

CommsWire

Essential daily reading for the communications industry executive

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Editor: Stan Beer

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USA MAY DECIDE WHAT SMARTPHONE YOU BUY



Yes, you, I mean you... buy what I decide is good for you.

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CommsWire/Telecommunications Editor: Stan Beer

Staff writers: Peter Dinham, Alex Zaharov-Reutt, Sam Varghese. Columnist: John de Ridder

Advertising: Director of Digital Media, Andrew Matler: andrew.matler@itwire.com • Tel: 0412 390 000

UNCLE SAM MAY DECIDE WHAT BRAND OF SMARTPHONE YOU BUY

One of the biggest telecommunications players in the world, China's ZTE, has been effectively shut down by a US ban and the ripple effects mean that Uncle Sam may well decide the brand of the next smartphone you buy.

Australia's biggest telco, Telstra, yesterday [said](#) it would stop selling 22 co-branded ZTE devices as there was no guarantee that supplied would continue given that ZTE had [announced](#) it was ceasing its main business activities in the US, an act that was likely to have

The blocking out of ZTE means that if the US authorities next decide that Samsung is a security threat — based on evidence that others are not allowed to see — then that company will have to pull out of the US as well.



ZTE was, until a couple of days ago, the fourth biggest seller of smartphones in the US, behind Apple, Samsung and LG. Not by virtue of making spectacular phones, but by catering to many niche markets.

The company fell foul of the rules by violating US sanctions on Iran and North Korea and agreed to pay a fine of US\$1.19 billion in March 2017.

Last month, the US Department of Commerce [imposed a seven-year ban](#) on ZTE acquiring components from US companies - on which it depends to manufacture its products - because of false statements made by the company during talks in 2016 over a charge of shipping telco equipment to Iran and North Korea.

As a penalty, US firms cannot sell parts to ZTE for seven years.

ZTE, incidentally, is one of four companies that has the resources and staffing to build 5G

networks; the others are Ericsson, Nokia and Huawei.

This case may seem clear-cut. But the US is also pursuing Huawei, claiming that it is a danger to national security, with not a shred of evidence to show.

Given that, one cannot help but think that this has more to do with controlling trade with China, rather than anything else.

As the ZTE ban will also affect American companies, it seems like the US is cutting off its nose to spite its face.

The ban, will, however clear the way for AT&T and Verizon to dominate the 5G field in the US.

And it will give Cisco some respite from competition as the company that once dominated networking struggles to compete in the face of the rise of software-defined networking that has been eating into its profits.

Over the years, technology firms have become increasingly dependent on inputs from multiple countries to build their products.

Coding, hardware manufacture, chips, memory, screens for smartphones, you name it – if supply from one company is cut off, then the cascading effect can be felt by many other companies across the globe. It only takes a fire at one memory factory in Taiwan for prices to rise across the world.

Globalisation has gone too far to be simply yanked back; you can't unscramble an egg without some real shocks to the system.

So which company will the US target next? And what about its acolytes like the other four of the so-called Five Eyes countries – the UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand? Will they start toeing the Washington line?

The UK has only gone as far as warning against the use of ZTE equipment in British telecommunications infrastructure.

No matter what happens next, one thing is very clear. China will move to ensure that it is self-sufficient as far as electronic components go, so that there cannot be a repeat of this incident.

And next time, the political fallout will be much greater.

Sam Varghese

CISCO TO PULL YOUTUBE ADS OVER FEARS OF UNSUITABLE PLACEMENT

Networking gear manufacturer Cisco is pulling all its advertisements from Google's YouTube video site, because it feared that they would appear on unsuitable content, according to a blog post that has now been removed.

Cisco senior vice-president and chief marketing officer Karen Walker apparently made the post on Wednesday, according to a **Reuters** [report](#).



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Follows CNN report that 300+ large companies' & orgs' ads ran on channels "promoting white nationalists, Nazis, pedophilia, conspiracy theories and N Korea propaganda"

twitter.com/reuters/status...

11:42 - 11 May 2018

It said the company did not want its ads to "accidentally end up in the wrong place, such as on a streaming video with sensitive content", but said it would continue to use YouTube to share video content.

The Cisco action comes in the wake of [a CNN report](#) last month that claimed ads from more than 300 firms were running on extremist channels on YouTube.

Google faced similar issues last year with **The Times** [discovering](#) that British Government ads were appearing on videos that had racist or extremist content.

But despite Google saying many times that it was seized of the issue and taking steps to ensure that such incidents did not happen, the [claims](#) have continued into [this year](#).

In February, a data journalist [unearthed](#) nearly 9000 conspiracy videos after a search using the video platform's API.

Professor Jonathan Albright said he had used several hundred "seed videos" which were returned from a search on YouTube's API for "crisis actor".

A Google spokesperson was quoted as saying in response to the Cisco issue: "We have partnered with advertisers to make significant changes to how we approach monetisation on YouTube with stricter policies, better controls and greater transparency."

Sam Varghese



John de Ridder

Telecommunications Economist

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TELSTRA SECURES LIVE MOBILE STREAMING FOR FFA MATCHES

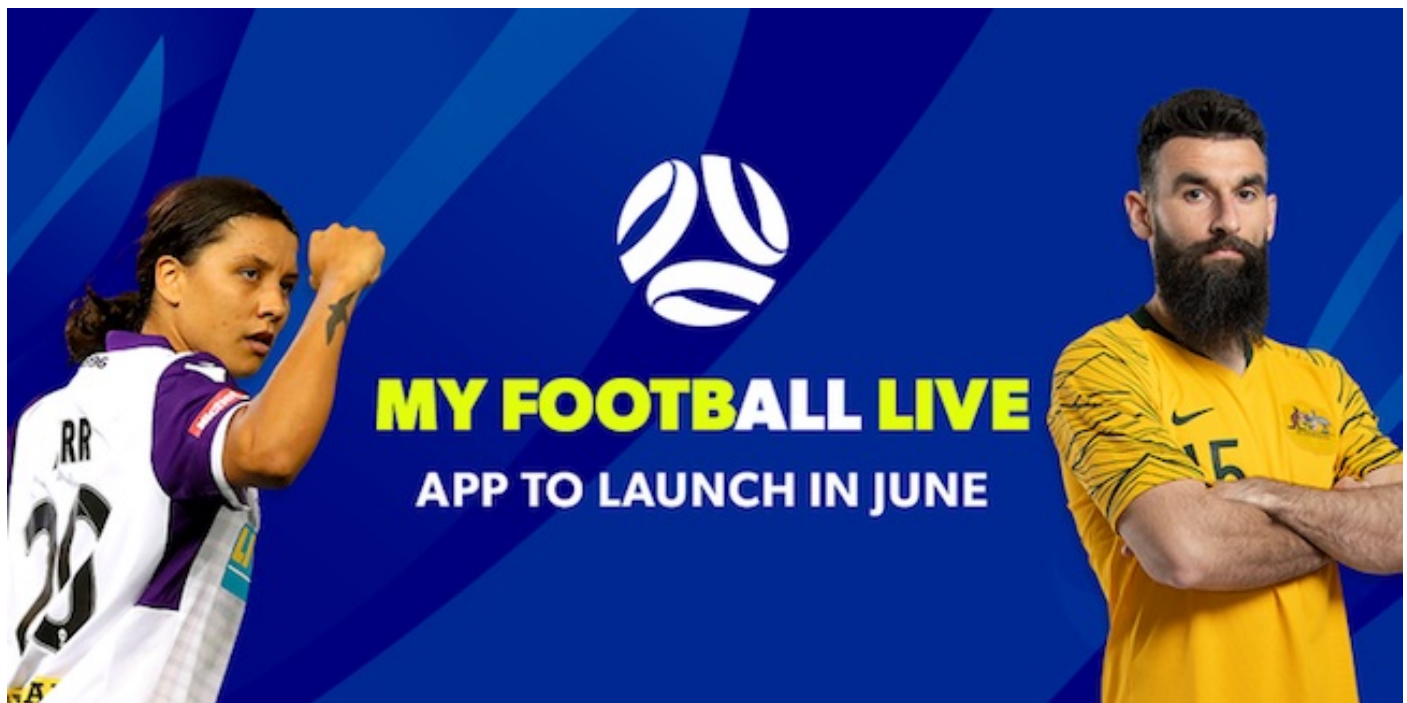
Telstra has sealed a long-term mobile rights and sponsorship agreement with Football Federation Australia (FFA), which includes a sub-licensing agreement with Fox Sports.

The agreement secures the rights for football for five years until 2023, with Telstra sub-licensing the mobile rights from Fox Sports, as part of the 2016 rights deal between the FFA and Foxtel.

Under the deal, Telstra will create and launch the new “My Football Live App” with live matches available via the Telstra Live Pass for existing Telstra mobile customers.

Telstra says the live, fast and data-free inclusion is yet another tangible and valuable benefit to being a Telstra mobile customer.

Telstra says the My Football Live App will be the home of news, information and video for Australian Football on mobile devices and live streaming of the Hyundai A-League and select Westfield W-League, FFA Cup and National Team games.



The deal will also see Telstra become the exclusive telecommunications partner of the FFA, and a Technology Partner of all FFA properties including the Hyundai A-League, Caltex Socceroos and Westfield Matildas.

Joe Pollard, Telstra’s Group Executive of Media and Chief Marketing Officer, said Telstra was now providing a year-round live mobile sports offering across premier male and female competitions.

Pollard said the My Football Live App will be included in all Telstra mobile plans, “providing another added benefit of being a Telstra mobile customer.”

“We are the home of live Australian sport on-the-go, and on our brilliant network we are committed to making games available live, fast and data-free to as many Telstra customers as possible,” Pollard said.

“We offer live streaming of every game of the AFL, AFLW, NRL and Netball seasons, on the leading mobile network in the country - and football is now joining the family. Adding the My Football Live App gives our customers a summer offering to complement the existing AFL, AFLW, NRL and Netball Live apps that are created by Telstra.”

David Gallop, FFA CEO, said more Australians than ever before would now have access to live football.

“Our media rights strategy was to deliver content to as many Australians as possible and this new partnership with Telstra delivers on that commitment, helping us offer many more people the chance to watch the Hyundai A-League, Westfield W-League, the FFA Cup and our national teams live.

“As we saw with Riley McGree’s scorpion kick, the Hyundai A-League can produce moments that generate millions of views globally.

“And with women’s football the fastest growing part of the game, fans will now have the new option of watching the Westfield Matildas and Westfield W-League on the move through Telstra.

“This is the first of a range of innovations FFA is working on for next season.”

Telstra says it saw unprecedented demand by sports-mad fans live streaming their favourite sporting games in 2017, with the audience subscribing to Telstra’s sporting apps increasing throughout the year, to over 1.5 million.

“We are enhancing the sports experience and shaping the way Australians are consuming sport. Customers now expect always-on ease of access, and deeper engagement with the game through their mobile devices, and we’re seeing strong continued growth of live streaming in 2018,” Pollard said.

Telstra says its expert sports product team is currently working with the FFA to design and build the My Football Live App and will launch the app with regularly updated Caltex Socceroos editorial content and player profiles, in time for the Socceroos journey to Russia in June.

Live streaming in the app will be made available as a live, fast and data-free inclusion for Telstra mobile customers and will commence for key games in the FFA Cup and every game of the Hyundai A-League 2018/19 season.

Peter Dinham

OPPO OPENS FIRST "AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE"

Youth-focused "cameraphone manufacturer" Oppo, which is a fancy way of saying smartphone, has opened a service centre for same-day, walk-in, send-in and/or send-back repair services, and it looks pretty good!

We're told the Service Centre will "serve as an easily accessible service hub for Australian OPPO customers, whether they choose to walk-in or send-in their devices for repair".

The Service Centre will "process all in-warranty and out-of-warranty services on the spot, with the option for customers to pre-book online".



This also includes OPPO's free screen repair services for six month for the OPPO R11s and R11s Plus, although with the new models including the R11s series which already come with a screen protector - and from memory, a case in the box too.

You will hopefully never need this service, but if so, that screen repair service would be a real saviour, both in terms of pride, and cold hard cash.

And, in an added bonus for all those seeking "out-of-warranty services", Oppo says "customers just need to pay for the replacement parts, with labour service being free of charge".

So, as a walk-in centre, as well as allowing you to send in a device for repair, what happens if the repair looks like it will take more than an hour to be fixed?

Well, we're told that "should a repair require longer than an hour or if the device has been

sent in, customers are able to track the repair status online using their IMEI number.

Once the repair is completed, the device will be sent back to the customer's home address."

Customers can also "send in their device through the dedicated OPPO partner where they purchased the phone from, such as JB Hi-Fi, Vodafone, Virgin Mobile, Woolworths Mobile and Optus, with the device being returned to the store or their home address once the repair is complete."

Outside of repair services, Oppo has another surprise up its sleeve, with the Centre offering "completely free personalised phone engraving for all OPPO devices, which can be completed on the spot while the customer waits in the service centre's lounge area, which includes complimentary refreshments and a charging station".



Michael Tran, OPPO Australia's executive director (left) said: "At OPPO, we believe the customer experience shouldn't end as soon as a phone is purchased, which is why we have created the ultimate customer service centre to provide the highest quality after-sales care.

"Customers are our number one priority at OPPO, and we are proud to say we hold the Canstar title for 'most satisfied customers'.

"We want our users to rest assured knowing their product is being looked after by dedicated OPPO specialists."

In addition to repair services, the OPPO Service Centre will also collect old devices, to be recycled through its partnership with Mobile Muster.

These can either be dropped off or sent in to the service centre.

The Service Centre is open Monday-Friday from 9am-5pm at Suite 8.04, Level 8/15 Talavera Rd, Macquarie Park NSW 2113.

For more information, [click here](#).

Alex Zaharov-Reutt

EQUINIX EXPANDS ECX FABRIC CAPABILITIES TO MELBOURNE, SYDNEY

Global data centre company Equinix is extending its Cloud Exchange Fabric (ECX Fabric) capabilities to Melbourne and Sydney. The move follows its recent Japan expansion

Equinix says ECX Fabric will be available from later this month and the new inter-metro connectivity will enable customers to connect on demand to any other ECX Fabric customer in Australia.

The company plans to expand the capability to Hong Kong and Singapore later this year.

ECX Fabric, formerly known as Equinix Cloud Exchange, will leverage the software-defined networking capabilities built into ECX to enable any customer to dynamically connect between its own infrastructure at Equinix or connect to any other customer on ECX Fabric in Melbourne and Sydney.

With the expansion, any ECX Fabric customer in Australia will be able to connect to any cloud service provider on ECX Fabric in Australia, including Alibaba Cloud, Amazon Web Services, Google Cloud, IBM Cloud, Microsoft Azure, Oracle Cloud and SaaS providers like SAP.

Equinix says in addition to Australia and Japan, the new ECX Fabric inter-metro capabilities are available in all locations in North America and the EMEA region.

And Equinix also says the ECX Fabric inter-metro capability will enable companies to reach their digital ecosystems, including new and existing customers and partners, on demand, through one connection in Australia.

“Equinix continues to expand our interconnection capabilities in Australia and the availability of inter-metro connectivity via ECX Fabric. This further demonstrates our commitment to supporting our customers’ growth towards the digital edge,” said Jeremy Deutsch, managing director, Equinix Australia.

“We look forward to helping our customers take advantage of ECX Fabric in Sydney and Melbourne to form secure, easily scalable digital ecosystems with their customers, partners and service providers. Having the ECX Fabric in Australia extends our ability to help customers benefit from the interconnections that are necessary for business success in today’s digital economy.”

Sara Baack, chief marketing officer, Equinix said, “As digital transformation intensifies, business possibilities have no limits and neither should an organisation's IT infrastructure. Building a digital business requires the ability to reach strategic global destinations on demand, to access everyone who matters, and to bring people, clouds, data and things together.”

Peter Dinham

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For editorial, contact, Stan Beer, CommsWire Editor:
0418 516 720 | stan.beer@itwire.com

To subscribe or advertise contact, Andrew Matler, CEO:
0412 390 000 | andrew.matler@itwire.com