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Internet Retailing In OZ 5 Years Behind UK

By David Richards | Wednesday | 09/02/2011

The International Sales Director of a leading UK consumer electronics company has said that Australia is five years behind the UK when it comes to Internet retailing.

In Australia to launch the Conran Audio Sound Dock, which has been designed by English designer, writer, restaurateur, and retailer, Sir Terrence Conran, with the audio side developed by Q Acoustics, David Jefferys of Armour Home said "Australia is way behind the UK when it comes to Internet retailing; they have a lot of catching up to do here. In the UK Internet selling is mature, it's not in Australia".

"When John Lewis who has 29 stores in the UK went to the Internet three years ago they were, within six months, doing as much business online as one of their major stores".

When asked whether the recently launched Conran Audio System which comes with a built in stylish Bluetooth iPod dock was going to be sold online in the UK, he said: "Yes".

When Robert Costello, the General Manager of Sales and Marketing for Canohm, the Australian distributor of the new system was asked the same question, he said: "No".

When asked why, Costello said: "We have never had our products sold online in Australia, we do not deal with any online retailers. We expect our normal retail partners to sell online," he said.

When asked whether one of the issues was distributors trying to price protect products in Australia, David Jefferys said: "Price protection is an issue, so is price erosion".

He also said that Australian consumers would not be able to buy the Conran Audio Sound Dock from a UK web site where it is set to go on sale for US \$340.

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The recommended retail price for the same product in Australia via Canohm is \$549 which is \$209 more expensive than in the UK.

Jefferys said that Internet sales in the UK already represented over 15% of all consumer electronics sales.

"A lot of the dealers that we sell through have been online for several years. They will sell this product. In Australia very few retailers have online operations and they are missing out on opportunities". He added.

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