Reward Gateway | Edenred

The Golden Quarter Report 2025

Where revenue is really captured in Q4

The Golden Quarter is the focal point for any brand who wants to achieve good sales.

But when are consumers actually ready to spend? How do they plan their spending?

And to what extent do deals and offers influence their spending habits?

We asked over 5,000 users of the Reward Gateway | Edenred employee discount platform about their plans for the last three months of the year to help brands and affiliate agencies sharpen their investment and messaging.

Here are seven new insights we uncovered.

1

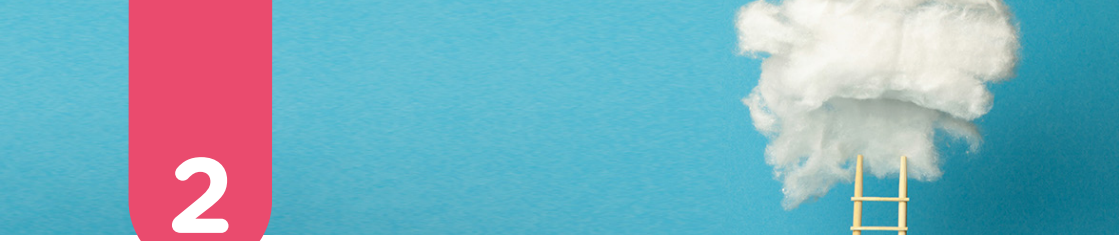
An Audience Primed to Spend

90% are active shoppers during the Golden Quarter

The overwhelming majority of people who use RGER's employee discounts platform are actively shopping, comparing, and buying throughout Q4. This isn't a passive audience considering purchases it's one that is ready to buy.

What this means for brands:

You're not fighting for attention in a distracted market with nine out of ten employees are already in shopping mode, the question is whether your brand will be visible when they're ready to buy



2

The Black Friday Myth

Only a minority of shoppers wait until Black Friday to start spending

54% begin shopping in early November or before

18% start on Black Friday itself

29% wait until December

What this means for brands:

The traditional Black Friday launch strategy misses more than half of active shoppers. Brands need to activate earlier and maintain presence for longer.

3

The Platform Preference

Where deal-seekers go first

32% **say their employee discounts platform is where they go most often for deals**

Over a million UK employees, RGER's discounts platform is the first stop for deals and discounts, not an afterthought, outperforming all other channels including search, voucher sites and in-app deals from retailers or banks. This is the place to find shoppers in Q4.

4

Black Friday Deals Still Convert

The Black Friday temptation remains strong

But 15% actively refuse Black Friday shopping
Whilst not all shoppers start on Black Friday, the majority remain highly receptive to compelling offers.

69% **will buy on Black Friday if they spot something they need**

The event still has pulling power, but it's the middle of the journey, not the beginning.

5

Universal Category Opportunity

Even spending distribution gives opportunity for all

Category	Share of spend
Clothing & Fashion	18%
Gadgets & Electronics	17%
Food & Drink	17%
Gift Cards	15%
Beauty & Cosmetics	14%
Toys & Games	13%
Home Décor	7%

What this means for brands

Contrary to perceptions, this isn't a tech-dominated market. Every category has substantial opportunity. Whether you sell fashion, beauty, food experiences, or home good, there is an audience ready to spend.

6

Premium Food & Drink Spending

The entertaining & dining out market booms

But 15% actively refuse Black Friday shopping
Whilst not all shoppers start on Black Friday, the majority remain highly receptive to compelling offers.

80% **of RGER employee users spend over £100 on food and drink during the golden quarter**

This represents premium spending on experiences, quality dining, and entertaining—a lucrative segment for food, beverage, and hospitality brands.

7

The Four Shopping Personalities You Need to Know

Understanding your audience psychology

1

The Bargain Hunter (59%)

Always hunting for the best deal. Your largest segment. Needs clear value propositions and compelling discount percentages.

2

Last Minute Hero (19%)

Leaves most shopping until December. Don't wind down campaigns early, this substantial segment needs you in December.

3

The Planner (14%)

Buys throughout the year and starts early. Reward this organised segment with exclusive early access and get their spend early.

4

Self-Gifter (9%)

Treats themselves alongside buying for others. “You deserve it” messaging resonates here.

What this means for brands

With **59%** bargain hunting, value messaging is critical. But don’t ignore the other personalities: nearly **20%** are shopping late, and they’re just as valuable.

The Impulse Purchase Hall of Fame

When we asked what they regretted buying, some answers were pretty unexpected:

1. Haunted doll from eBay – *RETURNED*
2. Bagpipes *(doesn't know how to play)*
3. 129 rolls of toilet paper
4. Inflatable hot tub that *"smells like plastic and regret"*
5. Second air fryer *(??? Why???)*
6. Tattoo gun *(no art skills)*
7. Pet psychic reading
8. Remote control shark *(no swimming pool)*
9. Medieval sword – *"Don't worry I'm responsible"*
10. Life-size cardboard cutout of Gordon Ramsay

These are just a handful of responses. The message is that the Golden Quarter brings out everyone's impulsive side. Smart brands balance urgency with considered purchasing to minimise post-purchase regret.

Strategic Recommendations

For brands

Start early

Launch campaigns in early November to capture the **54%** who begin shopping before Black Friday.

Sustain investment

Maintain active campaigns through December. **29%** of shoppers haven't even started by Black Friday.

Category agnostic

Every category performs. Don't sideline spending from brands or over-index on electronics.

Platform priority

With **32%** platform preference, employee discount channels deserve first-tier activation budgets, not leftover inventory.

Rethink timing

Your Q4 campaign should span early November through mid-December, not just Black Friday weekend.

Sustained offers

The **69%** Black Friday receptivity suggests offers should evolve rather than disappear. Keep fresh deals flowing.

Category confidence

Don't assume your category doesn't fit Golden Quarter behaviour. The data shows universal participation across categories.

Premium positioning

Particularly for food, drink, beauty, and fashion: employees are spending premium amounts. Match offer quality to spending intent.

The Bottom Line – Why RGER?

- Access to **6 million** UK employees
- **84%** completely or mostly trust Reward Gateway | Edenred to find great deals.
- **64%** of users say the employer-branded environment increases their trust in the offers.
- **64%** say we provide more relevant and higher-quality offers than other sources.

The employee discount channel is central to golden quarter revenue capture. Brands that start early, stay active throughout the quarter, and deliver compelling value across all categories will capture the largest share of this engaged, high-spending audience.

About This Research

This report is based on a survey of 5,500 UK employees conducted in October 2025, examining shopping habits and plans for the golden quarter. Data reflects UK employee shopping behaviour and spending intentions across the seasonal shopping period.

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