

HD U.S. E-Marketers Seeking Growth Increasingly Look Overseas; Payscout Helps Clients Expand Into Australia

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As e-commerce growth shrinks and competition tightens at home, U.S.-based online retailers are seeking opportunity--and finding acceptance--Down Under. Payscout's turnkey solution to global payment processing helps U.S. e-merchants manage risk as they establish themselves in the booming Australian market.

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 9, 2014 /PRNewswire-iReach/ -- After a decade and a half of red-hot growth, the U.S. e-commerce market is beginning to mature. While growth has by no means stopped--Forrester Research projects a 13% increase for total U.S. e-commerce sales in 2014 over 2013(1) --slowing market expansion and increasing competition make it more and more difficult, especially for small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs), to attain the kinds of year-over-year sales increases they have enjoyed in the past.

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In the scramble for increased domestic online sales and market share, it can be easy, according to some observers, for U.S.-based SMBs to neglect the opportunities offered by overseas markets. "Australia, for example, is a natural," says Payscout CEO Cleveland Brown. "As with any new market, of course, there are risks: Australia has strict taxation laws and a relatively complex banking system. An experienced global merchant services provider (MSP), however, can help U.S.-based SMBs manage those risks. And the rewards are there: Australia is a prosperous, English-speaking country with a rock-solid economy, a high per-capita income, and a big appetite for American goods."

Australia is also a global pacesetter in online shopping. According to a study by the Australian e-commerce **firm** Big Commerce, Australia leads the world in the rate of new online stores opening, with a 200% increase from 2010 to 2012. Not only that, Australian shoppers spend more per order than anyone else. While the global average spend for online shoppers is \$116 per order, in Australia it is a whopping \$142, the highest in the world, and a 20% jump from 2012.(2)

Australians have also been deemed receptive to the mobile strategies U.S.-based e-marketers have spent the last few years developing. According to figures from the National Australia Bank, smart phone penetration is currently at 54%, and is expected to reach 70% by 2017. Mobile commerce sales reached \$5.7 billion in 2012, accounting for almost one-third of the online total. Comments global fashion consultant Luna Vega, "The Australian population is receptive to creative and unique shopping experiences. Australians are extremely active on Facebook, YouTube, and Tumblr, so focus your social media efforts on creating unique and engaging experiences on these main channels." (3)

There are, says Vega, a few particular considerations to be made when marketing to Australians. "There are Internet bandwidth restrictions in their market. Most Australians have a daily cap on their mobile and Internet bandwidth usage, so having a robust hosting server and creating a **site** with optimized load time is important."

Australia is in a remote part of the world, many thousands of miles from other English-speaking nations, so it has grown up with a self-sufficient local economy, including a robust and competitive retail sector. This is

reflected in its e-commerce habits; though Australians are spending more time and money online, the large majority of their **purchases** are still made from Australian-based companies.

"This might at first look like a disadvantage to U.S.-based firms," observes Brown, "but in fact it is a great opportunity. The domestic share of Australian retail consumption is beginning to decline, making room for new international retailers to stake their claim."

The fact that trends are changing rapidly is perhaps best exemplified by e-commerce trends in New Zealand, Australia's **island** neighbor and cousin. According to the 2014 Nielsen Online Retail Report, 34% of the total amount New Zealanders spent shopping online last year was spent overseas, an increase of 26% the previous year and double that of 2010.(4)

In addition to being rife with opportunity, Australia is also a relatively safe market in which to do business. Within Australia, the incidence of charge-backs and refunds is low(5) , as is the incidence of card fraud.(6)

"Payscout assists U.S.-based eMerchants wanting to do business in Australia so that they can do so in confidence," says Brown. "As an experienced global MSP, we understand the complexities of the market and can help them manage risk while taking advantage of a truly spectacular growth opportunity."

About Payscout, Inc.:

Payscout is a Global Merchant Service Provider (MSP) and Payment Service Provider (PSP) with tier-one bank sponsorships in the United States, Latin America, Caribbean, Asia-Pacific, and Europe. Payscout assists SMBs and Enterprise companies with payment processing solutions for brick-and-mortar and eCommerce **transactions**. Payscout is one of the few providers with a true Global Payment Solution, encompassing all merchant risk verticals. Payscout is a new generation provider of merchant banking services, specializing in online/eCommerce retailers with a predominant proportion of card-not-present **transactions**. Payscout's services are provided on a state-of-the-art, web-based user portal, incorporating expert interaction directly between their highly-trained staff and the customer business owner or senior management. With clients in every state, Payscout serves the credit card processing needs of thousands of businesses, across a multitude of industries. Payscout's global partnerships include VISA USA, Bank of America Merchant Services, VISA Europe, VISA Latin America, VISA Asia Pacific, MasterCard Worldwide, **China** Union Pay, Deutsche Bank, First Data and Payscout Brazil. For more information about Payscout, visit www.payscout.com.

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Media Inquiries:

Karla Jo Helms

JoTo PR

888-202-4614

www.jotopr.com

Media Contact: Karla Jo Helms, JoTo PR, 888-202-4614, khelms@jotopr.com

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