

Media Release



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Social media and mCommerce serious business for retailers - Engage in E-tail seminar TODAY, Sydney

Bricks and mortar retailers gathered in Sydney today at the final Engage in E-tail seminar for the year, jointly hosted by Australian Retailers Association (ARA) and Australian Sporting Goods Association (ASGA) in partnership with PayPal to learn about mCommerce and social media for retail.

ARA Executive Director Russell Zimmerman said the key learning from the day was that engaging customers through social media and mCommerce is serious business as well as essential in delivering the experience a multi channel customer demands.

Keynote speakers Karen Borg and Tzvi Balbin from Deals Direct Group said for retailers, building an online audience is key to driving traffic to a business, and the way to do it is through relevant and engaging content, customer service, and asking customers before listening and delivering products and services to them.

One of the key points from the keynote presentation was mCommerce means huge opportunities for retailers, citing Australia as ranking third behind Japan and South Korea for their take up of mCommerce with Australians spending \$155 million online via their mobile phones last year.

Steve Brennen from PayPal also addressed the room and shared key information about the power and prevalence of smartphones, which now account for two out of three phones sold in Australia and are on an upward trajectory.

Brennen said PayPal's latest report, *Secure Insight: Changing the Way we Pay* found with 97 percent of Australians now having shopped online and having a propensity to buy Australian, Australian businesses plan to invest heavily in their online business strategy over the next twelve months.

Andrew McFarlane and Adrian Mezzina from Follow Online said social networking is prevalent in Australia, and Australians were using social networking sites more than any other country in the world (per capita), using them regardless of age and certainly using them to make quicker and more informed purchasing decisions.

McFarlane and Mezzina reinforced to retailers the importance of social media and developing an interactive online brand community and gave practical knowledge of the application and tools available for businesses going online.

ASGA Executive Director Brad Kitschke said, "Multichannel methods of conducting business are now the norm and the tools consumers use to shop with are becoming increasingly ubiquitous."

The Australian Retailers Association (ARA) and the Australian Sporting Goods Association (ASGA) are jointly hosting a series of seminars throughout August, September and October about everything online and e-commerce to help Australian bricks and mortar retailers embrace the online space. Sponsored by e-commerce websites and PayPal, the 'Engage in E-tail' seminar series covers topics including analysing the online trend and consumer behaviour; getting retailers started online; strategies to increase retailers' online presence and e-commerce capabilities, sharing in-store deals online, supply chain and logistics for online retail, M-commerce and social media for retail. Email events@retail.org.au or call 1300 368 041. **-ends- For interview opportunities contact: Andie McMaster, Media and Communication Officer, 0408 613 178 or media@retail.org.au**