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IPS brings top US marketing group to ANZ

June 16, 2011: Independent Photographic Supplies (IPS) today announced a partnership with the US-based **Independent Photo Imagers** marketing group (IPI) which will provide Australian and New Zealand independent photo retailers with 'easy, affordable and tailored membership'.

IPI operates as both a buying group and a marketing support group in the US and Canada, with around 500 members and 750 outlets, while up until now it has also offered access to a range of marketing support collateral and other benefits to international members.

(Pictured right is Rob Voysey (IPS), Brent Bowyer (IPI) and Stuart Holmes (IPS) in Sydney last month to complete IPI negotiations and sign the exclusive distribution agreement with IPS for the ANZ region.)



The new alliance will bring greater local relevance to IPI membership in Australia and New Zealand.

Currently Peter Michael, (Michaels Camera, Video and Digital), Phil Gresham, (Fotofast) and Alan and Catherine Logue (Hutt Street Photos) are international members of IPI.

'We've been in discussion with IPI about this partnership for over a year. Their passion for the photo specialist retailer is equal to ours,' said Independent Photo managing director, Stuart Holmes (pictured above right).

'Specialist retailers in the US are facing similar challenges to our customers here, with ruthless competition from the likes of Walmart and Walgreens in that market, and IPI has really set the standard in providing its members with the tools to push back against that competition.

'Marketing and advertising support from major suppliers has fallen away, so that independents increasingly need to do it themselves – but they still need help,' he said.

In appointing Independent Photo as exclusive partner for the Australian and New Zealand markets, IPI has undertaken to create marketing packages which are tailored to and seasonally relevant for the ANZ marketplace.

IPI members benefits include:

- Access to the informative members-only IPI website, updated daily;
- A weekly eNewsletter, emailed to members;
- A monthly hard copy newsletter, 'Innovative Imager', which is mailed to members;
- Regular 'eBlasts' of important or time-sensitive information;
- Admission to the annual Members' Retreat & Trade Show in the US, with industry expert-led sessions on growing business and increasing profits;
- Access to members-only technical and marketing forums, with 24/7 member-to-member networking.

The IPI marketing packages, delivered via DVD on a quarterly basis, provide the kind of creative marketing collateral larger retailers would source from a full-service advertising agency, covering creative artwork; brand identity; direct marketing; strategic and guerrilla marketing; graphic design; PR kits; and marketing education.

IPI also has a well-established relationship with Dakis eCommerce online photo retailing software (distributed in Australia by IPS) which will further deliver Australian and New Zealand members exclusive links to Dakis Cloud online print and marketing services.

Membership fees in Australia and New Zealand will be 'under \$100 per month' according to Stuart Holmes, and existing and new IPS customers will receive a partial refund of fees following 12 month's membership.

'We feel this demonstrates to our customers and the broader photo retailing community in Australia and New Zealand a willingness to "put our money where our mouth is" and become a supplier of marketing ideas and collateral as well as products.'

'Given the dynamic nature of our industry today, it's important for all service specialty retailers to join together in developing and promoting business models that provide customer service and benefits that others cannot and will not,' said Brent Bowyer, executive director, IPI.

'Our partnership with Independent Photo provides opportunities for service specialty retailers in Australia and New Zealand to participate in the world class programs that IPI has developed for its members in the USA, and also for the members in two hemispheres to share their knowledge and experience in effectively competing with others.

'We are very excited about this announcement and see a very bright future for all that are members of both organizations.'



Photo Counter Poll

Should the annual Australasian photographic equipment exhibition be entirely devoted to consumers?

- Yes
 No

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Independent Photo will have full details of IPI membership on their stand #437 at the Imaging and Entertainment Expo at Darling Harbour next week, and is keen to talk to all independent retailers about the advantages of belonging to the group.

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Your Comments

Posted By alan 06/17/2011 10:01:19 AM

Joining IPI was one of the best things we ever did! It may not help us directly with purchasing, but we have received (and given) great help from a switched on group of US retailers. The retreat is another PMA, and just as good, and we have taken away some great ideas from it. Looking forward to leaving Sydney on Sunday to go to Vegas to get even more ideas.

Posted By Rob Heim 06/16/2011 06:58:51 PM

This sounds like an excellent opportunity for retailers. Not sure how it will help them with product purchases at the best wholesale prices, but improved marketing would be an excellent start. If retailers do not find the answers for themselves they will disappear and box movers will win.

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