



## Australia - United States Free Trade Agreement Fact Sheet 15

### E-COMMERCE

- There will be no barriers to trade conducted electronically
- Australia will still be able to regulate for public policy purposes
- Trade and investment is encouraged by further facilitating electronic commerce

#### Summary

Australia and the United States have agreed not to impose customs duties on digital products (products digitised, or electronic, form), or to discriminate in favour of one form of the same digital product over another. An online soundtrack, for example, will not be taxed differently to the same sound track on a compact disc.

Both countries have reaffirmed that products should not be discriminated against just because they are traded electronically. For example, an architectural plan delivered by email should be treated just the same as if it is delivered in the regular mail.

Australia and the United States will recognise digital certificates issued by each government (so that an Australian business can deal directly online with a US government entity). Online versions of customs documents will be made available and accepted as the equivalent of paper versions.

#### Gains for Australia

- Trade and investment with the United States will be easier and more convenient for Australian businesses and consumers.
- Importantly, none of what we have agreed undermines our capacity to ensure that Australian stories and voices are heard and seen in Australian media.
- Both countries retain the right to regulate electronic commerce for other legitimate public policy reasons, such as public morals, health, welfare, and education.
- In addition, there is no bar to either country introducing new measures to tackle problems unique to electronic commerce, such as online gambling and email spam.

#### Who to contact

For further information, please contact DFAT's AUSFTA Taskforce:

Hotline: **1300 558 413** (local call rates) between 9am and 5pm (AEST) – Mon- Fri

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