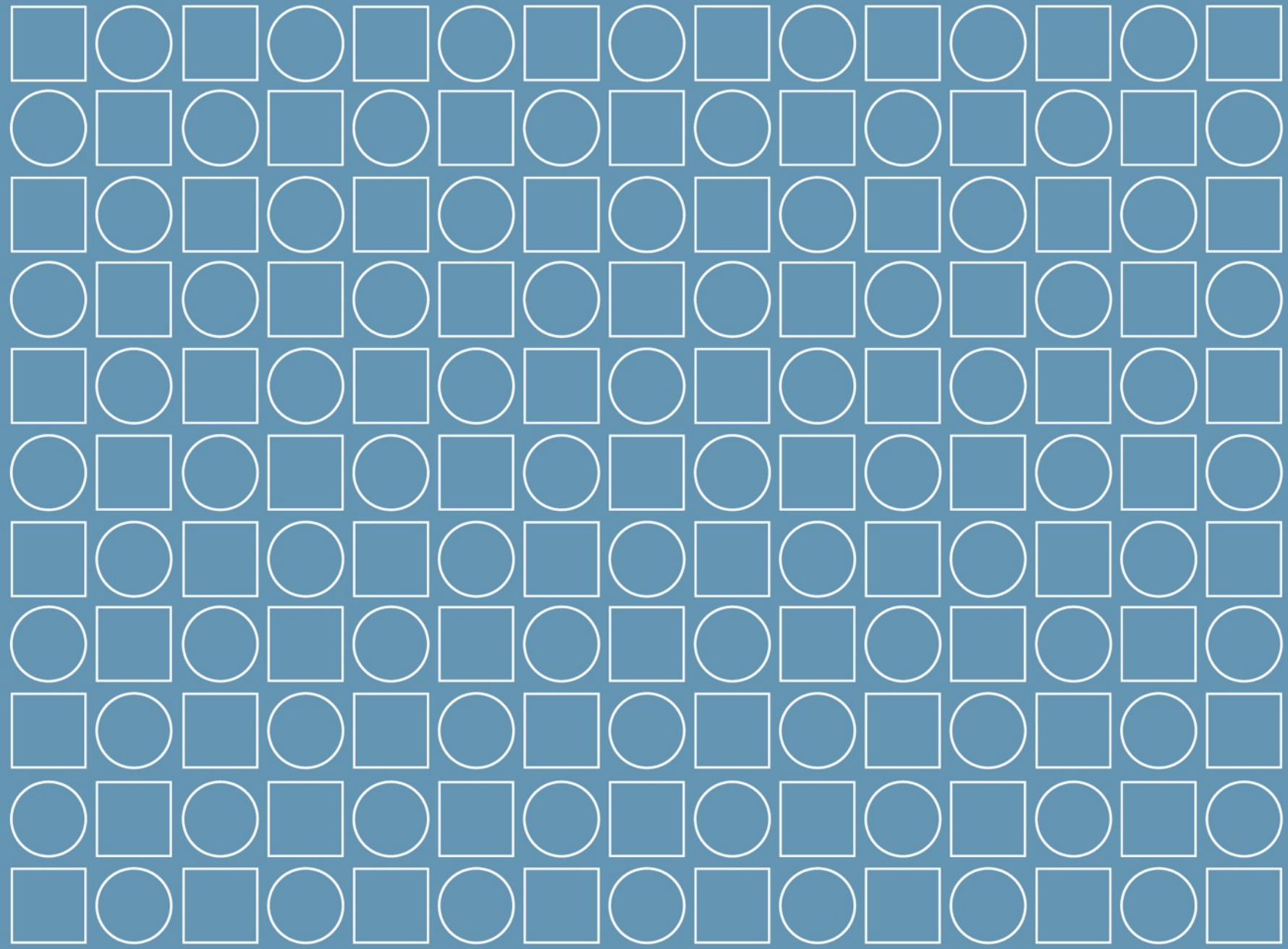


GCVA & PR
Agency One

Press & Media
Coverage

July



Gifts Today– Gift cards in lockdown

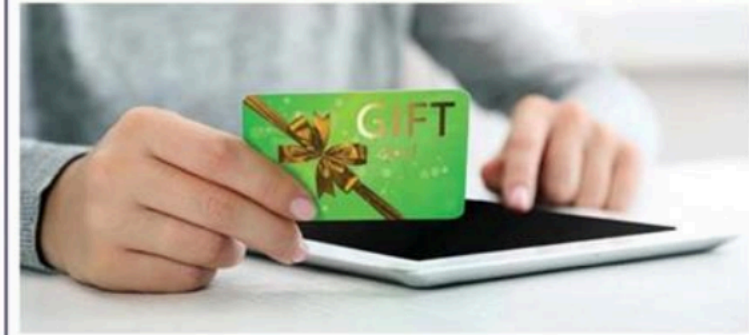
Gifts Today

Title Gifts Today

Date: 1st July 2020

Page: 6

Circulation: 7,098



Gift cards overtook physical gifts in lockdown

Gift cards emerged as the most popular form of gifting during Covid-19, according to latest research from the [Gift Card & Voucher Association \(GCVA\)](#) and GlobalData.

The research into 2000 UK shoppers found that, of those that purchased gifts for loved ones during lockdown, 14% bought a gift card for somebody else, outselling physical gifts at just 12%.

'Some of the UK's most popular gifting occasions, such as Easter, Mother's Day and Father's Day, fell during lockdown,' says Gail Cohen, director general of the GCVA. 'To adhere to social distancing, consumers needed gifting solutions that minimise contact, could be sent instantly, and enjoyed at a later date. For this, as well as recognising our key workers and even keeping the nation fed, gift cards have been the perfect solution.'

Attire Accessories – Self-gifting release

ATTIRE ACCESSORIES

Title Attire Accessories

Date: 1st July 2020

Page: 9

Circulation: 6,000

SELF GIFTING SOARS AMIDST COVID-19 PANDEMIC

UK consumers are increasingly purchasing gift cards to spend on themselves, according to the latest industry research from the Gift Card & Voucher Association (GCVA), in partnership with research and data specialist GlobalData.

The Valuing the Gift Card Industry 2020 research, supported by incentives and benefits provider Blackhawk Network, surveyed 2,000 UK consumers and found that self-use, referring to when a gift card is purchased to be used specifically by the purchaser, rather than as a gift, is now among the most prominent drivers of gift card purchasing. Self-use now represents 21.8% of consumer spend on gift cards – a value of just over £1 billion.

The rise in self-gifting is said to be reflective of the growing prominence of shoppers purchasing gift cards – typically at discounted rates – through B2B channels, such as employer programmes, rather than waiting to receive them from a friend or family member.

Other drivers of this trend include the rise of gift card and loyalty card hybrids, as well as the growth of categories such as video gaming, of which weekly sales have risen by as much as 63% during lockdown. In this industry the gift card is the primary mechanism for online purchases, which is due to gift cards often being seen as a more secure alternative to storing payment details on shared devices.

According to the report, the boost may have also been further augmented over the past few weeks by a new gifting trend termed “sunny day gifting”, which refers to when a gift – usually a gift card – is purchased with the intention of being used at a later date once everyday life has returned to normal. This new means of gifting has already been adopted positively throughout the retail and hospitality industries, with consumers across the UK purchasing gift cards for their favourite shops, bars and restaurants, to support these businesses throughout the pandemic.

Across the rest of the gift card market, gifting for others, such as friends and family, remains the most popular purchase driver of gift cards, making up 70.8% of the market. The list is rounded out by company bosses purchasing gift cards for staff to recognise loyalty and hard work, which makes up 5.8% of the total market – equating to £270 million.

Gail Cohen, director general of the GCVA, commented: “Our gifting habits continue to evolve over time, as evidenced by our latest research which reveals that, sometimes, we just like to treat ourselves, for which gift cards are the perfect solution.

“Gift cards’ versatility, despite the name, in fact extends far beyond being used as a gift for others. Whether rewarding key workers, helping to provide free school meals to schools or even just being used to pay for the weekly shop, gift cards have emerged as the safe, flexible payment option of choice throughout this pandemic. Given this, the continued rise of gift cards for self-gifting, at a time when we all need a little lift, comes as little surprise.

“We would expect this shift in shopper behaviour to only grow over time, presenting an interesting opportunity for retailers and providers that will need to adapt their offering to cater for this growing trend.”

As of the most recent valuation, the gift card industry as a whole is now worth £6.9 billion* – up from the previous estimated value of £6 billion.

For more information, visit www.gcva.co.uk



Country Wedding Magazines – Gift cards in

cwm[®]
COUNTY WEDDING MAGAZINES

Title: Country Wedding Magazine

Date: 3rd July 2020

Link: <https://www.county.wedding/wedding-news/16179/gift-cards-uks-most-popular-gift-during-lockdown>

Circulation: 11,160

DA: 23

 **Gift Card
& Voucher
Association**

Gift cards UK's most popular gift during lockdown



New research from the Gift Card & Voucher Association (GCVA) reveals that gift cards were the most popular gift purchased during lockdown, and with healthy and safety measures in place for a little longer yet, and the wedding scene not quite back to what it was before, the gift card could still be the best go-to option for wedding gifting yet!

With many shops having to close during lockdown it's no surprise that gift buys had to get creative and resulted to online purchases or the buying of giftcards. The research into 2,000 UK shoppers, carried out in partnership with GlobalData, found that, during lockdown, 14% bought a gift card for somebody else. Admirably, consumers were incredibly conscientious with more than one in five (21%) of consumers purchasing gift cards to support their favourite businesses during a difficult period, highlighting a growing trend among consumers to spend with brands that have prioritised customer service and loyalty.

Now that lockdown has eased, and we're being encouraged to return to the highstreet and boost the economy, major retailers, hospitality brands and beloved local businesses, are expected to see an increase in footfall and spend over the

coming weeks now that restrictions have been lifted and the British love of shopping can finally return.

With many people looking to spend their giftcards, recent GCVA research reveals that shoppers typically spend an additional £18.55 more than their gift card value with retail and multi-store gift cards the most popular. These make for the ideal wedding gift, where couples may have requests on their gift list from multiple stores, spanning, beauty, homewares and honeymoon purchases, a multi-store gift card means newlyweds can shop till their heart's content – and they also won't need to return anything either!

Experience gift cards, which can be spent on activities such as weekends away, or at local bars and restaurants, were purchased by 16% of consumers, with a further 10% having purchased leisure gift cards, reflecting continued public uncertainty around when, or if, businesses throughout the sector will be able to reopen.

Gail Cohen, director general of the GCVA, commented: "The pandemic has also given rise to a new, extremely interesting gifting trend, known as "sunny day gifting", referring to when a gift card is purchased with the intention of being used at a later date once everyday life has returned to normal. As shops continue to reopen their doors and the leisure sector gears up for reactivation, we anticipate a major surge in footfall as customers flock to spend the gift cards they have bought or received in lockdown, offering a much-needed shot in the arm for the sector that could benefit businesses for months to come."



For more information, visit www.gcva.co.uk

Country Wedding Magazines – Gift cards in



Country Wedding Magazine has also included this article on its other 19 regional sites and each article also contains a link back to the GCVA site.

This results in **20 pieces of coverage** in total.

Please see the table to the right for the names of these titles and the link DA for each.

Title	DA
Your North East Wedding	22
Your Hampshire Dorset	18
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Berkshire Wedding	23

The Sun – Voucher scheme comment



Title: The Sun

Date: 9th July 2020

Link:

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/money/12063068/shopping-voucher-scheme-dropped-budget/>

Circulation: 24,438,000



NO GIFT Shoppers miss out as Rishi Sunak ignores calls for £500 high-street voucher scheme ↑ TOP

Sara Benwell
8 Jul 2020, 13:23 | Updated: 9 Jul 2020, 8:33

WATCH THE VIDEO

But Rishi Sunak never planned to include the proposal in his bumper boost for jobs.

Gail Cohen, director general of the Gift Card & Voucher Association, slammed the decision not to offer shopping vouchers.

She said: "The disappointing omission of any notable announcements to protect high street retail businesses, such as the previously-mooted £500 voucher scheme, is a missed opportunity to show support for businesses that have had to contend with unprecedented challenges over the past few months.

"There is little doubt that many companies now need a major boost if they are to stay afloat amidst current and future turbulence."

While the shopping vouchers did not make an appearance in the mini-Budget, Chancellor Rishi Sunak did announce an Eat Out to Help Out scheme to support restaurants.

Brits who dine out Monday to Wednesday in August will only have to pay for 50 per cent of the tab, the [Chancellor Sunak announced](#).

This scheme sat alongside a whole raft of measures to help businesses.

These include [a cut on VAT for pubs and restaurants to help protect jobs](#) and plans for a [new apprenticeship scheme](#).

Recently, the Government also unveiled a [£1.4billion recovery package for the arts industry](#).

This is designed to help save theatres and live music venues which are still on lockdown because of coronavirus.

Home buyers will also benefit from a [stamp duty holiday in a bid to inject life into the housing market](#) during the [coronavirus crisis](#).

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How 50% discount in pub and restaurants will work

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Plan, write, analyze

The Scottish Sun – Voucher scheme comment



Title: The Scottish Sun

Date: 9th July 2020

Link:

<https://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/money/5787670/shopping-voucher-scheme-dropped-budget/>

Circulation: 164.154



NO GIFT Shoppers miss out as Rishi Sunak ignores calls for £500 high-street voucher scheme ↑ TOP

Sara Benwell
8 Jul 2020, 13:23 | Updated: 9 Jul 2020, 8:33

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Horticulture Week – Voucher scheme

comment
HorticultureWeek

Title: Horticulture Week

Date: 9th July 2020

Link: <https://www.hortweek.com/chancellor-announces-vat-cut-tourism-sector-industry-reaction/retail/article/1688897>

Circulation: 6,295



Chancellor announces VAT cut for tourism sector: industry reaction





8 July 2020, by Matthew Appleby

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak has announced he will be cutting VAT on tourism businesses from 20% to 5% as part of a suite of measures designed to help sectors recover from the coronavirus crisis.



Rishi Sunak - credit: Chris McAndrew (CC by 3.0)

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Coronavirus Tracker

The latest developments concerning **coronavirus** for horticulture industry professionals involved in buying or selling garden products and plants or producing and participating in horticultural shows and events.

Gail Cohen, director general of the **Gift Card & Voucher Association (GVCA)**, said: "The disappointing omission of any notable announcements to protect high street retail businesses, such as the previously-mooted £500 voucher scheme, is a missed opportunity to show support for businesses that have had to contend with unprecedented challenges over the past few months. There is little doubt that many companies now need a major boost if they are to stay afloat amidst current and future turbulence.

"The GVCA is launching a campaign for the tax-free gift card limit to be raised from the £50 currently permitted through HMRC's **Trivial Benefits Allowance**. By increasing this limit to £500 - as has already been successfully achieved in other countries such as Sweden and Ireland - government will incentivise employers to take advantage of the scheme, encouraging the use of gift cards as a reward which can then be spent with local businesses."

"Our research reveals that 50.6% of gift cards are spent within one month of being received. We also know that, on average, shoppers 'top-up' gift card purchases by 66.4% with cash from their own pocket which, if the tax-free limit was to be raised, could be worth billions to the retail, leisure and hospitality industries just when they need it the most."

Brinkwire – Voucher scheme comment

Brinkwire

Latest News and Reports

Title: Brinkwire

Date: 9th July 2020

Link: <https://en.brinkwire.com/wires/shoppers-miss-out-as-rishi-sunak-ignores-calls-for-500-voucher-scheme/>

Circulation: 66,570



Shoppers miss out as Rishi Sunak ignores calls for £500 voucher scheme

BY BRINKWIRE ON JULY 9, 2020

BRITs will be disappointed to hear that a £500 shopping voucher scheme was never planned as part of today's Budget – despite support on various quarters.



The scheme was initially suggested by the Resolution foundation, an independent think-tank focused on improving the living standards for those on low to middle incomes.

Many families hoped that it would be considered by the Chancellor.

The idea was that the Treasury could help sectors hit hardest by the crisis including hospitality and "face to face" retail.

But Rishi Sunak never planned to include the proposal in his bumper boost for jobs.

Gail Cohen, director general of the Gift Card & Voucher Association, slammed the decision not to offer shopping vouchers.

She said: "The disappointing omission of any notable announcements to protect high street retail businesses, such as the previously-mooted £500 voucher scheme, is a missed opportunity to show support for businesses that have had to contend with unprecedented challenges over the past few months.

"There is little doubt that many companies now need a major boost if they are to stay afloat amidst current and future turbulence."

While the shopping vouchers did not make an appearance in the mini-budget, Chancellor Rishi Sunak did announce an Eat Out to Dine In scheme to support restaurants.

Brits who dine out Monday to Wednesday in August will only have to pay for 50 per cent of the tab, the Chancellor Rishi Sunak announced today.

This scheme sat alongside a whole raft of measures to help businesses.

These include a cut on VAT for pubs and restaurants to help protect jobs and plans for a new apprenticeship scheme.

Recently, the government also unveiled a £1.4billion recovery package for the arts industry.

Retail Systems – Voucher scheme comment

Retail Systems

Title: Retail Systems

Date: 9th July 2020

Link: https://www.retail-systems.com/rs/Sunak_Summer_Statement_Missed_Opportunity_Retail.php

Circulation: 14,907



Summer Statement a 'missed opportunity' for retail

The UK's ailing retail sector has bemoaned the "missed opportunity" in the chancellor's Summer Statement to offer further support for the High Street.

While British Retail Consortium (BRC) chief executive Helen Dickinson welcomed the new Job Retention Bonus in helping bring back hundreds of thousands of staff who have been on furlough in recent months, she noted that retailers lost out to the hospitality and tourism industry in this latest announcement.

"The proposals of a VAT cut will be important in reviving these sectors, and the 1.8 million people who work there, however it was disappointing that the chancellor did not extend this measure to the retail industry and the three million people it employs.

Gail Cohen, director general of the Gift Card & Voucher Association, agreed that it was disappointing that the previously-mooted £500 voucher scheme was omitted from the statement.

"It is a missed opportunity to show support for businesses that have had to contend with unprecedented challenges over the past few months – there is little doubt that many companies now need a major boost if they are to stay afloat amidst current and future turbulence."

The association is therefore launching a campaign for the tax-free gift card limit to be raised from the £50 currently permitted through HMRC's Trivial Benefits Allowance. "By increasing this limit to £500 - as has already been successfully achieved in other countries such as Sweden and Ireland - government will incentivise employers to take advantage of the scheme, encouraging the use of gift cards as a reward which can then be spent with local businesses," argued Cohen.

Gift Focus – Self-gifting release

GIFT FOCUS

Title: Gift Focus

Date: 9th July 2020

Page: 9

Circulation: 6,880

SELF GIFTING SOARS AMIDST COVID-19 PANDEMIC

UK consumers are increasingly purchasing gift cards to spend on themselves, according to the latest industry research from the Gift Card & Voucher Association (GCVA), in partnership with research and data specialist GlobalData.

The Valuing the Gift Card Industry 2020 research, supported by incentives and benefits provider Blackhawk Network, surveyed 2,000 UK consumers and found that self-use, referring to when a gift card is purchased to be used specifically by the purchaser, rather than as a gift, is now among the most prominent drivers of gift card purchasing. Self-use now represents 21.8% of consumer spend on gift cards – a value of just over £1 billion.

The rise in self-gifting is said to be reflective of the growing prominence of shoppers purchasing gift cards – typically at discounted rates – through B2B channels, such as employer programmes, rather than waiting to receive them from a friend or family member.

Other drivers of this trend include the rise of gift card and loyalty card hybrids, as well as the growth of categories such as video gaming, of which weekly sales have risen by as much as 63% during lockdown. In this industry the gift card is the primary mechanism for online purchases, which is due to gift cards often being seen as a more secure alternative to storing payment details on shared devices.

According to the report, the boost may have also been further augmented over the past few weeks by a new gifting trend termed “sunny day gifting”, which refers to when a gift – usually a gift card – is purchased with the intention of being used at a later date once everyday life has returned to normal. This new means of gifting has already been adopted positively throughout the retail and hospitality industries, with consumers across the UK purchasing gift cards for their favourite shops, bars and restaurants, to support these businesses throughout the pandemic.

Across the rest of the gift card market, gifting for others, such as friends and family, remains the most popular purchase driver of gift cards, making up 70.8% of the market. The list is rounded out by company bosses purchasing gift cards for staff to recognise loyalty and hard work, which makes up 5.8% of the total market – equating to £270 million.

Gail Cohen, director general of the GCVA, commented: “Our gifting habits continue to evolve over time, as evidenced by our latest research which reveals that, sometimes, we just like to treat ourselves, for which gift cards are the perfect solution.

“Gift cards’ versatility, despite the name, in fact extends far beyond being used as a gift for others. Whether rewarding key workers, helping to provide free school meals to schools or even just being used to pay for the weekly shop, gift cards have emerged as the safe, flexible payment option of choice throughout this pandemic. Given this, the continued rise of gift cards for self-gifting, at a time when we all need a little lift, comes as little surprise.

“We would expect this shift in shopper behaviour to only grow over time, presenting an interesting opportunity for retailers and providers that will need to adapt their offering to cater for this growing trend.”

As of the most recent valuation, the gift card industry as a whole is now worth £6.9 billion* – up from the previous estimated value of £6 billion.

For more information, visit www.gcva.co.uk



A1 Retail – GiftCard500 (release 1)



Title: A1 Retail

Date: 16th July 2020

Link: <https://www.a1retailmagazine.com/latest-news/gift-card-industry-launches-campaign/>

Circulation: 6,000

DA: 34



Gift card industry launches campaign to drive £2.3 billion high street recovery

- Industry leaders lobby government to increase tax-free limit on employee gifting
- If just one in 10 businesses were to take part, an additional £2.3 billion could be spent with high street retailers and hospitality businesses
- Gift cards increase in-store spend by 67%, according to latest industry figures



The gift card and voucher industry, led by the Gift Card & Voucher Association (GCVA), has urged the government to raise the tax free gift card limit to £500, which could bring the high street an estimated spending boost of more than £2 billion*.

The proposal would involve the government increasing the tax-free gifting allowance of £50 currently permitted through HMRC's Trivial Benefits Allowance to £500, and encouraging employers across the nation to use the scheme to thank their staff for their hard work over the past few months of COVID-19 uncertainty.

This permanent increase initiative follows similar proposals intended to kickstart economic activity abroad, with a proposed scheme in Ireland allowing employers to make a single one-off, tax-free payment to employees of up to €500 per annum in non-cashable rewards – generally gift vouchers. Similarly, in Sweden temporary tax exemptions have been proposed for gifts up to a value of SEK 1,000 per employee, that employers can give to their staff from June until the end of the year.

The scheme is designed to leverage the increased demand for gift cards, which officially overtook physical gifts during lockdown due to their convenience, safety and ease of use, to drive demand and sales for businesses across the retail and hospitality industries. 14% of shoppers bought a gift card for somebody else during lockdown, outselling physical gifts at just 12%, and more than one in five consumers (21%) purchased gift cards to support their favourite businesses during this difficult period.

Schemes which involve gift cards and vouchers as the means to spend are preferable over other policies, such as VAT cuts or cash giveaways, because gift cards must be spent with businesses in certain sectors, as opposed to being put into savings.

In turn, this ensures increased household spend in targeted sectors over the coming months, with recent GCVA research revealing that 98.6% of gift cards are spent within a year of being received, with over half spent within days. Also, shoppers on average 'top-up' gift card purchases by 66.4% with additional funds from their own pocket, increasing the scheme's impact for businesses.

Gail Cohen, director general of the GCVA, commented: "While the Summer Statement brought with it some welcome announcements, more must be done to support high street retail, leisure and hospitality businesses; many of which have been hardest-hit by the turbulence of the past few months.

"Gift cards are a proven way to significantly increase shopper demand and spend which, subsequently, improves high street businesses bottom line. Through this, gift cards can offer a much-needed solution that would boost retailers' fortunes now – we just need to incentivise businesses to make greater use of them, and we may have a simple, quick-win solution.

"If the tax-free limit for employee gifting was to be raised permanently, and even just a tenth of employers took advantage of the new legislation to thank their loyal staff, this could be worth billions to struggling UK businesses just when they need it the most."

For more information, visit www.gcva.co.uk

* There are 27.93 million people in paid employment in the UK according to the most recent ONS data released in June 2020 – <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandem>

Cards International – GiftCard500 (release 1)

CARDS

INTERNATIONAL

Title: Cards International

Date: 16th July 2020

Link: <https://www.verdict.co.uk/cards-international/news/gift-card-campaign-high-street-recovery/>

Circulation: 108,630



News

Gift card industry launches campaign to drive £2.3bn high street recovery

By Evie Rusman | July 16, 2020



The gift card and voucher industry, led by the Gift Card & Voucher Association (GCVA), has launched a campaign to drive £2.3bn towards high street recovery in the UK.

GCVA has urged the government to raise the tax free gift card limit from £50 to £500, which could bring an estimated spending boost of over £2bn. The proposal would also encourage employers across the nation to use the scheme to thank their staff for their hard work throughout Covid-19.

In addition, the scheme is designed to leverage the increased demand for gift cards, which officially overtook physical gifts during lockdown. Within this period, 14% of shoppers bought a gift card for somebody else during lockdown, outselling physical gifts at just 12%, and 21% purchased gift cards to support their favourite businesses.

Gail Cohen, director general of the GCVA, said: "While the Summer Statement brought with it some welcome announcements, more must be done to support high street retail, leisure and hospitality businesses; many of which have been hardest-hit by the turbulence of the past few months.

"Gift cards are a proven way to significantly increase shopper demand and spend, which improves high street businesses bottom line. Through this, gift cards can offer a much-needed solution that would boost retailers' fortunes now. We just need to incentivise

Cohen continued: "If the tax-free limit for employee gifting was to be raised permanently, and even just a tenth of employers took advantage of the new legislation to thank their loyal staff, this could be worth billions to struggling UK businesses just when they need it the most."

Retail Jeweller – GiftCard500 (release 1)

Retail Jeweller

Title: Retail Jeweller

Date: 20th July 2020

Link: <https://www.retail-jeweller.com/industry-and-data/gift-card-industry-launches-campaign-to-drive-2-3-billion-high-street-recovery-17-07-2020/>

Circulation: 1,670

Gift card industry launches campaign to drive £2.3 billion high street recovery

The gift card and voucher industry, led by the Gift Card & Voucher Association (GCVA), has urged the government to raise the tax-free gift card limit to £500, which could bring the high street an estimated spending boost of more than £2 billion.



Retail Technology Review – GiftCard500 (release 1)



Title: Retail Technology Review

Date: 22nd July 2020

Link:

<https://www.retailtechnologyreview.com/articles/2020/07/21/gift-card-industry-launches-campaign-to-drive-%C2%A32.3-billion-high-street-recovery/>

Circulation: 20,179



Gift card industry launches campaign to drive £2.3 billion high street recovery

Jul 21, 2020 Critical Issues, Retail Supply Chain Comments (0)

Print page



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"Gift cards are a proven way to significantly increase shopper demand and spend which, subsequently, improves high street businesses bottom line. Through this, gift cards can offer a much-needed solution that would boost retailers' fortunes now - we just need to incentivise businesses to make greater use of them, and we may have a simple, quick-win solution.

"If the tax-free limit for employee gifting was to be raised permanently, and even just a tenth of employers took advantage of the new legislation to thank their loyal staff, this could be worth billions to struggling UK businesses just when they need it the most."

* There are 27.93 million people in paid employment in the UK according to the most recent ONS data released in June 2020.

If just one in 10 paid employees was rewarded with a £500 gift card, this, plus 67.1% in-store uplift (GCVA State of the Nation whitepaper, 2019), would equate to a £2,332,155,000 boost in total.