Flanders
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E-COMMERCE SECTOR IN AUSTRALIA

FLANDERS INVESTMENT & TRADE MARKET SURVEY

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State of the Art

AUSTRALIAN E-COMMERCE SECTOR 2018

MARKET STUDY

FLANDERS INVESTMENT & TRADE AUSTRALIA

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FLANDERS INVESTMENT & TRADE

Contents

Preface

Most of the contents of this market study were collected for and structured in the thesis prepared by Mr Sander Phlips for his Bachelor's Degree in International Business Management at the Artevelde University College in Ghent, during his internship at the FIT office in Melbourne (February-June 2018).

Mr Phlips's analytical skills, the Australian online context and the interest of FIT Australia in exploring more contemporary business opportunities for Flemish companies created the basis of this market study, aiming at presenting current status and trends of e-commerce in Australia.

Most of the SMEs that want to enter a foreign (and distant, like Australia) market don't have enough capital to set up a store abroad. This is due to access to working capital, manpower (and related wages), logistics, structural costs (including real estate), expertise on international scale, etc. As setting up a brick and mortar, a physical presence of a business, becomes more and more expensive, organizations are looking for alternatives to present their products and services to a wide range of customers. One of these alternative solutions is starting or using an online business.

This document includes information about the Australian online market, the reasons why and what Australians purchase online, the related legislation, the logistics of an online business in Australia, the importance of mobile commerce and social commerce.

Belgian companies can benefit from a range of opportunities when deciding to start and/or expand online operations into Australia.

1. Australian e-commerce outlook

Australia's e-commerce is booming and this can be proved by the average spending per e-shopper: Australian online shoppers spent $1,468 each in 2013, while this amount rose to $1.764 in 2015 for a total $22.23 billion, and an increase of 14.4% to an estimated $24.7 billion in 2017 according the National Australian Bank. This vast amount in online retail spending is equal to 7.9% of what Australians spend in traditional brick and mortar stores, as a study conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics found out.

According to the McGrathNicol Advisory Firm, the total value of retail in Australia equalled $307 billion in 2017. The year-on-year growth between January 2017 and January 2018 showed an increase in sales of 14.1%. The current trend is showing that online retail sales are much stronger than in the first half of 2017. Traditional over-the-counter sales declined by 0.5 percent in December 2017.

The National Australian Bank commented that small and medium-sized enterprises account for approximately one third of all online retail sales and represented a year-on-year growth of 22.1%, measured in January 2018. Although Australia has a relatively small population, the strong growth in e-commerce is mainly fuelled by its strong economy, rather than the amount of consumers in the market.

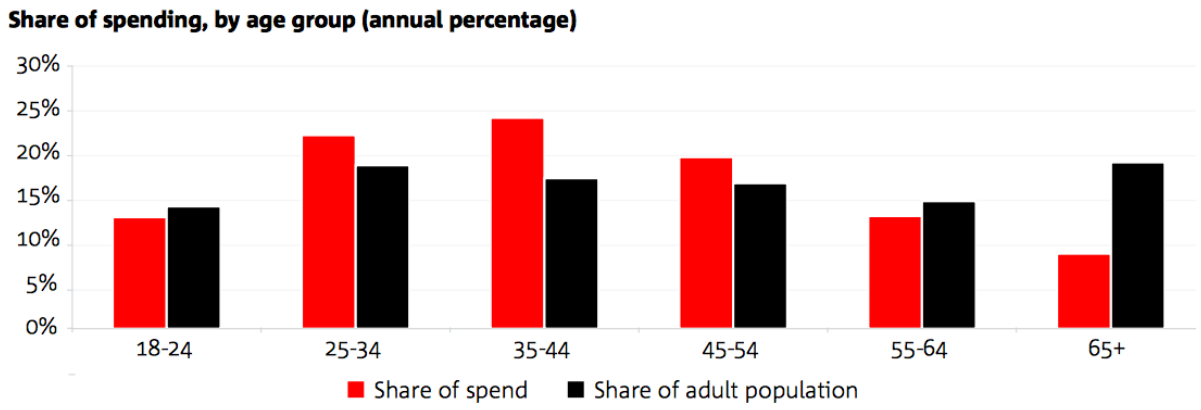
As Australia now ranks as the 10th biggest e-commerce environment, it provides online businesses with a range of opportunities. Moreover, about one fourth of the total Australian spending is spent on overseas e-commerce websites (about $6 billion Australian dollars, according to Mitchell & McIlroy).

1.1 Demographic factors

The Australian population counts almost 24.9 million permanent residents, with 89% of Australia's inhabitants living in urban areas, which makes these cities highly concentrated. Australia's Gross Domestic Product is continuing holding the world record of uninterrupted growth without two consecutive periods of recession, denoting a healthy economic environment.

65.7% of the population falls under the participation rate of whether being employed or actively looking for a job (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018) and the unemployment rate remained steady at 5.5% in Q1 2018, meaning that 729,500 people are unemployed whereas 12,480,500 Australians are employed.

The graph below shows the share of online spending by age group, calculated in June 2017: the biggest share of spending is reserved for those aged 35-44, namely 24% even though they only make up 17% of the population. Following close with a 22% share are those aged 25-34. They make up approximately 19% of the population. The age group showing the lowest share in online spending are those aged over 65. They occupy only 8.5% of the online spending share, yet, make up 19.3% of the total Australian population (National Australian Bank, 2017).



Source: NAB Online Retail Sales Index - Quarterly Update - June 2017

Statistics published by the National Australian Bank also show whether the different age groups are buying domestically or internationally when it comes to online retail. Those aged 18-24 significantly buy more goods from abroad (approximately 18%) compared to domestic online purchases (approximately 11%). Other age groups have approximately the same share of spending domestically as well as internationally, with the exemption of those aged 35-44, who tend to buy more domestic goods online (almost 25%) compared to foreign goods (20%).

Interesting to note that according to a KPMG report on global e-commerce, Australian men spend more than women per online transaction. Respectively AU$301 compared to AU$207. Moreover, there is no difference in the online shopping frequency between men and women.

1.2 IT literacy

Australia has a high IT literacy rate. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics there are 13.7 million internet subscribers in Australia, with 7.7 million households (86% of all Australian households) having access to the internet. This denoting a big difference between households with children under 15 years of age and households without any children under 15 years of age: respectively 97% and 82% with internet access. In urban areas, 88% of the households had internet access in comparison to only 79% of the households living in more rural and remote areas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016).

Desktops and laptops maintain the biggest market share in the Australian market for internet access, namely 50.81% in Q1 2018. The second biggest market share was reserved for mobile devices followed by tablets with 38.84% and 10.36% respectively (GlobalStats, 2018).

A mobile consumer survey carried out by Deloitte in 2017 found out that the smartphone penetration rate is continually increasing now that 88% of the Australians own a smartphone. This increase is mainly driven by older generations adopting new smartphone technologies. Australians own 3.9 connected devices per person, on average (Google Consumer Barometer, 2017).

2. Products and services purchased online

The most popular purchases are department and variety store items such as clothes, accessories, perfumes and underwear: these items account for 30.1% of all online purchases (60% of all online purchases in the department and variety store category come from pure online players). Fashion is following up closely with a 22.2%, with a year-on-year growth of 16.7% compared to 2015 (Startrack, Australia Post, 2017).

[Note: in Australia, Myer and David Jones are the biggest department store players on the market, comparable to Inno in Belgium]

Furthermore, Australians like to spend their money online for homeware and appliances and media with 14.8% and 12.9% of the share respectively. The category of media (including books, as they account for 80% of the purchases in this category) showed the biggest growth through 2016.

Smaller shares are reserved for health and beauty products, liquor and recreational goods, owning up 8.7%, 6.1% and 5.2% of the share of all online purchases made in Australia in 2016 respectively.

According to data from the NAB's Online Retail Sales Index at the end of 2016, 79% of online spending in Australia is reserved for domestic purchases, showing an 11% growth rate compared to just 7.3% for international online spending (Startrack, Australia Post, 2017).

However 2017 KPMG's global consumer report found out that cross-border shopping is increasing globally. This indicates a potential for growth in cross-border online shopping because consumers are seeking unique products from overseas more and more. In Australia and New Zealand, almost 35% of all online purchases were imported from other regions.

Australians are fairly receptive towards products that are not Australian sourced as most Australians do not really care or just in a moderate manner about the origin of the products.

2.1 Reasons supporting online purchase and methodology

A consumer survey conducted by Temando in 2017 found out that 33% of the Australian shoppers bought products online simply because it was cheaper, compared to just 4% of the consumers that are mainly shopping online for the free shipping. Australian shoppers prefer to shop online because the comparison between products becomes easier. (Startrack, Australia Post, 2017) Moreover, 37% of the Australian consumers especially liked the 24/7 online access and find it very convenient to buy products online whenever the time suits them best.

A major factor driving a purchase decision in Australia is the price of the product or a current promotion: 38% of Australians admits to be influenced by this factor (Kruh, Benzimra, Hernandez, Coonan, & Elaine, 2017).

Saving money is a main influential factor in both shopping online and in physical locations, yet, it is more present when it comes to shopping online.

This is one of the reasons why Australians turn to their computers and mobile phones. They use the devices to assist them to find product information, consumer reviews and current deals. It is very common for consumer to use online assistance to evaluate the alternatives and to find more information regarding the product. When the consumer has performed his or her research and wishes to purchase the product in a physical store, this can be described as "webrooming". This is otherwise known as research online, buy offline ("ROBO").

Webrooming is currently on the rise whereas the more conventional showrooming has started its decline. When a shopper is "showrooming", he or she will research the product in physical stores to touch and see the product in person. Afterwards, the consumer will buy the product online. There are two types of showrooming. The first one is friendly showrooming. In this case, the consumer may research the product in a physical Myer store, for example, and buy it online from the Myer website. When hostile showrooming occurs, the shopper will browse for the product in the Myer store but buy it from the online store of Ralph Lauren, for example. (Bakaj Pennacchio, 2017)

Looking deeper into where Australian consumers made their most recent online purchase, KPMG uncovered that 43% of the consumers purchased through the retailer's website, whereas 36% bought its products via an online-only retailer. Only 11% choose to buy via the brand's own website.

Australians are ready to embrace a multi-channel strategy when it comes to buying products online. They either solely depend on the information provided on the internet or in physical stores or they try to combine both ways and that is how the showrooming and webrooming effect came into existence. People will either accumulate information online and buy the product in-store (webrooming) or they go to the physical location to assess the product and eventually buy it online (showrooming). Webrooming is becoming more common in Australia.

2.2 Payment methods

Credit and debit cards are widely accepted throughout Australia and the preference in using credit cards to complete online purchase transactions brings added convenience to checking out. The majority of the online buyers find credit cards the safest way of paying for products online as some providers have built-in insurance coverage against theft and fraud.

EFTPOS (Electronic Funds Transfer at the Point of Sale) is a well-known payment method. that allows customers to make payments directly into bank account. Every day, 5.4 million payments are made through EFTPOS in Australia (EFTPOS, 2018). Online payments such as PayPal or Apple Pay allow customers to pay for the goods and services through a website. PayPal users prefer it as their payment method for making secure transactions and buyer protection as they do not want their credit card details to be spread across many websites.

Service fees and transaction costs are to be considered as these contactless payments (ie "tap-and-go") are quite expensive for businesses and these businesses calculate the extra costs into their products or fees to put it back on their customers.

In Australia, businesses can pass on the 1 to 2% surcharge of regular credit card transactions to their clients. The service fees charged for the use of debit cards and EFTPOS are much lower and therefore, according to the Reverse Bank's 2016 Consumer Payment Survey, Australians are using debit cards more than credit cards.

3. Product shipment (delivery and return policies)

Shipping can be a barrier to certain consumers as 84% of Australian shoppers generally find the costs of shipping too high. High shipping costs can demotivate consumers to buy products online. According to a market research 74% of the Australian consumers acknowledged that higher shipping costs resulted in a trade-off for the convenience of the package being delivered at home (Temando, 2017). Moreover, 73% of the panel found that high shipping costs were not relative to the quality the carriers provide.

85% Australians prefer free shipping over a fast delivery. 68% of the respondents admitted that they would buy online more regularly if shipping were free. Only 24% of retailers offers free return shipping if the product does not suit the needs of the consumer. Furthermore, 61% struggles to manage the rising costs of the shipping and carrier rates. It is becoming harder and harder for retailers to offer free shipping (Temando, 2017).

Clearly there is still a discrepancy between what retailers offer and what consumers desire in terms of shipping: as free shipping is still not very common in Australia, it has a major influence on the frequency of online shopping.

80% of shoppers is willing to buy again from the same retailer if they have enjoyed the previous shipping experience. A negative experience regarding the shipment of goods will set back 59% of the Australian consumers to order again from that same retailer (Temando, 2017).

Another major factor is return policies as consumer mostly have not seen the product until it is delivered. Some retailers are trying to give customers more confidence by offering better and distinct return options.

Another barrier for some consumers is the actual delivery, as it might be difficult to arrange a delivery at home at a convenient time. A tip for retailers and online merchants could be to provide alternative delivery options. If the organization disposes of a physical store, consumers could pick it up in-store at any time they prefer. If the organization does not operate physical locations in Australia, the product or package can be collected at a pick-up point, such as a post office (Startrack, Australia Post, 2017).

4. GST component

GST is the goods and services tax of 10% levied on most goods, services and other items that are being sold and consumed in Australia. A business in Australia must register for GST if the business has a GST turnover of AU$75,000 or more. This will be calculated as follows: Gross income minus GST.

The Australian Federal Government has decided upon a new import tax on low value products as from the first of July 2018. Australian consumers will then have to pay a 10% GST tax on goods bought via the internet from abroad with a total import value less than AU$1,000. This means that products with a total value (shipment and other duties included) of less than AU$1,000 are no longer exempted from goods and services taxes. Before, only shipments with products imported from foreign countries into Australia with a total value of AU$1,000 or more were levied a 10% GST tax.

The extension on the rule means that all electronics, make-up, clothing, books and equipment bought from overseas will become relatively more expensive. Under this GST plan, even eBay and Amazon will need to collect GST on goods these companies sell to Australian consumers.

This goods and services tax levy can be perceived as a protectionist tariff as the Australian Taxation Office wants to protect local retailers. (Frank, 2018) Online shoppers already had to pay taxes on domestic online purchases and purchases from overseas were significantly cheaper due to the "tax-free policies".

Furthermore, online shoppers could be prone to another two to seven Australian dollar tax levy per package they buy from overseas as Home Affairs Department is considering this additional rule to help cover the costs of screening 38.7 million parcels when they enter the Australian border control.

Amazon.com announced its intention to cease shipping to Australia to avoid the new GST levies. Australian consumers will no longer be able to order products from Amazon's overseas e-commerce websites. Amazon has set up a global store to offer products that were previously only available on the US website. Nonetheless, the product range will be just a fraction of those available in the United States (Mitchell & McIlroy, 2018).

5. Online product reviews

Online product reviews are becoming a more and more relevant as purchase drivers, with customer reviews having a high impact on the retention rate of businesses: 12% of Australians admit that online reviews was a major factor that drove them to the decision to make the purchase (Kruh, Benzimra, Hernandez, Coonan, & Elaine, 2017).

As an example, ProductReview is an Australian online opinion platform where consumers can leave their reviews for any product they have bought in the past twelve months. It has become the most visited consumer opinion platform with more than 9 million page views and 4 million unique visitors per month.

It is an ideal way for businesses to observe unbiased consumer experiences, monitor, manage and foster product reviews by consumers.

According to the global consumer survey carried out by KPMG in 2017, three out of ten online consumers post a product review. Nonetheless this global average, Australians are, with just 14%, less likely to write a review. Globally speaking, half of the consumers looked up online reviews on their smart phones while in store to obtain more information about the product (Kruh, Benzimra, Hernandez, Coonan, & Elaine, 2017).

In spite the fact people post reviews on the seller's website where they have bought the product on, social media platforms are increasingly influencing consumer feedback. Facebook is, with 42%, by far the preferred choice in Australia followed by Instagram with 16%.

As these consumer reviews are being generated out of the sphere of control of the companies, sellers need to integrate social media platforms into their customer and marketing strategies. Offering incentives and keeping in touch with the client by sending them post-purchase e-mails might help to convert purchases into positive product reviews.

6. E-Grocery

The Australian online grocery market, dominated by supermarket chains Woolworths, Coles and Aldi (and party IGA), is growing seven times faster than the global online grocery shopping market.

Woolworths and Coles attract 9 and 7 million monthly website visits respectively. Because of Amazon's arrival in the Australian e-commerce market on November 2017, Woolworths has expanded its "click-and-collect" services from 400 to 970 stores across Australia.

Groceries have seen the greatest increase in mobile purchasing since 2016. The category went up from 9% in 2016 to a 25% of the online spending in 2017.

According to IBISWorld, the online grocery industry accumulated a revenue of AU$3.1 billion in 2017 at an annualized growth of 14.2% in the past five years through 2018. Revenue is expected to grow further in the coming five years at an annualized rate of 12.4% through 2023 reaching AU$5.5 billion.

The e-grocery trend is to shop online for non-perishable, heavy and bulky goods with long storage lives. E-grocery is then complemented with in-store purchases of fresh products. This explains the most category being pantry, convenience and frozen foods with a market share of 29.2%.

Age group of 25 to 55 year olds is the major consumer segment shopping online for groceries, representing 54%, followed by consumers younger than 25 with 27.4%. E-grocery penetration is lower for consumers aged 55 and older. This can

represent a substantial challenge for online retailers as these shoppers have the ability to go grocery shopping during off-peak moments.

Potential entrants to the market should be aware that well-established and trusted supermarket chains account for more than 75% of the industry's revenue.

7. M-Commerce

M-commerce is the use of mobile devices that connect to the internet to enable online transactions. In 2013 8.9 million Australians have downloaded a mobile app. This includes 4.9 million downloads of banking and finance apps and 2.9 million shopping app downloads. By the end of 2015, 35% of all e-commerce transactions were performed on mobile devices (Frederick, 2016).

A study found out that 48% of the millennials use their smartphone as their primary device for online shopping (Temando, 2017). According to a survey performed by Deloitte, the results show a 14% increase in the number of Australians that browsed online shopping sites on their mobile devices compared to 2016.

In 2017, 88% of all Australians own a smartphone and the "smartphone-peak" is approaching with a 95% penetration rate for 18-34 year olds. Nonetheless, the biggest growth came from older generations aged 55-64 and 65-75 with a 5% and 9% increase respectively (Drumm, Chang, White, & Huggins, 2017).

In 2017, 72% of smartphone owners utilized their mobile phone to make online payments. The youngest age group in PayPal's survey, aged 18 to 34, has the highest adoption rate of mobile commerce. (PayPal, 2017)

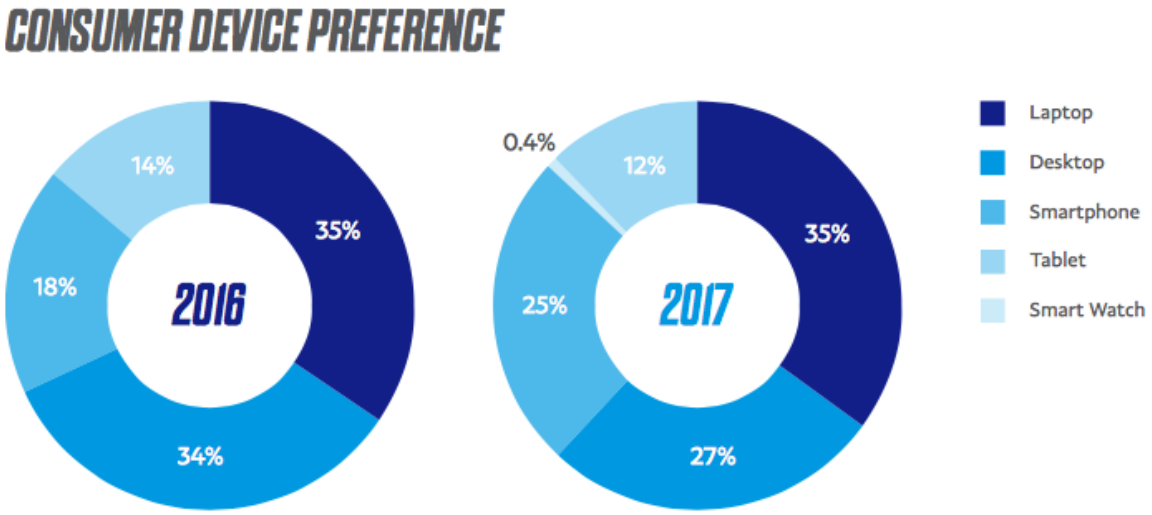


Figure: Consumer Device Preference 2016-2017. Reprinted from PayPal mCommerce Index Australia 2017 (PayPal, 2017)

Looking into the device preference of consumers in mobile commerce, laptops are still the preferred method of online shopping with an overall 35% share of the m-commerce market.

Following up closely, we find desktops and smartphones with a 27% and 25% share respectively. Tablets have lost 2% of their market share compared to 2016, totaling up for a 12% market share (PayPal, 2017).

The study conducted by PayPal shows an increase in smartphone preference by all age groups of Australian consumers. Those aged 18 to 34 show the highest preference (39%) for smartphones whereas the highest increase (11%) was measured in the age group of 35 to 50-year-old consumers.

Moreover, this study proved the increase of mobile payments and purchases: 48% of all Australians makes a mobile purchase or payment more than once a week. The frequency increase is evident across all generations.

On average, Australian consumers spend AU$331 on mobile commerce per month. An interesting aspect of this finding is that those aged 50 or over spend the highest monthly amount on mobile commerce despite being the age group with a lower mobile commerce adoption. The average amount of money spent on M-Commerce by users over the age of 50 was AU$513. This is 17% higher than what 18 to 34 year old segment spends on M-Commerce per month.

In 2017, paying off bills remained the most common mobile payment category at 70%. Tickets to the movies, concerts or museums have been paid online by 51% of the Australian consumers. Clothing and accessories ranked third in online payments with 46%. The food and drinks and travel industries have seen a rise in their share with currently 39% of the consumers paying for these goods and services online (PayPal, 2017).

There is still a significant gap that continues to exist between the readiness of Australian businesses and the Australian consumer acceptance of mobile commerce. Only 51% of Australian businesses have optimized sites for mobile use. There has been just a 2% increase compared to 2016. Still over one third of all businesses with a non-optimized mobile site have no plans to optimize it. Only 8% of them is currently in the process of developing or planning to develop a mobile website suitable for smartphones. 36% of businesses think it is not necessary to have a mobile-optimized website as they believe their customers do not want to shop via a mobile device (PayPal, 2017).

The data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that only 50.1% of all Australian companies is involved in having a web presence.

8. Social Commerce

Social Commerce brings the functionality of e-commerce to social media platforms. These platforms are used to provide the customer with a more targeted and personalized online shopping experience.

Social media is becoming increasingly important in the decision process of purchasing items. Lately, it became a vast part of the research phase and the product discovery: 16% of social media users engage in actively researching for products and services.

Electronic goods remain the most researched item on social media with 47% and is followed up upon by furniture and fashion with 42% and 35% respectively (Tolliday, 2017).

According to Sensis, an Australian marketing company, Facebook remains the dominant player of all social media platforms with 94% of all survey participants having a presence on Facebook. Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube mainly dominate the younger age segments with 81%, 77% and 75% respectively of the Australians aged 18 to 29 using the platforms (Tolliday, 2017). Nonetheless, online business and retailers should maintain a presence on all platforms their target market is also present on. Each and every platform will require a different strategy to approach potential customers. Moreover, it can be beneficial to retailers to bring the social aspect to their own websites by embedding (clients') social media posts for example (Pandolph, 2018).

After a one-year-long trial in the United States, Australia is one of the first nine countries to introduce Instagram Shopping before a potential global rollout. The in-app shopping feature simplifies the process for brands to direct consumers to their e-commerce stores. Retailers on Instagram can now overlay a post with virtual price tags. Users are now able to tap on these tags that include more information about the product and the brand (Koehn, 2018). Moreover, the tag includes a link to the brand's website to order the specific product. Potentially, this can save a lot of time for Instagram users as they do not need to close the app any longer and browse in multiple store catalogues to find what they are looking for.

9. Logistics

As businesses will be confronted with massive logistics issues, it is a very important aspect to take into account when engaging in e-commerce. Businesses need to get their products to the consumer and the challenges are even tougher for foreign businesses as they need to take import regulations into account.

Foreign businesses have a few options when it comes to the logistics aspect of e-commerce. The first option is to manufacture the products in Australia itself, but this would be the most capital-intense exercise to set up operations, buy machinery and pay out wages to employees.

The second option is outsourcing of the logistics. As e-commerce logistics became increasingly complicated with more geographies, more fulfillment locations and carriers, it can be extremely difficult to manage as a retailer. Most likely, logistics companies have access to capabilities you do not possess, whether it's resources, technology, expertise or geographic reach. By outsourcing your logistics, a specialist will do the work for you, 24/7, so you do not have to worry about it at all. Looking at the costs, third-party logistics operate economies of scale which signifies that the cost per unit will most likely be lower than what your business would be able to accomplish. Outsourcing logistics will require a synchronization of the business' inventory with the third party (BigCommerce, 2018).

Online retailers can also import products into Australia themselves but they must take the Australian Border Control Regulations into account. They will need a trustworthy and knowledgeable customs broker specialized in globalization and international trade expansion in order to circumvent penalties when the business does not comply to Australian customs and regulations (BRinternational, 2014).

According to the Australian Department of Home Affairs, goods with a value lower or equal to 1000 Australian dollar need a Self-Assessed Clearance Declaration (SAC) if the goods arrive in Australia via sea or air cargo.

There is no additional charge for this declaration document and this will generally be arranged by the cargo company bringing the goods into Australia. For a list of products or substances that are denied entry into Australia because they do not comply to Australia's Biosecurity conditions, businesses can consult BICON. BICON is the Biosecurity Import Conditions System provided by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, 2018).

10. Legal framework for e-commerce

Online businesses have legal obligations and are subject to the Australian Consumer Law when setting up online operations in Australia. The fast growth of the Australian e-commerce allowed omnipresent benefits for both entrepreneurs in acquiring access to a wider range of international customers as for the customers in the form of competitive prices amongst market players. Nonetheless, it is essential for online businesses in Australia to be familiarized with the Australian Consumer Law and its applications to a business' operations when it is selling goods to consumers that are located within or connected with Australia (Fallahi, 2017).

When it comes to advertising, the consumer reserves the right to receive truthful and full information regarding the service or product they may wish to purchase. The Australian Consumer Law takes protection over the users of e-commerce websites, online stores, e-mail marketing or any other sources of advertising that may result in a consumer buying a good or a service via the web.

Organizations must provide customers with accurate and mindful information regarding the online presentation of a product to engage a customer to make a purchase. No unconscionable conduct is allowed which means that the business' website must include the total price of the services and goods you are selling, the charges for delivery and contact information details such as the business address and telephone number must be provided. Online businesses must comply with the 2012 Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act.

If your business saves and stores any personal or contact information from your clients, it is required, under the Federal Privacy Act of 1988, to notify your customers to make them aware about what information you are collecting.

An online business may also encounter issues regarding intellectual property such as potential trademark and copyright violations. IP Australia will grant patents, trademarks and registers designs that provide protection for your intellectual property. Businesses can consult IP Australia to work out their intellectual property rights and obligations when establishing an online business in Australia as failure to comply will face the business with significant penalties (Fallahi, 2017).

Electronic junk mail such as spam can be used to send large amounts of unsolicited promotional emails. According to the Spam Act of 2003, sending unsolicited commercial e-mails or text messages is illegal. The Australian Communication and Media Authority enforces compliance to this legislation and failure to comply results in significant penalties. A business must receive consent from its customers to send them messages regarding promotional activities. Furthermore, it must include accurate and clear information about the organization with the provision of contact details. Thirdly, a business must include an "unsubscribe" feature to its messages to allow recipients to withdraw from receiving them.

11. Next steps towards e-operating in Australia

When a business wants to expand into Australia, it should respond to the needs and wants of Australian consumers. This includes offering the right payment methods. Due to shifting preferences and innovations, consumers are now increasingly attracted to the buy-now-pay-later-schemes.

The survey results have shown that half of the respondents expect their product order to be delivered within three to five days. Businesses should act accordingly by providing shipping terms that are desirable to most consumers. The online business can for example charge more for an express delivery within one or two days to satisfy those that expect a fast product delivery.

A new foreign entrant to the Australian market must create awareness. Reaching out to micro-influencers will be fairly easy but will not generate a lot of coverage. A solution for the business can be to partner up with influencer marketing agencies such as The Exposure Co., Hello Social, Hoozu or MODA Creative. These agencies undertake some vital tasks in the process of creating brand awareness. They cast influencers, do media planning, influencer placements, creation of content and experiential influencer campaigns or social media endorsements to name a few. To illustrate the reach of influencer marketing agencies, The Exposure Co. operates a portfolio of 2,000 influencers with a combined reach of 90 million followers (Influencer Marketing Hub, 2018). Social media presence is an important method of creating more awareness and it does not hurt the company to have a presence on multiple social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram or Twitter.

Flemish companies interested in entering the Australian market can consult the Melbourne-based office of Flanders Investment & Trade for advice and extensive market reports.

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