

# Credit Cards (UK)

As consumer uncertainty has risen and interest rates have changed, what—if any—impact has this had on what credit cards consumers search for?

# A roundup of key events

11<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Bank of England (BoE) announced base rate cut to 0.25% (previously 0.75%)

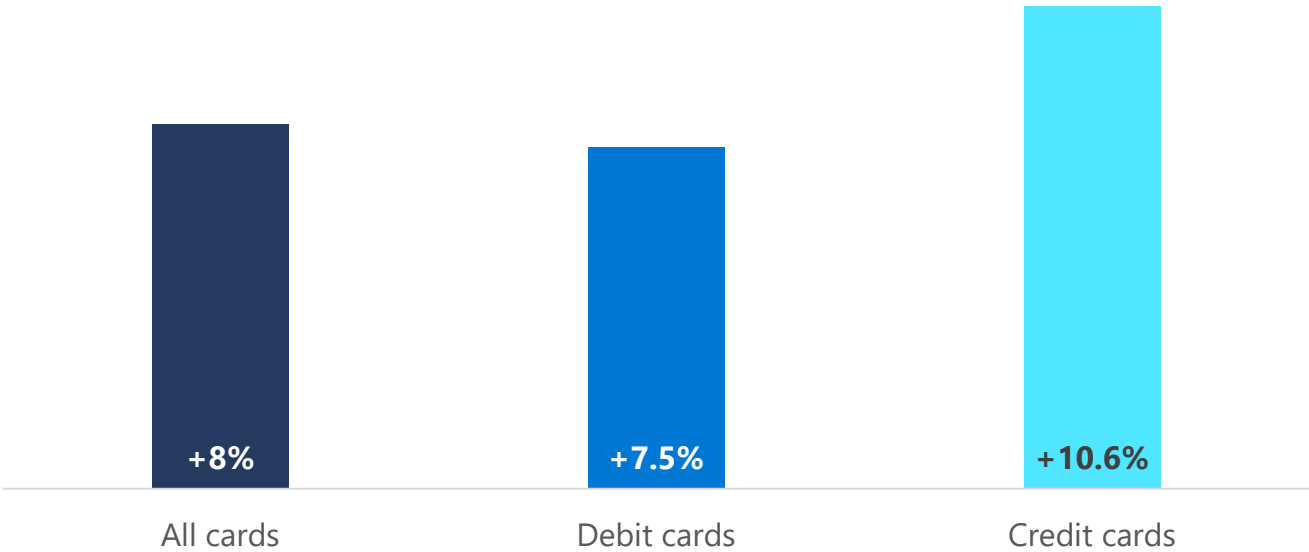
19<sup>th</sup> March 2020

After an emergency meeting, BoE cut base rate to 0.1% in response to COVID-19 market shocks

# Interventions encourage the use of contactless transactions

The number of contactless credit card transactions has outgrown the market. New regulations designed to encourage contactless transactions may raise it further.

Year-over-year (YoY) volume growth of contactless card transactions



**UK contactless spending limit raised to £45**  
By Mike Moore 9 days ago  
Current limit rises from £30 to enable more cash-free purchases

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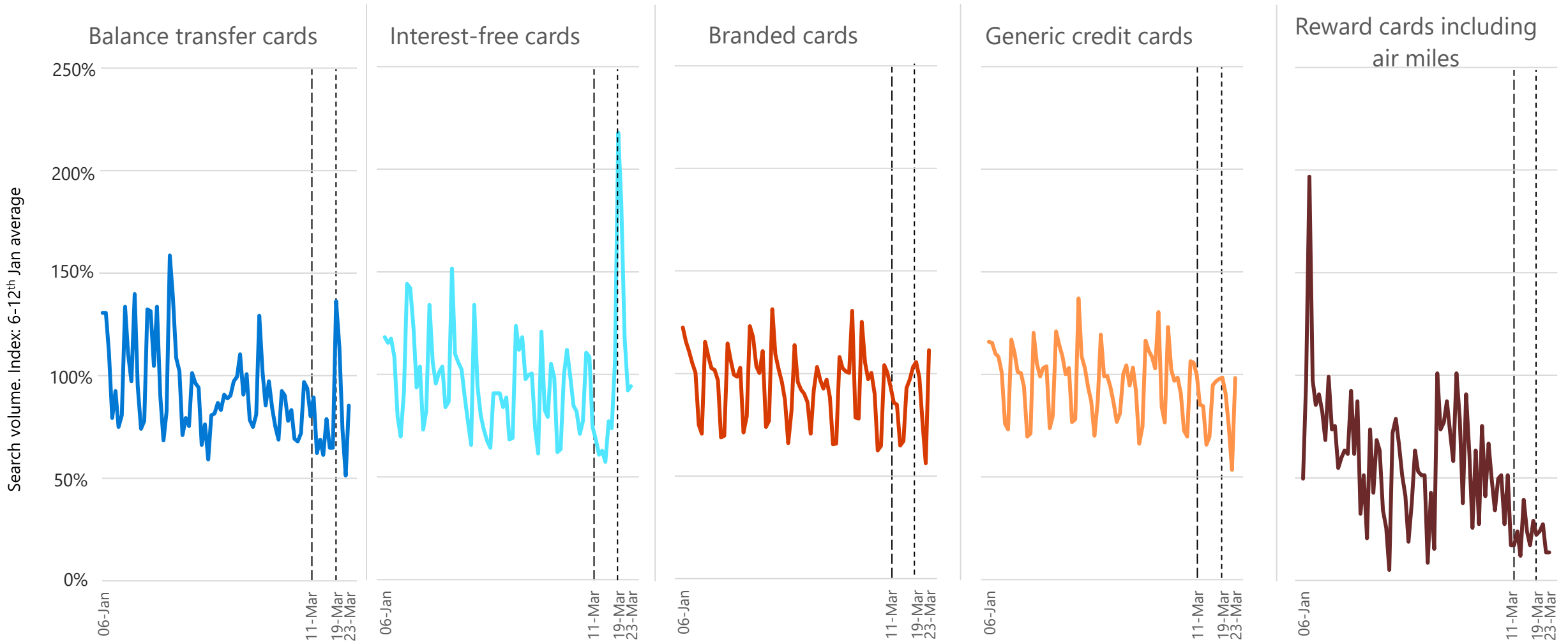


(Image credit: Shutterstock)

The UK has raised the contactless payment limit to £45 as retailers look to mitigate the ongoing effects of the coronavirus pandemic.

# Recent volume is driven by consumers looking for balance transfer and interest-free cards

Key dates | 11<sup>th</sup> Mar: Budget and base rate cut to 0.5% | 19<sup>th</sup> Mar: Base rate cut to 0.1%



# The future

The Financial Conduct Authority are proposing to introduce freezes on loans and credit card bills and cancel overdraft charges

Thursday 2 April 2020 9:34 am

## Coronavirus: City watchdog proposes credit card payment freeze

Harry Robertson



# Conclusions

- The number of contactless payments has risen YoY and credit card payments are outpacing the card market
- Recently, consumers have been more likely to search for interest-free and balance transfer cards. Airmiles and rewards cards have been less of a focus.
- Regulation interventions will likely be welcomed during this unprecedented time and bring temporary relief to many

# Checklist

## Immediate actions

### Ads

- Check the extensions you're using. Use "delivery, curbside pickup, other services" that are unique and applicable to your business.
- Shopping: Adjust product group bidding strategy to align with your inventory dynamics.
- Shopping: Keep your product feed files up to date as product inventory and prices may change rapidly.
- Automatically test different messaging by adding Responsive Search Ads (RSA) to your ad groups. Add assets with "delivery options."
- Check your editorial rejections as COVID-19-related terms are disallowed.
- Check your text ads. Replace any standard text ads with [Expanded Text Ads](#) and RSA (standard text ad volume will begin to decline April 1).
- Search partners: Review publisher reports to optimize performance on the search partner network.

### Keywords

- Use "Broadience" (broad match + audience targeting) to help you efficiently expand reach and identify new opportunities.
- Add keywords with terms around delivery, curbside pickup, fees waived, etc. as fit for your business (note "COVID-19" terms are restricted).
- Review your search term reports for emerging queries to add as keywords or add negatives to avoid poor performance.
- To capture emerging queries, create or reactivate Dynamic Search Ads (DSA) as a "catchall" with a lower bid and use discoverability tools like [Microsoft Advertising Intelligence](#) and [Keyword Planner](#).
- Revamp your branded strategy and consider broad match on your core brand terms to cover highly relevant emerging queries.

### Audience

- Create Remarketing lists with more recent frequencies (ex: 1, 3,7, 14, 30 days) to target customers still looking to purchase.
- Use In-market Audiences to target customers who are in-market for your product (especially for areas of opportunity for you).
- If you're using Shopping Campaigns, make sure you have Product Audiences (dynamic remarketing) set up to help increase performance.
- Optimize your Audience Ads campaign and reach people where they are today while navigating the web and news sites at home.
- Add images to your search campaign, so your ads can serve on the Microsoft Audience Network and get in front of more potential customers.
- Refine targeting settings to reflect consumer trends for your business around geographies, time of day, etc. Use the [Bing COVID-19 Tracker](#) to help.

### Bidding

- Balance between using automation and manual reviews. Monitor [auto-bidding](#), but keep a close eye to adapt to a fluctuating marketplace.
- Monitor SOV/click share and adjust bids, especially where you see opportunities with less competition in the marketplace during this time.
- Review your smart targets, adjusting as needed if your targets shift (ex: target conversion rates). Layer Enhanced CPC on top of manual bids.

### Budget

- Check budgets in the Microsoft Advertising Interface daily. Watch for budget pause notifications, which may not show up in bid management tools.
- Reallocate budget to your best-performing campaigns and products as performance fluctuates with emerging trends.
- Keep campaigns running at a lower CPCs and lower budget to capitalize on decreased marketplace competition, instead of pausing campaigns.



# Checklist

## Restoration strategies

### Ads

- Ad rotation should be set to [optimize](#).
- Check your editorial rejections as COVID-19-related terms are disallowed.
- Begin the (required) move to [Expanded Text Ads](#) and add Responsive Search Ads (RSA) to your ad groups as an efficient way to swiftly change your text ad messaging.
- Use ad customizers and IF functions where applicable. Use audiences to land effective messaging.
- Shopping: Use Local Inventory Ads to indicate availability of items and adjust product group bids based on inventory changes.
- Shopping: As your inventory levels grow, re-evaluate your product group strategy and product prioritization to meet your campaign goals.
- Check the extensions you're using. Use "delivery, curbside pickup, other services" that are unique and applicable to your business.

### Keywords

- Monitor keyword recommendations specific to your account surfaced in Microsoft Advertising user interface.
- Continue to use "Broadience" (broad match + audience targeting) to help you expand reach and identify new opportunities after the initial period of greater volatility has passed.
- Reevaluate strategy on keywords around delivery, curbside pickup, fees waived (COVID-19-terms are restricted).
- To capture newly emerged queries, create or reactivate Dynamic Search Ads (DSA) as a "catchall" with a lower bid and use tools like [Microsoft Advertising Intelligence](#) and [Keyword Planner](#).

### Audience

- Reevaluate Remarketing list frequencies (ex: 1, 3, 7, 14, 30 days) to target customers still looking to purchase.
- Use In-market Audiences to target customers who are in-market for your product (especially for areas of opportunity for you).
- Use Product Audiences (dynamic remarketing) to maximize the performance of your shopping ads.
- Create a separate Audience Ads campaign to reconnect with your ideal audience in high-quality and brand-safe native placements.
- Add images to your search campaigns to expand your audience reach and drive increased performance.
- Refine targeting settings to reflect consumer trends for your business around geographies, time of day, etc. Use the [Bing COVID-19 Tracker](#) to help.

### Bidding

- Once the market has "leveled" out and fluctuations have lessened, begin moving back to automated bidding with adjusted targets.
- When using manual bids, monitor SOV to adjust bids and leverage ECPC.
- Ensure you are setup for real-time success if you are re-entering the auction by leveraging first page bid recommendations in the UI.

### Budget

- Begin planning for increases (or decreases) in campaign budgets as the markets shifts from greater volatility to a new normal.
- Monitor SOV to adjust budgets based on new trends, inventory, etc.



# Checklist

## Restorations strategies

### Retail & Shopping Campaigns best practices

#### Feeds

- Send a complete feed with all product offers and include recommended fields – GTIN, MPN, Brand, Color, Size, Shipping Cost, Multiple Images, and more
- Optimize product titles and descriptions for improved product matching and relevance. Use the Search Term Report at the offer level for relevant terms to include and test.
- Leverage Custom labels in your feed to customize your product groups to meet your business goals.
- Import your Google product offerings to Microsoft Merchant Center to mirror your campaigns from Google.
- Schedule automatic downloads of product feeds to keep your prices and inventory fresh.
- Once stores open again, use Local Inventory Ads to drive traffic to your physical stores. Also a great option for the Shop online, pick up in store trend.

#### Merchant Center

- Schedule your Merchant Promotions and include any relevant promotional codes.
- Opt into Automatic item updates for price and/or availability to ensure your Product Ad details match the customer experience on your landing pages.
- Use the new List view for ad groups to easily see your product group taxonomy and make bulk operations to your product groups like bid changes by percentage or filter products.
- Campaign priority settings (low, medium, high) give you more control over which campaigns and products take precedent

#### Audience

- Product Audiences (dynamic remarketing) can help you take your shopping ads to the next level with increased performance.
- Use Product Ads on the Microsoft Audience Network to expand your reach and get your products in front of customers where they are today.

#### Reporting

- Review share of voice metrics with Click share and Absolute top impression share reporting to see how traffic volume compares to your competitors.
- Use the Product match count reporting to identify product serving issues within your feed and campaigns.
- Easily add negative keywords from your search term reports to filter unqualified traffic to your Product Ads.
- Regularly review your Product negative keyword conflicts report to ensure negative keywords are not limiting how your Product Ads are serving.
- Check your feed error reports to trouble shoot rejections and resubmit corrections.
- Review the Untargeted offers report to confirm all product offers are targeted by a campaign. An All Products as a catch-all bucket for new products or low-bid products is recommended.
- Review your Product partition report to view product group performance and use the Product dimensions report to see product SKU level performance.

#### Bidding

- Balance between using automation and manual reviews. Monitor [auto](#)-bidding but keep a close eye to adapt to a fluctuating marketplace.
- Adding Enhanced CPC will leverage auction-time signals and increase the likelihood of clicks driving conversions.
- Test new auto bidding pilots for Shopping: Maximize Clicks and Target Return on Ad Spend (ROAS)

#### Budget

- Plan budgets to meet the increased traffic demands by monitoring SOV.
- Allocate additional budget to your current best-performing and products.
- Monitor your daily budgets and adjust as needed with the changing environment.



# Checklist

## New opportunities

### Ads

- Ad rotation should be set to [optimize](#).
- Check your editorial rejections as COVID-19-related terms are disallowed.
- Efficiently replicate your marketing messaging strategy changes in your text ads. Replace any standard text ads with [Expanded Text Ads](#) and RSA (standard text ad volume will begin to decline April 1).
- Use ad customizers and IF functions where applicable. Use audiences to land effective messaging.
- Search partners: Expand your reach to a wider audience across all devices on proven, reputable and tested sites.
- Check the extensions you're using. Use "delivery, curbside pickup, other services" that are unique and applicable to your business.

### Keywords

- Monitor keyword recommendations relevant to your business surfaced in the Microsoft Advertising user interface.
- Use "Broadience" (broad match + audience targeting) to help you expand reach and identify new opportunities once the volatility has settled.
- Monitor keywords and consider relevant terms around delivery, curbside pickup, fees waived (COVID-19-terms are restricted)
- To capture emerging queries, use Dynamic Search Ads (DSA) as a "catchall" and use tools like [Microsoft Advertising Intelligence](#) and [Keyword Planner](#).
- Use the Google Import tool to expand your reach by automatically mirroring your Google Ads campaigns and changes on Microsoft Advertising.

### Audience

- Create Remarketing lists with more recent frequencies (ex: 1, 3,7, 14, 30 days) to target customers still looking to purchase.
- Use In-market Audiences to target customers who are in-market for your product (especially for areas of opportunity for you).
- Product Audiences (dynamic remarketing) can help you take your shopping ads to the next level with increased performance.
- Use Product Ads on the Microsoft Audience Network to expand your reach and get your products in front of customers where they are today.
- Add images to your search campaigns to expand your reach and connect with customers in new places on the Microsoft Audience Network.
- Refine targeting settings to reflect consumer trends for your business around geographies, time of day, etc. Use the [Bing COVID-19 Tracker](#) to help.

### Bidding

- Balance between using automation and manual reviews. Monitor [auto-bidding](#), but keep a close eye to adapt to a fluctuating marketplace.
- Adding Enhanced CPC will leverage auction-time signals.
- Review your smart targets, adjusting as needed if your targets shift, for example target cost per conversion.

### Budget

- Plan budgets to meet the increased traffic demands by monitoring SOV.
- Allocate additional budget to your current best-performing ads and products.
- Monitor your daily budgets and adjust as needed with the changing environment.