Payment Platforms Stand To Gain As Consumers And SMBs Push For Smarter Financial Solutions, New Marqeta Research Finds

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UK consumers and SMBs are thinking more strategically about their finances, opening the door for payment platforms to deliver integrated solutions that drive greater value and engagement

LONDON--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Sep. 16, 2025-- Marqeta's sixth annual *State of Payments Report* shows widespread interest in smarter payment platforms to unlock small to medium-sized business (SMB) growth and meet growing consumer demands amidst ongoing economic pressures. The annual State of Payments report expanded this year to survey a total of 1,000 SMBs along with 3,000 consumers across the US and UK, finding that consumer and SMB demand for flexible, real-time and digitally integrated payment experiences is increasing and accelerating the need for payment platforms to deliver.

Consumers Shift From Passive to Strategic Payment Users

UK consumers are driving a shift in the payments industry, demanding smarter tools that make every transaction work hard for them. Consumers want intelligent solutions that integrate easily into existing payment methods, with 34% of UK consumers surveyed saying they are interested in AI-powered wallets that can automatically optimize payment choice based on their spending habits and preferences, and 49% saying they'd want one that recommends which payment method, credit, BNPL or debit, to use for each purchase.

"Marqeta's *State of Payment Report* signals a move beyond simply choosing a payment method or processing a transaction," said Marcin Glogowski, SVP, Managing Director for Europe and UK CEO, Marqeta. "Consumers are thinking strategically about their payment methods, seeking more convenience and choice and requiring payment providers to offer the options that deliver the most value in real-time based on their specific needs."

An example of the shift towards strategic thinking is how UK consumers have adapted to the ongoing growth and usage of Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL) solutions. 54% of UK consumers surveyed have used BNPL, higher than the 38% of US consumers surveyed, showing the widespread adoption in the country. While BNPL was originally designed to split payments on big-ticket purchases, it has now evolved into a tool for everyday spending:

- Savvy consumers are using BNPL to strategically manage their cash flow, using it for smaller purchases such as food delivery and groceries: 16% of UK consumers surveyed who use BNPL now use it for grocery shopping, and 14% of UK consumers surveyed who use BNPL now use it for food delivery services.
- Supporting this trend, Marqeta's platform data shows that the average order value decreased by 9% year-over-year in the first five months, indicating a shift toward more non-discretionary, small-ticket items such as groceries.

UK SMBs Seek Innovative Payment Solutions That Fuel Their Growth

The report reveals that UK SMBs are actively looking for payment solutions that save money and advance their growth. One of the most pressing challenges for UK SMBs remains access to capital and increased cash flow. While SMBs are the backbone of the UK economy, generating £2.8 trillion in revenue, they account for only £62.1 billion in business loans – 45 times less than the amount of revenue they generate for the economy – illustrating a deep mismatch between economic contribution and financial support. Marqeta's report shows that 42% of UK SMB owners surveyed rely on personal cards to fund business expenses, citing higher credit limits and better rewards as reasons why. This highlights a strategy for credit access, as many still struggle for it without modern business card solutions and data-driven underwriting models that look beyond traditional credit scores.

"UK SMBs need smarter, more flexible payment solutions that not only support their day-to-day operations but also actively fuel their long-term growth," continues Glogowski. "As SMBs raise their expectations for financial tools, payment providers that can deliver real-time and modern solutions that reward businesses will be best positioned to capture this growing demand."

According to the report, UK SMBs also want tools that act as strategic assets, with more than half (52%) of SMBs surveyed viewing payments as a strategic lever helping them streamline expenses, boost operational efficiencies, and free up cash flow. Marqeta's survey shows that 90% of UK SMBs surveyed are prepared to invest in new solutions with higher upfront costs if it means long-term savings and greater efficiency, underscoring the rising need to deliver these tools.

Marqeta's 2025 State of Payments Report also includes insights on the rise of social commerce, new approaches to rewards and loyalty programs, and how digital assets are impacting the financial ecosystem. Download the full report here.

About the research

The survey was performed on behalf of Marqeta by a payments research company in April 2025. Marqeta surveyed 3,004 consumers (1,503 in the United States, 1,501 in the UK) ages 18 and above and 1,003 small and medium-sized businesses (503 in the United States, 500 in the UK).

About Marqeta (NASDAQ: MQ)

Marqeta makes it possible for companies to build and embed financial services into their branded experience – and unlock new ways to grow their business and delight users. The Marqeta platform puts businesses in control of building financial solutions, enabling them to turn real-time data into personalized, optimized solutions for everything from consumer loyalty to capital efficiency. With compliance and security built-in, Marqeta's platform has been proven at scale, processing nearly $300 billion in annual payments volume in 2024. Marqeta is certified to operate in more than 40 countries worldwide. Visit www.marqeta.com to learn more.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the "safe harbor" provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements expressed or implied in this press release include, but are not limited to, quotations and statements relating to changing consumer preferences; increasing consumer adoption of certain digital payment methods, products, and solutions; which payment, banking, and financial services products and solutions may succeed; technological and market trends; Marqeta's business; Marqeta's products and services; and statements made by Marqeta's senior leadership. In some cases, these forward-looking statements can be identified by the use of words such as "outlook," "believes," "expects," "potential," "continues," "may," "will," "should," "could," "seeks," "projects," "predicts," "intends," "plans," "estimates," "anticipates" or the negative version of these words or other comparable words. Actual results may differ materially from the expectations contained in these statements due to risks and uncertainties, including, but not limited to, the following: any factors creating issues with changes in domestic and international business, market, financial, political and legal conditions; and those risks and uncertainties included in the "Risk Factors" disclosed in Marqeta's Annual Report on Form 10-K, as may be updated from time to time in Marqeta's periodic filings with the SEC, available at www.sec.gov and Marqeta's website at http://investors.marqeta.com. The forward-looking statements in this press release are based on information available to Marqeta as of the date hereof. Marqeta disclaims any obligation to update any forward-looking statements, except as required by law.

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