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Media Release

Adviser Websites Suffer From Abandonment Issues

Thursday September 20, 2012. The issue of adviser websites suffering from abandonment issues will be a key area of focus by Mr. Claudio O. Pannunzio President and Founder of US based i-Impact Group during his social media presentation at the forthcoming American Financial Planning Association's annual conference.

Pannunzio stresses that directing traffic to an adviser's website is only half the battle...retaining that traffic is an entirely different story.

"It's a global issue that applies to Australian financial advisers as it does to those in the USA," said Pannunzio. "A website may feature great design and easy navigation, but if visitors don't stick around to learn more about the adviser, his / her practice, products and services, it may well be a case of '*website abandonment*'."

Many financial practitioners don't know why visitors leave their site.

Pannunzio recommends Google Analytics as first step and an effective tool that can help unearth the core causes for abandonment. Its *In-Page Analytics* and *Top-Exits* features will enable advisers to understand what visitors do when they land on the website and why and how they leave – including the specific page where most visitors terminate their visit.

Pannunzio's research in this area has identified the five main causes behind *website abandonment*.

The first being that the longer it takes for a tablet or Smartphone application or webpage to load, the more visitors are prone to abandon it. According to a study conducted by the Aberdeen Group, a one-second delay in page load time equals –

- 11% fewer page views
- 16% decrease in customer satisfaction, &
- 7% loss in conversions.

Given these facts, all advisers would be well advised to routinely check their sites to insure that loading time is up to par.

Not knowing exactly the audience being addressed will be reflected in failure to keep visitors to the advisers' site interested, because the messages will not be on target.

Pannunzio continued, "Advisers must have an in-depth understanding of their target audience and the issues and problems they're experiencing and within appropriate compliance and disclosure guidelines articulate the solutions they can provide. When a visitor finds a solution to their problems on the adviser's website, the odds that they will leave the site, drop dramatically."

Message inconsistency was the third underlying issue for website abandonment identified by Pannunzio.

The adviser's message should be clear, concise and in a language that everyone can understand. Avoid extensive copy and dense paragraphs. Be focused and use bulleted paragraphs to quickly engage visitors' attention. Ultimately, content should be easy to follow and, remember, to *'talk to your audience instead of at them'*.

Poor usability was the next issue.

Traditionally, when navigating a site, a visitor's visual pattern begins at the top left corner of a site and extends to the right and down. This general rule should be applied to gauge how to strategically place the most compelling messages and content.

"At i-Impact we consistently encourage our clients to rely on an additional set of eyes to understand how visitors view their sites," said Pannunzio.

"An inexpensive way of doing that is to seek help from a few friends who know close to nothing about Internet marketing and technology. Observe how they navigate your site, what sparks their interest and what doesn't and take note of their process and comments."

"This test may be a bit time consuming, however, the information gained by the adviser will outweigh the investment in time!"

The fifth and final key issue for website abandonment was the lack of video.

Placing a video on a website may significantly increase the time visitors spend on the site. According to a study conducted by YouOnTV, the average time spent on a site that features video is 5 minutes and 50 seconds, which is 5.33 times longer than a visit to a traditional text-only site.

Video provides a one-stop shop for information that keeps the user engaged on the site, reducing the need to navigate to other sites.

It is also important to know that research conducted by Dr. James McQuivey of Forrester Research Inc discovered that one minute of video equals 1.8 million words. Therefore, in a single frame, a video can deliver the same amount of information as three pages of text.

Claudio O. Pannunzio will be providing an extensive insight into the importance of social media at the American Financial Planning Association's National Conference. San Antonio, Texas will be the host city for the 2012 Annual Conference that will commence of September 29.

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Issued by Joe Perri & Associates Pty Ltd

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