



Uniquely Yours



ECOMMERCE: BUSINESS WITHOUT BORDERS

Asian online spending
patterns and why building
omnichannel is key

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“I believe that the trick to encouraging the growth of ecommerce across Europe comes in understanding the needs of each region. Customer expectations and preferences are so different – and this is where we have the expertise to further enable our partners.”

Toru Yamaguchi, President of JCB International (France) S.A.S.





Ecommerce may have once been more popular with younger generations, but across Asia we are seeing it welcomed by all age groups. This trend goes hand-in-hand with the region's economic climb back.

Year in and year out, Europe is a top destination for JCB cardmembers, many of whom have an appreciation for upscale and unique products and services offered by world-renowned European brands. Amidst the global travel restrictions, we have been working with our retail partners to support this once predominantly bricks and mortar exchange as it evolves with the current times to become a digital interaction – online shopping.

Asian economies are at the forefront of the global economic recovery with Japan leaping out of a recession with 5 % growth in the third quarter of 2020¹.

This guide showcases JCB cardmember purchase preferences from selected JCB issuing countries and regions – Japan, China, Taiwan, Thailand, and South Korea – by breaking them down into favoured shopping categories. As an additional layer, this growth is then explored in relation to European destinations such as Austria, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands.

The JCB leadership team believes in a collaborative approach to ecommerce underpinned by a two-fold mission. Firstly, to offer our cardmembers, who have grown

by 48 % in the past 4 years², every possible opportunity to complete their shopping journey with their payment network of choice. Secondly, to drive and support brand loyalty and returning customers for our partners with the core goal of enabling economic prosperity and recovery across Europe – and beyond.

Finally, we recognise that a 'one-size-fits-all' model does not suit all organisations and understand the value in creating digital solutions which enable customers to interact with brands both physically and online. Integration and coordination with multiple audiences helps to improve international visibility and increase sales more widely.

Tsuyoshi Notani

Managing Director, JCB
International (Europe) Ltd.



“It is important for European retailers to understand the potential for tangible growth that JCB can bring to their businesses through tailored and targeted promotional activities. For example, food delivery services in Japan and other Asian regions were nowhere near as popular as they are now, and through increased demand and collaborative marketing, we worked with our food service partners to tap into our JCB cardmember network.”

Hitoshi Shioda, Head of Global Acceptance and Marketing, JCB Co., Ltd.



Ecommerce has been steadily growing as connectivity improves and consumers feel more secure shopping online – and as retailers create attractive consumer purchasing experiences. The events of 2020 accelerated the ecommerce journey and normalised the concept of digital shopping for many who had never explored the online universe.

Retailers who have not yet developed an internet proposition could be missing out on significant revenue from Asia's high-net-worth consumers at this crucial time. Losses due to store closures or new restrictions may mean many European businesses will need to increase international sales to stimulate recovery.

For JCB, impressive virtual spending by cardmembers can be seen in Europe as JCB online sales increased by more than 300 % between 2016 and 2019³. The continent's online shopping boom is being fuelled by strong alliances with global acquirers as they expand across the region.

Investing in both online and offline platforms provides a retail brand with year-round resonance with Asian consumers. Visitor numbers to Europe are expected to return and face-to-face (F2F) shopping as an enjoyable recreation will resume, but retailers may also consider cross-border and multicurrency models to increase their profits.

The pre-pandemic online purchasing trend can be illustrated by Japan. In February 2020 (before many European countries entered lockdown), e-trade with retail partners outside of Japan increased by 4 % and for the top 50 ecommerce retailers outside Japan by 15 %⁴. The most prolific months for spending peaks in 2019 outside Japan were January, July and December⁵.

“Ecommerce is 24/7 – and that’s where we can facilitate ‘customer-service-beyond-payment’. The key is that we are a trusted brand, and on top of that, our cardmembers are trusted too. When it comes to payments, our cardmembers have a rare kind of payment discipline – and that’s very reassuring for e-businesses.”

Thomas Heigl, Senior Vice President, Sales and Marketing, JCB International (Europe) Ltd.



THE EVOLVING CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS OF ECOMMERCE

Customer expectations of a smooth purchase journey are equally as prevalent online as with physical exchanges. A new generation of wealthy, technologically adept shoppers is emerging, and by 2025 a fifth of global luxury sales are expected to be web-based⁶. JCB data indicates that accessories lead the luxury digital shopping list, ahead of apparel and beauty.

But Asian shoppers are buying across many categories from health products to highly engineered and customised bicycles. Retailers who are shaping their strategy to offer multichannel options should consider all touchpoints, devices and new technology (such as voice recognition) to boost their revenues. Alongside building resilience into virtual stores, e-tailers can localise their offering by including language capabilities and sharing transparent tax and duty thresholds for overseas packages.

“From a partner perspective, we can design technical specifications which are then inter-operable across the globe – this makes it more affordable for merchants to set up acquiring and processing systems for their businesses. From a cardmember perspective, online sales facilitated with their JCB card gives them confidence as they know there is a secure platform put in place by their preferred payment brand.”

Nick Fisher, General Manager, Sales and Marketing UK, JCB International (Europe) Ltd.



“It is interesting to note that Japanese cardmember spend increases in the months of July as well as December. At a glance, this may seem seasonal, but we understand that this runs deeper. It’s common practice for Japanese companies to offer their bonuses during these months, so it’s a good time for European online stores to think about promotions and discounts.”

Hitoshi Shioda, Head of Global Acceptance and Marketing, JCB Co., Ltd.



EUROPEAN ECOMMERCE TRENDS: THE CHINESE CARDMEMBER

Behavioural Snapshot:

The split between ecommerce and F2F transactions continues to widen with 79 % online in 2020, rising from 45 % in 2017.

When it comes to spend, the split is more balanced – 49 % / 51 % in 2020, accelerating from 28 % / 72 % in 2017.

It may be surmised that the Chinese economy was reacting to the pandemic before the virus was formally identified by the World Health Authority, as December 2019 showed the largest monthly increase for digital spending, up by 21 %, while F2F shopping decreased by 5 %.

Spending Patterns

Chinese cardmembers are still spending but shifting from travel to retail.

Retail accounted for 31 % of sales in 2020, a notable increase from 11 % in 2017.

Spending with all other retailers, which ranges from cable television to other subscriptions, like music or e-gaming, rose to 29 % (2018: 22 %).

Where Are They Spending Online?

British medical and education services saw increased spend, as these sectors accounted for 17 % of all spend in 2020 (compared to 8 % in 2019).

British department stores accounted for 17 % in 2020 (2019: 10 %).

Chinese cardmembers are also clicking onto German brands to buy telecommunications products and Mail Order/Telephone Order (MOTO). This refers to a type of card-not-present transaction in which services are paid for and delivered via telephone, mail, fax or internet communication.

Chinese Cardmembers: Key Takeaways



Ecommerce now accounts for
49 %
of cardmember transactions
virtual spend



Retail took a
31 %
share of online sales in 2020



UK department stores
increased share of
online spend by
170 %
in 2020 on 2019



Chinese cardmembers
shopping for telecoms products
favour German brands

EUROPEAN ECOMMERCE TRENDS: THE JAPANESE CARDMEMBER

Behavioural Snapshot:

There is a clear shift towards transaction via ecommerce among Japanese cardmembers with 91 % online in 2020 compared to 73 % in 2019.

Japanese customers are generally considered to be low risk, have a higher income than other counterparts in Asia, and shop for high value items.

European retailers should be aware of the penetration of mobile wallets, such as PayPay or LINE Pay, to diversify payment options.

Spending Patterns

Travel agencies and cruises were impacted most as business travellers and holidaymakers stayed at home. The category accounted for just 13 % of e-trade to May (2019: 34 %).

Spending in retail has jumped since 2017 and now accounts for 20 % of sales.

The category with the largest percentage of spend was MOTO and telecommunications at 33 % to May 2020, (2019: 27 %) but down from 43 % in 2017.

Where Are They Spending Online?

Japanese cardmembers are doing most of their virtual shopping with UK retailers (73 %), up from 59 % in 2019.

Germany increased its share of European sales among Japanese cardmembers from 3 % to 8 % between 2019 and 2020.

France saw its share of cardmember sales jump slightly from 5 % in 2019 to 6 % in 2020 as French fashion remained a prominent favourite.

Japanese cardmembers shifted spend with Italian e-retailers from cruises to retail. Luxury leather goods and men's and women's clothing appear most attractive.

Japanese Cardmembers: Key Takeaways



91 %
of transactions online
in 2020



Spending in retail now
accounts for
23 %
of all sales



Travel agency & cruise
spend dropped to
13 % of e-trade



UK retailers have a
73 %
share of cardmember
virtual spend

EUROPEAN ECOMMERCE TRENDS: THE SOUTH KOREAN CARDMEMBER

Behavioural Snapshot:

Online shopping has increased over the past four years among South Korean cardmembers to 96 % of overall transactions from 76 % in 2017.

When it comes to spend, there has been an 80 % increase over three years (2017 - 2019).

Spending Patterns

Most spending in Europe tends to be with online travel agents but, in line with other countries and regions, this has begun to shift towards retail.

Retail's share of virtual spend among South Koreans shot up to 56 % to May 2020 (2019: 22 %). Over the same period, travel agencies and cruises saw a dip in share of sales to 36 % (2019: 72 %).

Where Are They Spending Online?

Spain accounted for 34 % in 2020 (2019: 72 %) of sales with European e-brands, while the UK increased its share from 59 % in 2020 (2019: 24 %).

Some of the growth for the UK comes from JCB licensee partners that are based in the region.

South Korean Cardmembers: Key Takeaways



Ecommerce spend has increased
80 %
over the past four years



Spain's share of ecommerce sales fell from 72 % to
34 % year on year



Retail's share of virtual spend jumped to
56 %
for Jan – May 2020



Travel agents & cruises share halved in 2020 to
36 % year on year

EUROPEAN ECOMMERCE TRENDS: THE TAIWANESE CARDMEMBER

Behavioural Snapshot:

Ecommerce transactions among Taiwanese cardmembers have grown to 98 % of overall transactions, up from 78 % in 2017.

There has been an even starker shift when it comes to internet spending with a rise to 84 % share from 52 % in 2017.

Spending Patterns

Taiwanese cardmembers now assume European e-tailers will accept the JCB card.

Travel restrictions meant 30 % of spend went to retail purchases in 2020. In 2017, retail represented just 6 %.

August to December are the most favoured months for online transactions with November accounting for 14 % of spend in 2019.

Where Are They Spending Online?

In 2017, spend with British retailers accounted for 27 % of all spend but by 2019 this had risen to 52 %. Further, this accounted for 80 % of all spend in the five months to May 2020. Travel agencies and tour operators took a 14 % slice of all spend Jan – May 2020 (Jan– Dec 2019: 45 %, 2018: 71 %)

Taiwanese Cardmembers: Key Takeaways



Online spending has risen to
84 %
over four years



Retail took a
30 %
share of online spend in 2020



Travel agents and tour operators share of spend
fell to **14 %**
for Jan – May 2020



November accounts for
14 %
of ecommerce spend

EUROPEAN ECOMMERCE TRENDS: THE THAI CARDMEMBER

Behavioural Snapshot:

There has been a steady rise from a high base in ecommerce versus F2F since 2017. In 2020, 80 % of transactions were online compared to 54 % in 2017.

When it comes to ecommerce spend, volumes grew 238 % between 2017–2018 and a further 36 % in 2019.

Spending Patterns

Online retail sales jumped to 43 % (2019: 13 %). In 2017, this was merely 2 %.

Spend on travel agencies and cruises fell to 31 % in 2020 (2019: 70 %).

Thai cardmembers tend to transact most online in the European spring and around Asian holiday time.

Where Are They Spending Online?

The United Kingdom, Spain and Germany are the top ecommerce markets.

The UK accounted for 65 % of all Thai cardmember spend in 2020 (2019: 26 %, 2018: 15 %). The country's online stores, particularly the high-profile departments, took an increased share of 19 % of all spend (compared with 2018: 3 %).

Britain overtook Spain in terms of spend in 2020 because of this shift to retail. Spain had led internet spend between 2017–2019 as Thai cardmembers bought from travel agencies registered in the country. One third of Thai cardmember spend was on booking travel and cruises through Spanish-registered companies in 2020. (up to May 2020).

In Germany, Thai cardmembers spend primarily online at airlines, however in 2020 there was a shift in spend towards e-tailers. Notably, motorcycle shops and dealers saw an increase to 10 % of German spend in 2020 (2019: 2 %).

Thai Cardmembers: Key Takeaways



Spend volumes grew
238 %
between 2017/18



Retail sales have leapt
from 2 % in 2017 to
43 % in 2020



The UK takes
65 %
of all Thai
cardmember spend



Peak online spending periods
include European spring
time and Asian holidays.

“When it comes to ecommerce the best advice is: don’t miss out. It’s up to you, as a retailer, to open up your market and tap into new revenue opportunities for growth and profitability.”

Roberto Morales de Castro, General Manager Spain, JCB International (Europe) Ltd.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN EUROPE – HOW COUNTRIES ARE EVOLVING ECOMMERCE CAPABILITY

Austria

The JCB card is accepted in F2F stores by more than 80 % of Austrian retailers but the pandemic has persuaded more players of the importance of multi-channel.

Digital sales are increasing in home entertainment equipment and for general products sold in department stores.

Asian shoppers mainly visit Vienna or Salzburg, but some do take day trips to smaller towns and cities. These journeys, with hotels, transport and entertainment, are often booked on consumers' mobiles.

France

France was the top European tourist destination for JCB cardmembers in 2019, but much like Austria, the events of 2020 persuaded more French brands to look to omnichannel development. Trends indicate that French luxury designers, who once may only have offered F2F exchange to uphold aspirational status, now see the opportunity to develop online experiences as well as physical engagement.

Retailers succeeding virtually tend to display information in different languages, especially English, and have invested in seamless website design.

French banks play a crucial role in the region's financial ecosystem and are starting to respond to competition from leading acquirers.

Germany

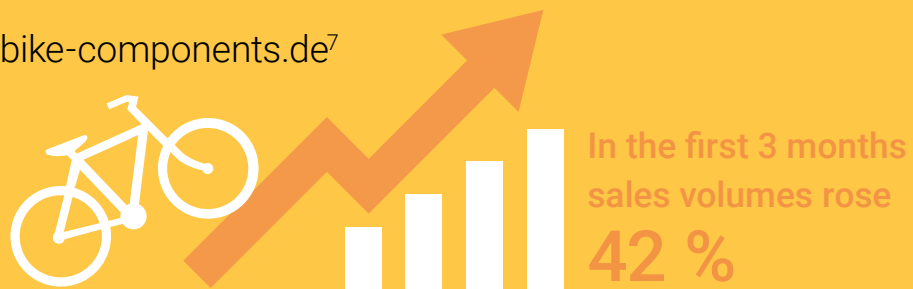
Asian consumers tend to spend more with German e-tailers when they use their JCB card as the method of payment.

Germany's reputation for quality engineering and luxury is appealing. Sales of motorcycles, bicycles and computer security are valued by Japanese, Taiwanese, and South Korean cardmembers.

JCB cardmembers also desire German luxury, while the high standards of health and cosmetic products, perceived as safe by Chinese cardmembers, for instance, also appeal.

Chinese cardmembers want to be confident they are buying genuine products and would rather buy brands from websites from the country of source than a physical store in China.

Case Study: bike-components.de⁷



Bike-components.de was established in Germany in 1997 by two friends, Marcus and Klaus, and has grown over the years to a company with 170 employees. The company sells 60,000 quality products, for approximately 250 bike brands, both in-store and online.

It began accepting JCB payments at the end of 2018 to drive incremental online sales from Asia.

JCB worked with Bike-components.de to make the virtual payment experience frictionless. The brand also created a newsletter awareness campaign to inform all customers of Bike-components.de of this newly formed collaboration. **The results showed that after the first three months sales volumes rose 42 % with an average transaction value of €400.**

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN EUROPE – HOW COUNTRIES ARE EVOLVING ECOMMERCE CAPABILITY

United Kingdom

JCB cardmembers from all Asian countries and regions increased their spend in the UK as transactions shifted from travel to retail.

Online sales from JCB cardmembers at luxury department stores, such as Selfridges and Harrods, increased from 0.2 % to 15 % over 4 years. Harrods is benefitting from widening its omnichannel offer in 2017 to attract more global customers.

Ecommerce is helping the UK's retail post-pandemic recovery, especially among those that previously did not offer multiple browsing platforms.

Nevertheless, physical outlets will remain an important channel in 2021 with Asian consumers keen to buy products virtually that they have spotted in-store during a visit.

Italy

The pandemic prompted the Italian government to improve the country's digital infrastructure.

This is good news for Asian customers who still want to enjoy Italian luxury and style brands such as Gucci and Giorgio Armani. Chinese cardmembers want to buy high-end Italian clothing and leather goods because they trust the goods not to be counterfeit.

Italian acquirers are supporting e-tailers, including department stores, which are poised to expand their international online sales to Asia in 2021 after adapting their offer for the domestic market.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN EUROPE – HOW COUNTRIES ARE EVOLVING ECOMMERCE CAPABILITY

Netherlands

There has been steady ecommerce growth in the Netherlands since 2017 and 2020 saw much of this in retail, due to JCB partners' local presence, and their impressive network of merchant partners across the region.

Ecommerce business from all five Asian markets rose 165 % between 2017–2019. The biggest increase in spending came from Japanese shoppers with growth of 190 % between 2017–2019.

Between January and March 2020 there was also an increase in spending on a well-known food delivery service. In Japan and China, spend with this merchant increased by more than 250 %, and in Thailand and Taiwan by more than 150 %.

Spain

Many Spanish retailers are investing in diverse cross-channels and are targeting Asian shoppers by country and region, currency, and language.

Physical retail has dominated for a long time in Spain but banking partners are now more receptive to online platforms and associated payment solutions. JCB and Banco Santander recently evolved their partnership to additionally support digital exchange in Spain in sectors such as hospitality, travel and education.

Spanish retailers have also become more confident about protection regarding fraud and security and are using JCB's J/Secure™ service.

Popular travel industry businesses are registered in Spain and travel agencies remain the most prolific merchant category. Ecommerce sales have grown in recent years from leading JCB partners Travelgenio and airline Iberia.

However, under the pandemic, travel bookings are down. This trend should reverse once cardmembers feel it is safe to travel again.

“JCB is one of the most respected payment brands in Asia and our cardmembers seek out our logo as a beacon of support when shopping on or offline. To promote awareness, we have increased our marketing budget to focus on the development of specific partner tools that will aid in the recovery of spend from Asian customers. We are here to support our business partners and have the in-house expertise to promote e-tail growth.”

Victoria Perea-Usher, Head of Marketing and Communications, JCB International (Europe) Ltd.



TEN TIPS FOR OPTIMISING ECOMMERCE WITH JCB CARDMEMBERS

1. Invest in omnichannel

Invest in a frictionless omnichannel customer experience so shoppers return to your website. Many younger cardmembers are using the latest technology and will expect device integration. Include local language capability and delivery to Asia.

2. Ensure Asian shoppers can purchase in their own currency and their own language

Take time to understand the needs and preferences of Asian consumers on a localised level. JCB understands these preferences, so speak to your JCB account manager to unpack this in more detail.

3. Invest in good customer service

JCB cardmembers appreciate excellent customer service when buying online. This includes receiving replies to questions they ask, reliable reviews, no hidden costs, and a clear and simple returns process.

4. Don't underestimate the importance of shipping

Asian cardmembers choose efficient and secure delivery services, so consider how goods will travel to various destinations. European e-tailers are attractive because the product is considered bona fide and shoppers know purchases will arrive in good condition.

5. Make the most of the Asian holidays

Market your business around national holidays in countries and regions when people have time to shop and browse websites – and look out for international events to leverage, such as Black Friday and Singles' Day – or ask your JCB account manager for insight into peak shopping occasions throughout the year (for example, months such as July and December when Japanese cardmembers receive bonuses).

6. Create innovative promotions to boost loyalty

Asian shoppers like bargains and promotions. Discover what discount schemes work in each market. For example, email offers, immediate discounts, or free shipping.

7. Research your target market

Even though business and leisure travellers may be smaller in number right now, you can still identify what they are looking to buy online, so that when they return, they will know your brand, products and services.

8. Be aware of local sales taxes

Taxes vary between countries and regions and have implications for retailers selling online out of Europe. Localise the online check-out experience and build taxes into the final price, perhaps by adding in an online calculator.

9. Ensure your website carries the JCB logo

The JCB card is trusted by Asian shoppers. They look for signs it is accepted when shopping in-store, so e-stores MUST make the JCB logo visible to capitalise on opportunities for profit.

10. Ask JCB for support

JCB can strengthen your business through an approach of co-creation, listening and responding to the demands of modern commerce, whether F2F or online. JCB has been in operation for 60 years, and we partner with various organisations across the world to ensure that we are up to date and compliant.

TEN TIPS FOR OPTIMISING ECOMMERCE WITH JCB CARDMEMBERS

“JCB has prioritised security for payments and ecommerce on an international level. We will continue to develop digital identity and biometric solutions to mitigate risks for retailers and cardmembers.”

Francesco Maroldi, General Manager, JCB International (Italy) S.p.A.

Compliance with the new European regulatory requirement ‘Strong Customer Authentication (SCA)’ is high on the priority list with many acquirers coming to Europe to start their businesses and JCB navigates this path with partners.

Retailers should be aware of all that is required to create a ‘best-in-class’ service for customers, including payment solutions, regulation, security and diversifying omnichannel features.

J/Secure™ 2.0, as an example, is available to European partners, and is integrated with each organisation’s interface and solves interoperability issues. This enables retailers to make accurate decisions and mitigate risk of fraud. This secure platform enhances the online shopping experience, as it identifies cardmembers by requesting a password.

“The advantage of ecommerce is that it is fast and fluid. Customers can pay online with their preferred payment method, and if something is out of stock in the physical store, customers can always go online and place their order. Business is almost guaranteed.”

Philippe Polutnik, Head of Sales and Acquiring, JCB International (France) S.A.S.



The pandemic has not slowed Asia's high-net-worth shoppers engaging with European retailers using their JCB cards. Spend has shifted toward digital shopping, with the retail category experiencing high growth across Europe. This creates room to solidify lasting relationships with JCB cardmembers.

As Asian consumers begin travelling again, it will potentially be the retailers that provide both an in-store and convenient and secure omnichannel experience that will see their sales grow rapidly. Global logistics firm DHL Express, for example, announced that it has experienced a 50 % surge in ecommerce shipments since the start of 2020 to Asia Pacific (excluding China) and predicts shipment volumes to Asia Pacific to be 30–40 % larger than last year's peak season⁸.

Looking to a multiplatform future, retailers will need to additionally focus on mCommerce – where mobile devices interact with the customer and the brand. Developments that will impact on both F2F and online shopping include new technology such as 'PIN on glass' (where the cardmember's PIN is entered via a glass-based capture mechanism like a smartphone), payment apps and increased use of personal QR codes. Rather than pay at the check-out, shoppers will be billed via their device.

Those that stay abreast of new developments and meet the evolving expectations of Asian consumers, with the help of partners like JCB, are more than likely set to enjoy a thriving business far into the future.

With thanks to the following JCB team members for their time in contributing and giving their insights and industry knowledge to this ecommerce guide:

- **Hitoshi Shioda**, Head of Global Acceptance and Marketing, JCB Co., Ltd.
- **Tsuyoshi Notani**, Managing Director, JCB International (Europe) Ltd.
- **Toru Yamaguchi**, President of JCB International (France) S.A.S.
- **Thomas Heigl**, Senior Vice President, Sales and Marketing, JCB International (Europe) Ltd.
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- **Magdalena Weiss**, Deputy General Manager Austria, JCB International (Europe) Ltd.

JCB wants to hear from any potential collaborator or partner that it can work with to build a sustainable payments-based omnichannel business. To discuss partnership opportunities, please contact **marketing@jcb europe.eu**

Endnotes

- 1 'Japan leads economic 'Zoom boom' out of recession.' 19.11.2020, [online], <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-54955484> (Accessed November 2020)
- 2 JCB Proprietary Data (September 2020)
- 3 JCB Proprietary Data (May 2020)
- 4 JCB Proprietary Data (March 2020)
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- 8 'DHL Express to invest EUR 750 million in Asia Pacific region', [online], DHL Express to invest EUR 750 million in Asia Pacific region- The New Indian Express (Accessed November 2020)

JCB is the leading card issuer and acquirer in Japan and one of the largest payment brands in the world, serving over 140 million cardmembers with global acceptance across 35 million retailers. JCB launched its card business in Japan in 1961 and began expanding worldwide in 1981. As part of its international growth strategy, JCB has formed alliances with hundreds of leading banks and financial institutions globally to increase its cardmember base and merchant coverage. As a comprehensive payment solution provider, JCB commits to provide responsive and high-quality service and products to all customers worldwide.



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**MERCI
D'AVOIR LU**

**THANKS FOR
READING**

**GRAZIE PER
AVER LETTO**

**GRACIAS
POR LEER**

**お読みいただき
ありがとうございます**

**DANKE FÜRS
LESEN**

If you want to discuss the findings
in this study or JCB services, please
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