



Australia edging closer to a cashless society

Research shows cash is losing its lustre as the popularity of electronic payments grows

Sydney, 12 July 2011 – A surprising number of Australians now only carry small amounts of money. That's according to new research¹ from eftpos Payments Australia Limited (ePAL), Australia's leading payment system, which reveals that almost a third (31 per cent) of Australians carry less than \$20 at any time.

The research findings reveal the declining use of coins and bank notes, and indicate we are well on our way, along with countries such as New Zealand and Canada, to becoming a largely cashless society. Standout statistics from the eftpos research were that:

- 46 per cent of Generation Y (those born from 1982 – 1995) in Australia carry less than \$20 at any time
- 30 per cent of Australians didn't have enough cash in their wallets at the checkout to make a purchase, preferring to pay with a card instead
- Women are more likely than men to not have enough cash for purchases (33 per cent versus 26 per cent)
- Gen Y is the group most likely to be unaware of how much money they are carrying (51 per cent).

The Reserve Bank of Australia's *Payments Use study*², to be released in full later in 2011, shows the use of cash is declining in Australia (down from around 40 per cent to 30 per cent share of payment methods) and that debit cards appear to have been substituted for cash, with eftpos and scheme debit cards gaining share.

Bruce Mansfield, Managing Director, eftpos Payments Australia Limited, said: "All the indicators point to Australians moving away from cash and favouring electronic payments.

"The declining use of cash is a trend reflecting changing payment habits and preferences, and Australians' increasing comfort levels with electronic transactions. Other countries, such as New Zealand, have long favoured the safety and convenience of electronic payment systems over cash, and it seems it's only a matter of time before cash begins to disappear from Australian pockets too."

-ENDS-

Notes to editor

¹ Pureprofile fielded the survey on behalf of eftpos between 10 and 13 of May among a nationwide cross-section of 1000 adults aged 18+ in Australia. The data was weighted to be representative of the total Australian population on the basis of gender, location and age. With probability samples of this size, one can say with 95% certainty that the results for the sample have a sampling error of plus or minus two percentage points.

² Speech by Malcolm Edey, Reserve Bank Assistant Governor (Financial System), at Cards and Payments Australasia 2011 - <http://www.rba.gov.au/speeches/2011/sp-ag-290311.html>

About eftpos

eftpos is the most widely used debit card system in Australia, accounting for around 83% of debit card transactions. Approximately 5 million eftpos transactions are made each day, comprising \$285 million in purchases and \$40 million in cash out. In 2010, Australian consumers performed over 1.9 billion eftpos transactions worth \$119 billion at 325,000 merchants using 700,000 eftpos terminals.

For more information on EFTPOS Payments Australia Limited, please visit: www.eftpospayments.com.au

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