

Gift Card & Voucher Sales Analysis & Outlook (UK)

H1 - 2025

 GlobalData.



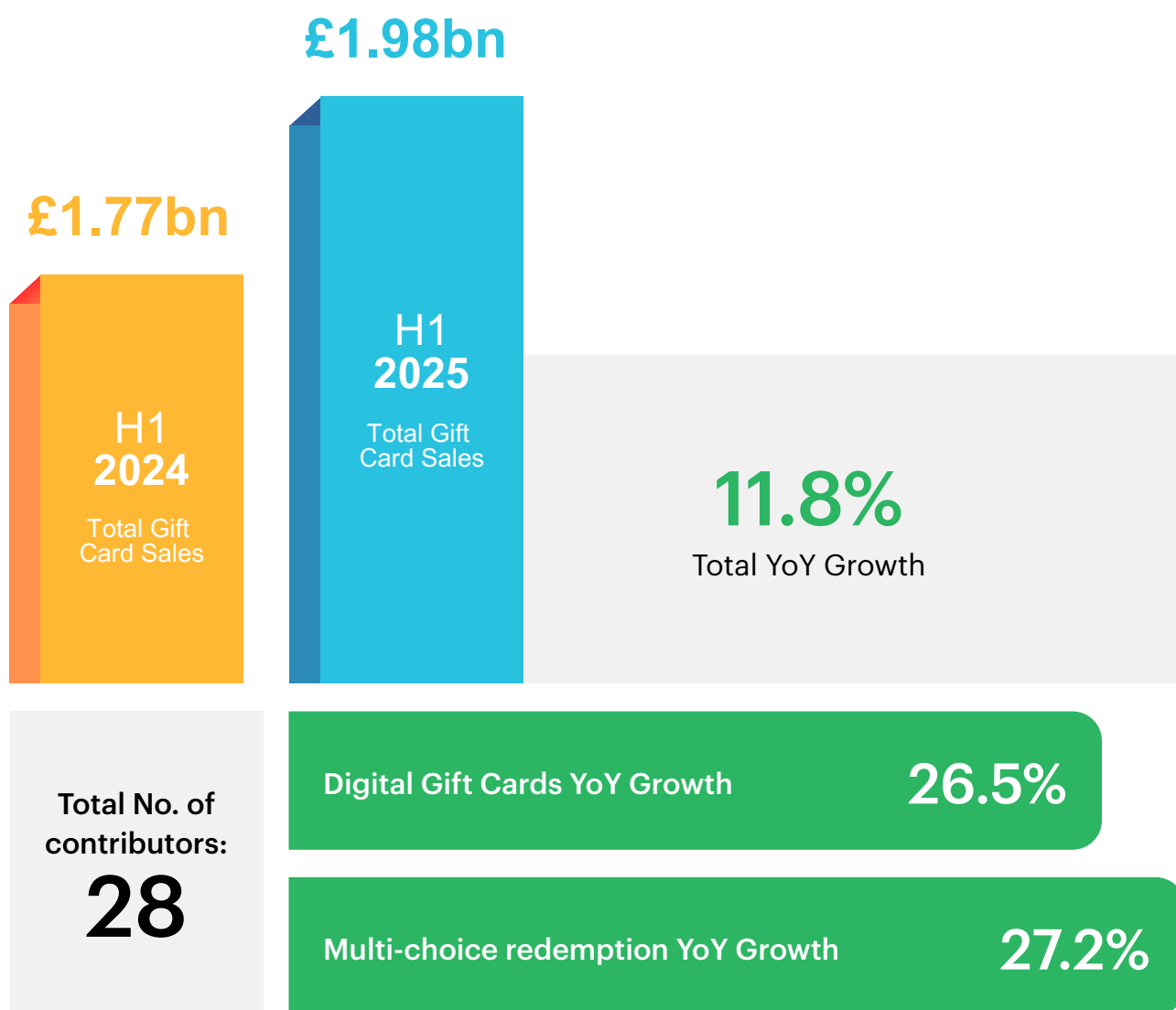
Summary Report
Sept 2025

Executive Summary

- Submitting Members H1 2025

Total Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Gift cards sales in H1 2025 reached £1.98bn among contributing members; a YoY growth of 11.8%→ 28 GCVA members contributed to the H1 2025 data capture→ In absolute terms, growth was underpinned by strong B2B activity, while B2C and non-sale channels also contributed positively in the period
B2B Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ The B2B market accounted for 64% of the total share of gift card sales, and grew by 8.9% YoY→ The majority of B2B share in H1 2025 sat within the benefits, employee savings and salary sacrifice submarket→ Digital formats (+ 22.8% YoY) and closed-loop products (+12% YoY) contributed strongly to the overall channel growth
B2C Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ B2C held a 31% share of the total in H1 2025, growing by 19.1% YoY→ Online sales accounted for the largest subchannel share within B2C, holding 42% of aggregated sales value in H1 2025, surpassing in-store sales and growing by an impressive 34% YoY on the back of strong member performances in the multi-retail sector→ Gift card mall sales rose by 10.2% YoY, consolidating their role as a steady contributor to the channel→ Third-party posted a strong YoY growth of 81%, although from a comparatively small base and partly reflecting first-time reporting in this channel for H1 2025 from a member
Non-Sale	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Non-sale accounted for 5% of the total gift cards sales value from the member cohort, growing by 7.5% YoY→ Merchandise returns and refunds remained the dominant sub-segment, despite a modest YoY decline→ Gestures of goodwill (+ 57.5% YoY) and promotional issuance (+ 108%) both experienced strong YoY, although this was from a comparatively small base
Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ While Leisure experienced a flat YoY performance, Retail saw strong double digit growth across general retail, grocers and multi-format retailers
Product Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Digital continues to be fundamental to the gift cards market, holding a 63% share of the market and growing by an impressive 26.5% YoY→ While B2C digital sales grew faster (+ 48% YoY), the majority of absolute sales growth came from B2B, where digital expanded by 22.8% to reach £951m in H1 2025 among members
Redemption Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Closed-loop dominated value share, holding 76% of the total market, and growing by 11.2% YoY, while multi-choice surged by 27.2% in the same period→ Open-loop cards declined by 10% overall, driven by a 24% fall in automated distribution, only partially offset by modest growth in human intervention (+ 4% YoY)

▼ Topline Highlights – H1 2025



The UK gift card market showcased impressive momentum in the first half of 2025, with the B2B sector playing an integral role to its growth, while the B2C segment outpaced expectations despite a challenging economic backdrop. The Retail sector benefited from seasonal occasions and their alignment with everyday spending, making them a practical choice despite tight budgets. The leisure sector, however, was more exposed to caution, lying flat on the year. Overall, the market reached £1.98 billion, driven by a diverse range of offerings. Digital gift cards emerged as a key growth engine while closed-loop gift cards maintained a dominant position.

Fashion grew by 20%, supported by consumer appetite for accessible discretionary spending and the appeal of fashion gift cards as versatile gifting options. General retail expanded by 6%, a more modest but steady increase reflecting continued reliance on gift cards in supermarkets and multi-category retailers. Grocery gift card sales posted a strong growth of 14%, underscoring the ongoing trend of prioritising essential purchases while still embracing the convenience of gift cards. This dynamic landscape highlights the adaptability of the gift card market, with both B2B and B2C segments responding effectively to shifting consumer preferences and volatile economic conditions.



Hannah Shimko, Managing Director of the GCVA said:

I am delighted to introduce GCVA's H1 2025 Gift Card Market Report, which provides an authoritative overview of performance across our industry. Once again, the results highlight the continued strength of the gift card sector, with total sales from participating members reaching almost £2bn in the first half of the year. An impressive 12% increase compared with the same period in 2024.

This growth is being driven by a combination of factors. In the consumer market we are seeing record demand for digital and multi-choice products, reflecting both convenience and the growing desire for flexibility. In the B2B market, gift cards continue to play a central role in employee benefits and reward programmes, demonstrating their proven value in motivating and engaging workforces at a time when employers are focused on retention and wellbeing.

It is also notable that retail-linked gift cards are leading the way, with strong growth across fashion, grocery and multi-sector categories. This shows that gift cards are not only continue to be a popular choice for birthdays and celebrations but are also being used more widely as a practical way to manage everyday spending and help households navigate a higher everyday cost.

This year we have also introduced a refreshed style for the report, designed to make the results and trends clearer and easier to read. We hope that these updates will be of real value to our members, partners and stakeholders, offering sharper insights into the opportunities and challenges facing the market.

There is much to be positive about. With consumers embracing digital formats, businesses embedding gift cards more deeply into their benefits strategies, and new technologies enhancing the customer experience, the gift card sector is exceptionally well-placed to continue its strong performance and deliver even greater value in the months to come



Joseph Robinson, Senior Consulting Director, Retail, added:

The UK has experienced an uneven first half, characterised by steady economic performance, amid fiscal tightening, labour market adjustments, and wavering consumer confidence. While there has been an improving picture for household finances for the last couple of years, inflation remains a thorn in the side, with a notable increase in household bills from April onwards, highlighting persistent inflationary pressures consumers are facing.

When it comes to retail demand more generally, while total retail expenditure grew 2.4% over January-June, and while 2025 as a whole is set to experience the full-year of retail volume growth since 2021, it is the more essential spend-led Grocery category that is driving this performance. Indeed, spend on Clothing & Footwear declined 1.8% over the half, while most other non-Grocery categories experienced anaemic growth of between 1%-3%.

Against this backdrop, the continued outperformance of the UK Gift Card market is a testament to sector's dynamism, and its continued relevance among consumers. Among the 28 GCVA members that contributed to the H1 2025 research, Gift Card sales grew an impressive 11.8%.

The sector's H1 performance was again underpinned by B2B, which grew 8.9% and accounted for 64% of gift card sales among contributing members. Most of this B2B spend saw within the benefits, employee savings, and salary sacrifice sub-market, demonstrating the prevailing appeal of gift cards as a medium through reach to reward and support employees.

B2C posted a strong 19.1% year-on-year growth among contributing members, led by online and digital formats, with flexible multi-choice products notably driving the market upwards and outpacing closed-loop cards. Here, reflecting the industry's drive for channel flexibility over recent years, online sales accounted for the largest subchannel share within B2C, holding 42% of aggregated sales value in H1 2025, following impressive 34% year-on-year growth.

On a sector-level, Retail enjoyed strong double-digit growth across all sub-sectors. Notably, despite the contraction in the wider retail fashion market, gift card Fashion sales grew by 20%, supported by consumer appetite for accessible discretionary spending and the appeal of fashion gift cards as versatile gifting options.

While the demand backdrop remains uneven, at best, the industry goes into H2, and the all-important golden quarter, in rude health.

The role of gift cards for consumers, as thoughtful and flexible gifting options, a medium through which to support savings ambitions, and to facilitate cross-channel purchasing, means that they are playing a more relevant role than ever before. For employers and companies looking to win new customers, and drive higher rates of retention, the growing flexibility of gift cards means that they will continue to remain an in-demand option.



The GCVA is the trade body and membership organisation for gift cards and vouchers. The association represents the key players in the industry and promotes best practice for the benefit of gift card issuers, services and consumers.

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