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GCVA & PR AGENCY ONE  
PRESS & MEDIA COVERAGE

**February**

**Title:** Retail Technology Innovation Hub

**Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> February 2020

**Link:** <https://retailtechinnovationhub.com/home/2020/2/6/gift-card-and-voucher-conference-to-celebrate-thriving-industry>



## RETAIL TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION HUB



### Gift card and voucher conference to celebrate thriving industry

EVENTS

The UK Gift Card & Voucher Association (UKGCVA) has announced the details of its 2020 conference.

This will be held at Leonardo Royal Hotel London Tower Bridge on 4th and 5th March.

Day one will focus on key industry topics such as market trends, legislative developments and wellness in the workplace. Day two will cover the future of the industry, the global issue of sustainability, and see the UKGCVA exclusively unveil its first Valuing the Industry report and whitepaper, presented by GlobalData.

"The conference, like the wider gift card and voucher industry, continues to get bigger and better every year, and it's fantastic to see the sector continue to go from strengths to strengths within the UK and wider global audiences," says Gail Cohen, Director General at the UKGCVA.

"We look forward to exploring the reasons behind this in-depth at the event, while looking to the future and exploring vital industry hot topics such as legislation, tax and Brexit, as well as global issues such as sustainability and wellness in the workplace."

"Gift cards hold a multitude of benefits for retailers, corporate businesses and consumers alike, and are an invaluable tool for engaging, retaining and rewarding both customers and loyal employees. The onus is on us to continue to actively promote these benefits, ensuring the continued growth of both the gift card and voucher market and those we service in the years to come."

For more information about how to purchase tickets, click [here](#).

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Staff Writer

Latest Article



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FEB 6, 2020

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**Title:** Gift Focus

**Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020

**Link:** <https://www.giftfocus.com/news/14673/gift-card-conference-to-celebrate-thriving-industry>

**DA:** 27

## GIFTFOCUS

### Gift card conference to celebrate thriving industry

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The UK Gift Card & Voucher Association (UKGCVA) has announced the details of its 2020 conference, focused around how the gift card industry can build on its continued growth and continue to deliver for consumers and business.



The conference, which attracts over 400 gift card industry experts from across the UK, Europe and worldwide, will be held at Leonardo Royal Hotel London Tower Bridge on 4th and 5th March 2020. The two-day event will provide the most up-to-date industry information as well as hot topics, updates, insights, views and expertise.

Day one will focus on key industry topics such as market trends, legislative developments and wellness in the workplace. Day two will cover the future of the industry, the global issue of sustainability, and see the UKGCVA exclusively unveil its first "Valuing the Industry" report and white-paper, presented by GlobalData. Stored Value Solutions (SVS) returns as the lead sponsor for the conference, with leading sector figures such as BlackHawk Network, Fi-Serve, Incomm and LastMinute.com also sponsoring the event. As the gift card market continues to prosper, having grown by 7.2 per cent year-on-year according to the latest data from the UKGCVA and KPMG UK, the conference will bring the sector together to explore ways to continue this momentum. It will also showcase the best industry innovations and explore both evolving marketing strategies and consumer needs. Attendees will be able to hear

from sector thought leaders such as notable futurist, author, and speaker James Wallman, head of retail at KPMG Paul Martin, and co-founder of A Plastic Planet Siân Sutherland during the event.

Gail Cohen, director general of the UKGCVA, commented: "The UKGCVA conference, like the wider gift card and voucher industry, continues to get bigger and better every year, and it's fantastic to see the sector continue to go from strength to strength within the UK and wider global audiences. We look forward to exploring the reasons behind this in-depth at the event, while looking to the future and exploring vital industry hot topics such as legislation, tax and Brexit, as well as global issues such as sustainability and wellness in the workplace." Gift cards hold a multitude of benefits for retailers, corporate businesses and consumers alike, and are an invaluable tool for engaging, retaining and rewarding both customers and loyal employees. The onus is on us to continue to actively promote these benefits, ensuring the continued growth of both the gift card and voucher market and those we service in the years to come."

Sarah Poynter, vice president of account services, Northern Europe at SVS, said: "Since its inception the UKGCVA conference has rapidly become the go-to event for the gift card and voucher industry. "This year's conference is shaping up to be the biggest yet and, with its focus on key areas such as sustainability and future of the high street, also looks set to be the most exciting to date. Having supported the conference for years, it is an absolute privilege for us to be on board with the event once again."

For more information about how to purchase tickets, please visit: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ukgcva-conference-2020-tickets-69169581079>

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**Title:** A1 Retail

**Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> February

**Link:** <https://www.a1retailmagazine.com/latest-news/flagship-gift-card-conference-to-celebrate-thriving-industry/>

**DA:** 35

**Circulation:** 7,000



## Flagship gift card conference to celebrate thriving industry



The UK Gift Card & Voucher Association (UKGCVA) has announced the details of its 2020 conference, focused around how the gift card industry can build on its continued growth and continue to deliver for consumers and businesses.

The conference, which attracts over 400 gift card industry experts from across the UK, Europe and worldwide, will be held at Leonardo Royal Hotel London Tower Bridge on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020. The two-day event will provide the most up-to-date industry information as well as hot topics, updates, insights, views and expertise.

Day one will focus on key industry topics such as market trends, legislative developments and wellness in the workplace. Day two will cover the future of the industry, the global issue of sustainability, and unveil exclusive thought leadership research. Specifically, the UKGCVA will launch its first "Valuing the Industry" report and white-paper, presented by GlobalData, and KPMG is also set to share the latest retail and gift card industry data.

Stored Value Solutions (SVS) returns as the lead sponsor for the conference, with leading sector figures such as BlackHawk Network, FI-Serve and LastMinute.com also sponsoring the event.

As the gift card market continues to prosper, having grown by 7.2% year-on-year according to the latest data from the UKGCVA and KPMG UK, the conference will bring the sector together to explore ways to continue this momentum. It will also showcase the best industry innovations and explore both evolving marketing strategies and consumer needs.

Attendees will be able to hear from sector thought leaders such as notable author, journalist and speaker James Wallman, head of retail at KPMG Paul Martin, and, co-founder of A Plastic Planet Siân Sutherland during the event.

**Gail Cohen, director general of the UKGCVA, commented:** "The UKGCVA conference, like the wider gift card and voucher industry, continues to get bigger and better every year, and it's fantastic to see the sector continue to go from strength to strength within the UK and wider global audiences. We look forward to exploring the reasons behind this in depth at the event, while looking to the future, exploring industry hot topics such as sustainability, and sharing the great progress we have made in these areas.

"Gift cards hold a multitude of benefits for retailers and consumers alike – increasing both sales and customer loyalty through offering consumers the choice to shop when, where and how they want, whether this be in-store or online. The onus is on us to continue to promote these benefits, ensuring that continued growth of both the gift card and voucher market and those we service in the years to come."

**Sarah Poynter, vice president of account services, Northern Europe, at SVS, said:** "Since its inception the UKGCVA conference has rapidly become the go-to event for the gift card and voucher industry.

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For more information about how to purchase tickets, please visit: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ukgcva-conference-2020-tickets-69169581079>



**Title:** Retail Gazette

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> February 2020

**Link:** <https://www.retailgazette.co.uk/blog/2020/02/gift-card-voucher-sales-remain-resilient/>

**Circulation:** 87,000



## Gift card & voucher sales remain resilient



**// UK gift card and voucher sales continue to grow despite adverse trading conditions, the UKGCVA & KPMG finds**

**// Leisure continues to increase market share, reinforcing growing consumer preference for experience over products**

Gift card sales have remained resilient despite tough trading, as leisure and experience continues to challenge the dominance of traditional retail market share.

UK gift card and voucher sales grew by 1.7 per cent on a rolling year basis in the second half of 2019, and increased 0.9 per cent on a like-for-like basis.

The latest analysis by the UK Gift Card and Voucher Association (UKGCVA) and KPMG said the growth occurred against a backdrop of challenges facing many consumer businesses, including shoppers putting off purchases due to Brexit uncertainty.

That UKGCVA added that leisure continued to challenge the dominance of traditional retail by increasing market share, with more and more shoppers favouring experience over products and items.

Nonetheless, sales of gift cards and vouchers continued to be dominated by traditional retail, accounting for 62.8 per cent of the overall market share, the UKGCVA said.

Leisure-related sales grew 24 per cent on a rolling year basis and now accounts for 11.5 per cent of the overall market share – a gain of 2.5 percentage points compared the second half of 2018 to the second half of 2019.

**Title:** A1 Retail

**Date:** 21st February 2020

**Link:** <https://www.a1retailmagazine.com/latest-news/gift-card-sales-remain-resilient/>

**Circulation:** 7,000



## Gift card sales remain resilient, the UKGCVA and KPMG finds

- *UK gift card and voucher sales continue to grow despite adverse trading conditions*
- *Leisure continues to increase market share, reinforcing the growing consumer preference for experience over product ownership*
- *Growth in digital gifting outperformed more traditional physical or paper alternatives, nodding towards the growing preference for added-convenience and the rise of enviro-conscious shoppers*

UK gift card and voucher sales grew by 1.7% on a rolling year basis (0.9% like-for-like) in the second half of 2019, despite the widely publicised challenges facing many consumer businesses, including shoppers putting off purchases in light of ongoing Brexit uncertainty<sup>1</sup>.

That said, the latest analysis by the UKGCVA and KPMG also reveals that leisure continues to challenge the dominance of traditional retail by increasing market share, with shoppers increasingly favouring experience over product ownership.

Sales of gift cards and vouchers continues to be dominated by traditional retail, still accounting for 62.8% of the overall market. However, the latest data sees leisure-related sales grow by 24% on a rolling year basis. Moreover, leisure now accounts for 11.5% of the overall market – a gain of 2.5% if comparing the second half of 2018 to the second half of 2019.

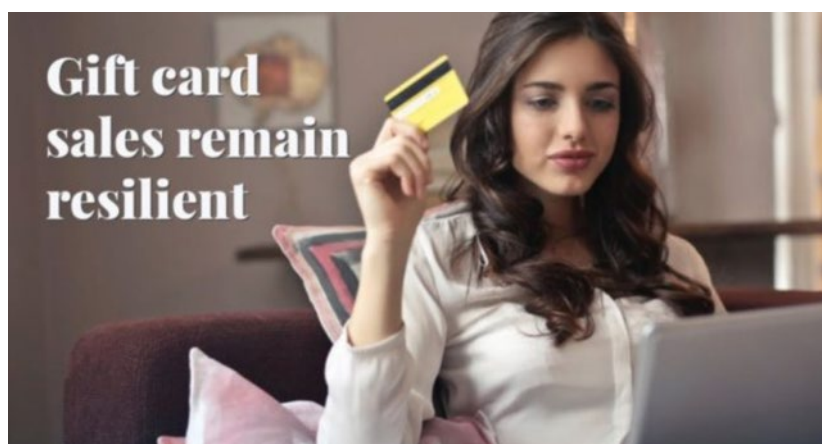
**Title:** The Marketing Blog

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> February 2020

**Link:** <https://www.themarketingblog.co.uk/2020/02/latest-gift-card-sales-remain-resilient-despite-tough-trading-condition>

the **Marketingblog**

## Latest : Gift card sales remain resilient despite tough trading conditions



*UK gift card and voucher sales continue to grow despite adverse trading conditions*

- *Leisure continues to increase market share, reinforcing the growing consumer preference for experience over product ownership*
- *Growth in digital gifting outperformed more traditional physical or paper alternatives, nodding towards the growing preference for added-convenience and the rise of enviro-conscious shoppers*



**Title:** Retail Technology Innovation Hub

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> February 2020

**Link:** <https://retailtechinnovationhub.com/home/2020/2/21/retailers-must-not-underestimate-importance-of-gift-cards-and-vouchers>

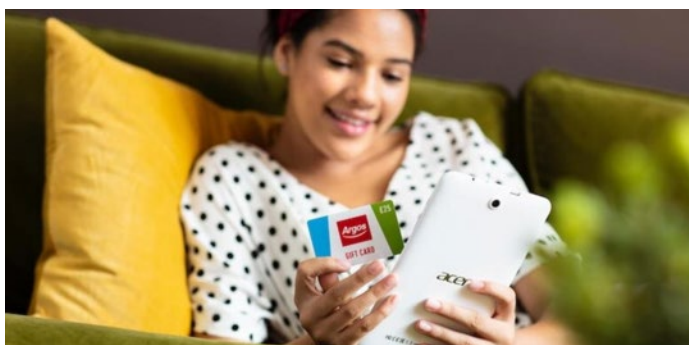


RTIH

RETAIL TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION HUB

## Retailers must not underestimate importance of gift cards and vouchers

GIFT CARDS AND VOUCHERS



**UK gift card and voucher sales grew by 1.7% on a rolling year basis (0.9% like-for-like) in the second half of 2019.**

According to research by UKGCVA and KPMG, digital products saw their market share rise by 5%, taking this from physical and paper alternatives. And while gift card sales continue to be dominated by traditional retail (accounting for almost two-thirds of the market), leisure gift cards have continued to gain market share, emphasising consumers' increasing appetite for experiences over traditional product ownership.

“The clear resilience of gift card and voucher sales is testament to the importance of this avenue in generating additional revenue and boosting customer loyalty,” says Gail Cohen, Director General at the UK Gift Card and Voucher Association.

“They hold a whole array of new avenues for consumer-facing businesses to consider or improve upon, whether it be business-to-business sales as organisations look at new ways to incentivise and reward their people; or reminding ourselves of preferable buying choices, like the growing popularity of experiences.”

“All consumer-facing businesses need to think beyond the traditional view of this growing market, as gift cards and vouchers are changing rapidly and offer a whole host of new opportunities,” she concludes.



**Title:** i News

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> February 2020

**Page:** 50

**Circulation:** 217,760



# The Business Matrix

*The day at a glance*

## CONSUMER

### Gift card sales defy challenges

Gift card and voucher sales grew by 1.7 per cent in the second half of 2019, and increased 0.9 per cent on a like-for-like basis. Analysis from the UK Gift Card and Voucher Association said the growth occurred against a backdrop of challenges facing businesses.

**Title:** Insight DIY

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> February 2020

**Link:** <https://www.insightdiy.co.uk/news/kpmgukgcva-gift-card-market-defies-retail-downturn-to-post-sustained-growth/8119.htm>

## Insightdiy

KPMG-UKGCVA: Gift Card Market Defies Retail Downturn To Post Sustained Growth



- UK gift card and voucher sales continue to grow despite adverse trading conditions
- Leisure continues to increase market share, reinforcing the growing consumer preference for experience over product ownership
- Growth in digital gifting outperformed more traditional physical or paper alternatives, nodding towards the growing preference for added-convenience and the rise of enviro-conscious shoppers

UK gift card and voucher sales grew by 1.7% on a rolling year basis (0.9% like-for-like) in the second half of 2019, despite the widely publicised challenges facing many consumer businesses, including shoppers putting off purchases in light of ongoing Brexit uncertainty<sup>1</sup>.

That said, the latest analysis by the UKGCVA and KPMG also reveals that leisure continues to challenge the dominance of traditional retail by increasing market share, with shoppers increasingly favouring experience over product ownership.

Sales of gift cards and vouchers continues to be dominated by traditional retail, still accounting for 62.8% of the overall market. However, the latest data sees leisure-related sales grow by 24% on a rolling year basis. Moreover, leisure now accounts for 11.5% of the overall market – a gain of 2.5% if comparing the second half of 2018 to the second half of 2019.

Commenting on the latest figures from a retail-perspective, **Paul Martin, UK head of retail at KPMG**, said:

*"In a landscape where winning and maintaining customer loyalty is often the line between success and failure, retailers can't afford to overlook the key role gift cards and vouchers play. That's especially true given that growth of gift card sales remains so resilient, despite such volatile trading more broadly. Leisure might be winning some more market share, but many retail players are actually recording double-digit growth of their gift card and voucher sales.*

*"If anything, the rise in market share of leisure-focussed gift cards bolsters the argument that more work is required to make retail more experiential. Shopping is no longer deemed the leisure activity it once was and that needs to change."*

**Gail Cohen, director general at the UK Gift Card and Voucher Association**, added:

*"The challenges being faced by all consumer businesses have been painfully clear in recent months, whether it is record low retail sales figures or the latest business casualties. However, the clear resilience of gift card and voucher sales is testament to the importance of this avenue in generating additional revenue and boosting customer loyalty.*

*"As the latest figures outline, gift cards and vouchers hold a whole array of new avenues for consumer-facing businesses to consider or improve upon, whether it be business-to-business sales as organizations look at new ways to incentivise and reward their people, or reminding ourselves of preferable buying choices, like the growing popularity of experiences. All consumer-facing businesses need to think beyond the traditional view of this growing market, as gift cards and vouchers are changing rapidly and offer a whole host of new opportunities."*

Additional key findings from the latest UK Gift Card and Voucher Sales Analysis and Outlook: H2 2019:

- The business-to-business market grew by 12.7% year-on-year, continuing the strong performance in this avenue of sales, as noted last year<sup>2</sup>
- There was a 13.7% like-for-like increase in sales of gift cards and vouchers to consumers online, reflective of the preferences of younger generations who prefer to shop online<sup>3</sup>. This is also being driven by the increased interest in leisure
- 'Open loop' options have gained popularity, with market share growing from 3.6% last year to 5.6% this year. Having taken this market share from 'multi-choice' options, it's clear that greater flexibility had become increasingly more important<sup>4</sup>
- Digital products saw their market share rise by 5%, taking this from physical and paper alternatives. While convenience will have contributed to this shift, the consumer demand for more environmentally-friendly options will also played a part.

Source : KPMG-UKGCVA

For all the very latest news and intelligence on the UK's largest home improvement and garden retailers, sign up for the Insight DIY weekly newsletter.

**Title:** A1 Retail

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> February 2020

**Link:** <https://www.a1retailmagazine.com/latest-news/gift-card-sales-remain-resilient/>

**Circulation:** 7,000



## Gift card sales remain resilient, the UKGCVA and KPMG finds

- UK gift card and voucher sales continue to grow despite adverse trading conditions
- Leisure continues to increase market share, reinforcing the growing consumer preference for experience over product ownership
- Growth in digital gifting outperformed more traditional physical or paper alternatives, nodding towards the growing preference for added-convenience and the rise of enviro-conscious shoppers



UK gift card and voucher sales grew by 1.7% on a rolling year basis (0.9% like-for-like) in the second half of 2019, despite the widely publicised challenges facing many consumer businesses, including shoppers putting off purchases in light of ongoing Brexit uncertainty<sup>1</sup>.

That said, the latest analysis by the UKGCVA and KPMG also reveals that leisure continues to challenge the dominance of traditional retail by increasing market share, with shoppers increasingly favouring experience over product ownership.

Sales of gift cards and vouchers continues to be dominated by traditional retail, still accounting for 62.8% of the overall market. However, the latest data sees leisure-related sales grow by 24% on a rolling year basis. Moreover, leisure now accounts for 11.5% of the overall market – a gain of 2.5% if comparing the second half of 2018 to the second half of 2019.

Commenting on the latest figures from a retail-perspective, **Paul Martin, UK head of retail at KPMG**, said:

*"In a landscape where winning and maintaining customer loyalty is often the line between success and failure, retailers can't afford to overlook the key role gift cards and vouchers play. That's especially true given that growth of gift card sales remains so resilient, despite such volatile trading more broadly. Leisure might be winning some more market share, but many retail players are actually recording double-digit growth of their gift card and voucher sales."*

*"If anything, the rise in market share of leisure-focussed gift cards bolsters the argument that more work is required to make retail more experiential. Shopping is no longer deemed the leisure activity it once was and that needs to change."*

**Gail Cohen, director general at the UK Gift Card and Voucher Association**, added:

*"The challenges being faced by all consumer businesses have been painfully clear in recent months, whether it is record low retail sales figures or the latest business casualties. However, the clear resilience of gift card and voucher sales is testament to the importance of this avenue in generating additional revenue and boosting customer loyalty."*

*"As the latest figures outline, gift cards and vouchers hold a whole array of new avenues for consumer-facing businesses to consider or improve upon, whether it be business-to-business sales as organisations look at new ways to incentivise and reward their people; or reminding ourselves of preferable buying choices, like the growing popularity of experiences. All consumer-facing businesses need to think beyond the traditional view of this growing market, as gift cards and vouchers are changing rapidly and offer a whole host of new opportunities."*

Additional key findings from the latest UK Gift Card and Voucher Sales Analysis and Outlook: H2 2019:

- The business-to-business market grew by 12.7% year-on-year, continuing the strong performance in this avenue of sales, as noted last year<sup>2</sup>
- There was a 13.7% like-for-like increase in sales of gift cards and vouchers to consumers online, reflective of the preferences of younger generations who prefer to shop online<sup>3</sup>. This is also being driven by the increased interest in leisure
- 'Open loop' options have gained popularity, with market share growing from 3.6% last year to 5.6% this year. Having taken this market share from 'multi-choice' options, it's clear that greater flexibility had become increasingly more important<sup>4</sup>
- Digital products saw their market share rise by 5%, taking this from physical and paper alternatives. While convenience will have contributed to this shift, the consumer demand for more environmentally-friendly options will also played a part

**Title:** Cards International

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> February 2020

**Link:** <https://www.verdict.co.uk/cards-international/news/uk-gift-card-sales/>

## CARDS

INTERNATIONAL

### UK gift card sales remain resilient despite tough trading conditions

By Douglas Blakey | February 21, 2020



UK gift card and voucher sales are up 1.7% on a rolling year basis in the second half of 2019. This is despite widely publicised challenges facing many consumer businesses, including shoppers delaying purchases in light of ongoing Brexit uncertainty.

The UK gift card sales figures are released by trade body the UK Gift Card and Voucher Association and KPMG. UKGCVVA reports that leisure continues to challenge the dominance of traditional retail by increasing market share. Specifically, shoppers increasingly favour experience over product ownership.

UK gift cards sales and vouchers are again dominated by traditional retail, still accounting for 62.8% of the overall market.

However, the latest data sees leisure-related sales grow by 24% on a rolling year basis. Moreover, leisure now accounts for 11.5% of the overall market. This is a gain of 2.5% if comparing the second half of 2018 to the second half of 2019.

### UK gift card sales: other key H2 findings

The business-to-business market is up by 12.7% year-on-year. Meantime, there is a 13.7% like-for-like increase in sales of gift cards and vouchers to consumers online. This reflects the preferences of younger generations who prefer to shop online. Furthermore, this is being driven by the increased interest in leisure.

'Open loop' options are gaining popularity with market share growing from 3.6% last year to 5.6% this year. At the same time, digital products market share rises by 5%, taking this from physical and paper alternatives. While convenience contributes to this shift, the consumer demand for more environmentally-friendly options is also contributing.

Paul Martin, head of retail at KPMG says: "In a landscape where winning and maintaining customer loyalty is often the line between success and failure, retailers can't afford to overlook the key role gift cards and vouchers play.

"That's especially true given that growth of gift card sales remains so resilient, despite such volatile trading more broadly. Leisure is winning some more market share. But many retail players are actually recording double-digit growth of their gift card and voucher sales.

Gail Cohen, director general at the UK Gift Card and Voucher Association, adds: "The challenges being faced by all consumer businesses have been painfully clear in recent months. Whether it is record low retail sales figures or the latest business casualties. However, the clear resilience of gift card and voucher sales is testament to the importance of this avenue in generating additional revenue and boosting customer loyalty.

**Title:** Company News HQ

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> February 2020

**Link:** <https://www.companynewshq.com/company-news/accountancy-company-news/gift-card-sales-remain-resilient-despite-tough-trading/>



Accountancy Company News

## Gift card sales remain resilient despite tough trading

February 21, 2020 · Stacie Munroe · KPMG



UK gift card and voucher sales grew by 1.7% on a rolling year basis (0.9% like-for-like) in the second half of 2019, despite the widely publicised challenges facing many consumer businesses, including shoppers putting off purchases in light of ongoing Brexit uncertainty<sup>1</sup>. That said, the latest analysis by the UKGCVA and KPMG also reveals that leisure continues to challenge the dominance of traditional retail by increasing market share, with shoppers increasingly favouring experience over product ownership.

Sales of gift cards and vouchers continues to be dominated by traditional retail, still accounting for 62.8% of the overall market. However, the latest data sees leisure-related sales grow by 24% on a rolling year basis. Moreover, leisure now accounts for 11.5% of the overall market – a gain of 2.5% if comparing the second half of 2018 to the second half of 2019.



Commenting on the latest figures from a retail perspective, Paul Martin, UK head of retail at KPMG, said:

*"In a landscape where winning and maintaining customer loyalty is often the line between success and failure, retailers can't afford to overlook the key role gift cards and vouchers play. That's especially true given that growth of gift card sales remains so resilient, despite such volatile trading more broadly. Leisure might be winning some more market share, but many retail players are actually recording double-digit growth of their gift card and voucher sales."*

*"If anything, the rise in market share of leisure-focussed gift cards bolsters the argument that more work is required to make retail more experiential. Shopping is no longer deemed the leisure activity it once was and that needs to change."*

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Related: [Worst year on record for retail](#)

*"As the latest figures outline, gift cards and vouchers hold a whole array of new avenues for consumer-facing businesses to consider or improve upon, whether it be business-to-business sales as organisations look at new ways to incentivise and reward their people; or reminding ourselves of preferable buying choices, like the growing popularity of experiences. All consumer-facing businesses need to think beyond the traditional view of this growing market, as gift cards and vouchers are changing rapidly and offer a whole host of new opportunities."*

Additional key findings from the latest UK Gift Card and Voucher Sales Analysis and Outlook: H2 2019:

- The business-to-business market grew by 12.7% year-on-year, continuing the strong performance in this avenue of sales, as noted last year<sup>2</sup>.
- There was a 13.7% like-for-like increase in sales of gift cards and vouchers to consumers online, reflective of the preferences of younger generations who prefer to shop online<sup>3</sup>. This is also being driven by the increased interest in leisure.
- 'Open loop' options have gained popularity, with market share growing from 3.6% last year to 5.6% this year. Having taken this market share from 'multi-choice' options, it's clear that greater flexibility had become increasingly more important<sup>4</sup>.
- Digital products saw their market share rise by 5%, taking this from physical and paper alternatives. While convenience will have contributed to this shift, the consumer demand for more environmentally-friendly options will also played a part.

**Title:** Fashion Network

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> February 2020

**Link:** <https://uk.fashionnetwork.com/news/Britons-still-buying-more-gift-cards-than-ever,1189227.html>

**Circulation:** 50,000

**FASHION**  
NETWORK

## Britons still buying more gift cards than ever

New research has revealed that the UK gift card and voucher market continues to defy the ongoing retail downturn, but with consumers' appetites for experiences fuelling the growth.



According to new research from KPMG UK and the UK Gift Card & Voucher Association, gift card and voucher sales grew by 1.7% on a rolling basis in the second half of 2019. On a like-for-like basis, sales of this kind increased 0.9%.

The results suggest that gift vouchers continue to be a popular way of gifting, particularly because of their convenience. In fact, growth in digital cards outperformed more traditional physical or paper alternatives in the second half of last year.

REPORT & PHOTOGRAPHY



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And while traditional retail continues to dominate the market (it accounts for 62.8% of total sales), more and more Britons are choosing to buy leisure gift cards. This highlights a consumer shift towards experiences rather than product ownership, with leisure cards increasing market share by 2.5% to 11.5%.

Paul Martin, UK head of retail at KPMG, said: "In a landscape where winning and maintaining customer loyalty is often the line between success and failure, retailers can't afford to overlook the key role gift cards and vouchers play.

"That's especially true given that growth of gift card sales remains so resilient, despite such volatile trading more broadly. Leisure might be winning some more market share, but many retail players are actually recording double-digit growth of their gift card and voucher sales."

The research also found various trends within the market, including the rise of 'open loop' gift cards, which saw their market share grow from 3.6% last year to 5.6% in 2019. Business-to-business sales are still going strong, up 12.7% year-on-year, and sales of gift cards and vouchers to consumers online are gaining traction.

Gail Cohen, director general at the UK Gift Card and Voucher Association, commented: "As the latest figures outline, gift cards and vouchers hold a whole array of new avenues for consumer-facing businesses to consider or improve upon, whether it be business-to-business sales as organisations look at new ways to incentivise and reward their people; or reminding ourselves of preferable buying choices, like the growing popularity of experiences.

"All consumer-facing businesses need to think beyond the traditional view of this growing market, as gift cards and vouchers are changing rapidly and offer a whole host of new opportunities."