

Second week of Christmas shopping season brings more cheer for retailers

Hospitality sector also sees boost in business as peak party season approaches

AUCKLAND, 15 December 2023 – Consumer spending increased in the second full week of December bringing some much-needed cheer to merchants within both the Core Retail and Hospitality sectors, as month-to-date spending jumped ahead of last year.

Consumer spending processed through all Core Retail merchants (excluding Hospitality) in Worldline NZ’s payments network during the first 14 days of December reached \$1.625B, which is up +2.3% on the first 14 days of December 2022 and up +15.2% on 2019.

Worldline NZ’s Chief Sales Officer, Bruce Proffit, says the second seven days of December (8-14 Dec) showed the traditional uptick in consumer spending and, promisingly, lifted the running annual month-to-date growth rate from +1.4% last week to +2.3% now.

“This is not a large annual growth rate, especially when compared with price inflation. However, annual spending growth was positive for the week amongst Recreational Goods merchants and amongst the large Hardware & Furniture sector,” says Proffit.

Proffit says spending for the combined two weeks (1-14 December) was up (+6.6%) amongst Food & Liquor merchants and down (-4.1%) across the remaining Core Retail merchants (excluding Hospitality). Other sectors experiencing annual growth include Recreational Goods (+1.1%) and Chemists (+4.4%), while spending at Clothing/Footwear stores remains down on last year (-8.7%).

“The better week was not sufficient to push the Hardware & Furniture merchants into the black month-to-date (-2.7%) but this sector still has its biggest trading days of the year to come,” he says.

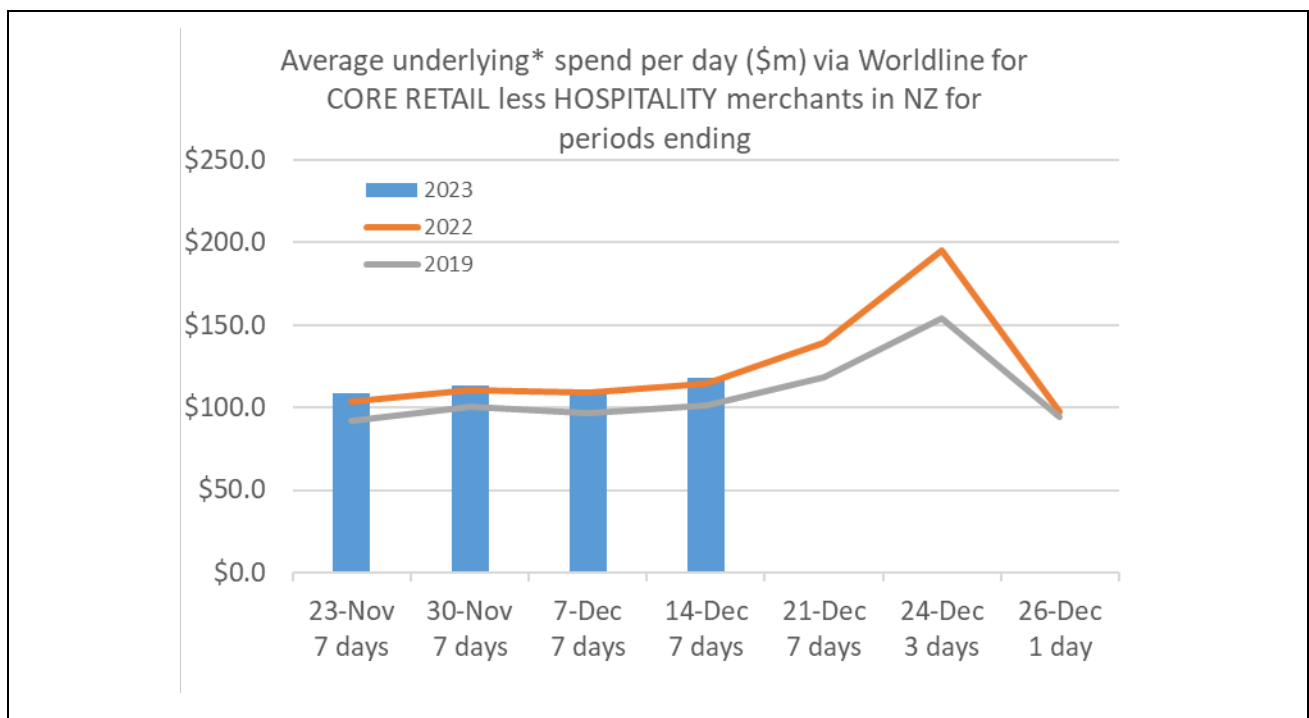


Figure 1: All Cards NZ average daily underlying* spending through Worldline for Core Retail excluding Hospitality in the leadup to Christmas Day (* Underlying excludes large clients moving to or from Worldline)

Proffit says the Christmas leadup is also producing the traditional extra spending at Food & Beverage Services merchants in the Hospitality sector, with spending recorded through Worldline NZ's network at the likes of restaurants, cafes, fast foods, bars, and clubs reaching \$431m in the first 14 days of December, up +0.4% on last year.

"Patterns differ amongst these various types of Hospitality sector offerings but, overall, spending is on track for 'peak party season' this Saturday (16 December), when spending in this sector is traditionally busiest for the year," says Proffit.

WORLDLINE All Cards underlying* spending for FOOD & BEVERAGE SERVICES merchants for 1-14th Dec 2023			
Region	Value transactions \$millions	Underlying* Annual % change on 2022	Underlying* Annual % change on 2019
Auckland/Northland	179.4	3.6%	5.2%
Waikato	31.0	-0.6%	15.6%
BOP	32.4	-1.7%	18.2%
Gisborne	4.0	1.1%	24.7%
Taranaki	9.4	-1.1%	27.4%
Hawke's Bay	12.7	3.7%	25.3%
Whanganui	4.5	7.2%	24.1%
Palmerston North	11.9	-0.6%	22.5%
Wairarapa	3.4	1.4%	31.9%
Wellington	38.9	-11.8%	-9.2%
Nelson	8.0	-1.1%	20.9%
Marlborough	5.2	-1.6%	-3.8%
West Coast	2.3	19.4%	63.9%
Canterbury	45.5	-1.3%	4.5%
South Canterbury	5.7	-4.3%	10.6%
Otago	25.7	5.4%	2.1%
Southland	11.0	1.2%	15.4%
New Zealand	431.2	0.4%	7.5%

Figure 2: Recent All Cards NZ underlying* spending growth through Worldline for regional Food and Beverage Services merchants, versus the same dates in previous years (* Underlying excludes large clients moving to or from Worldline)

Regionally, overall spending through Core Retail merchants in the first 14 days of December was up strongest in Whanganui (+8.9%) and Otago (+6.1%). Spending was lower than last year in Southland (-4.1%) and Taranaki (-1.2%).

WORLDLINE All Cards underlying* spending for CORE RETAIL less HOSPITALITY merchants for 1-14th Dec 2023			
Region	Value transactions \$millions	Underlying* Annual % change on 2022	Underlying* Annual % change on 2019
Auckland/Northland	609.5	1.6%	9.5%
Waikato	136.5	3.4%	23.4%
BOP	111.6	0.8%	16.3%
Gisborne	14.6	1.0%	6.1%
Taranaki	38.1	-1.2%	26.2%
Hawke's Bay	60.2	0.8%	23.5%

Whanganui	22.5	8.9%	38.6%
Palmerston North	51.3	2.7%	24.1%
Wairarapa	20.3	1.1%	22.2%
Wellington	144.3	3.0%	14.2%
Nelson	33.7	3.7%	14.5%
Marlborough	21.0	2.4%	15.7%
West Coast	11.5	4.2%	31.8%
Canterbury	196.1	2.3%	19.6%
South Canterbury	27.9	0.9%	16.6%
Otago	89.3	6.1%	16.4%
Southland	36.8	-4.1%	10.5%
New Zealand	1,625.1	2.3%	15.2%

Figure 3: Recent All Cards NZ underlying* spending growth through Worldline for regional Core Retail excluding Hospitality merchants, versus the same dates in previous years (* Underlying excludes large clients moving to or from Worldline)

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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).

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