



TelSoc

Telecommunications & the Digital Economy

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Editorial

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Abstract

The September issue provides an interesting look at the National Broadband Network: and how it is perceived to have problems that need to be resolved; how telecommunications is having an effect on the lives of Australians, with discussion on how older Australians engage with online news; and how mobile phone use in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is a balance between opportunity and affordability. Papers on future digital service delivery and metadata retention provide a balance between identifying future use and how authorities are looking our telecommunications usage.

In this issue

In this issue the *Journal* contains papers that provide discussion on how telecommunications is being used and how telecommunications and services might develop in the future.

The NBN is broken. Here's the fix provides an insider look at concerns surrounding the direction being taken with the National Broadband Network (NBN) and proposes a way forward. Possibly the solution could be a far broader review of the government's Multi-Technology Mix approach and reconciling why Australia is adopting technologies that were in vogue ten to fifteen years ago.

Digital news and silver surfers. An examination of older Australians' engagement with news online and *Balancing Opportunity and Affordability: Use of mobile phones in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities* provide interesting insights into how telecommunications is being used by Australians today. Telecommunications is an essential service and it is important to remember how telecommunications has a positive effect on our daily lives, but the cost of telecommunications remains a challenge for future governments to overcome.

The metadata retention regime introduced recently presents a challenge in the Internet of Things era, and *It's only the beginning: Metadata Retention laws and the Internet of Things* provides an insight into how complex the relationship between technology development and law enforcement will become without further research and broad discussion on alternate approaches.

Business and government service delivery is evolving from traditional brick, mortar and trucks to digital delivery over telecommunication systems, and *The Future of Digital Services Delivery* provides a discussion of the shift that is currently underway and why it is important to be part of the transition and to look for new and innovative ways to harness telecommunications to provide digital services.

An Opportunity

The new look Coalition government led by Malcolm Turnbull provides an opportunity for recent technology and digital security related decisions made by the government to be revisited. The question being pondered by the broader technology, engineering and science community is whether Turnbull will take this opportunity to scrap some of the government's more controversial policies, such as those affecting climate change, metadata retention and the Multi-Technology Mix NBN.

It is well understood by technologists that occasionally government decisions will be hard to reconcile, especially when Australian experts are dismissed in favour of consultants from the other side of the planet. Turnbull's challenge is to rebuild the government's relationship with the Australian science and technology communities.

Looking forward

Papers are invited for upcoming issues. The December issue includes the themes: *Economic Research, Telecommunication Legacy Issues* and *Universal Service Obligation*. The first issue for 2016 in March includes the themes: *Telecommunications and Network Security, Telecommunications Affordability* and *Block Chain Technologies (e.g. Bitcoin)*.

The December and March themes highlight the breadth of telecommunications from new technologies that are finding a place within the vast global telecommunication systems to the economics and social aspects of how telecommunications affects individuals and nations.

We actively seek your help to ensure that the *Journal* provides the readership with topics of interest that reflect the broad nature of the local and international telecommunications industry and the global digital economy. If you have a theme for an upcoming issue that you would like to recommend to the Editorial Board please let us know. And papers submitted to the *Journal* are welcome and do not need to be associated with a theme issue.

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