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### COVID-19 boosts e-commerce card spending worldwide by \$2 trillion

*Online spending will continue to show strong growth over the coming years as pandemic restrictions have accelerated a shift in consumer habits*

#### Lockdowns and temporary store closures led to e-commerce boom

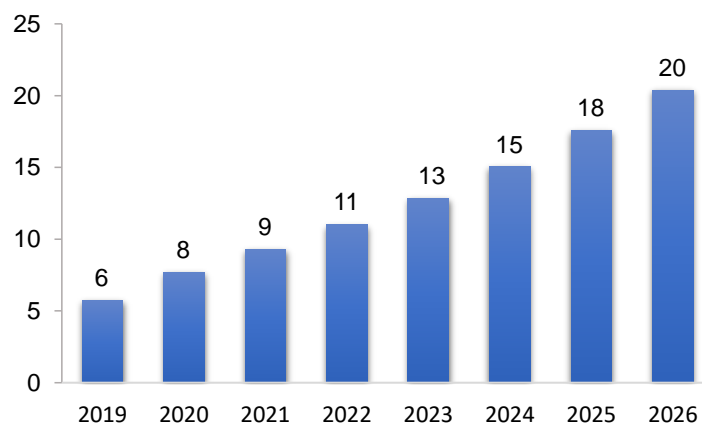
RBR's *Global Payment Cards Data and Forecasts to 2026* study shows that a record \$7.7 trillion was spent online using payment cards in 2020. Periods of lockdown and other restrictions on everyday life across the globe prevented access to physical stores and encouraged the use of online shopping for everyday purchases such as groceries.

COVID-19 provided an unprecedented boost to e-commerce spending on payment cards, but their usage for online shopping had already been on the rise for a number of years. This upward trend has been driven by improved access to the internet, rising smartphone penetration and a wider range of products available online.

#### Average value of an online card payment rises during the pandemic

Despite having been in decline for several years prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, RBR's study reveals that the average value of an online card payment actually increased in 2020. This was the result of consumers buying a wider variety of higher-value products online that would normally have been purchased in bricks-and-mortar outlets. This can be seen as something of an anomaly, and the average value of an e-commerce card payment will fall again over the next few years as consumers shop for lower-value goods and services online.

#### Global volume of e-commerce card purchase transactions, 2019-2026 (US\$ trillion)



Source: *Global Payment Cards Data and Forecasts to 2026* (RBR)

#### Americas and Asia-Pacific account for 80% of card spending online

RBR's report shows that total online card expenditure in the Americas grew by 48% to reach \$3.4 trillion, representing 44% of the global total. Online spending with cards in Asia-Pacific also rose significantly, increasing by 25% to stand at \$2.9 trillion, accounting for 37% of the worldwide figure.

E-commerce card spending doubled in Middle East and Africa. This growth was driven by pandemic restrictions which encouraged many merchants to begin offering online shopping for the first time. Despite such a big increase, at \$300 billion, the region still accounts for just 4% of worldwide e-commerce card expenditure.

Daniel Dawson, who led RBR's *Global Payment Cards Data and Forecasts to 2026* study, commented: "While e-commerce spending with cards has been on the rise for several years, COVID-19 restrictions encouraged consumers around the world to shop online even more. This trend is set to continue, with annual spending on payment cards growing at an average of 18% between 2020 and 2026".



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### **Notes to editors**

These figures and insights are based on RBR's study, Global Payment Cards Data and Forecasts to 2026. For more information about this report or to discuss the findings in more detail please email Daniel Dawson ([daniel.dawson@rbrlondon.com](mailto:daniel.dawson@rbrlondon.com)) or call +44 20 8831 7310.

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