

# Boots and Other Leading Retailers Join The Gift Voucher Shop's Merchant Roster

Gift Voucher Sales Predicted to Rise This Christmas

6 December 2005



The Gift Voucher Shop (GVS), the market leader in the Irish Gift Voucher market, announced today (Tuesday, 6th December 2005) that Boots Retail Ireland, one of the island's leading health and beauty stores, is one of the latest group of retailers to join the company's extensive portfolio of more than 500 merchants.

Other retailers joining The Gift Voucher Shop merchant roster include River Island, Sony Centre, Peats World of Electronics, Pamela Scott, DID Electrical and Thomas Cook. GVS is part of FEXCO, the Kerry, Ireland-headquartered global payments company.

The announcement was made as the company predicted a significant increase of 15 per cent in Gift Voucher sales this Christmas. According to The Gift Voucher Shop, the Irish Gift Voucher market is presently worth €270 million. The company reported a 160 per cent year-on-year sales increase last month and said that it is supporting sales with a €400,000 advertising and marketing campaign.

Market research undertaken by The Gift Voucher Shop confirmed that the popularity and sales of Gift Vouchers in Ireland have reached an all-time high. Almost eight out of every ten Irish people have bought a Gift Voucher with women outnumbering men by a factor of three.

It also revealed that birthdays and Christmas are the two most popular occasions for buying a Gift Voucher. The average value of Gift Voucher sales in Post Offices is now €70 compared with an average value of €43 over the Internet or by telephone.

Boots has 40 stores nationwide following its most recent store opening in Dundalk last month. Speaking at the announcement, Kate Baughan, Product Manager of Gift Cards and Vouchers at Boots said, "We are delighted to be associated with The Gift Voucher Shop. Gift vouchers can be the perfect solution for those difficult to buy for people.

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"We feel that using the Post Office is an excellent way to provide a service to customers who may not live near a city or town. The Gift Vouchers can be spent on anything in Boots stores and can be used to pay for all or part of any purchase," she added.

Michael Dawson, Managing Director of The Gift Voucher Shop, commented, “The addition of Boots and the other leading retailers to our portfolio extends our merchant network.

This offers greater choice to customers and those redeeming our Gift Vouchers. Based on our market research and sales analysis, we are confident that this Christmas will witness higher-than-ever Gift Voucher sales. This will deliver increased sales opportunities and other benefits to merchants with a presence in the Gift Voucher market.”

The Gift Voucher Shop offers two types of Gift Voucher. The branded Gift Voucher allows customers specify which merchant the Gift Voucher can be redeemed against. The **One4all**<sup>®</sup> Gift Voucher is an open Gift Voucher and can be used in any of the 500 plus shops and services signed up to The Gift Voucher Shop. Gift vouchers can be purchased in any denomination from €20 to €500 in 1,000 post offices nationwide, online at [www.giftvouchershop.ie](http://www.giftvouchershop.ie) or over the telephone on 01 8708111.

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### **Notes to Editors:**

The Gift Voucher Shop Ltd.

Established in September 2002 by entrepreneur Michael Dawson, the company provides the most comprehensive range of Gift Gouchers available in the Irish market. FEXCO, the Kerry, Ireland-based global payments company holds a majority shareholding in the company.

More than 550 of Ireland’s top businesses with over 3,000 outlets across the 32 counties sell their Gift Vouchers through the Gift Voucher Shop service. Leading stores such as Argos, Brown Thomas, Smyths Toys and Arnotts benefit from the service’s unique distribution system.

The company entered a strategic distribution partnership with An Post to sell its gift vouchers through 1,000 Post Offices nationwide in addition to its online shop, [www.giftvouchershop.ie](http://www.giftvouchershop.ie), and its call centre service. The Post Office channel gives the company a unique national distribution capability unmatched in the Gift Voucher market.

### **FEXCO**

FEXCO is a global payments company headquartered in Kerry, Ireland with operations in the Ireland, UK, Spain, Scandinavia, Malta, Australia, Dubai and USA. The company was established in 1981 by its Executive Chairman, Brian McCarthy, and offers a range of Global Consumer Payments, Global Corporate Payments and Business Services. The company is privately owned with USA-based First Data Corporation, the world’s leading payment processor, holding a minority shareholding in the business.