

## Kiwis do Valentine’s Day differently this year

***Canterbury ranks as NZ’s most romantic region as Kiwis spend up on flowers and jewellery but less on the traditional intimate night out***

**AUCKLAND, 17 February 2022 – Consumer spending on Valentine’s Day this year proved that New Zealanders are still a romantic bunch, but external factors seem to have prompted more lovers to keep the traditional dinner-date celebrations at home this year.**

Worldline data released today showed an extra \$1.7m was spent through Florists and Watch / Jewellery merchants nationwide on Valentine’s Day (February 14), versus spending on the previous Tuesday (Monday having been a holiday). This pattern was similar to the extra spending amongst these merchants on Valentine’s Day in previous years.

However, spending amongst Food & Liquor Service merchants, while up \$1.9m on the prior Tuesday, did not spike as much as has occurred on Valentine’s Day in the last two years.

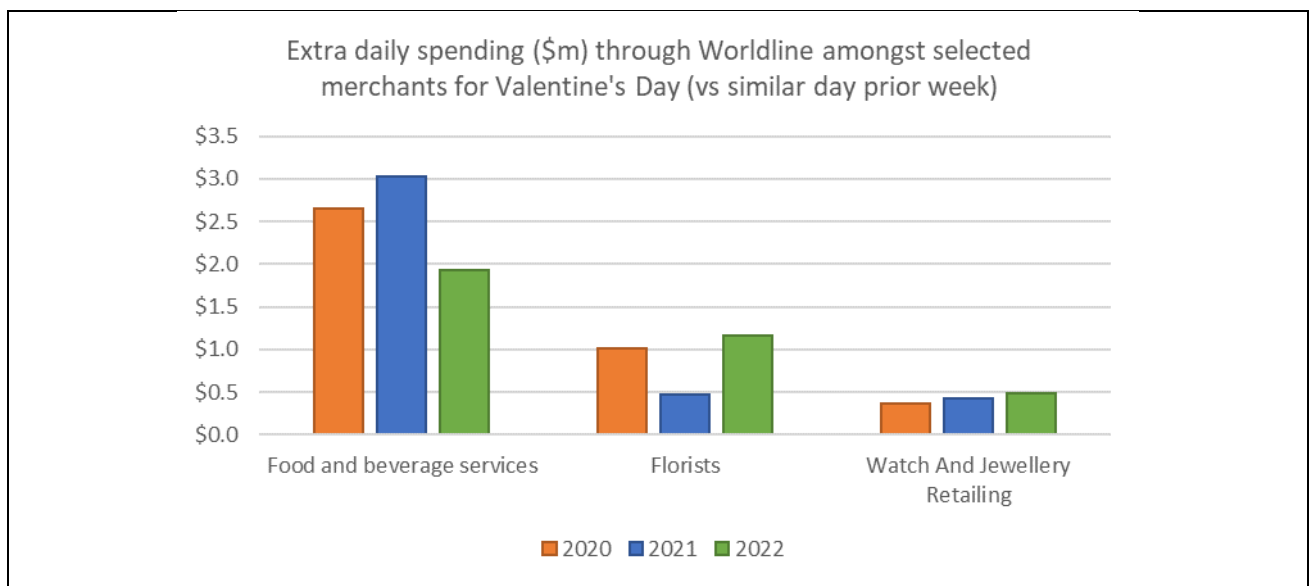


Figure 1: All Cards NZ spending through Worldline for selected core retail merchants – change to 14<sup>th</sup> February from prior Tues (2022) and prior same day of week (2020, 2021)

Worldline’s Head of Data, George Putnam, says the data show NZ consumers still celebrated Valentine’s Day this year, but that they just did it a little differently.

“In previous years we’ve seen the spending totals on dining-out spike on and around Valentine’s Day. This did not occur this year to the same extent,” he says.

Putnam says that the broader pattern for February so far has been a drop in Food & Liquor Services payments, continuing the COVID-19 related trend that began in late January when the nation shifted to the ‘Red’ level setting under the COVID Protection Framework.

“To be fair, romantic dinners are only part of the total dining-out spend and poor weather may have deterred other diners, but the modest spike on the day suggests we preferred our candle-lit dinners

at home this year. We do know, though, that the traditional gift buying occurred, showing that romance is still in the air, especially in Canterbury.”

A Regional Romance Rating created from the percentage change in spending at florists and jewellers between 8 – 14 February shows Cantabrians were the most romantic this year.

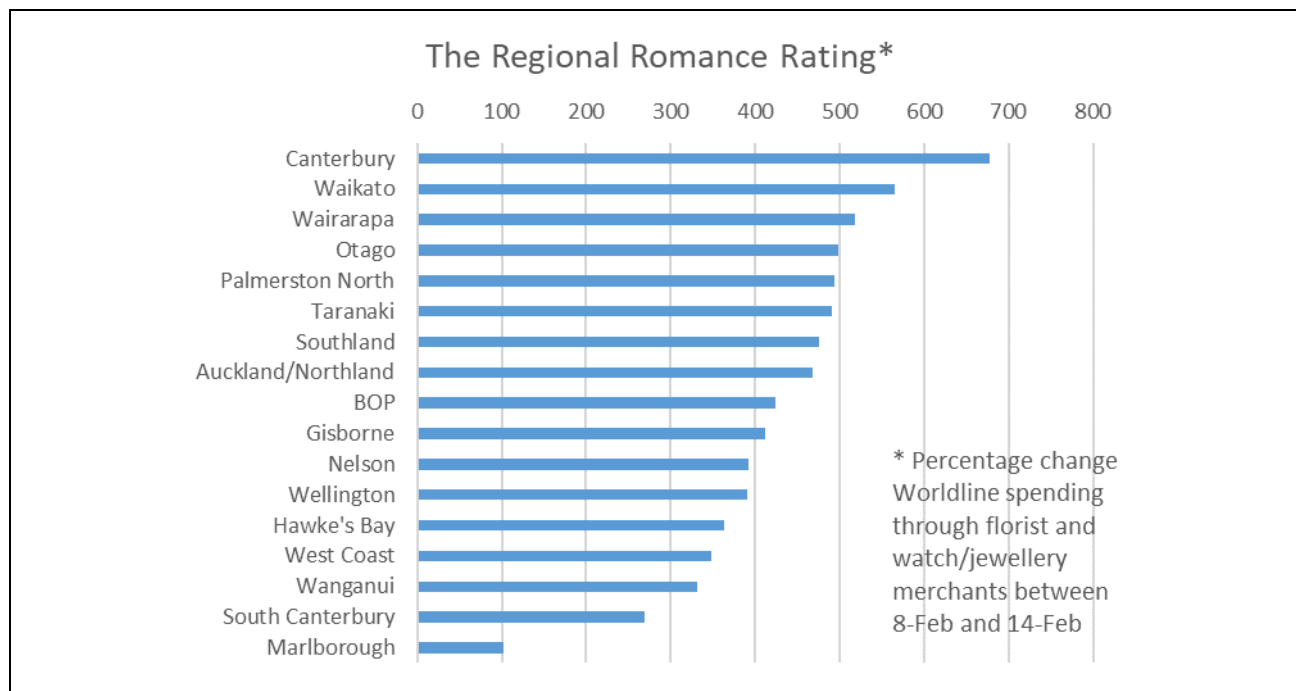


Figure 2: All Cards NZ spending through Worldline for Florists and Watch/Jewellery merchants – percentage change between Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February and Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February by region

On a more serious note, Putnam notes that spending nationwide through Hospitality merchants (including Accommodation) – a total of \$359m – was down 14.3% on the first 14 days of February last year and was unchanged on 2021 through the rest of the Core Retail sector (\$1.3B).

“It’s clear that the dampening effect of COVID-19 that we saw beginning in late January has increased this month, but we will be able to provide a better view of these ongoing impacts in our next consumer spending update on 1 March.”

- ENDS -

**Note to editors:**

These figures reflect general market trends and should not be taken as a proxy for Worldline’s market share or company earnings. The figures primarily reflect transactions undertaken within stores but also include some ecommerce transactions. The figures exclude transactions through Worldline undertaken by merchants outside the Core Retail sector (as defined by Statistics NZ).

For more information, contact:

**Brendan Boughen**

T 027 839 6044

E [brendan.boughen@paymark.co.nz](mailto:brendan.boughen@paymark.co.nz)

## ABOUT WORLDLINE IN NEW ZEALAND

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## PRESS CONTACTS

### Hélène Carlander

T +33 (0)7 72 25 96 04

E [helene.carlander@worldline.com](mailto:helene.carlander@worldline.com)

## INVESTORS RELATIONS

### Laurent Marie

T : +33 (0)1 58 01 83 24

E : [laurent.marie@worldline.com](mailto:laurent.marie@worldline.com)

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