

# 'Scared UK Becoming a 'Nation of Online Shopkeepers'

Submitted by: Dexterity

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'Trinity of Fears' is pushing entrepreneurs to the web instead of the high street

Hi-res photographs at [www.actinic.co.uk/press/library.htm](http://www.actinic.co.uk/press/library.htm)

London, 26 August 2003 - According to new research\* commissioned by ecommerce software developer Actinic, there is a "trinity of fear" making Britain's next generation of retailers too scared to start up new businesses on the high street and pushing them towards the web.

Aspiring Richard Bransons and Anita Roddicks cite three major issues that are stopping them from taking the plunge:

\* Fear of robbery, assault and other crime (cited by 61% of respondents)

\* Lack of funds (cited by 51% of respondents)

\* Not attracting enough customers (cited by 31% of respondents)

As a result, potential entrepreneurs find the web more attractive: 68% of would-be retailers say they would sell online if they had the necessary technical support. UK shoppers spent £8.8 billion (1) online in the 12 months to July 2003.

"The trinity of retailing fears - crime, cash and customers - is holding back Britain's retail entrepreneurs. But selling online eradicates the danger of physical crime because there is no shop to raid or physical stock to shoplift," says Chris Barling, chief executive officer of Actinic, which powers over 10,000 transactional websites. "And of course starting an online shop is far quicker and cheaper than opening a high street store and can reach far more customers on a global scale.

"Britons are more than ready to make a success of online retail, as Martha Lane-Fox has proven with lastminute.com. Compare the growth of that company to, say, Thomas Cook which had no choice but to take decades growing a high street presence."

The research also shows that Britain remains a 'nation of shopkeepers', with running a retail business the most popular new business idea:

\* 4 in 10 would-be entrepreneurs want to set up a retail business;

\* 12% would go for professional services (accountancy firm, legal practice etc);

\* 6% opted for a manufacturing company;

\* 4% would start a health clinic (dentist, chiroprapist etc);

\* 4% cited a café, sandwich shop or coffee bar.

What would-be retail entrepreneurs want to sell online

#### Goods

Gifts 18%

Clothes 18%

Food 14%

Hobby goods 11%

(comics, model kits etc)

Leisure equipment 4%

(bikes, camping etc)

Other 35%

(including books, pet shop, computer equipment, garden goods, educational goods, music and electrical)

\* The research, conducted by Ipsos, was a survey of 1000 UK citizens over the age of 25. Use of research figures to be attributed to Actinic Software.

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#### About Actinic Software Ltd

Actinic powers more UK ecommerce sites than any other company. Search for 'acatalog' on Google to see the vast range of online stores that run using Actinic.

Founded in 1996, Actinic specialises in developing PC-based ecommerce software for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that want to sell online. Actinic is a key partner in the DTI's UK online for business programme. Research shows that over 50% of SMEs using packaged software to run their e-stores use Actinic. Some of Actinic's better known UK users include the Royal Opera House, Lloyds of London, Focus Do-it-All, Robert Dyas, the Royal Navy and Help the Aged. Visit [www.actinic.co.uk](http://www.actinic.co.uk)

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1 - Source: Interactive Media in Retail Group (IMRG)

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