

## Mobile shopping on the rise as Click Frenzy clocks its third year

**After this year's Click Frenzy 24-hour internet sale, the phenomenon seems to have left the rocky start with technical problems in the first year behind. The event showed a 27.7 per cent rise in online sales compared with 2013.?**

Nailing mobile strategy is the next big challenge for online retailers, if the buying behaviour in this year's Click Frenzy event is a reliable guide.

This is the third year that the 24-hour internet sale has operated and, after a rocky start with technical problems in the first year, Click Frenzy now seems entrenched in the pre-Christmas marketing calendar for retailers.

This year's Click Frenzy showed a 27.7 per cent rise in online sales compared with 2013, according to an analysis of Australian online shopping transactions by IBM Digital Analytics Benchmark. Last year's event delivered an estimated \$30 million in sales.

Individual customers are also spending more, with average order value increasing to \$151.02, 15.2 per cent higher than 2013.

However, not all retailers are happy. Booktopia co-founder and managing director Tony Nash says the results were "really disappointing" and it is "unlikely" Booktopia would participate again in 2015.

"For the cost to participate it has returned a significant loss for us, which is a shame," Nash says. "Due to the disappointing result from Frenzy we have had to keep our sale going across the site until the end of November just to recoup the cost of participating."

### Cost to participate

"I am sure the sales were distributed amongst more retailers, the problem is that the cost to participate does not reflect that, so there may be many retailers that are coming to the same conclusion as us and realising it is the last time we give it a go. Our offer of up to 90 per cent off across 14,000 different titles was as good as it gets, but it still didn't get the result we hoped for."

Nash says the first year of Click Frenzy was the best for Booktopia because it paid for top billing and its site was one of the few to remain operational the entire time, amid well-documented technical problems for the majority of participants. He admits that this year Booktopia went for a less expensive advertising package with Click Frenzy, opting for banners further down the home page and in the book category, and companies that paid for better promotion may have had a better result.

Booktopia may also have been affected by the fact that competitor Bookworld paid for top billing in the carousel at the top of the Click Frenzy home page. However, Nash says he has tried the carousel before and it is only effective for the first advertiser, since it rotates while people have scrolled to the bottom of the page.

Click Frenzy founder Grant Arnott says 310 retailers participated this year, up from 270 last year and 200 in the first year. He says retailers that had a new offer, such as PharmacyMax and Laybyland, performed better than those that ran the same offer as previous years.

The biggest change IBM saw in the Click Frenzy statistics is the rise of mobile – 43 per cent of total traffic came from smartphones and tablets, up from 33.3 per cent last year. Mobile sales reached 20.4 per cent, up from 17.7 per cent.

But consumers used smartphones to browse and tablets or desktop to buy. The analysis suggests 24.8 per cent of online traffic came from smartphones and 18.3 per cent from tablets. However, smartphones only drove 7.1 per cent of online sales, while tablets drove 13.3 per cent.

## **iOS platform beat Android on all metrics**

Apple's iOS platform beat Android on all metrics, delivering higher traffic, higher sales and higher average order value.

Desktop traffic represented 56.7 per cent of the total traffic and 79.6 per cent of online sales. Shoppers spent an average of \$161.76 each on their desktops and \$121.82 on their smartphones.

IBM Australia retail industry lead Ian Wong says omnichannel shopping has taken hold in the past 12 months.

"We anticipate customers are fusing in-store experiences – using the concept of 'show-rooming' to touch and feel products, complemented by mobile browsing both in and out of store, and then using the convenience of online to make the purchase," Wong says.

"Australians are really making the most of multiple retail channels to get the best products and best deals possible – and we anticipate this trend will continue to grow in popularity."

Click Frenzy's Arnott says this year's execution was "flawless" and he is pleased that he stuck with the concept after the "brutal" experience of the site crashing in the first year.

"We ended the first Click Frenzy event thinking it might be all over. Two years later we're still here breaking sales records," Arnott says. "We laid low for a while to think about how we could bounce back .??. but the fact that there were hundreds of thousands, and it's now a million, customers coming through our site interested in online shopping showed us that we had something."

By Caitlin Fitzsimmons