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## IPS ties knot with US photo marketing group

21 Jun 2011

US-based photo marketing group Independent Photo Imagers will have a stronger presence in Australia and New Zealand following the signing of a partnership deal with Independent Photographic Supplies.

IPS managing director Stuart Holmes said the deal will provide local 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. Until now it has only offered access to a range of marketing support collateral and other benefits to international members.

International members of IPI currently include Peter Michael, (Michaels Camera, Video and Digital), Phil Gresham, (Fotofast) and Alan and Catherine Logue (Hutt Street Photos).

The new alliance will bring greater local relevance to IPI membership in Australia and New Zealand, Holmes told *Photo & Imaging News*.

Membership fees in Australia and New Zealand will be 'under \$100 per month' according to 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," he said.

"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 IPI executive director Brent Bowyer.

"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 US," he said.

"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," Holmes said.



In Sydney last month to sign the exclusive distribution agreement with IPS for the ANZ region (from left), Rob Voysey (IPS), Brent Bowyer (IPI) and Stuart Holmes (IPS).

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"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 added.

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 e-newsletter, emailed to members;
- A monthly hard copy newsletter, 'Innovative Imager', which is mailed to members;
- 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.

IPI also has a relationship with Dakis e-commerce 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.



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