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IPS aiming to add 200 retailers to IPI marketing group

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Independent Photographic Supplies has launched a recruitment drive in Australia and New Zealand for the US-based Independent Photo Imagers marketing group.

Sydney-based IPS, which last month announced that it had signed a partnership agreement with the 950-member strong North American group, said it has a long-term goal of bringing up to 200 Australian and New Zealand retailers into the group.

IPS managing director Stuart Holmes said the IPI marketing group is "non-denominational" and that there are no conflicts with existing marketing and buying groups such as Kodak Express, PhotoEdge and Camera House.

He said IPI was in the process of localising its marketing package for Australian and New Zealand, with all local holidays and events included.

Home visit initiative

The IPI membership drive includes six months' free membership of the Association of Personal Photo Organizers, an association of independent business owners who offer personalised, one-on-one photo management services to consumers.

New to Australia and New Zealand, personal photo organisers have established a viable niche in the North American market over the past three years, according to Holmes.

APPO founder Cathi Nelson identified the opportunity for home visits while working in the scrapbooking industry. APPO agents visit a client's home and help them organise their printed photo collections or digital image files or both. Additional services include digitising printed photos, slides and home movies.

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Home visits are a hot idea according to IPS.

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"The potentially lucrative new revenue stream sees personal photo organisers take on the task of organising their clients' image collections - both hard copy and digital files - and transforming them into digital albums or photo books," Holmes said.

"APPO and IPI are working together to help the photo retailers, including a certification program so that staff members can become a 'certified PPO'", according to New Zealand's first APPO member, Jill Boswell of Snapshot Cameras, Hamilton.

Boswell said seniors moving into smaller residences would be an ideal group that would benefit from an expert photo organising service.

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