



## **Industry challenges Coles for using the environment to reduce catalogues.**

*For immediate release*

The Real Media Collective (TRMC), the Australian industry association representing the interests of companies in the paper, print, publishing/media and related distribution sectors across Australia, has challenged Coles Supermarkets for using the environment as a reason in its announcement today outlining its plans to cease sending catalogues to Australian homes from September.

In the announcement, Coles Supermarkets said that it is switching its catalogues to digital platforms following the COVID-19 pandemic pushing people online and printed catalogues will now only be provided in-store.

According to Kellie Northwood, CEO, The Real Media Collective, “The claim that Coles is stopping production of its supermarket catalogues due to environmental concerns is simply disingenuous.

“For every Coles customer spending 60 seconds browsing a digital catalogue they will emit 12g of CO2 compared to looking at a printed catalogue for a day and only emitting 0.5g of CO2. All of Coles catalogues are made from a renewable resource, using bio-diverse and planted forestry principles, and the paper making process is powered by hydro-electricity – paper carries the highest environmental credentials over e-waste and CO2 powered digital streaming.”

In addition to debunking the sustainability argument stated by Coles Supermarkets, Northwood also commented, “In an era where Australia is in recession and double-digit unemployment is looming, the impact of Australian job losses should be met with concern, especially when supermarkets have made record profits from the COVID pandemic. Digital media channels reduce local employment and contribution to local economies, and regional economies will suffer the most with major employment for paper manufacture being within Maryvale, Victoria and Boyer, Tasmania.

“Whilst at times seen as a ‘quick cost out’ or ‘customer data collection’ the long-term ramifications are severe, particularly in economic times of local rebuilding. Australia’s print media channels alone, excluding design and editorial, employ 258,000 Australians across metropolitan and regional locations, skilled and unskilled labour sources.”

Customers across all of Australia should also be considered says Northwood “We know that a lot of Australians rely on catalogues to plan and budget for their weekly shopping, both for themselves and their families, there are many Australians who are being left behind by big brands and digital social exclusion is a growing divide. With this example, our most vulnerable, will not have access to the best offers from Coles Supermarket catalogues once they go online.”

The ABS and the Australian Digital Inclusion Index (ADII) report that over 2.5M people do not have internet connectivity in their homes and more than four million Australians access the internet solely through a mobile connection. In 2019, mobile-only users have an ADII score of 43.7, some 18.2 points lower than the national average (61.9).

“We know that 14.8 million Australians find catalogues to be a helpful shopping tool and, when a catalogue is not delivered in the letterbox, we see an enormous increase in complaints from



customers who didn't receive their weekly specials. Who has ever heard of customers ringing up complaining because ads weren't played during the footy or complaining because they didn't receive their marketing email? Brands who move away from media channels that customer's see as useful in order to gain greater datasets do so at their own risk," concluded Northwood.

**Sources:**

1. Climate Care, The carbon footprint of the internet
2. TRMC, Industry Metrics - PORTA™
3. Roy Morgan, Single Source (AUS 14+)

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**Media Information**

**The Real Media Collective** (TRMC) is an industry association representing the collective interests of companies in the paper, print, publishing/media, magazine publishing, advertising, mail, packaging, design, graphics, and related distribution sectors across Australia.

Kellie Northwood is the Chief Executive Officer of The Real Media Collective, an industry association representing the paper, print, publishing, mail and distribution sectors across the Australian and New Zealand landscape.

Northwood also holds the Executive position for the Australasian Paper Industry Association (APIA).

The Real Media Collective partnered and leads the Keep Me Posted campaign, lobbying for customers to not be charged for paper billing and statements. [www.keepmeposted.org.au](http://www.keepmeposted.org.au)

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