

CommsWire

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Editor: Stan Beer

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TELSTRA PROMISES TO BRIDGE COVERAGE GAP



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TELSTRA 4GX-LITE MOBILE SATELLITE SMALL-CELL LAUNCHES

Telstra's new 4GX-lite Mobile Satellite Small Cell service has launched, offering "a new solution to help people living and working in some of Australia's most remote places purchase their own coverage extension of the Telstra 4GX mobile service".

A smaller, lower cost version of a standard mobile base station, Telstra's new 4GX-lite satellite small-cell "gives customers access to Telstra's 4GX-lite service which delivers most of the benefits of Telstra's 4GX service including voice calls, text, email, browsing and basic data, although due to constraints with the satellite backhaul it is not intended to support data heavy applications, like high definition video streaming or video calling and conferencing".

Billed as having been "built with a flexible design so that it can meet the varied needs of these remote communities, benefiting various customers from rural farmers and mining companies to local councils who want to bring mobile coverage to new areas.



Mike Wright, Group MD of Networks said the Satellite Small Cell was an "exciting new option for communities and businesses looking to get access to mobile coverage and overcome the challenges of providing mobile coverage to very remote locations."

Wright wrote: "We want all Australians to have the opportunity to connect to our mobile network so they can embrace the benefits mobile coverage brings. We know this is a particular frustration for many businesses and communities in regional areas who want to use the innovative technology on offer to grow their businesses or connect their people.

"We offer options, such as Yagi antennas and the Telstra Go Repeater, for customers in regional areas looking to extend coverage, but until now there hasn't been many options for

people looking for coverage where none exists nearby. The Satellite Smart Cell helps solve that problem.

"For example, a local council may want to bring mobile coverage to a particular remote tourist attraction to help boost visitor numbers through social media posts, whilst an agricultural business may want to enhance worker safety by giving people the ability to connect with each other if issues arise. The Satellite Small Cell reduces the cost of gaining access to new coverage from hundreds of thousands of dollars for a new base station to tens of thousands, making it a realistic proposition in these circumstances.

“We’ve been running satellite cells for many years and have conducted successful trials of this innovative solution over the last 12 months at five sites. We’ll have a total of 16 Telstra trial sites on air by July,” Wright continued.

While Telstra aims to deliver up to 500 Satellite Small Cells over the next three years, and is discussing the opportunity to deploy this technology with a number of organisations and customers, its first customer is already on board.

He is [Winton Shire Council Mayor](#), Cr Gavin Baskett, who said the Satellite Small Cell solution is "innovative in its approach in that it provides people with the ability to identify where they need mobile coverage and then to work with Telstra to deliver it".

Baskett said: “It’s given us more control. We’ll be using the Satellite Small Cell to bring coverage to some parts of the Winton shire for the first time and to help grow tourism in the area.

“We’re a remote area, driven by rural industry and tourism – all industries where mobile coverage can provide so much in terms of innovation, connectivity and safety. We look forward to getting our two Satellite Small Cells installed and operational so we can connect our people.”

The Satellite Small Cell is "funded by co-contributions from Telstra and the customer, where the customer pays an initial amount to cover the cost of installation and Telstra builds and maintains the small cell".

Wright added: “The Telstra 4GX-lite Mobile Satellite Small Cell is a way to bridge the gap between what customers want and what is financially viable. This solution gives consumers, businesses and local councils more control over where they can get mobile coverage, making them part of the decision making process.

“We’ll continue to look for innovative ways to expand our network across the country so that all Australians can have access to the latest technology and stay connected to the things they love,” said Mr Wright.

Telstra says its 4GX-lite Mobile Satellite Small Cell "can be installed in most areas of Australia beyond the reach of our existing coverage footprint. Telstra will visit the customer to discuss their needs and the best location for the small cell.

"The launch of the Telstra 4GX-lite Mobile Satellite Small Cell builds on Telstra’s successful contribution to improving coverage for all Australians and provides a useful complement to the Federal Government’s Mobile Black Spot Program, which has so far seen mobile coverage extended to more than 170,000 square kilometres of country Australia."

Alex Zaharov-Reutt

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OPTUS SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION HUB LAUNCHES IN SYDNEY

Optus has launched its "Optus Innovation Hub", a dedicated workspace within the Sydney Start Up Hub that will "see Optus SMB (small-to-medium business) collaborate with startups and SMBs to tackle current and future-state SMB issues".

The Optus Innovation Hub will operate as an extension to the "Optus SMB Yes Business platform" by physically connecting SMBs and startups with the technology and expertise to develop innovative solutions which address the challenges faced by SMBs.



We're told that the workspace will "also serve as a meeting place for startups and SMBs and host regular events – ranging from Hackathons, Innovation Challenges and Masterclasses".

Vice President of Optus SMB Matt Ball, who spoke during the launch ceremony and participated in a one-on-one interview, said: "The Innovation Hub is designed to solve and explore challenges and opportunities and foster new ways of thinking to provide Optus SMB customers with the best user experience and prospects for growth.

"SMBs are the backbone of the Australian economy and it's incredibly important for Optus – as a business partner for SMBs –to invest in new ways of supporting their growth and success," Ball.

Minister for Innovation Matt Kean said he was thrilled to see the Sydney Start Up Hub continuing to expand and facilitate growth in the innovation sector.

“It’s incredibly important that we unlock more opportunities for startups to collaborate and innovate with big business, and this is a perfect example of just that,” Kean continued.

“These innovative companies are carving out the next generation of jobs and businesses for our country, and I’m pleased to see some of our best and brightest innovators working together to create a prosperous future for our country.”

Optus SMB X Macquarie University Innovation Challenge

Launching next month on July 9, the Optus Innovation Hub’s first Innovation Challenge will be delivered in partnership with Macquarie University and will ask participants “How can



we support Small to Medium Businesses to grow digitally?” and will cover a broad range of topics, from digital currencies, through to cross border expansion and digital marketing.

Director, Incubation and Entrepreneurship at Macquarie University, John Shi-Nash said,

“Macquarie University is delighted to support Optus and the entrepreneurs working within the Optus Innovation Hub, facilitating an environment of excellence and collaboration, and ultimately creating real world solutions for the wider community.”

In addition to startups and SMBs, Optus will invite corporate partners, customers and other innovation leaders across the wider Optus and Singtel network to contribute to the Optus Innovation Hub through collaboration and sharing of their expertise.

These contributions will include providing a wide and varied support network, and further developing ideas via the User Experience test lab and R&D sessions.

“As the largest physical space for startups in the Southern Hemisphere, the Sydney Startup Hub provides us with a great physical location within the ecosystem that will enable the rapid development of ideas and be the physical extension of our online Yes Business platform,” said Ball concluded.

Alex Zaharov-Reutt



John de Ridder

Telecommunications Economist

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MACQUARIE CLOUD LAUNCHES HEALTHCARE DATA PROTECTION

Macquarie Cloud Services, a division of Macquarie Telecom, has developed LaunchHealth Cloud, a purpose-built solution to enhance data protection for the healthcare sector.

Macquarie says the solution has been developed in response to a policy decision by the Department of Human Services (DHS) designed to protect the integrity of people's data entrusted to the Department.

The DHS policy applies to third-party software connecting with the Department to deliver online services, such as electronic claims payments for Medicare.

According to Macquarie Cloud, the solution ensures Australians can benefit from easy and convenient access to Government health services using digital technologies without compromising the security of their private information.

Macquarie says its 'built-for-government' secure cloud was designed from the ground up to meet the most rigorous security requirements, and has achieved the 'gold standard' accreditation for security by being listed in the Certified Cloud Services List (CCSL), controlled by the Australian Signals Directorate.

And Macquarie says the same infrastructure will now be

available to private health sector providers.

The cloud environments connecting to the Department's ICT systems are now mandated to meet the same standards of accreditation of those the Department applies to itself.

"This is a great example of leadership by a Government agency, and of the way organisations with a good understanding of cyber security can drive change beyond their own business," James Mystakidis, Group Executive, Macquarie Cloud Services, said.

"Through the updated policy, the DHS is demonstrating how it is possible to transform ICT while at the same time elevating cyber security standards.

"This is particularly relevant as there has been a lot of talk about how supply chains can create cyber security risks. This is an example of how the Government can use its supply chains to push secure transformation through an industry."

Peter Dinham



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INTERNET USERS REGRET MOVE TO NBN FROM PREVIOUS SERVICE

Many Australians wish they could switch back to their previous Internet service rather than having to use the country's national broadband network, the NBN, according to newly published research from a popular comparison website.

Comparison website finder.com.au says the research reveals that the leading reasons for this desire is that respondents believe their previous connection was more reliable or faster.

And, finder tech editor Angus Kidman, says that despite that lack of enthusiasm, there's no option to revert back.

“The reality is that everyone will need to switch over to the NBN. Aussies generally have 18 months to migrate to the NBN before all copper and cable networks will be disconnected.”

“These figures suggest that many are disappointed with their connection, especially when comparing it to their previous service.”

According to the survey of 958 Australians, Victorians are the most likely to want to switch back to a non-NBN connection with 40% wishing it could be a possibility – followed by New South Wales at 38% and Queensland residents at 30%.

“While the NBN technology available at your address is out of your control, you can switch providers or opt for a faster speed tier if you’re unsatisfied with your NBN connection,” Kidman said.

“If you are experiencing poor speeds, use a broadband speed test to check your connection. If you are unhappy with the results then it’s definitely time to contact your ISP, as well as potentially considering different providers.”

As reported by **CommsWire** in April, finder.com.au released research which showed Australian Internet users are collectively prepared to spend \$267 million in total in one year to get a better Internet access, but they want a steadier service free of buffering and dropouts if they are going to fork out their hard-earned cash.

And, while these Internet users said they were prepared to pay more for a good broadband connection, the majority of Australians (80%) said wouldn’t pay more for better broadband.

Those who wouldn’t pay more are made up of 14% who believe the onus is on telcos to improve their service, while one in four (26%) say NBN Co is responsible. A further 40% are satisfied with their connection and wouldn’t pay more.

Peter Dinham

NBN CO CTO OWEN TO DELIVER THE 2018 TELSOC ORATION

This year's TelSoc Henry Sutton Oration is to be given by telecommunications industry veteran and the current chief technology officer of NBN Co Dr Ray Owen.

Owen, billed by NBN Co as an innovator and technologist, will deliver the lecture at TelSoc HSO on 20 June at the Angliss Restaurant in Little Lonsdale Street in the Melbourne CBD.



As NBN Co's Chief Technology Officer, Dr Owen (left) is responsible for the technology evolution of a nationwide fibre, Fibre-to-the-Node, Fibre-to-the-Curb, HFC, Fixed Wireless and satellite network.

Dr Owen joined NBN Co in November 2017, bringing over 25 years of extensive experience in the telecommunications sector and technologies across Australia based in various locations across Singapore, Vietnam and the UK.

As well as holding senior roles at Nokia and Motorola, including Head of Technology for Asia Pacific and President and General Director for Motorola Vietnam, Dr Owen has held board positions across wireless start-ups in Vietnam, the Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association and is currently an advisory board member for the University of Technology in Sydney.

Dr Owen holds a PhD from the University of Birmingham in the UK, is Adjunct Professor at the University of Technology in Sydney and holds 19 patents and a publication record over the last 20 years.

NBN Co already boasts 3.8 million active users of Australia's national broadband network in the 10 years since its inception.

In his address Owen will analyse the statistics, growth expectations for traffic and the NBN responses to meet the technology evolution on the multi-technology mix to support this growth.

The TelSoc event commences with professional networking followed by a sit-down lunch and the lecture by Owen.

TelSoc says members of the society from around Australia will join the event online.

Peter Dinham

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