



Christmas Trading Dips in Final Week to Deliver Similar Demand to Christmas 2016

Christmas 2017 will trade on a par with Christmas 2016. This is somewhat disappointing as we had very much hoped to see some marginal gains. Contributory factors include:

- A less than robust final week of consumer activity
- With Christmas Eve falling on a Sunday the concern is that it won't trade as robustly as had it fallen on another day due to curtailed public transport and restricted opening hours in Northern Ireland (prohibited from opening before 13.00)
- Significant leakage of spend to .Co.UK websites. Approximately €300m was spent by Irish consumers with UK online merchants in December 2017
- The busiest ever Black Friday period sucked a significant proportion of conventional Christmas demand into that period

Commenting on the Retail Excellence Trading Statement, Chief Executive David Fitzsimons said "Having experienced the most successful Black Friday ever the momentum could not be sustained and retail sales dipped in the latter part of the month. Certain retail sectors have come under sustained pressure in recent days including ladies wear, jewellery and telecommunications. Over €300m has been spent by Irish consumers with .Co.Uk websites to date in December which has significantly undermined the Irish retail industry. Some retail closures are most probable in Q1 2018."

Ends.

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About Retail Excellence

Established in 1995, Retail Excellence is owned by the members, for the members. We are an organisation which invests in innovative and exciting learning, market intelligence, human resource services, Government representation and member networking initiatives. Retail Excellence has over 1,800 leading retail companies in Ireland. Our members are the most progressive and innovative retailers. Retail Excellence is by far the largest retail industry body in Ireland.