

Absa Merchant Spend Analytics | May 2025

Consumer Sector

Your story matters



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At a glance | May 2025

1 Month-to-month (MTM): Card spending and transaction volumes rebounded in May.

2 MTM: Entry of the Government category into the top 10 core categories, boosted by the Electric, Gas, Sanitary and Water Utilities sub-category.

3 Year to date (YTD) May 2025: A noticeable slowdown in card spending and transactional volumes.

4 YTD May 2025: Average transaction value declined by 3% year-on-year (YoY).

5 YTD May 2025: Online spending continues to be a firm favourite among consumers, maintaining double-digit growth.

Important: As of December 2024, there has been a significant change in our reporting. We have expanded our data sources to include both consumer issuing data and merchant transaction data. Previously, the report was solely based on merchant transaction data. This change may result in slight variations in the observed trends compared to previous reports.

The analysis presented in this report is based on the data available at the time of writing and is subject to change. Consumer spending data is inherently subject to limitations. Sampling methods and reporting lags can introduce some level of error. The findings presented in this report are based on our interpretation of the data, and different interpretations are possible. This report may contain forward-looking statements about consumer spending trends. These statements are based on assumptions and are subject to risks and uncertainties. We encourage this report's users to carefully consider these limitations and to consult other information sources before making any decisions based on the information presented here.

1

May 2025

MTM performance

Your story matters



MTM | May 2025 overview

A five-month snapshot: Volatility and key movers

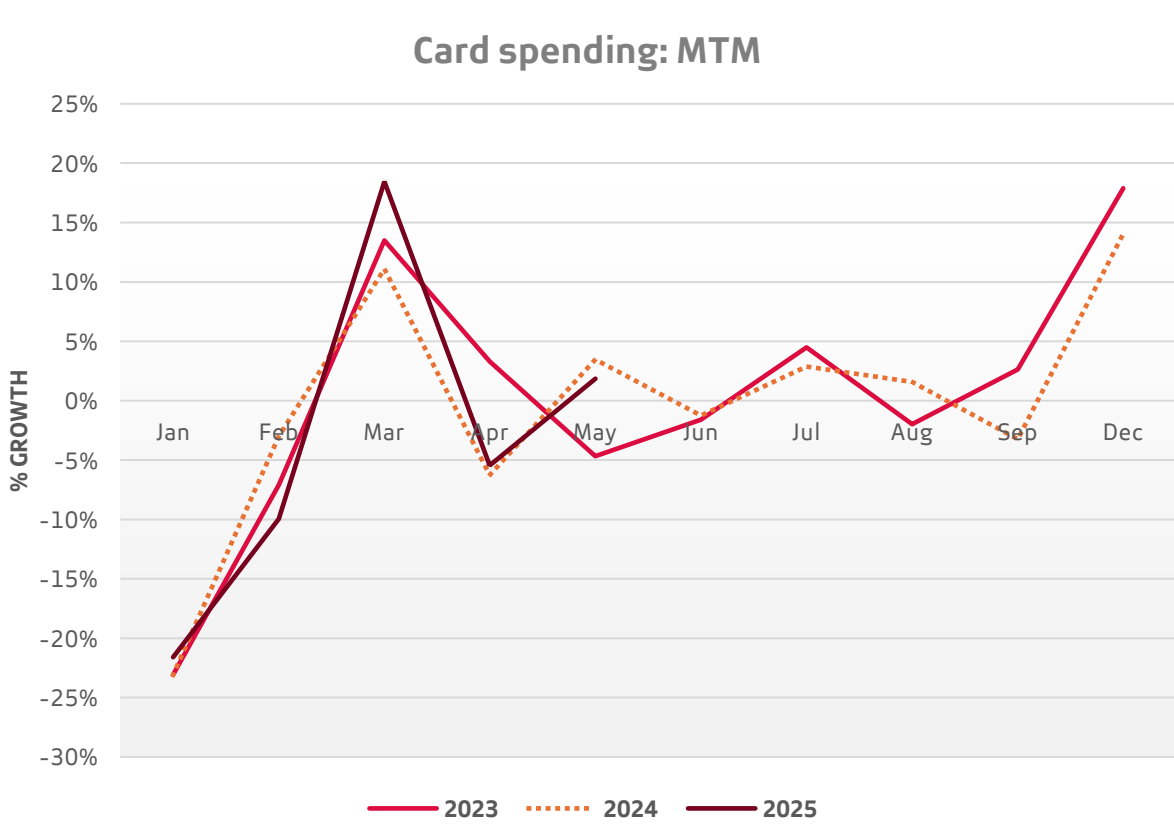
According to Absa’s internal data, card spending and transaction volumes rebounded in May, increasing by 2% and 4% respectively (graphs 1 and 2). This recovery was largely driven by a recovery in the top 10 **core spending categories***, which had experienced declines in April 2025. These key categories, which account for a significant 91.5% of total card spending, played a pivotal role in May’s upturn. While this growth is a welcome sign, it’s important to note that the 2% month-on-month increase remains below the current inflation rate of 2.8%, suggesting that real spending power is still facing headwinds. A new development this month is the entry of the Government category into the top 10 core categories, replacing Tourism. This shift is primarily driven by the increase in card spending in the Electric, Gas, Sanitary and Water Utilities sub-category. The rise is likely seasonal, influenced by colder weather patterns and Eskom’s annual tariff increases implemented in April.

The broader trend over the past five months provides a more nuanced picture of consumer behaviour. The average growth rate in card spending during this period was 2.6%. January and March recorded the highest growth rates, indicating periods of increased seasonal spending, while February and April saw declines, highlighting periods of contraction (graph 3). Out of the 29 spending categories tracked, only 13 experienced positive average growth over the five-month period (table1). This uneven distribution underscores the challenges faced by many categories and the selective nature of consumer spending in the current economic climate.

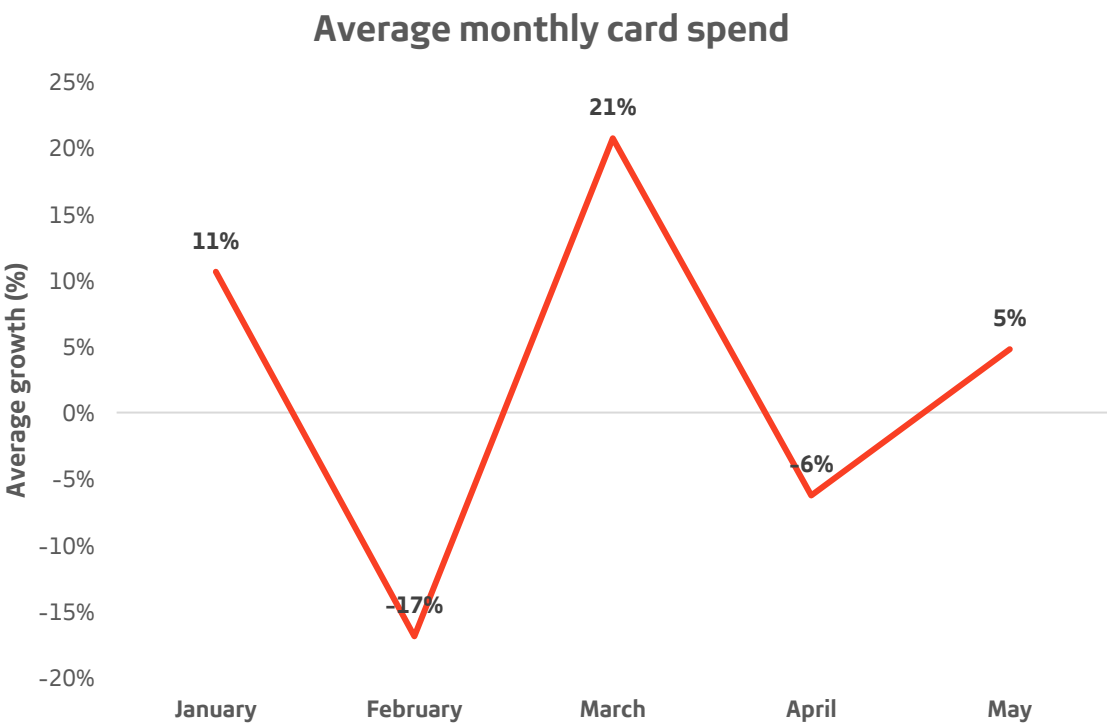
Two categories, Education and Transport, emerged as strong growth leaders over this five-month period, with increases of 79% and 54% respectively (table 1). However, it’s crucial to acknowledge that these significant jumps originated from a relatively low base, meaning their substantial percentage growth might not translate to a proportionally large impact on overall spending. Food, which consistently remains the largest spending category, experienced an average decline of 3% over the past five months. This dip in spending on essential goods could be a reflection of consumers tightening their belts in response to ongoing economic pressures.

The dynamic nature of consumer spending

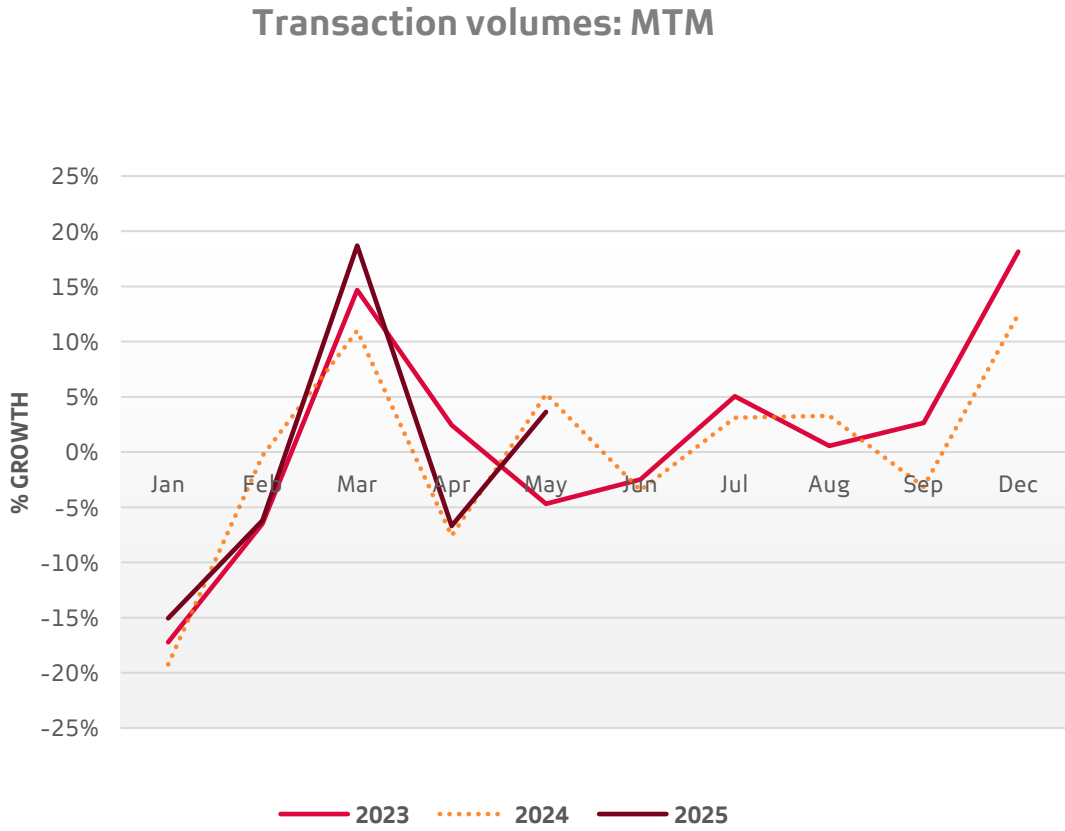
Perhaps the most salient takeaway from the analysis is the inherent volatility and responsiveness of consumer behaviour. No single category demonstrated consistent growth or decline throughout all five months (table 2 in the heatmap section). This lack of sustained trends across the board suggests that consumer decisions are highly reactive to immediate economic conditions, promotions and/or seasonal factors. Businesses will need to continue monitoring these shifts closely to understand the evolving landscape of South African consumer spending.



Graph 1
Source: Absa’s Merchant Spend Analytics



Graph 3
Source: Absa’s Merchant Spend Analytics



Graph 2
Source: Absa’s Merchant Spend Analytics

Tracked card spending categories	Average
Education	78.9%
Transportation	53.6%
Domestic & cleaning services	4.6%
Digital print media	4.1%
Health practitioner	3.7%
Medical services	3.2%
Government*	2.9%
Commercial & industrial services	2.2%
Funeral services	1.5%
Gambling	1.4%
Care services	1.1%
Automotive*	0.4%
Garages*	0.0%
Stationery & office furniture	-0.6%
Health & beauty*	-0.7%
Tourism*	-2.2%
Telecommunication	-2.2%
Building & hardware*	-2.8%
Business & professional services*	-3.2%
Food*	-3.3%
Clothing*	-4.2%
Home & garden*	-4.9%
Sports, outdoors & travel	-5.0%
Speciality*	-5.4%
Electronic & computers	-5.8%
NGO_ social & religious services	-7.0%
Books & newspaper	-8.9%
Games & gaming	-9.4%
Warehousing & storage	-10.9%

Table 1
Source: Absa’s Merchant Spend Analytics
*Core categories

Heatmap | MTM 2025

Tracked card spending categories	Jan'25	Feb'25	Mar'25	Apr'25	May'25
Automotive*	-5%	-18%	24%	-2%	3%
Books and newspapers	-5%	-18%	24%	-2%	3%
Building and hardware*	-20%	-16%	25%	-7%	3%
Business and professional services*	-19%	-8%	17%	-11%	5%
Care services	15%	-28%	22%	-5%	2%
Clothing*	-42%	-11%	24%	2%	6%
Commercial and industrial services	-2%	-13%	22%	-5%	9%
Digital print media	-16%	-17%	-12%	-6%	72%
Domestic and cleaning services	2%	-30%	43%	0%	7%
Education	494%	-38%	-48%	-28%	16%
Electronics and computers	-15%	-10%	17%	-15%	-6%
Food*	-20%	-8%	17%	-5%	0%
Funeral services	0%	-17%	18%	-4%	11%
Gambling	-14%	-36%	58%	-1%	0%
Games and gaming	-50%	-13%	20%	6%	-10%
Garages*	-7%	-18%	32%	-8%	1%
Government*	15%	-18%	16%	-4%	5%
Health and beauty*	-21%	-18%	33%	-3%	5%
Health practitioners	17%	-9%	11%	-8%	7%
Home and garden*	-28%	-7%	20%	-11%	2%
Medical services	6%	-8%	38%	-19%	0%
NGO, social and religious services	-52%	-18%	52%	3%	-19%
Speciality*	-42%	-14%	31%	-1%	-1%
Sports, outdoor and travel	-23%	-31%	43%	-9%	-5%
Stationery and office furniture	52%	-65%	11%	-11%	10%
Telecommunication	-20%	-6%	19%	-7%	3%
Tourism*	-9%	-22%	32%	-7%	-5%
Transport	189%	54%	17%	-3%	12%
Warehousing and storage	-38%	-22%	7%	-8%	6%

Table 2
Source: Absa's Merchant Spend Analytics

Heatmap | MTM 2023/2024

Card spending categories	Jan'23	Feb'23	Mar'23	Apr'23	May'23	Jun'23	Jul'23	Aug'23	Sep'23	Oct'23	Nov'23	Dec'23
Automotive	-11%	-5%	15%	-9%	9%	-2%	4%	1%	-4%	2%	6%	0%
Books and Newspapers	-10%	-24%	-3%	-12%	6%	-6%	8%	0%	-5%	12%	33%	25%
Building and Hardware	-15%	-9%	16%	-4%	3%	-3%	7%	1%	-2%	3%	10%	-3%
Business and Professional Services	-20%	-5%	18%	4%	-7%	-1%	8%	2%	3%	0%	9%	19%
Care Services	15%	-14%	12%	-18%	32%	-9%	1%	4%	-5%	7%	5%	-10%
Commercial and Industrial Services	0%	-4%	11%	-8%	21%	-4%	3%	-1%	-2%	7%	3%	-14%
Digital Print Media	-27%	11%	8%	7%	-8%	-33%	11%	27%	-11%	-8%	46%	5%
Domestic and Cleaning Services	-4%	-9%	20%	-4%	3%	1%	1%	5%	0%	-4%	4%	-13%
Education	330%	-4%	-55%	-39%	30%	-24%	18%	-4%	-9%	8%	22%	-21%
Electronics and Computers	-15%	-4%	9%	-5%	-6%	-5%	9%	-10%	3%	1%	39%	0%
Food	-20%	-7%	12%	6%	-8%	0%	5%	-3%	3%	1%	2%	21%
Clothing	-44%	-14%	21%	13%	-3%	-1%	-2%	-9%	7%	-4%	21%	47%
Funeral Services	4%	-7%	16%	-10%	14%	6%	-5%	3%	-6%	1%	-1%	0%
Gambling	-15%	-5%	19%	0%	-2%	6%	5%	1%	1%	0%	7%	19%
Games and Gaming	-58%	-3%	14%	12%	-15%	13%	3%	-10%	8%	-2%	18%	85%
Garages	-12%	-8%	7%	1%	1%	-8%	5%	1%	7%	3%	0%	-3%
Government	13%	-6%	7%	-16%	18%	2%	3%	9%	1%	5%	-6%	-12%
Health and Beauty	-25%	-5%	18%	-1%	3%	-3%	6%	2%	0%	-1%	7%	14%
Health Practitioners	11%	4%	8%	-20%	29%	-8%	0%	11%	-10%	11%	10%	-26%
Home and Garden	-31%	0%	13%	-5%	2%	-5%	7%	-4%	-1%	7%	44%	-4%
Medical Services	2%	-1%	31%	-23%	8%	-7%	0%	9%	-6%	9%	5%	-12%
NGO, Social and Religious Services	-44%	-14%	21%	20%	-28%	6%	10%	-2%	11%	15%	-9%	66%
Speciality	-41%	-7%	18%	7%	-14%	5%	3%	0%	11%	-5%	11%	46%
Sports, Outdoor and Travel	-23%	-13%	18%	-1%	-6%	3%	5%	-1%	-5%	0%	28%	11%
Stationery and Office Furniture	45%	-60%	-6%	-11%	19%	-18%	15%	9%	-16%	13%	22%	54%
Telecommunication	-36%	-4%	12%	1%	-2%	-3%	3%	-2%	3%	-2%	3%	24%
Tourism	-7%	-3%	14%	-6%	-8%	-3%	7%	3%	3%	5%	5%	7%
Transport	-10%	4%	14%	-10%	4%	-2%	3%	6%	4%	-2%	-2%	1%
Warehousing and Storage	-17%	-12%	18%	-10%	-9%	13%	0%	4%	9%	-7%	9%	7%
Overall performance	-23%	-7%	13%	3%	-5%	-1%	4%	-2%	3%	1%	8%	18%

Table 3
Source: Absa's Merchant Spend Analytics

Card spending categories	Jan'24	Feb'24	Mar'24	Apr'24	May'24	Jun'24	Jul'24	Aug'24	Sep'24	Oct'24	Nov'24	Dec'24
Automotive	-7%	-1%	2%	2%	3%	-6%	14%	-4%	-6%	15%	0%	-1%
Books and Newspapers	-7%	-26%	-13%	-8%	0%	-13%	8%	-7%	1%	14%	29%	5%
Building and Hardware	-16%	-1%	2%	2%	4%	-2%	8%	0%	-2%	13%	5%	0%
Business and Professional Services	-22%	0%	14%	-14%	3%	-4%	4%	6%	-3%	7%	9%	12%
Care Services	21%	-13%	-5%	11%	0%	-7%	13%	-1%	-4%	10%	-1%	-3%
Commercial and Industrial Services	3%	0%	0%	13%	-3%	-3%	16%	-9%	-7%	9%	3%	-13%
Digital Print Media	-25%	9%	88%	-33%	20%	-11%	-35%	30%	40%	66%	-39%	8%
Domestic and Cleaning Services	7%	-8%	7%	7%	-1%	0%	10%	0%	-2%	7%	-2%	-3%
Education	348%	-15%	-59%	-4%	-11%	-35%	73%	-23%	-13%	43%	7%	-29%
Electronics and Computers	-17%	-4%	5%	-13%	-4%	4%	3%	-4%	-4%	3%	31%	10%
Food	-21%	-3%	13%	-7%	4%	-1%	2%	2%	-4%	4%	7%	14%
Clothing	-44%	-10%	20%	-2%	3%	8%	-8%	-2%	0%	5%	22%	37%
Funeral Services	8%	-6%	3%	5%	7%	4%	4%	-2%	-10%	12%	-8%	7%
Gambling	-17%	-8%	17%	3%	5%	-3%	5%	6%	-7%	7%	6%	11%
Games and Gaming	-58%	-2%	17%	-6%	-3%	8%	-5%	1%	2%	-3%	21%	76%
Garages	-10%	2%	7%	-2%	-2%	-6%	4%	-2%	-6%	2%	-2%	5%
Government	17%	-4%	-4%	6%	6%	-5%	24%	3%	2%	8%	-11%	-14%
Health and Beauty	-24%	-1%	9%	-2%	10%	-7%	7%	4%	-5%	5%	3%	11%
Health Practitioners	16%	7%	-8%	10%	2%	-13%	22%	-4%	-7%	19%	-1%	-24%
Home and Garden	-23%	-4%	4%	-5%	7%	-4%	7%	-3%	-2%	11%	27%	5%
Medical Services	5%	8%	12%	-8%	-3%	-10%	13%	0%	-6%	15%	1%	-10%
NGO, Social and Religious Services	-47%	-9%	42%	-22%	-2%	10%	-12%	7%	25%	-12%	17%	69%
Speciality	-43%	1%	20%	-13%	6%	0%	0%	7%	-3%	4%	15%	33%
Sports, Outdoor and Travel	-23%	-6%	15%	-15%	2%	1%	6%	6%	-9%	6%	27%	10%
Stationery and Office Furniture	54%	-59%	-18%	5%	4%	-19%	24%	-1%	-10%	20%	9%	58%
Telecommunication	-23%	0%	10%	-7%	2%	0%	5%	1%	-4%	8%	-1%	17%
Tourism	-7%	-1%	6%	-9%	-5%	0%	1%	9%	6%	3%	-1%	5%
Transport	-9%	2%	-7%	-6%	4%	-3%	13%	-5%	-16%	-66%	-28%	6%
Warehousing and Storage	-17%	3%	-3%	-1%	20%	7%	27%	13%	-5%	20%	11%	46%
Overall performance	-23%	-3%	11%	-6%	3%	-1%	3%	2%	-3%	6%	9%	14%

Table 4
Source: Absa's Merchant Spend Analytics

2

May 2025

YTD performance

Your story matters



YTD | May 2025

Card spending slows despite economic tailwinds

Absa’s internal data reveals a noticeable slowdown for the YTD May 2025 period. While still in positive territory, overall card spending grew by a modest 3% (YTD May’24: +7%), accompanied by a deceleration in transaction volumes, which slowed to 7% (YTD May’24: +10%). The average transaction value has consequently declined by 3% YoY. This marks a significant shift, especially considering that interest rates and inflation are currently favourable. Despite these positive economic signs, consumers continue to face a challenging landscape. Factors such as persistent unemployment, escalating electricity and fuel prices, stubbornly high food costs and increasing household expenses are all contributing to consumer strain. This comes on the heels of several years where households have been under considerable financial pressure. While the broader economy may be improving, many households are still struggling with the cost of living and financial insecurity.

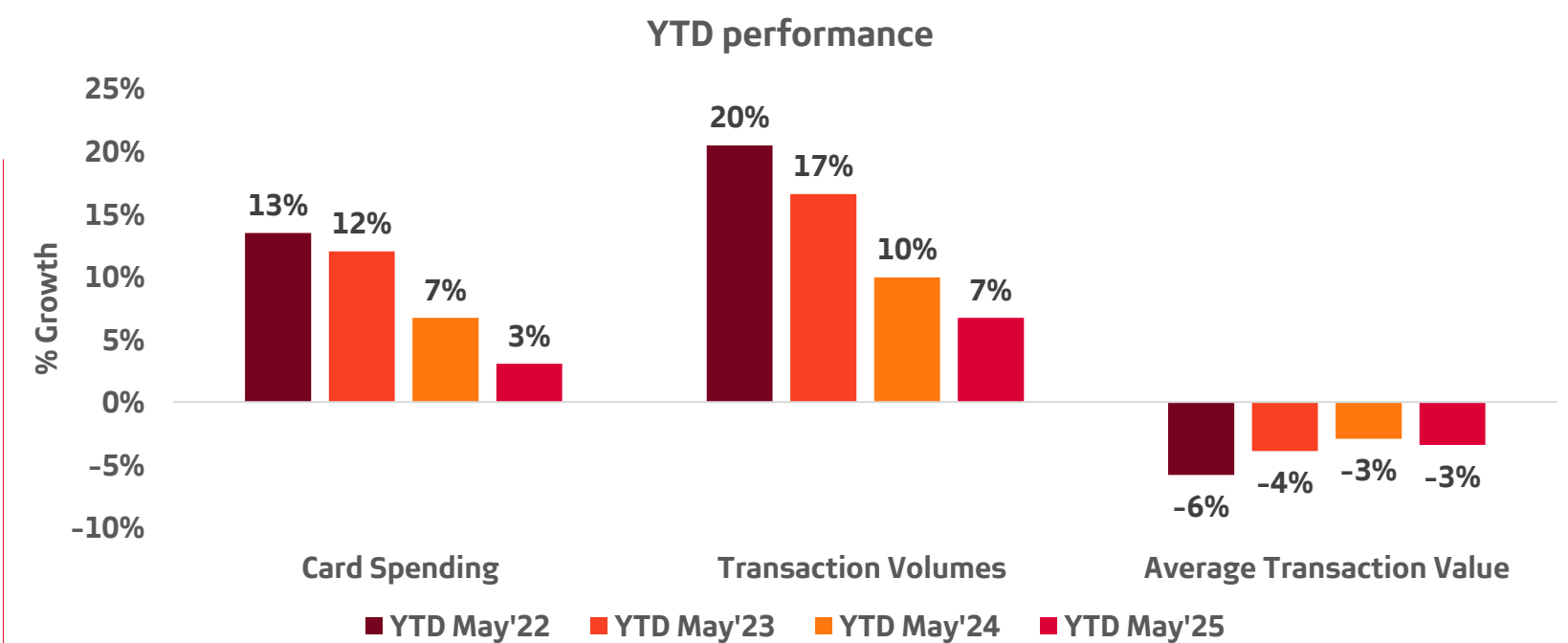
Category performance

For YTD May’25, core categories* such as Food, Clothing, and Home and Garden are showing growth, yet at a slightly slower pace than more non-core categories (table 5). This trend is particularly evident in the food sector, which has experienced a notable deceleration in spending, recording a modest 2% growth in the YTD – a drop from the 5% growth observed in YTD May 2024. Conversely, the clothing category appears to be experiencing a better performance, with growth climbing from a mere 1% in YTD May 2024 to 4% in the YTD 2025. Looking at non-core categories, Warehousing and Storage continues to be a standout performer, claiming the top spot for YTD growth at 73% (YTD May’24: +11%). However, it’s important to note that this category still represents a tiny fraction of total card spending. Other top-performing categories in the top five include Transport, Education, Gambling and Government Services. These categories show hints of seasonality and growing popularity. The surge in the Transport category is largely driven by e-hailing services, which have seen an impressive increase in growth from 73% in 2024, to 95% this year. This suggests a notable expansion in both the number of e-hailing drivers and the frequency of consumer usage. It’s worth noting that all of these top-performing categories are growing from a relatively low base.

The overall slower growth in core categories,* coupled with a YoY decline in the average transaction value, may be pointing to a consumer who, while still possessing purchasing power, is becoming increasingly price sensitive. This decline in average transaction value likely signifies a trend of consumers shrinking their basket sizes in response to the sustained high prices of goods and services. As global political instability and ongoing conflicts persist, certain product categories are expected to face further price pressures.

Fitch Solutions** recently highlighted a highly uncertain macroeconomic outlook for the global food and drinks sector. Persistent inflationary pressures, fluctuating interest rates and the potential weakening of labour markets are cited as key concerns. These global factors, compounded by elevated geopolitical and economic risks, are expected to significantly impact consumer spending decisions, especially concerning discretionary purchases. Ongoing conflicts and political tensions are identified as directly affecting household purchasing power and corporate margins, while also indirectly influencing consumer and business sentiment worldwide.

** Source: BMI South Africa Food and Drink Key View, 20 June 2025



Graph 4
Source: Absa’s Merchant Spend Analytics

Tracked card spending categories	YTD May'22	YTD May'23	YTD May'24	YTD May'25
Warehousing & Storage	11%	-10%	11%	73%
Transportation	77%	14%	-9%	43%
Education	25%	21%	21%	22%
Gambling	9%	61%	30%	18%
Government	4%	19%	17%	18%
Domestic & Cleaning Services	28%	8%	3%	14%
Telecommunication	7%	3%	3%	13%
NGO_ Social & Religious Services	0%	15%	9%	11%
Medical Services	9%	11%	10%	8%
Games & Gaming	50%	20%	2%	7%
Funeral Services	-11%	38%	15%	6%
Home & Garden	-2%	4%	12%	6%
Stationery & Office Furniture	9%	15%	11%	6%
Speciality	24%	11%	10%	6%
Care Services	21%	12%	15%	5%
Business & Professional Services	51%	48%	19%	4%
Health & Beauty	15%	0%	9%	4%
Automotive	12%	10%	8%	4%
Clothing	12%	-11%	1%	4%
Sports; Outdoors & Travel	20%	245%	5%	3%
Electronic & Computers	9%	7%	0%	3%
Food	8%	13%	5%	2%
Health Practitioner	5%	8%	13%	1%
Building & Hardware	3%	8%	0%	0%
Tourism	69%	28%	11%	-1%
Commercial & Industrial Services	19%	5%	10%	-3%
Digital Print Media	224%	107%	31%	-6%
Garages	26%	8%	0%	-11%
Books & Newspaper	11%	16%	4%	-20%

Table 5
Source: Absa’s Merchant Spend Analytics

YTD | May 2025

Online vs in-store:** A shifting landscape

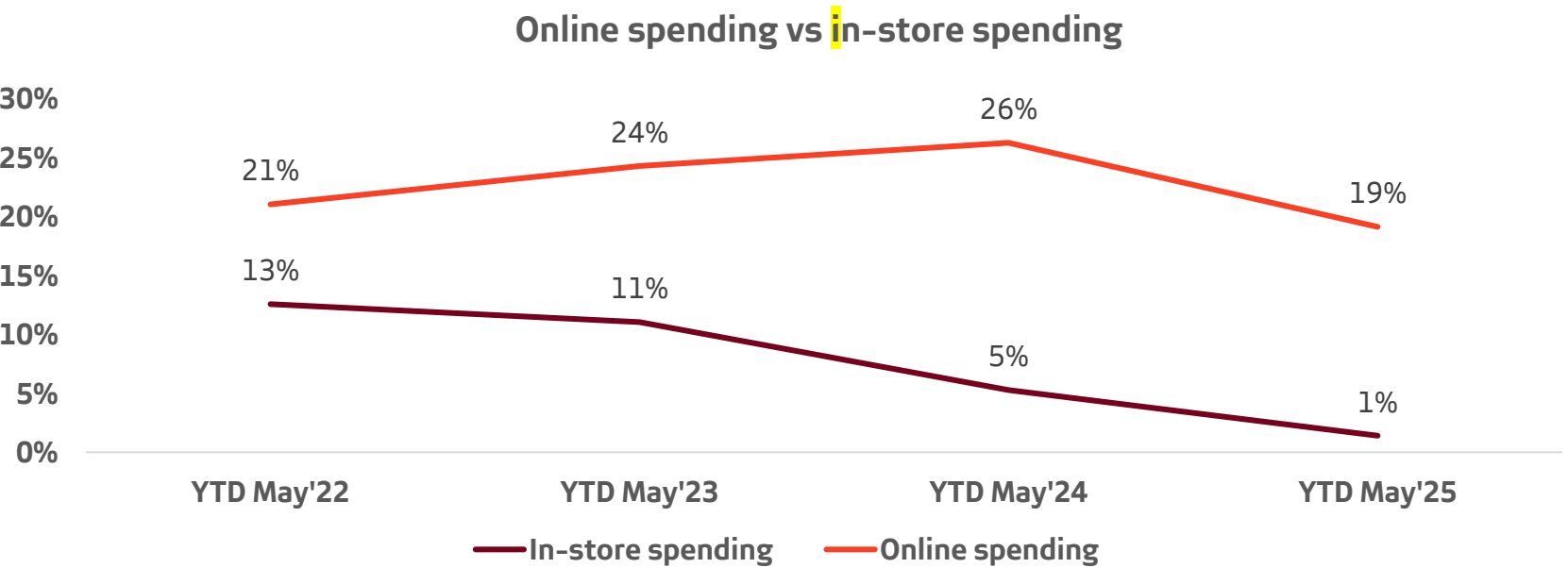
Online spending continues to be a firm favourite among consumers, maintaining double-digit growth at 19% for YTD May 2025, though this has slowed from 26% in the same period last year (graph 5). In contrast, in-store spending saw a more significant slowdown, growing by only 1% compared to 5% previously. Internal data highlights the top five categories dominating (market share) online spending: Home & Garden (22%), Food (21%), Business and Professional Services (17%), Transportation (8%) and Clothing (7%). Among these, Food and Transportation are experiencing particularly strong growth, up 47% and 65% respectively for YTD May 2025, a significant jump from their performance in the same period in 2024 (33% and -12%). This robust growth in the food category suggests increasing consumer reliance on digital platforms for this essential good, likely fuelled by retailers’ enhancement of their online offerings with more sales, extended delivery options and broader geographical reach.

Credit card vs debit card**

Credit cards continue to exhibit higher usage rates than debit cards across the top 10 core spending categories, albeit at a slower rate than the previous periods (graph 6). Notably, credit card usage for essential goods such as food has risen by 7%, compared to a 1% increase for debit cards.** This trend is expected to persist, as credit cards offer a range of benefits including rewards programmes, cashback offers and the ability to build credit history. Additionally, consumers are more likely to use credit cards to supplement their income, further contributing to the sustained growth in credit card usage relative to debit cards.

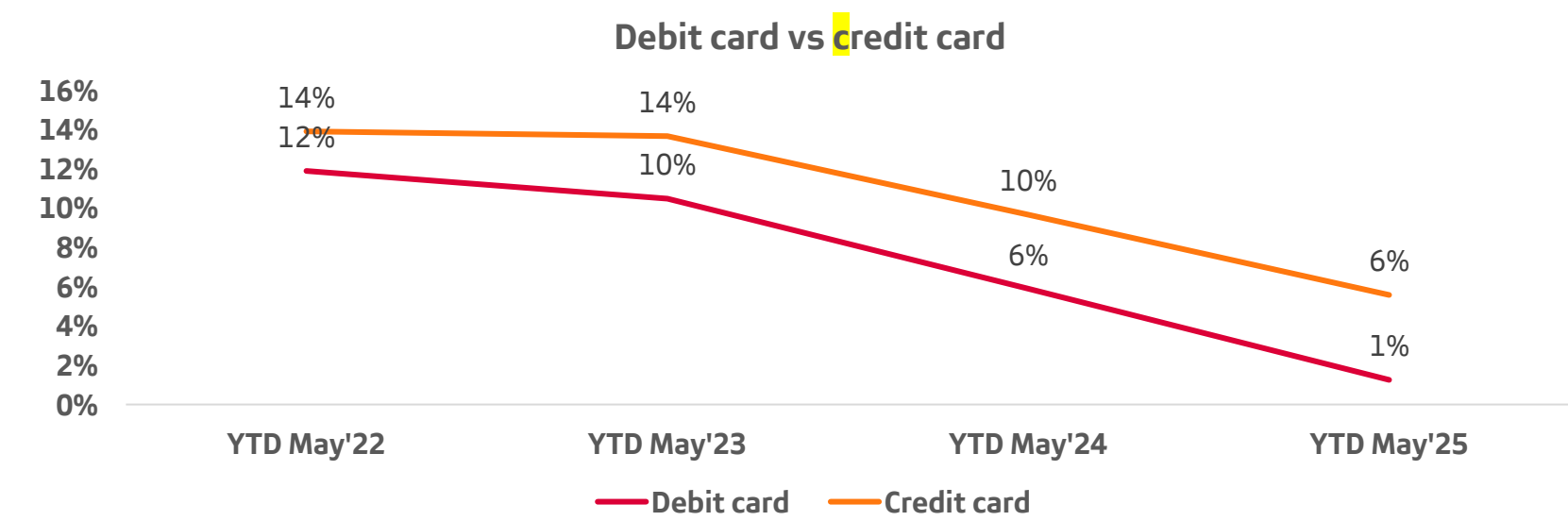
In closing

The card spending landscape based on Absa’s internal data indicates a resilient consumer base still grappling with cost-of-living pressures, even as the economy shows signs of improvement. The overarching trend points to a discerning consumer who is prioritising value and adjusting spending habits in response to both local economic conditions and broader global uncertainties. The significant shift towards online channels for certain categories underscores the evolving retail landscape and consumer preferences. Businesses in the retail sector will need to remain agile and responsive to these evolving consumer behaviours to maintain growth and profitability



Graph 5
Source: Absa's Merchant Spend Analytics

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Graph 6
Source: Absa's Merchant Spend Analytics

** Source: See heatmap section, pages 11 and 12, for detailed data.

May YTD 2025 | Online pending

	YTD growth			
	YTD May'22	YTD May'23	YTD May'24	YTD May'25
Automotive	32%	52%	240%	77%
Books and Newspapers	-9%	19%	12%	1%
Building and Hardware	29%	25%	-9%	0%
Business and Professional Services	6%	34%	33%	-2%
Care Services	58%	0%	-13%	37%
Clothing	93%	30%	25%	6%
Commercial and Industrial Services	3%	20%	34%	130%
Digital Print Media	409%	134%	35%	-7%
Domestic and Cleaning Services	116%	13%	-5%	12%
Education	9%	32%	28%	69%
Electronics and Computers	65%	17%	-4%	13%
Food	36%	-3%	33%	47%
Funeral Services	326%	-85%	643%	-84%
Gambling	-27%	236%	72%	31%
Games and Gaming	45%	39%	12%	13%
Garages	-76%	203%	-75%	14%
Government	-30%	30%	39%	32%
Health and Beauty	10%	9%	12%	7%
Health Practitioners	-1%	12%	33%	-19%
Home and Garden	-9%	31%	37%	13%
Medical Services	19%	18%	14%	31%
NGO, Social and Religious Services	-39%	-9%	21%	28%
Speciality	53%	14%	2%	18%
Sports, Outdoors and Travel	77%	91%	17%	3%
Stationery and Office Furniture	-28%	-28%	17%	19%
Telecommunication	6%	8%	-14%	17%
Tourism	80%	23%	15%	-1%
Transport	60%	14%	-12%	65%
Warehousing and Storage	32%	-19%	4%	-18%

Table 6
Source: Absa's Merchant Spend Analytics

	Distribution			
	YTD May'22	YTD May'23	YTD May'24	YTD May'25
Automotive	0%	0%	0%	1%
Books & Newspaper	0%	0%	0%	0%
Building & Hardware	1%	1%	0%	0%
Business & Professional Services	18%	19%	20%	17%
Care Services	0%	0%	0%	0%
Clothing	8%	8%	8%	7%
Commercial & Industrial Services	0%	0%	0%	0%
Digital Print Media	1%	2%	2%	2%
Domestic & Cleaning Services	0%	0%	0%	0%
Education	1%	1%	1%	2%
Electronic & Computers	2%	2%	1%	1%
Food	21%	17%	17%	21%
Funeral Services	0%	0%	0%	0%
Gambling	1%	3%	4%	5%
Games & Gaming	1%	1%	1%	1%
Garages	0%	0%	0%	0%
Government	2%	2%	2%	2%
Health & Beauty	0%	0%	0%	0%
Health Practitioner	0%	0%	0%	0%
Home & Garden	20%	21%	23%	22%
Medical Services	1%	1%	1%	1%
NGO, Social & Religious Services	0%	0%	0%	0%
Speciality	3%	3%	2%	2%
Sports, Outdoors & Travel	0%	1%	1%	1%
Stationery & Office Furniture	0%	0%	0%	0%
Telecommunication	3%	2%	2%	2%
Tourism	8%	8%	7%	6%
Transportation	9%	8%	6%	8%
Warehousing & Storage	0%	0%	0%	0%

Table 7
Source: Absa's Merchant Spend Analytics

May YTD 2025 | In-store spending

	YTD growth			
	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD
	May'22	May'23	May'24	May'25
Automotive	12%	10%	6%	3%
Books and Newspapers	25%	15%	0%	-31%
Building and Hardware	3%	7%	0%	0%
Business and Professional Services	64%	50%	17%	6%
Care Services	21%	12%	16%	5%
Clothing	10%	-13%	-1%	3%
Commercial and Industrial Services	20%	5%	10%	-6%
Digital Print Media	83%	48%	15%	-2%
Domestic and Cleaning Services	25%	7%	3%	14%
Education	32%	18%	18%	3%
Electronics and Computers	3%	6%	1%	1%
Food	8%	14%	5%	1%
Funeral Services	-11%	38%	15%	6%
Gambling	25%	17%	0%	1%
Games and Gaming	53%	10%	-4%	2%
Garages	26%	8%	0%	-11%
Government	12%	17%	14%	15%
Health and Beauty	15%	0%	9%	4%
Health Practitioners	5%	8%	13%	1%
Home and Garden	1%	-6%	0%	1%
Medical Services	8%	11%	10%	6%
NGO, Social and Religious Services	26%	23%	6%	7%
Speciality	22%	11%	11%	5%
Sports, Outdoor and Travel	14%	273%	4%	3%
Stationery and Office Furniture	10%	15%	11%	6%
Telecommunication	7%	2%	7%	13%
Tourism	60%	32%	8%	-1%
Transport	602%	15%	18%	-69%
Warehousing and Storage	11%	-10%	11%	74%

Table 8
Source: Absa's Merchant Spend Analytics

	Distribution			
	YTD	YTD	YTD	YTD
	May'22	May'23	May'24	May'25
Automotive	3%	3%	3%	3%
Books and Newspapers	0%	0%	0%	0%
Building and Hardware	5%	4%	4%	4%
Business and Professional Services	7%	10%	11%	12%
Care Services	0%	0%	0%	0%
Clothing	14%	11%	11%	11%
Commercial and Industrial Services	0%	0%	0%	0%
Digital Print Media	0%	0%	0%	0%
Domestic and Cleaning Services	0%	0%	0%	0%
Education	0%	0%	0%	0%
Electronics and Computers	1%	1%	1%	1%
Food	48%	49%	49%	48%
Funeral Services	0%	0%	0%	0%
Gambling	0%	0%	0%	0%
Games and Gaming	0%	0%	0%	0%
Garages	6%	6%	6%	5%
Government	1%	1%	1%	1%
Health and Beauty	2%	2%	2%	2%
Health Practitioners	1%	1%	1%	1%
Home and Garden	5%	4%	4%	4%
Medical Services	1%	1%	1%	1%
NGO, Social and Religious Services	0%	0%	0%	0%
Speciality	3%	3%	4%	4%
Sports, Outdoor and Travel	0%	1%	1%	1%
Stationery and Office Furniture	0%	0%	0%	0%
Telecommunication	1%	1%	1%	1%
Tourism	1%	1%	1%	1%
Transport	0%	0%	0%	0%
Warehousing and Storage	0%	0%	0%	0%

Table 9
Source: Absa's Merchant Spend Analytics

May YTD 2025 | Credit card vs debit card

Tracked card spending categories	Credit card			
	YTD May'22	YTD May'23	YTD May'24	YTD May'25
Automotive	11%	10%	8%	7%
Building and Hardware	2%	12%	-4%	3%
Business and Professional Services	39%	42%	23%	9%
Clothing	22%	-3%	4%	8%
Food	6%	13%	10%	7%
Garages	12%	11%	-4%	-13%
Health and Beauty	24%	-9%	10%	8%
Home and Garden	-8%	6%	14%	7%
Speciality	26%	17%	8%	8%
Tourism	510%	25%	10%	-4%

Table 10
Source: Absa's Merchant Spend Analytics

Tracked card spending categories	Debit card			
	YTD May'22	YTD May'23	YTD May'24	YTD May'25
Automotive	12%	10%	8%	3%
Building and Hardware	4%	6%	1%	-1%
Business and Professional Services	57%	50%	18%	2%
Clothing	10%	-13%	0%	3%
Food	9%	13%	4%	1%
Garages	35%	6%	3%	-11%
Health and Beauty	13%	3%	9%	3%
Home and Garden	1%	3%	12%	5%
Speciality	23%	10%	11%	5%
Tourism	-58%	34%	12%	3%

Table 11
Source: Absa's Merchant Spend Analytics

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The team

Your story matters



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Jonas Moapolela, Frontend Engineer: PocketFlow

Spend analytics: PocketFlow

Your story matters



A big-data web-based tool that takes you beyond the limitations of traditional banking

Do you know who your customers are, what their spending behaviour at your store is, or how you compare to competitors?

Now you can, with Absa's spend analytics tool, PocketFlow.

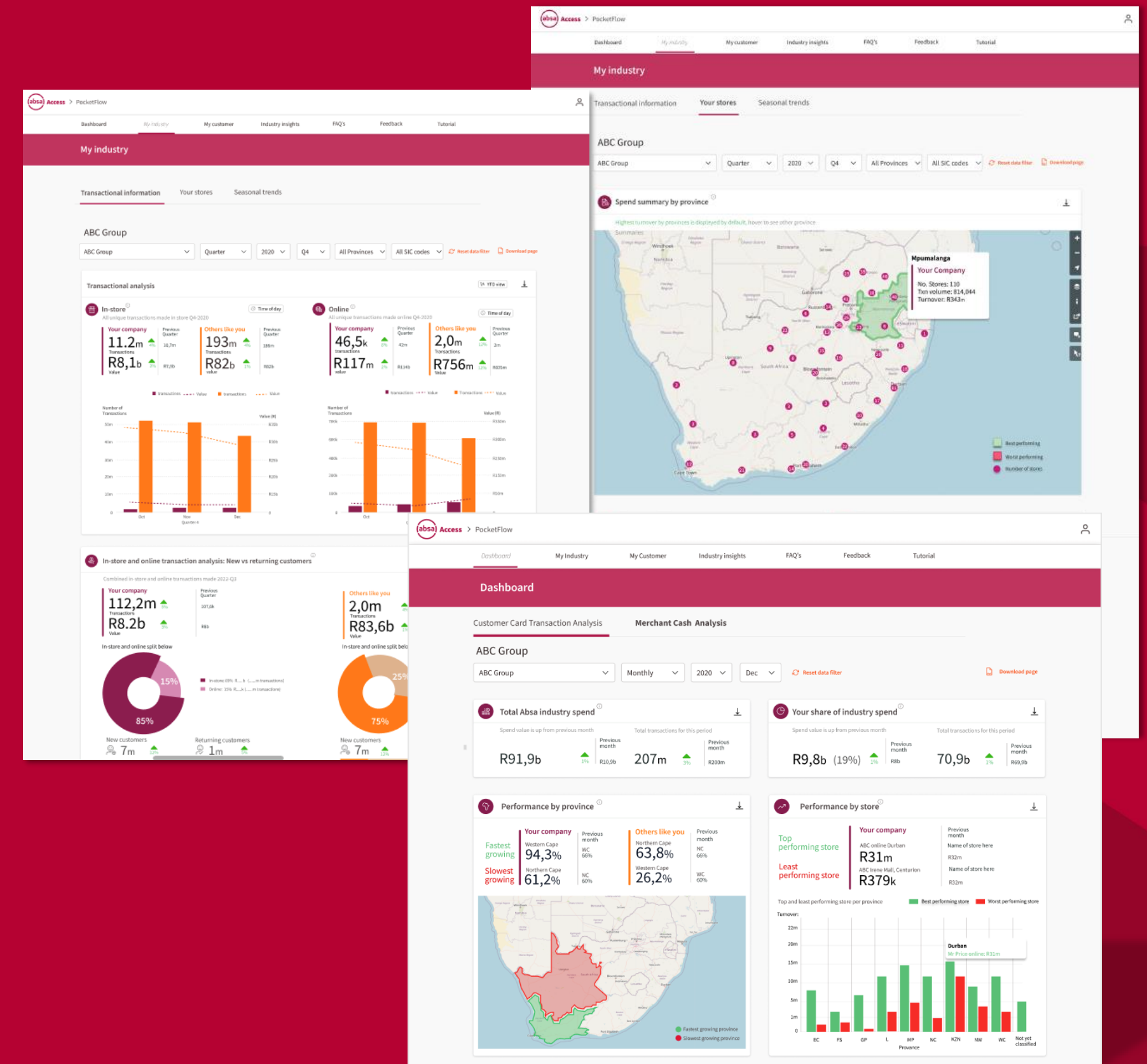
This tool is designed to help you understand your customers better and optimise your business strategies. Its interactive customer visualisations enables you to better understand your business's performance and gives you further actionable insights.

PocketFlow is a self-service tool that doesn't involve any complicated installation processes, nor does it require specialist IT skills to implement or use.

There are two offerings available, namely:

- **PocketFlow** (for large corporates): Speak to your Business Banker to find out more.
- **PocketFlow Lite** (for small and medium enterprises): Register on the Absa Merchant Access Online (AMAO) portal at <https://absamerchantaccessonline.absa.co.za>

Start your PocketFlow spend analytics journey today!



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