

Brits spend 18 hours a year queuing



Visa Contactless study finds consumers plagued by queues

- British consumers queue for an average of 6.92 minutes per week
- 89% people have left a shop or business as a result of excessive queuing
- Londoners spend the longest time in queues averaging 9.11 minutes weekly
- Consumers believe demand outweighs retailers' ability to make a sale promptly
- Brits rarely complain despite excessive queuing

London, UK – 25 November 2014 - The average Brit spends over 18 hours a year queuing, with local shops, post offices and supermarkets the worst contributors to the UK 'queuing culture', according to stats released today by Visa Contactless. The survey revealed that Londoners are worst off, with those in the capital averaging 9.11 minutes per week in queues – more than two minutes longer than those in the West Midlands who suffer the second longest queues.

Over 89% of the 2,000 consumers surveyed have recently left a store as a result of the length of the queue, with two thirds (65%) admitting they've visited a rival store straight after in order to get what they need. Almost half felt that the length of queues was down to slow payment options and people having to find the right cash rather than using quicker payment methods such as contactless. True to form, 78% of Brits smile sweetly or tell the cashier it's not a problem when they get to a front of the long queue, despite feeling aggrieved at the time wasted.

Queuing is one of the nation's most tedious tasks, according to the Brits surveyed. Nearly half (44%) say that queuing is worse than washing up, while over a quarter (27%) prefer the commute to work than being stuck in a queue. Over half (53%) dislike queuing purely because of the amount of time it takes up, while 37% consider themselves to be impatient, but only when it comes to queuing.

Commenting on the findings, behavioural psychologist Jo Hemmings said: "Unlike some of our European neighbours, the British accept that queuing is a necessary and fair way of making a purchase. However, psychologically the length of time that we have to queue also affects our purchase decisions, as we can see from a whopping 89% of people leaving a shop, without making a purchase, due to excessive queuing.

"A strategy that both reduces our expectations, such as offering easy ways to pay or a full line of active cashiers as well as one that can also distract us from the impatience that the waiting, stress and boredom brings, is likely to be the most effective at bringing in return custom."

Retailers including McDonalds, WHSmith, Tesco and Pret A Manger have introduced contactless to offer the rapidly growing proportion of UK consumers who now own a contactless card a way to avoid lengthy queues in-store when they're making payments up to £20.

"These stats clearly show that consumers are incredibly frustrated by long queues," comments Kevin Jenkins, managing director UK & Ireland at Visa Europe. "I'd encourage those who have a contactless card to use it for small purchases whenever they can to help reduce tedious queuing in store, particularly over the busy Christmas shopping period."

Note to editors

Results are based on an online survey carried out by research agency OnePoll. 2000 UK consumers were surveyed via online questionnaire.

Visa contactless payments are very secure and certainly much more secure than carrying cash. Visa contactless cards use the same secure technology as Chip and PIN and have a maximum purchase amount of £20 per transaction. From time to time, cardholders are asked to enter their PIN to verify they are the genuine cardholder. Importantly, cardholders benefit from Visa's promise that if a Visa card is lost or stolen, they are protected against fraud loss – providing they take reasonable precautions to protect their card and let their bank know as soon as they realise it's gone.

Contactless Facts

- Using a contactless card is the fast and convenient way to pay for everyday purchases that are under £20
- 1 in 4 people in the UK already have a contactless card
- There are now over 317,000 terminals accepting contactless payments in the UK
- You can pay with contactless cards in retailers including Boots, Tesco, McDonalds, Costa Coffee, Waitrose and Greggs
- Workers can also pay for their commute using contactless payments anywhere across the Transport for London network
- More than £1 billion was spent on contactless cards in the 12 months to June 2014 in the UK
- Over 160 million contactless purchases were made in the 12 months to June 2014 in the UK

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