift card mall purchases together accounting for more than half of consumer sales, highlighting their continued importance, especially for gifting occasions.



Commenting on the findings, Hannah Shimko, Managing Director of the GCVA, said: “Gift cards are showing remarkable resilience and strength, even in a difficult retail environment. What’s striking in this report is how businesses are leading the charge, using gift cards as a way to support staff, stretch household budgets and build loyalty. With double-digit growth and strong digital adoption, the sector is proving itself as one of the most dynamic parts of UK retail and workplace benefits.”

Key Findings from the GCVA H1 2025 Report

- Gift card sales grew 11.8% YoY to £1.98bn, outpacing UK retail sales growth of 2.4%.
- B2B market worth £1.27bn (64% share), growing 8.9% YoY.
- Employee benefits and savings schemes up 9.8%, and rewards & incentives up 20.4%.
- Digital gift cards up 26.5% YoY, now making up 63% of the market.
- Multi-choice formats expanded 27.2%, showing demand for flexibility.
- Retail-linked gift cards grew strongly (+12.7%), while leisure remained flat (+0.7%).

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Notes to Editors

About the GCVA

The Gift Card & Voucher Association (www.gcva.co.uk) is the trade body representing the key players in the UK’s £7 billion gift card and stored value solutions market. With more than 90 members spanning leading retailers, issuers and suppliers, the GCVA provides a central information and reference point for the sector.

The GCVA’s mission is to raise the profile and use of gift cards and vouchers across the UK – promoting the industry to consumers, businesses, government and stakeholders. The



association provides a platform for collaboration, sharing innovation and best practice, and runs a programme of events, research projects and updates throughout the year, including its flagship annual Conference.