

# Donegal Town Gift Card

A Case Study



MICONEX

TOWN & CITY GIFT CARDS

## Executive summary

Led by the Business Focus Group, Donegal Town transitioned to a high-tech physical and digital Gift Card with Miconex in 2024 as an upgrade to their successful paper Shop Local vouchers.

The move enabled the Business Focus Group to unlock growth, increase redemption rates, decrease administration and put more money in the tills of local businesses.

**Raymond Rooney from Donegal Town Business Focus Group told us more.**



€448,000 in sales  
in December 2025,  
growth of 28%



Winners of national  
competition, The BIG  
Christmas Giveback



More money to the  
tills of businesses,  
more quickly



## From paper vouchers to a high-tech physical and digital card

“Our paper Shop Local voucher initiative was a basic system run using Excel charts. It involved a lot of manual inputting, and we had to tally every Euro. We ran the system for 2-3 years with €1.5m in sales, but eventually it had grown to the point that we, as a business group with no dedicated administration resource, couldn’t cope with the administration of the paper system anymore. We realised that to grow, we had to reduce administration for us, and enhance the ease of use and user friendliness for recipients.

“Letterkenny had switched to Miconex for their ShopLK Gift Card, so we knew the technology of the Town & City Gift Cards concept was working well an hour up the road. We made the move and it was an easy transition.”

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## Garnering support from local businesses

“We had a meeting with our member businesses in the town and explained how the new Gift Card would work, making it clear that there would be no commission for them to accept the card and that the objective was a more streamlined system. The town is made up of largely family owned businesses who understand the importance of Donegal Town having its own Gift Card.

“Many don’t accept the national Gift Cards like One4All because of the high commission rate, meaning without us having our own card, money earmarked for Donegal Town would go elsewhere. Support for the new Gift Card backed by Miconex was strong and they voted in favour of the card that night.”



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## Onboarding and business experience

“With around 60 businesses in the town, we did most of the onboarding in person by going around members and completing the test transaction to register the terminals in the business. It was easy enough to do. We utilised the onboarding materials provided by Miconex including a leave behind to inform and educate businesses about the benefits of the card, a staff room poster for them to display in their business for staff, and a cheat sheet for the till point.

“The cheat sheet sits below the till and is a handy reminder for the person accepting the card to put it through as a Mastercard, how to get the balance using the QR code on the back of the card, and how to accept split payments. This is useful for businesses that might have staff working temporarily over Christmas or at weekends, so they always know how to accept the card without constant training. It’s the small things like this that make a difference to the customer experience.

“Donegal Town businesses are delighted with how streamlined the Donegal Town Gift Card is – they’ve gone from waiting 4-6 weeks for payment with our paper program to getting paid straight away. The ease of use and ability to drive more revenue encourages more businesses to want to accept the card.”

*“Donegal Town businesses are delighted with how streamlined the Donegal Town Gift Card is.”*

## Enhanced redemption rates

“Both customers and staff are more familiar with the physical and digital Gift Card format of the new Donegal Town Gift Card. The paper Shop Local vouchers were large and unwieldy, and were often put away in a drawer and forgotten about. Now, recipients can easily put the physical Gift Card into a purse or wallet, or have the digital version in their digital wallet on their phone.

“Customers like how easy and convenient the Donegal Town Gift Card is, and as a result, the cards are redeemed more often. This means more money is getting to the tills of our member businesses, more quickly, which is a huge benefit. The ability to drive new revenue quickly and easily means the Donegal Town Gift Card has positive word of mouth within the business community, and more businesses want to accept the card as a result.”



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## Marketing to consumers and corporates

“As a business group with no dedicated marketing resource, we don’t spend a huge amount of time marketing the card to consumers and corporates because we operate the Gift Card around running our own businesses. Around Christmas, we target our local newspaper which has around 100,000 reach. And we also tap into the resources provided by Miconex, such as assets provided through the Annual Promotional Plan and PR campaigns.

“We took part in The BIG Christmas Giveback, a national PR campaign organised and funded by Miconex during Christmas 2025 to celebrate the positive work happening in our local communities with €2250 in Town & City Gift Cards as the prize, and a local woman, Shauna Cooney won. It was incredible, we couldn’t believe that someone from our town won this national competition. It was very easy for us to take part and Shauna winning brought lots of positive PR for our program with a photo shoot with Shauna and the focus group taking place in the town.

“€450,000 in sales in 2025 for the Donegal Town Gift Card is a strong result. Every euro is ring-fenced into Donegal Town, helping local businesses to keep their doors open, employing local people. The cards are very popular with locals throughout the year who use it for gifts for friends and family, teacher gifts, competition prizes and incentives, and as employee rewards in line with the Small Benefit Exemption. We’ve been fortunate that a lot of employers in Donegal Town have purchased the cards for their staff, and that increased in 2025 with the increase in the Small Benefit Exemption scheme.”



## Putting money in the tills of businesses

“Any Irish town that has a paper system is going through an incredible administrative burden. The advice I would give is to bite the bullet and make the move to a high tech physical and digital Gift Card with Miconex. Since making the move, our sales have increased, our redemption rates have increased, and businesses and customers alike are happy with the ease of use of the card.

“From a member organisation perspective, your goal is to put money in the tills of businesses, and if you can do that, they’ll stay with you. Our retention as a business group is excellent and the Donegal Town Gift Card plays a huge part in that.”





TOWN & CITY GIFT CARDS

Take the first step on your Town & City Gift Cards journey today:

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