

COMPANIES & PEOPLE

INDUSTRY VIEWS

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**U.K./EU
PREPAID
MARKET**

We posed a rather cheeky question to prepaid executives operating in the U.K. and/or Europe, asking whether the success of prepaid in those markets depends on first building a “gift card foundation,” as in the United States. The question didn’t come from thin air. The topic was much discussed at a prepaid conference in Europe earlier this year, and we’ve heard comments—advocating and rejecting the proposition—ever since. Our respondents were decidedly mixed in their views, although the “Nos” bested the “Yeses” by 7-4.

Does the success of prepaid in the U.K. and Europe depend on first building a “gift card foundation,” as in the United States?

David Parker Director, Polymath Consulting

This is a totally misguided view. What it does take is the need for a “Hero” product that drives the market education forward and allows others to follow. Every market is different, and the product that is relevant to drive market education will differ, e.g., UAE (payroll) and India (per diem).

