



MEDIA RELEASE

BUY FROM REPUTABLE BUSINESSES TO AVOID SCAMS SAYS RETAIL NZ

Retail NZ is warning customers that they're better protected from scams if they shop locally and buy from reputable retailers. The warning follows printed flyers being delivered to homes in the Wellington region offering half price iphones and other technology items that can only be bought by making international bank transfers.

"Consumers in New Zealand are well protected by the Fair Trading Act and the the Consumer Guarantees Act, but the legislation is very difficult to enforce outside New Zealand," Retail NZ's General Manager of Public Affairs, Greg Harford said today. "Genuine retailers try their best to provide great customer service, and meet all their legal obligations to customers. We strongly recommend that, in order to protect themselves, consumers make sure they know from whom they are buying, and take steps to make sure that the business is genuine.

"We are aware that someone has gone to some expense to print and deliver colour flyers to households purporting to sell half price technology kit from an anonymous offshore company, with express delivery within two days. The company doesn't have a website or phone number, and requires customers to pay only by bank transfer or money order. A customer trying to purchase these items runs the risk that they will not be protected either by New Zealand consumer law, or the guarantees that typically apply to credit card transactions."

Mr Harford said that it's really important customers know who they're dealing with. "Just because a flyer has come in the letterbox, or a company has a .co.nz website address doesn't necessarily mean that the company is legitimate. There are plenty of reputable businesses based offshore selling to New Zealanders, but there are also some pretty dodgy dealers out there. If an offshore firm selling in New Zealand doesn't have a website or a phone number, and doesn't take credit cards, you'd want to ask some questions about why this is. The bottom line is that if a deal looks too good to be true, then it probably is.

"Our #shoplocal campaign is about supporting local Kiwi businesses to support the ongoing development of the New Zealand economy. But shopping local is also good for consumers. The best consumer protection is buying from a New Zealand firm that's subject to New Zealand law, and we continue to encourage Kiwis to shop locally wherever possible".

For further information, please contact:

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