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The new digital environment is offering businesses and consumers boundless opportunities. But online shopping and marketing is like any other commercial environment — businesses have the same responsibilities under the Trade Practices Act and consumers have the same rights of protection.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission operates nationally at the forefront of administration and enforcement of competition and consumer protection law.

The Trade Practices Act covers all businesses in Australia, including government enterprises and many thousands of unincorporated firms that were previously exempt, such as professional practices.

A fast growing number of businesses are initiating an online presence, often unaware of how their legal obligations of disclosure and business practice translate to a website.

This issue of **ACCC update** clarifies some of those legal rights and responsibilities. The story on page 3 looks at the strategies the ACCC is using to identify and prevent any contraventions of the Trade Practices Act on the Internet.

On page 5, 'E-commerce — advice for business' looks at the benefits and pitfalls that confront businesses setting up a website for commercial exchange.

Advice for consumers is offered on page 8, identifying the kinds of scams that are perpetrated on the Net and how to recognise a genuine trader.

**ACCC update** is published to give the wider community general information about the Commission's work and responsibilities.

More detailed information is available in the wide range of ACCC publications (available from the offices listed at the back) or from the Commission's regularly updated website at <http://www.accc.gov.au>.