

Discover your edge

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Australia's online shoppers more likely to buy local

It's a problem familiar to many online shoppers: trying to buy products from internet retailers in the US, only to find they don't ship to Australia. But the news that Australia Post has just launched a parcel-forwarding service to help online shoppers get their American goodies says it all: the world really is one big, boundless retail opportunity. Yet, as the latest findings from Roy Morgan Research reveal, Aussies are still more likely to buy from local rather than overseas websites.

In the 12 months to September 2014, 38% of Australians 14+ (or 7,387,000 people) bought one or more products over the internet in an average four week period. Almost two-thirds of them (64%, or 4,730,000 people) purchased locally, while 39% (2,896,000) bought from overseas websites.

Only six out of 51 product categories were more commonly purchased from overseas websites: video games and consoles, ebooks, books, jewellery and watches, TV show downloads and fashion accessories.

Top-selling products bought on Australian and overseas websites in an average 4 weeks

	Best-selling products from local websites	Number of Australians who bought (last 4 weeks)		Best-selling products from overseas websites	Number of Australians who bought (last 4 weeks)
1	Shows, movie tickets, events etc	830,000	1	eBooks	557,000
2	Travel (tickets/accommodation)	785,000	2	Books	528,000
3	Fast food/meals	569,000	3	Women's clothing	369,000
4	Women's clothing	545,000	4	Music to download	327,000
5	Books	383,000	5	Video games and consoles	256,000
6	Music to download	358,000	6	Computer accessories and software	253,000
7	Supermarket shopping	354,000	7	Men's clothing	229,000
8	Homewares & Manchester	309,000	8	Travel (tickets/accommodation)	200,000
9	Alcohol	278,000	9	Crafts/hobbies	188,000
10	Men's clothing	277,000	10	Shoes/footwear	150,000

Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), October 2013 – September 2014 (n=16,176).

For everything else, from women's clothing, cosmetics and skincare, to toys, travel and homewares, local websites come up trumps.

The top-selling products locally are tickets to movies, shows and other events (purchased by 830,000 Australians in an average four weeks), followed by travel items such as tickets and accommodation (785,000 people), and fast food/meals (569,000), all of which would usually be impractical or inappropriate to buy via foreign websites.

Ebooks and books are the most popular items bought from overseas online retailers, no doubt due to the low prices offered on websites like Amazon and the Book Depository compared with those of Australian retailers.

Geoffrey Smith, General Manager – Consumer Products, Roy Morgan Research, says:

“There’s no doubt about it: the internet has revolutionised the way we shop, giving us unprecedented access to the global marketplace. But in great news for Aussie online retailers, the majority of Australians prefer to buy from local rather than overseas websites.

“Much of the retail conversation over the last few years has focused on women’s fashion. The race for Australian stores to develop an online presence so they can compete with well-established overseas competitors has received much coverage and commentary. In the midst of all this focus on women’s fashion, it looks like the new fashion battleground may be for men’s clothing. With a higher ranking on the overseas online stores’ list and nearly as many customers, it could be the category that local retailers need to watch.

“With overseas markets more accessible than ever via online shopping, it’s crucial for local online and traditional retailers to stay abreast of consumers’ shifting needs, expectations and preferences. Roy Morgan Single Source data tracks who is shopping where for what, as well as how much is being spent online. Our online store provides a comprehensive range of profiles, containing insights to help your business stay competitive in this ever-changing marketplace.”

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research’s retail data, please contact:**Vaishali Nagaratnam**

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Explore our extensive range of [Online Shopper profiles](#), including [People who have bought Books Online](#), [People who have bought eBooks Online](#), and [People who have bought Women’s Clothing Online](#). These in-depth, ready-made profiles provide a broad understanding of the target audience, in terms of demographics, attitudes, activities and media usage in Australia.

About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in New Zealand, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years’ experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

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Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2