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Press Release

Rakuten, Inc.

Rakuten Strengthens E-Commerce Offering With Launch of Rakuten.co.uk Marketplace

Rakuten.co.uk to cater to the needs of tech-savvy consumers who want to shop online and access all of their favourite digital services, from eBooks to instant messaging

London, UK, 22 October 2014 – Rakuten, one of the world's leading Internet service companies, today announces the launch of Rakuten.co.uk, with a direct focus on empowering more independent retailers to sell online in the UK. The marketplace will initially offer products from some of the UK's most exciting merchants before expanding to include international merchants in the future. The move comes as Rakuten seeks to accelerate the global expansion of its internet services ecosystem.

The new Rakuten.co.uk marketplace offers shoppers the ability to buy from independent retailers in the UK and includes a broad range of products across multiple categories including food and drink, health and beauty, clothing and pet care, among others. Customers will also be able to access digital services offered by Rakuten businesses including Kobo and Wuaki through a single account from December 2014. In the future, customers will be able to buy from Rakuten marketplaces worldwide.

“What consumers want from retailers is continually changing, however the desire for a personal and entertaining experience remains constant,” commented Kenji Hirose, CEO of Rakuten Europe. “With the launch of Rakuten.co.uk we are making it easier for shoppers to discover what they want and empowering merchants to provide it. Over the next 12 months we will pioneer a new era of borderless retail and entertainment by integrating our e-commerce offering with our global ecosystem of Internet services, to make shopping more fun.”

The launch of Rakuten.co.uk, the newest, most exciting marketplace in the UK, will offer shoppers an unprecedented shopping experience, with the chance to buy from a variety of independent businesses in a new and engaging way. For instance, Rakuten's loyalty scheme, Rakuten Super Points rewards customers with a minimum of 1 Super Point for every £1 they spend on Rakuten.co.uk. However, campaigns are running all the time so consumers will have many fun and engaging Super Points campaigns to look forward to.

To celebrate the launch of the new marketplace, Rakuten is offering customers the chance to become a 'Rakuten Millionaire'- For the entire month of November 2014, customers who make purchases on Rakuten.co.uk, will be automatically entered into a prize draw to win 1 Million Rakuten Super Points, which equates to a redemption value of £10,000 to spend on the website. In addition until 31st October -customers spending £25 or £50, will receive £5 or £10 back in Rakuten Super Points to use on their next purchase.

Mike Bishop, managing director of Rakuten.co.uk, said: “The launch of Rakuten.co.uk will empower retailers to truly take advantage of the Internet and everything that it has to offer, to drive sales and reach new shoppers. With access to our Merchant Services team and expert e-commerce consultants, who can advise on how to adapt to the changing shopping habits of consumers and provide training, merchants can grow their businesses and build a recognisable brand and loyal customer base through the Rakuten.co.uk marketplace.”



Rakuten's proprietary E-Commerce Consultants (ECCs)—a position specifically created with the sole purpose of supporting the success of Rakuten merchants—offer merchants dedicated support and guidance to ensure Rakuten merchants have a deep understanding of the Rakuten merchant platform and its powerful tools and to keep them informed about potential opportunities to maximize their sales. The Rakuten platform is backed by rolling monthly contracts, competitive commission rates and low subscription fees. Businesses that would like to join the marketplace can register their interest at Rakuten.co.uk.

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About Rakuten

Rakuten, Inc. (4755:Tokyo), is one of the world's leading Internet service companies. We provide a variety of products and services for consumers and businesses, with a focus on e-commerce, finance, and digital content. Since 2012, Rakuten has been ranked among the world's 'Top 20 Most Innovative Companies' in Forbes magazine's annual list. Rakuten is expanding worldwide and currently operates throughout Asia, Europe, the Americas and Oceania. Founded in 1997, Rakuten is headquartered in Tokyo, with over 11,000 employees and partner staff worldwide. For more information: <http://global.rakuten.com/corp/>.