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MEDIA ALERT

Card spending reaches £50.7 billion in April with over one in ten transactions now online

UK Card Expenditure Statistics: April 2015

Card spending grew by 0.9 per cent in April to reach £50.7 billion, the second month in a row where total spending passed the £50 billion milestone, according to the latest figures from The UK Cards Association.

Consumers used their cards almost 25,000 times a minute last month, with a total of 1.08 billion purchases in April. Over three-quarters (76.6 per cent) of transactions were on debit cards, as debit spending growth continued to outstrip that on credit cards. Overall, payment cards accounted for 75.5 per cent of total retail spending.

More than one in ten transactions (11.4 per cent) were made online, with a total of 121 million internet purchases occurring in April. Over a quarter (28 per cent) of all online transactions were made on entertainment.

As the average value of an online transaction (£95.22) was more than double that for face to face transactions (£41.84), internet spending accounted for 22.7 per cent of all card expenditure, at £11.5 billion.

Richard Koch, Head of Policy at The UK Cards Association, commented:

"With the highest employment rate since 1971, strong consumer confidence and driven by debit cards in particular, we're seeing card spending continue to grow. Over £380 million is now spent on the internet every day, showing how significant cards are in creating new opportunities for online retail."

	Total Spending <i>£ billions</i>		Annual growth rates for spending		Number of purchases <i>Millions</i>	
	April 2015	April 2014	April 2015	April 2014	April 2015	April 2014
All plastic cards	50.7	47.2	7.1%	8.0%	1,076	986
Debit cards	36.1	33.2	8.0%	8.7%	824	757
Credit cards	14.6	14.1	5.0%	6.3%	252	229

Spending by sector



The key movements to note are:

- The Easter holidays meant that many of largest monthly increases in spending were at recreational places such as amusement parks (up 104 per cent), aquariums and zoos (up 76 per cent), and tourist attractions (up 40 per cent). There was also a large jump in spending at garden centres (up 38 per cent).
- Retail sector spending rose by £138 million to £23.7 billion in April, driven by food and drink and household goods in particular.
- Service sector spending increased by £331 million to £27.1 billion.

-Ends-

For further information, please contact The UK Cards Association Press Office on 020 3217 8436 or email press@ukcards.org.uk

Notes to Editors:

1. The full April 2015 Card Expenditure Statistics, include detailed retail and service sector data, are available at: <http://www.theukcardsassociation.org.uk/2015-facts-figures/index.asp>. Total spending figures are seasonally adjusted. Sub-sector level spending figures have not been seasonally adjusted.

About the *Card Expenditure Statistics* figures:

Card Expenditure Statistics reveal where credit, debit and charge cards are used in the UK. They are reported to The UK Cards Association by banks and other financial institutions, known as merchant acquirers, that process plastic card transactions on behalf of businesses and enterprises.

Spending is shown separately for debit and credit cards, by volume and by value, and the location is broken down into the principle UK retail and services sectors with a detailed analysis covering over 100 merchant categories across the full range of industries in the UK.

About The UK Cards Association:

The UK Cards Association is the trade body for the card payments industry in the UK, representing financial institutions which act as card issuers and acquirers. Members of the Association account for the vast majority of debit and credit cards issued in the UK - issuing in excess of 55 million credit cards and 95 million debit cards - and cover the whole of the payment card acquiring market.

The Association promotes co-operation between industry participants in order to progress non-competitive matters of mutual interest; informs and engages with stakeholders to shape legal and regulatory developments; develops industry best practice; safeguards the integrity of the card payments industry by tackling card fraud; develops industry standards; and co-ordinates other industry-wide initiatives such as those aiming to deliver innovation. As an Association we are committed to delivering a card payments industry that is constantly focused on improved outcomes for the customer. More information about The UK Cards Association is available at www.theukcardsassociation.org.uk

