

Solicitors top Valentine's sales forecast

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New Paymentsense data reveals consumer spending trends around February 14

Solicitors could be in for a boost over the Valentine's Day period, if consumer spending follows last year's trend, according to card processing data* from Paymentsense (<https://www.paymentsense.com/uk/>).

Although not the most romantic of purchases solicitors, attorneys and legal services saw the biggest trading increase on February 14, 2018 compared with all other businesses across the merchant service provider's 70,000-strong customer base.

The sector saw a 549% increase in trade last Valentine's Day, compared with the annual average, suggesting that the occasion could be a trigger for some couples to begin separation proceedings.

Florists' trading peaked on February 13, with sales volumes of five times the annual average. According to Paymentsense data, Valentine's is the second most important time of the year for florists, behind the Mother's Day weekend which saw a sales uplift of 765% in 2018.

Consumers in the north of England splashed out the most on flowers before the day, with florists in the North West and North East enjoying six times the usual rate of sales on February 13, 2018 - ahead of all other areas.

Londoners, in contrast, left it late with sales not peaking until February 14. Similarly, service station sales were also up on Valentine's Day (132% over average), suggesting unprepared shoppers stopped off to grab last-minute gifts and flowers.

In terms of online transactions, florists saw 15% growth, peaking on Sunday February 11, while hotel bookings increased by 20% between February 12-14.

Top destinations for a Valentine's night date in 2018 were bowling, which enjoyed a 191% increase above average sales, the cinema (154%), amusement arcades (138%), and tourist attractions and exhibitions (122%).

Guy Moreve, CMO of Paymentsense, said: "We were surprised to see that legal firms achieved the best percentage sales growth on Valentine's Day last year - even beating florists. We'll be watching closely over the next few days to see if this trend is repeated. Our findings also underline how certain events can trigger consumer spending in unexpected areas.

"Just because a company might not seem directly related to a particular festival or occasion, business owners can still take the opportunity to think laterally when it comes to customer promotions, beyond the more obvious tie-ins."

Valentine's Day 2019 sales forecast (based on 2018 sales increase)

1. Solicitors, Legal Services, Attorneys (+549%)
2. Florists (+467%)
3. Bowling Alleys (+191%)
4. Cinema (+154%)
5. Amusement arcades (+138%)
6. Service stations (+132%)
7. Tourist attractions and exhibitions (+122%)

*Data from Paymentsense 70,000-strong customer base.

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About Paymentsense

As Europe's largest merchant services provider

(<https://www.paymentsense.com/uk/blog/merchant-services/>), Paymentsense enables over 70,000 SMEs to process over GBP 10 billion worth of card payments per year. From card readers (<https://www.paymentsense.com/uk/card-readers/>) to semi-integrated solutions and payment gateways (<https://www.paymentsense.com/uk/payment-gateway/>), Paymentsense supplies small businesses with low-cost card processing solutions that allow them to take payments in store (<https://www.paymentsense.com/uk/card-machines/>), online (<https://www.paymentsense.com/uk/accept-payments-online/>), over the phone (<https://www.paymentsense.com/uk/virtual-terminal/>) and on the move (<https://www.paymentsense.com/uk/card-machines/mobile/>).

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