

ACCC enters new media

The consumer watchdog now tweets like a bird. The ACCC has entered the web 2.0 world and is actively exploring how web 2.0 can assist it in promoting competition, fair trading and consumer protection, including 'tweeting'.

Web 2.0 technologies allow the ACCC to engage in a collaborative manner, target and tap into new audiences, and communicate important information, such as product recalls, in real time.

The ACCC's foray into new media was prompted by the 2009 Product Safety Recalls Review, which found that, in many cases, traditional print media recall notices are not an effective way

of reaching consumers. New methods more appropriate to the preferences of different audiences were needed. Now the Product Safety Branch is:

blogging—on specific community forums (for example, about products for babies and children)

appearing on YouTube—with a hot water bottles safety video

tweeting—@ProductSafetyAU, providing real-time, frequent advice and information to an eager audience. The ACCC's first tweets hit 101 714 people. So far, the ACCC is averaging more than one tweet a day, and each tweet adds new followers.

This is in addition to SCAMwatch, which has an important and growing online presence. SCAMwatch features radar alerts, which provide real-time warnings to consumers about new and emerging scams—for example, during the 2010 World Cup, FIFA referred consumers around the globe to the ticketing scam alert posted on SCAMwatch.

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