



## PRESS RELEASE

### UK retailers missing out on £1bn worth of online sales this Christmas

- *50% of potential online sales not completed due to lack of information or confidence about the purchase*
- *WorldPay founder predicts voice commerce revolution and a 'Virtual Christmas' for 2006*

**2 December, 2005** – The Voice Commerce Group today issued a warning that British online retailers stand to miss out on up to £1 billion worth of sales in the run-up to Christmas<sup>1</sup>.

Despite the CBI's warning that UK high street retail sales fell at their fastest pace for 22 years in November, 2005 is still set to be a bumper year for online retailers, and with competition for purchases at its most intense, it's increasingly important that the online shopping process is made as simple as possible. With research revealing that more than 50% of shopping carts are abandoned due to lack of confidence or information, e-commerce as we know it is about to change.

Nick Ogden, Voice Commerce Group President and WorldPay founder, explained: "With UK online retail market worth some £5 billion this Christmas, it's staggering that retailers aren't using Internet communications technology to make the most of this lucrative period. Many of the abandoned transactions could be saved by including a simple 'click-to-call' link on retail websites. By giving the customer the

confidence and information needed to complete the purchase, using VoIP technology to talk directly from their PC to a customer service representative, retailers could realise the full potential of the multi-billion online retail market.”

Nick Ogden, who built Europe’s first online shop in 1994, predicts that the voice commerce revolution will be more profound than e-commerce. Voice Commerce believes that with growing broadband penetration, fuelled by intense price competition, the online shopping experience will start to become much more realistic through the use of voice, 3D animation and video technologies.

Christmas online in 2006 will be a fascinating experience he predicts, “You will be able to “walk” along a virtual street and into shops that you recognise, watch video’s of the latest fashions and click on the products you like, visualise them in 3D, talk to the sales assistant and then buy them securely, and perhaps even haggle for a discount.”

This year has seen huge growth in VoIP with eBay’s multi billion dollar purchase of Skype setting a trend that Google and others are following. Voice commerce, which allows people to use their computers to talk and visualise, is set to revolutionise the way the Internet functions during 2006.

[1] UK online sales will be worth £5 billion in the run-up to Christmas 2005 (Interactive Media in Retail Group, November 2005). Voice Commerce estimates that the total of abandoned (and recoverable) online sales is equivalent to 20% of successful online sales: £1 billion in Christmas 2005. With 24m British online shoppers, this equates to £42 per shopper. Adding a click-to-call link to retail websites costs as little as £1 per day.

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## **EDITORS NOTE:**

The **Voice Commerce Group** ([www.voice-commerce.com](http://www.voice-commerce.com)) delivers commercial applications of Internet communications technology (VoIP). The Group’s products include:

- **WhitePhone Enterprise** is an integrated Internet communications system which enables the creation of valuable on-line communities around virtually any theme. Taking just a few days to implement, Whitephone Enterprise has built-in viral marketing characteristics which provide the

potential for further and rapid growth with a low cost of customer acquisition. See [www.whitephone.com](http://www.whitephone.com). Examples include Jersey Talks ([www.jersey-talks.com](http://www.jersey-talks.com)) and On4 ([www.on4-com](http://www.on4-com))

- **Hello** enables customers to simply click and talk to the web site operator from a clickable link placed anywhere on a web site, in emails and electronic documents. Calls can be made directly from a PC to any existing landline, mobile phone or, even an on-line call centre. Hello can be deployed on any web site in a few minutes. See [www.whitephone.com/hello.html](http://www.whitephone.com/hello.html)
- **On Instant** is a secure B2B Internet communications network, based on WhitePhone technology, which provides a high quality but low cost VoIP solution for business use. It saves money, improves efficiency and provides business networking opportunities globally. See [www.on-instant.com](http://www.on-instant.com)

*Definition of **voice commerce**. Voice commerce is enabling eCommerce using Internet Communication (VoIP) technologies.*

**For further information please contact:**

Emma Hutchinson/Nick Clark  
Nelson Bostock Communications  
020 7792 7412  
[emma.hutchinson@nelsonbostock.com](mailto:emma.hutchinson@nelsonbostock.com)