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# Almost 7 in 10 Irish SMEs do not provide an online shopping service and risk losing out on Black Friday trade

- **Irish consumers expect that 62% of their Black Friday weekend spend will be transacted online**
- **53% of Irish consumers want their local high street shops to offer a full online shopping service (such as direct-to-door delivery)**
- **However, fewer than a third of SMEs' websites can take sales orders or process transactions through their website**
- **IE Domain Registry CEO: "*Given that almost 70% of Irish SMEs do not have any e-commerce capabilities, most Irish businesses are immediately on the backfoot compared to their digital rivals in Ireland and abroad.*"**

**Almost 7 in 10 (68%) Irish SMEs risk losing out on Black Friday trade as a result of not being able to take sales orders online, according to a recent report published by IE Domain Registry, the company that manages and maintains Ireland's country domain, .ie.**

As one of the busiest shopping weekends of the year approaches, Irish consumers expect that 62% of their Black Friday weekend spend will be transacted online.*

However, according to IE Domain Registry's SME Digital Health Index 2019, which analyses Irish SMEs and consumers' attitudes to digital technology, only 32% of Irish SMEs' websites allow them to take sales orders or process transactions.

Broken down by region, only 20% of SMEs in the capital plan on offering any Black Friday or Cyber Monday deals. That number drops to 13% in Connacht and Ulster, 12% in the rest of Leinster, and just 7% in Munster.

Despite Irish SMEs' lack of e-commerce capabilities, 59% of Irish consumers say that it is important for them to be able to make a purchase online. More than half (53%) believing that online shopping will, at some point, replace traditional shopping.

However, almost a third (31%) of Irish SMEs don't have a website and a further 60% do not promote themselves online in any way.

Commenting on the report's findings, IE Domain Registry CEO David Curtin said:

"As we approach Black Friday and Cyber Monday, we are reminded of the competitive nature of the retail industry. Consumers are already seeking the best offers they can find, and online platforms allow them to compare promotions within Ireland and outside it.

"Irish SMEs' online presence is relatively high. Almost 90% have at least one digital asset, such as a website or social media page. However, it is the gap in

these businesses' ability to use their online platforms for e-commerce that reduces their attractiveness to the online consumer.

"Now more than ever, consumers expect to be able to get the full retail experience online. Given that almost 70% of Irish SMEs' websites do not have any e-commerce capabilities, most Irish businesses are immediately on the backfoot compared to their digital rivals in Ireland and abroad.

"As a result, a significant portion of Ireland's online spending goes overseas. To combat this, Irish SMEs must adapt their digital offering in line with changing consumer attitudes to buying goods and services online.

"This doesn't mean that all of your business should be online, rather that your online presence should complement your in-store experience. Providing options such as click-and-collect or the ability to reserve an item in store, are e-commerce methods that are easily adapted for SMEs of all sizes and can encourage in-store shopping.

"This year, there is a national campaign called 'Green Friday' which looks to encourage consumers to shop locally and support Irish brands and businesses this Black Friday. Ensuring that consumers have ease of access to Irish products, whether it is in-store, online, or both, plays a huge part in supporting this initiative."

## ENDS

**Read IE Domain Registry's SME Digital Health Index 2019 in full:**

- Download the main report
- Download your region's digital factsheet
    - Dublin
    - Leinster (excl. Dublin)
    - Munster
    - Connacht–Ulster
- Download the report's supplementary appendices

**SME Digital Health Index 2019 methodology overview**

Core Research surveyed 1,000 Irish SMEs in July 2019 on their use of and attitudes to digital technology and e-commerce; and 1,000 Irish consumers in September 2019 on their attitudes to digital technology, e-commerce, and retail trends.

**Additional sources**

*   *PWC   Black   Friday   research:*   *https://www.pwc.ie/industries/retail-consumer/publications/consumer-interest-black-friday-set-to-peak-2019.html*

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**About IE Domain Registry**

IE Domain Registry is the national registry for .ie domain names and is responsible for the management and administration of Ireland's official internet domain, .ie, in the interest of the Irish and global internet communities. It operates the domain name system (DNS) for the .ie namespace, facilitates an independent dispute resolution service, and operates a public WHOIS lookup service for .ie domains.

The company's mission is to provide unique, identifiably Irish domain names, along with registry and related services, to the local and international internet community. Policy development for the .ie namespace follows a bottom-up, consensus-driven approach, through its multi-stakeholder Policy Advisory Committee.

IE Domain Registry is committed to digital advocacy for the SME community. Through the OPTIMISE Programme and stakeholder engagement initiatives such as Digital Town, the company works with and supports SMEs to improve their online presence and e-commerce capabilities.

IE Domain Registry produces fact-based research for the business community and policymakers, such as the annual SME Digital Health Index, which provides key insights into the digital health of SMEs.

The company is focused on providing excellence in customer service through its ongoing customer experience (CX) innovation and improvement programmes. Since March 2018, it is  easier and faster to register a .ie domain name. There are almost 280,000 .ie domains in the database.

Based in Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin, IE Domain Registry employs 22 people.

www.iedr.ie