

# Editorial

'If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that.'

**SHYLOCK'S WORDS** in *The Merchant of Venice* may well have applied to scammers—they do not stick out from the crowd; they look like you and me.

Some Australians believe that scammers are disorganised and unintelligent and that highly educated individuals rarely fall victim to scams. But a recent study by researchers at the University of Exeter put the kybosh on that theory.

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'A good background knowledge of the subject of a scam offer, such as experience of investments, may actually increase the risk of becoming a victim through over-confidence', the researchers reported. 'Victims are not, in general, poor decision-makers'.

This edition of *Update* deals with the rise of online scamming and provides tips on how to avoid being caught. Complaints about these types of scams have increased by 16 per cent over the past year.

*Update* also goes behind the scenes in the energy market to explain why energy prices are on the rise. Deteriorating networks and the huge demand for air conditioning have been significant contributors to spiralling costs.

And *Update* reviews the state of grocery competition in Australia and poses the question: are consumers being ripped off by an increasingly powerful duopoly of Coles and Woolworths? What is the ACCC doing to encourage competition?

We take a look at the major players in the grocery sector—and the emergence of retailers such as ALDI—and what measures have been taken to boost competition.

Another topical issue is the growth of 'green' advertising claims as a method of selling goods and services. *Update* looks at how some companies have contravened the Trade Practices Act—and the importance of companies being able to back up their 'green' claims.

We then take you on a drive through the rental car industry and the legal requirement for this and other industries to comply with the new section 53C (component pricing) of the Act.