

Acceptance of Cash Payments – Survey Results (July 2024)

The following survey received 36 responses in total, mostly from the Retail and Hospitality industries. Average business size was 24 employees, ranging from one employee to over 200.

Q1. Are there instances in which your business would not accept cash payments?

Two responded 'yes', 34 responded 'no'.

a) What are the benefits or challenges of not accepting cash? (for those who responded 'yes' to Q1)

- 'We do not accept cash. The hotels are located in St Brelade and St Lawrence. The nearest branch of our bank is now St Helier and it takes up to 2 hours to bank cash at the branch as well as presenting a security risk to staff carrying thousands of pounds of cash.' (a local hotel chain)
- 'Advance booking online with payment by card saves on bank charges, costs of using cash and also advance payment reduces the risk of no shows. In exceptional circumstances we accept cash payments but do find that these often have a higher incidence of no shows.' (an outdoor adventure activity company)

Q2. Are there instances in which your business would not accept digital payment methods (including card payments)?

Six responded yes, one responded 'Not sure'. The remaining 29 said 'No'.

b) What are the benefits or challenges of not accepting specific digital payments? (for those who answered 'Yes' or 'Not sure' to Q2)

- 'We do not accept payment by card on the day because we do not have the terminals at the venue and all bookings are made and paid for in advance.'
- 'Not having to pay banking or card provider merchant charges & not having to wait to receive the cleared funds'
- 'None to our experience'
- 'No benefits, challenges losing sales'
- 'Very expensive'
- 'Challenges. I do not have a machine for taking card payments'
- 'Not being able to verify identity of the card holder'

Q3. Does access to cash or digital payment systems influence your ability to accept certain payment methods?

A majority (21 of 36) said no. Of the others, responses include:

- ‘Yes, most customers pay by card so without a card payment method I could not run my business efficiently’
- ‘We need to take both as it gives customers the choice’
- ‘We accept Cash Sterling and all card payments but not Foreign Currency due to processing restrictions’
- ‘The cost of accepting certain cards does impact us, however, we have to accept everything, as a sale is a sale.’
- ‘The business accesses both, and functions well. Cash doesn’t involve bank or card charges, so business gets to keep the full payment received.’

Q4. Should the Government of Jersey introduce measures to enable more digital payment methods? If so, what would these entail?

Most responses were ‘no’ or similar. Of the remaining, they include:

- ‘Yes, web payment card systems and more options like square and other online gateway/ electronic methods - holding back web development’
- ‘Yes - there are still some that you can’t do - but we pay most of our GOVT taxes on credit cards online’
- ‘Yes - reduce bank charges for cash.’
- ‘We only take payments via our tills and therefore limit this to cash/card - would not be interested in taking digital currency’
- ‘We have all acceptable systems in place already - no interest in any further digital or otherwise payment systems’
- ‘There are ample methods in place.’
- ‘The Government should always support more ways to pay. We, as far as I am aware accept pretty much every payment method.’
- ‘No, these are commercial decisions’
- ‘It would be good to see other merchant providers available, e.g. Stripe. It would be good to see rules to stop what seems to be a common practice when booking online to have a surcharge added for booking/processing fees.’
- ‘I’d like to pay any government bills with AMEX as this gives more "rewards" that I consider useful. However if it meant an increase in charges I'd not want to.’
- ‘Enforcing next day clearance of funds from all card providers & a reduction of Merchant charges’

Q5. Should the Government of Jersey introduce legislation regarding acceptance of cash payments? If so, what would these entail?

Sentiment here was mixed, with strong opinions on both sides. Many believe cash should always be accepted, while many others feel that businesses should be free to choose which payment methods they accept. There were several mentions of banking fees for cash handling. Responses include:

- ‘Yes. Cash payments should be always be accepted’
- ‘Yes, cash should always be accepted and it should be illegal to not accept it’
- ‘We already take cash but would like to see cash reduce due to the shrinking bank infrastructure (from August no convenient branches for banking or change)’
- ‘Tourists especially like to use their cash as it is not readily exchangeable in the UK. Legislation is not required, we are transitioning to a cashless society and have been for many years, it just needs a common-sense approach by all customer facing operations to offer cash as an alternative tender.’
- ‘There are people who do not have credit or banking facilities so I feel "essential" goods and services should ALWAYS be payable by cash. Not too sure about how the legislation should work.’
- ‘Remove banks charges in cash deposits first to encourage retailers to accept cash or very soon we will have to charge for cash payment’
- ‘Reduce cost of banking cash. I hear this is a cost higher than the fee for cards payments’
- ‘No, these are commercial decisions’
- ‘No, it should be a choice for the business whether to accept it or not with all the consequences it entails (losing some clients/increasing workload)’
- ‘If you are referring to stopping cash, no. Cash is king for all retailer, yes there is less of it in comparison to years ago, but its the only thing we are not charged for.’
- ‘I don’t understand why this is required? I believe the older generation will always want to use cash and legislation could confuse them.’
- ‘Cash should always be in circulation in society’
- ‘As long as such legislation does not place the Jersey retail industry at a disadvantage with other jurisdictions. Need to consider older generation’
- ‘All businesses and government should be enabled to take cash.’
- ‘Absolutely not. People should be able to pay for their goods with phones, cards and cash.’
- ‘A common sense approach required rather than legislation as per below comment.’

Q6. Please share any other information you would like us to hear regarding the topic.

- ‘The push for digital payments incurs costs to small businesses whose rates with card payment providers are higher than those for larger businesses. Moving forward if governments want digital payments to increase, charges for accepting digital payments needs to be looked at and regulated. If digital becomes the only way of payment, charges should be abolished altogether otherwise retailers will be forced to increase prices on lower value items to cover charges. Customers expect to pay for small items under £1 with card now but this is not worthwhile for small businesses. We do not accept American Express, the customer gains in terms of airmiles etc but the rates for retailers mean small business are paying considerably higher charges than those for other card providers. We have never lost a sale by not accepting American Express but we would lose sales if we did not accept cash. Many of our older customers and tourists still prefer to use cash and we notice our cash takings are considerably higher in the summer months and at Christmas as many people still use cash to budget. Another consideration is the problems that occur when internet/ systems fail. Access to cash is imperative for businesses to keep trading.’ (Gift shop in Central Market)
- ‘We do not want to become a cashless society - it means that the control of your money goes. The banks are trying hard enough to make that the case’
- ‘Banks charge more for cash deposits than card making it very hard for small businesses, this is something that needs to be looked at purely because cash takes less work than digital payments’
- ‘PayPal card payment terminals don't seem to be available in Jersey. Nor Stripe. Registering to handle card payments can be problematic because some card processors are unfamiliar with the Jersey documentation.’
- ‘Cash has become more of a problem due to bank closures and not "night safe" facilities at banks. Also younger generations are less able to take and give the correct amount of cash during transactions - even when the till displays the change to be given.’
- ‘Need more versions of the sum up payment system / more systems that link product inventory / POS / website / one system that's fits all and is affordable for small businesses’
- ‘Government could legislate for banks to offer cash handling facilities or ensure parity of services for digital and cash transactions. Banks are making it more expensive and acting obstructive when it comes to cash transactions and this impacts on business more than consumer behaviour. There are fewer branches available in general and a switch to digital banking is impacting banking services.’
- ‘Government customer facing outlets should all allow cash payments’

- ‘WE accept all major card types with the primary exception of Amex. This is due to the way they account for sales rather than their charges.’
- ‘Accepting cash is a right of the business to choose. Also, no card / service provider deductions. Card payments have proved easy, but cash still an option. If web/ card/ electric goes down, payments can be made in cash’
- ‘NatWest charges my business 2% for cash deposits and 2% for cash withdrawals. Payment cards are around 1%.’
- ‘Both card and cash payments do have their advantages and disadvantages. When your system goes down which does happen, you lose business i.e. Power cut, it’s a problem and trying to get your PDQ provider is endlessly time consuming. As a member of the public I am concerned for when someone is in a queue in the shop and go to pay cash and they are turned down to pay by cash. It does stop sticky fingers with cash which is good but why cannot we adopt the same as Spain. Shops have a machine that accept cash and card so no employee touches physically anything. It was amazing’
- ‘The cost of Merchant and to a lesser degree banking charges for digital payments is driving up the overall cost of doing business worldwide for commercial entities.’
- ‘There is a strong argument for going cashless from a business viewpoint: speed of service at the tills, staff not having to handle cash and give change, and the management team not having to go to the bank to credit cash to the bank account. At least 90% of our customers pay using contactless methods. It’s great! We love it! For our customers who choose to pay using these methods it’s quick and there’s no need to carry a wallet, they just balance their phone over a PDQ machine or tap a little plastic card and they’re done! However, some people simply will not do that: perhaps, for whatever reason, they don’t have a bank account. Perhaps they are elderly and are confused or worried by cards and phones. Perhaps they are young and have been given some pocket money to buy a little treat. Perhaps their reasons are, in actual fact, none of our business. Perhaps, they simply choose to use cash.’
- ‘It is still important to take cash payments, especially at the airport as island visitors cannot use our Jersey currency outside of the Channel Islands. I think it is also important currently to take cash due to our ageing population, at least while we transition through this next generation as cash reliance will become less integral to society going forward.’