



NORITSU
Smart Choice[®]

A New game-changing state-of-the-art minilab has arrived on the scene

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How was it for you?

In our latest readers poll we asked whether the two hundred grand put aside to promote the just completed Digital Life Expo was the best way for the industry to promote consumer photography in Australia.

Just over half said 'No' to the investment, while 40 percent gave it the thumbs up. It certainly worked in getting the punters along in greater numbers (along with the 'indoor activity' weather over Saturday and Sunday and the fact that Melbournians just seem to love to get together *en masse* in public places!)

City-based retailers reported good sales which we hope will continue, and spread out to the suburbs. Whether it was worth the \$15 – 20 per consumer who attended – which is what the money divided by the consumer attendees equates to, well who knows?

In this issue I'm imploring readers to drop a few lines to provide their own brief review of the Digital Life Expo. Partly, I confess, because I was so wrapped up in other activities that I really didn't get around to see as much as I should have! So 'citizen journalists' – have your say!

One thing I did notice on the exhibition floor, which ties in obliquely with our story on HP and Ted's and Kmart, was a real coming of age of Independent Photo Supplies in terms of a far more sophisticated look and feel to its stand. With the linking up with retail software specialist Dakis, and distribution of Noritsu's superb dry lab technology, IPS now has the ability to offer retailers the kind of competitive advantage Ted's is pursuing with HP and Lifepics.

For a specialist to be able and willing to offer online ordering followed by customer pick up in store in an hour or at worst next day should give the printing and creative categories a real boost. Will (can?) the major majors follow suit, or will they bank on price slashing, and Australian consumers' willingness to wait 10 days for their orders. Let's see...

Bye for now,
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RICOH
PHOTOGRAPHICS

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COMMENTS

Unfortunately, the ACCC's response to our complaint was sympathetic but unsupportive. As many of you have indicated, they say that it is almost impossible to prove that these larger enterprises are discounting for the sole purpose of driving competitors out of the market.

There is a lot of talk about predatory trading in print prices but is it the fault of the HN's and Big W? Who makes it possible? - Fuji and HP of course. Fuji did the same thing to the colour copy industry some years ago.

I am a Photo Centre manager for Harvey Norman in a new store. We have gone in the past 18 months from 300 prints per day to an average of 5,000 and sometimes up to 15,000 prints per day.