



Blind Spots to Breakthroughs: The Power of Comprehensive Gift Card Reporting

April 14, 2026

By Ashley Girsch, VP of Operations, TDS Gift Cards

Blind Spots to Breakthroughs: The Power of Comprehensive Gift Card Reporting

Gift card reporting can be a massive, manual headache. For many program managers, uncovering actionable insights means painstakingly pulling reports from a processor, manually marrying them to activator reports, and incorporating it all with internal redeemer data just to figure out basic metrics like sales per retailer.

But the issue often goes deeper than just a clunky process - it starts with the raw data itself. When your foundation is broken, extracting strategic value becomes nearly impossible.

The Hidden Cost of Messy Raw Data

If you have ever stared at a spreadsheet trying to decipher cryptic reporting, you are not alone. Many brands struggle with reporting that lacks clarity and context. Challenges often arise from ambiguous merchant identifiers, inconsistent naming conventions across regions, or omitted geographic data that forces teams to infer locations based on secondary metrics like currency. When foundational data is unstructured or obscure, it creates an immediate bottleneck in the reporting process. Internal teams are forced to expend valuable time and resources on manual data reconciliation and formatting, rather than focusing their efforts on strategic analysis and high-level decision-making.

The Power of Clean, Consolidated Data

The solution to this industry-wide pain point is adopting a smarter, automated approach to gift card reporting. Your program needs good, thorough reporting that consolidates global data into one cohesive file.

Instead of hunting down what "Store 123" means, a processor that prioritizes assisting brands with growth management should provide all the data you need and ensure it is actually meaningful. A strong reporting foundation requires cleaning, labeling, and supplementing program data with industry knowledge. By centralizing program data within an intuitive, unified platform, organizations can evaluate their global performance with complete accuracy and confidence.

Elevating Gift Card Reporting: From Spreadsheets to Visual Analytics

Once data integrity is established, organizations can leverage advanced analytics platforms to translate raw figures into strategic insights.

A robust, web-based analytics tool that is available 24/7 to analyze global gift card performance is a game-changer for growing programs. Brands should seek platforms that provide clients with interactive access to their program activity, offering the ability to dynamically filter data by time, country, region, retailer, SKU, channel, format, and more. A comprehensive platform should also incorporate marketing and promotional data directly into the analytics. This empowers teams to quickly and easily evaluate campaign performance and allocate future marketing dollars where they will have the greatest impact. Ultimately, by leveraging automated visual reporting, you can eliminate tedious manual work - like creating graphs and tables or classifying retailers - and focus entirely on strategic growth.

Making Data-Driven Decisions

Equipped with standardized data and dynamic visualizations, teams can pivot their focus from data aggregation to strategic execution. A comprehensive analytics platform allows for pinpointing promotional lifts, month-to-month and year-over-year trending comparisons, retailer analysis, and more.

Crucially, advanced gift card reporting allows brands to marry sales volume with user data through reporting based on user classification. By allowing partners to send a simple numeric value during redemption - such as 1 for a new user, 2 for an existing user, and 3 for a returning user - brands gain immediate visibility into consumer behavior. This level of insight is paramount for any gift card program; it empowers your team to spend your marketing dollars wisely on the specific retailers that are actively bringing new users into your ecosystem.

This comprehensive visibility empowers your team to:

- Make quick and easy business and strategy decisions based on sales trends, performance, and new user acquisition.
- Confirm if a promotion provided you with the ROI you were targeting.
- Provide quick answers to your execs about the health and growth of your program.
- Access data without needing a 3rd party or internal resources to pull a report for you.

Final Thoughts

In a highly competitive global gift card market, program success relies heavily on the ability to interpret and respond to market dynamics efficiently. By optimizing data infrastructure and embracing advanced analytics, organizations can unlock the full growth potential of their gift card programs.