PSCU, the nation’s premier payments credit union service organization, has updated its weekly transaction analysis as of May 24, 2020, to identify the impact of COVID-19 on consumer spending and shopping trends.

To provide relevant updates on market performance, experts from PSCU’s Advisors Plus and Data & Analytics teams today released year-over-year spending and shopping trends data. In this week’s installment, PSCU compares the 21st week of the year (the week ending May 24, 2020) compared to the week ending May 24, 2019.

The average debit card purchase amount continues to be higher, up 17.2% for the week year over year. This continues to be driven by larger transactions in segments such as Grocery, and strong growth in this merchant category (average transaction amount up 16.4% year over year) has changed the overall transaction mix. The volume of overall debit transactions improved last week, finishing down 4.7% year over year, compared to being down 6.6% in the prior week.

For the states/districts hardest hit by the pandemic ("hot zones"), spending is improving at the same rate as the overall U.S. Credit card spend is up 17.0% last week, while debit card purchases grew by 14.1%. For the states/districts with "stay at home" orders in place, the week ending May 24, the gains in the consumer goods category come from bookstores (Amazon), home goods, and automotive, with continued negative impact from clothing stores.

The positive trend in consumer goods continued in week 21, with much higher year-over-year growth in debit card purchases. In this category year over year, there was a 37.4% increase on debit card spend and a 10.5% increase on credit card spend for the week ending May 24. The gains in the consumer goods category come from bookstores (Amazon), home goods, and automotive, with continued negative impact from clothing stores.

The elevated rates of the Grocery stores/supermarket sector are offset to the negatively impacted Restaurant/Dining sector, in which credit card spend was down by 45.5% and debit was down by 18.8%.

Our latest data shows continued progress for both debit and credit. While key sectors such as travel and entertainment remain muted, others including gas and dining are inching upward. We have now seen six straight weeks of improving results for credit, while debit has been at or above historic growth levels over that same period. These trends are encouraging as the rebound continues.

GROCERY STORES/SUPERMARKETS

Credit 14.8% Debit 16.4%

Credit purchases are up 59%, while Amazon debit purchases are up 120%, versus card-present (CP) purchase data the prior week. Among the states/districts with "stay at home" orders in place and "at home" orders in place, the week ending May 24, the increases in the consumer goods category come from bookstores (Amazon), home goods, and automotive, with continued negative impact from clothing stores.

For more COVID-19 support resources, visit pscu.com/covid19

PSCU will continue to develop and share analysis of transaction trends on a regular basis moving forward through the COVID-19 crisis.

Tracking Transaction Trends
Week Ending May 24, 2020