



SMEs Warned Over Christmas and January Sales Commerce Crash

London, 07 December 2010: Easynet Connect, one of the leading ISPs for small and medium sized enterprises, has today warned SMEs to prepare their connections and employees for the festive period ahead. With the biggest UK online shopping days expected in early December¹, and high levels of online sales activity expected for the January sales, smaller online retailers need to ensure their connections can cope with the surge in traffic to their websites. At the same time, with more people expected to shop online this year than ever before², SMEs need to have policies in place to ensure their employees do not use significant work hours to hunt for their festive bargains.

Andy Sumner, sales and marketing director at Easynet Connect comments, "The festive period is often the most lucrative season for retailers, and the January sales are a great chance to top up those sales figures. Those SMEs who rely on the Internet for the bulk of their sales need to ensure their websites and Internet connections can cope with the surges in traffic during this period. Many businesses depend on their website to survive, so any downtime and subsequent loss of sales is especially detrimental during this time of the year."

Statistics show that 52% of SMEs believe the web makes it easier for them to compete with larger companies.³ "The Internet is a great leveler for small businesses," continues Sumner. "With a well designed and professional looking website, a small business can more easily compete on the same level as the e-commerce giants. However, because SMEs don't have the same scalable website infrastructure as larger businesses, they are more at risk of losing custom through website overloading."

With more people expected to shop online than ever before, the festive period also poses a potential challenge to all SME owners, whether they operate in e-commerce or not. Just as with major sporting events during office hours, SMEs need to have clear policies in place to manage employee productivity during the Christmas period. David Brunnen from the Communications

¹ [Cyber Monday peak online shopping week is 29 November to 6 December](#), IMRG, 11 November 2010

² [Online shoppers set to spend £17 Million an hour on manic Monday](#), Kelkoo, 2 December 2009

³ [Internet the most important tool for small business survival according to latest research](#), Easynet Connect, 17 March 2009

Management Association (CMA) said: “The recent report (‘Connected Kingdom’⁴) from Boston Consulting Group revealed that the UK is much more than a nation of digital shopkeepers. As Christmas approaches, SMEs across the country will be testing the strength of their networked systems and hoping that broadband access is adequate for the surge in demand”.

With over half of SMEs expected to be using cloud computing by the end of this year⁵, many businesses are moving their core business applications online. These can be jeopardised if employees take up excessive bandwidth capacity during popular web surfing hours like lunchtime. SMEs should make a judgment on the best way to manage personal Internet usage, whether this is by offering personal shopping days or use of the Internet for personal use during less critical timeframes. Whatever is decided, core business functions and staff productivity should not be compromised. Whilst a complete ban is clearly too extreme, managing the work Internet connection is essential. SMEs need to promote clear online policies that work best for the business as a whole.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Relevant Links

Tags

- Online shopping, Christmas shopping, Broadband, Internet, Easynet Connect, Easynet, Hosting

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[Easynet Connect](#) is one of the UK’s leading providers of quality connectivity and internet access for small to medium size businesses. Its services range from business class ADSL and SDSL through to high-quality, leased line equivalent and Ethernet based services. It is the first ISP to launch a reliable fixed-rate 100 Mbps fibre service across London.

⁴ [The Connected Kingdom](#), The Boston Consulting Group, October 2010

⁵ [2010 to be the year of the cloud for UK small businesses](#), Easynet Connect, 5 January 2010

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