

Beware of Chinese Manufacturers who do not have the rights to sell products! BY Shelley Elder, CEO Axeze Pty Ltd

I wanted to be involved with one of those Living Social deals so I researched a variety of products via Alibaba. Within moments I received quotes for well branded external hard disk drives and laptop computers. I researched the businesses, I won't go into names here but the business that I was going to work with looked like a Hong Kong Company. We found their websites and all was very good. My lawyer advised that they looked a big and respectable company.

The organization confirmed that they had rights to sell the branded products. The pricing offered was superior, based on high quantity sales and they assured me they had loads of stock and I could expect delivery within 2-3 days of placing my order and paying for the goods. All normal when dealing with China!

We received lots of calls ensuring that the sale was genuine and that we could deliver so many units. With Total confidence we acknowledged that we could do both. Sales were amazing. I sent my Pro Forma invoice off to the organization and I received my Pro Forma Invoice the next day, requesting that I pay another Company for the goods. Something was not right.

More research revealed that the organization was not a part of Alibaba (and all indications are that they never were.....but how did I get in touch in the first place??. Initially I understood that they were a Gold Supplier, I had even seen the Gold Supplier logo on one of their emails, or perhaps the website that disappeared. You can ask what happened here and it is difficult to tell you. On top of this I tried to contact Seagate, the actual owner and distributor of the Intellectual property, but they do not have phone contact, and I could not email them from their website.

I employed a specialist to research the Organisation and they advised me that they definitely did not have the rights to sell the branded Hard Drives and that this would place the internet marketing company and Axeze at enormous risk and we could likely see ourselves sued. Now I got super stressed.

Hundreds of people asking when they would receive their goods. People were calling and emailing to see if they could order more units. I tried all sorts of things to get the same product to ship to the potential clients.

I could not risk selling illegal product and would not think of bringing any organisation into ill repute. Time to let the marketers and my sales guy know the bad news. I was very worried about the embarrassment that I was causing the internet seller and their representative. We had moved from being a glowing success to a dismal failure within 48 hours, and through no fault of theirs and nor I felt ours.

I am truly sorry to advise that I was not able to ship an article that sold so well. I had absolutely no idea that the product was not the genuine article. I had been provided with logos, packaging, confirmation and more. But after all this research when I asked for proof from the organization that Seagate had given them permission to on sell the product to me, I was told I could go elsewhere.

How embarrassing for all concerned. Perhaps I should have known that China does not in fact manufacture the hard drives for the world.

Perhaps I should have requested written confirmation from the owner of the brand that the product could be sold to me. I don't think I have ever, after 14 years in business, received a phone call asking me if someone could on sell my product. I certainly have never asked anyone I purchase from if they have the right to sell to me. Perhaps we all can learn from this experience. I thoroughly recommend using a specialist to check out the organization that you are working with is working with Chinese Organisations.

I do not know what else I could do. Ethically I believe I have done all in my power to correct this major mistake. The Internet Marketing Company refunded all the purchasers for our inability to deliver.

I hope this honest account helps someone else to avoid making the same mistakes and assists people who purchased the product to understand why we withdrew from the sale.

The Internet Organisation is refunding all monies paid for the goods - go to their site, sign in and request your refund.