

As part of the institution's commitment to socially-responsible banking

CaixaBank launches a support scheme for small retailers to provide funding, reduce fees and help promote online sales

- ***Under the slogan #ByYourSideNowMoreThanEver, CaixaBank is implementing a package of measures to shore up individuals and companies in light of the current situation.***
- ***The financial institution is the leading provider among self-employed workers and retail business clients, with a 33% market share among self-employed workers and a 24% share of retail business invoicing.***

Barcelona, 30 March 2020

CaixaBank has set in motion a support scheme for small retail businesses, against the backdrop of the current crisis arising from the outbreak of coronavirus, which has resulted in a state of alarm being declared and the closure of a significant proportion of Spanish retail businesses.

The scheme is chiefly intended for CaixaBank's retail business customers, a sector in which the bank which is led by Chairman Jordi Gual and Chief Executive Officer Gonzalo Gortázar, has a **33% market penetration among self-employed workers** and a **24% share of retailers' invoices**.

The measures taken include specific financing, discounts on POS terminal fees and the launch of a new e-commerce technology solution provided by CaixaBank to small retailers to help them boost online sales.

In terms of lending, the financial institution has decided to uphold access to the funding of working capital for businesses and self-employed workers, despite the fact that their turnover may have fallen and that this would – under normal circumstances – involve reductions in the customer funding facility.

These measures are introduced in addition to a recently launched 25-billion-euro facility of pre-approved loans for self-employed workers and SMEs, available to those in need of new funding, as well as access to the ICO (Spanish Official Credit Institute) facility promoted by

the Government to assist companies affected by the crisis brought about by the current global coronavirus pandemic.

While the exceptional situation remains ongoing, CaixaBank will not charge POS terminal fees to retailers that – as of 16 March, the date in which the state of alarm came into force– have undergone a major drop in their usual invoicing or have not directly recorded any activity.

Launch of a new technology solution to sell over social networks

CaixaBank has also created a new e-commerce solution designed to help small businesses to open new online channels quickly and securely.

The bank has launched a technology solution called Social Commerce to manage online purchases directly via social networks and messaging applications. The solution enables retailers to sell through their profiles on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Telegram or any other means of communication with the end customer, without the need to have an online store or their own website.

According to the 2018 Annual Study on Social Networks by the Association of Advertising, Marketing and Digital Communication (IAB Spain), 81% of users follow brands on a social network, and the fact that a brand has a profile on social networks helps to build the trust of 27% of users. 53% of users seek information on a social network before making their online purchases.

Social Commerce analyses the number of interactions the company's post has had, to provide the company with relevant information that will help it take the necessary actions to improve its reach. This will enable companies to increase the effectiveness of their posts and reach a larger number of potential consumers, thus supporting the growth of their business. Customers receive the offers via the business' profile and messaging applications, and, if they like the product, they can buy it through a link that takes them directly to the payment instructions. The retailer receives the information on the sale that it has just made, and it can then start to manage the shipment of the order.

The launch of Social Commerce comes in addition to PayGold, a solution designed to receive payments online, by email or SMS, without the need for the business to have its own website.

The product is available to CaixaBank's retail business customers as well as new businesses with no previous relationship with the bank. Customers can apply for the product in CaixaBank's branch network, which has 2,500 expert business advisers.

#ByYourSideNowMoreThanEver: close to self-employed workers and companies

The scheme to support small businesses is one of a series of measures announced by the bank to support customers in light of the coronavirus pandemic. Under the slogan #ByYourSideNowMoreThanEver and as part of CaixaBank's commitment to socially responsible banking, a series of initiatives have been set in motion to help individuals, self-employed workers and companies in light of the current situation.

CaixaBank is Spain's leading financial group in retail banking. The bank has 15.6 million customers in the Iberian market, the peninsula's largest business network with more than 4,600 branches, and it continues to strengthen its leadership of the digital banking market, where it has 6.5 million digital customers.

CaixaBank is committed to a socially-responsible model of universal banking, based on quality, close relationships and specialisation in products and services that are adapted to suit each sector. Its goal is to contribute to its customers' financial well-being, while supporting the progress of the communities where it operates.

In 2019, CaixaBank has been named Best Bank in Spain, Best Bank for Corporate Responsibility in Western Europe and Best Bank Transformation in Western Europe by British publication Euromoney. These acknowledgements come in addition to those of Best Bank in Spain and Best Bank in Western Europe by the Global Finance magazine.