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AUSTRALIA A LAGGARD IN FTTH PENETRATION

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AUSTRALIA LAGS IN PENETRATION OF FTTH/B IN APAC REGION

Australia lags well behind Asia Pacific markets like Singapore, China and South Korea in the take-up of fibre to the home/building services, according to a newly published report.

The FttH Market Panorama report on the rollout of fibre from the **FttH Council Asia-Pacific** shows Australia sitting in 11th position for fibre with a penetration/take-up rate of 14.3% compared to a whopping 92.7% for Singapore, 80.1% for China and 77.5% for South Korea.

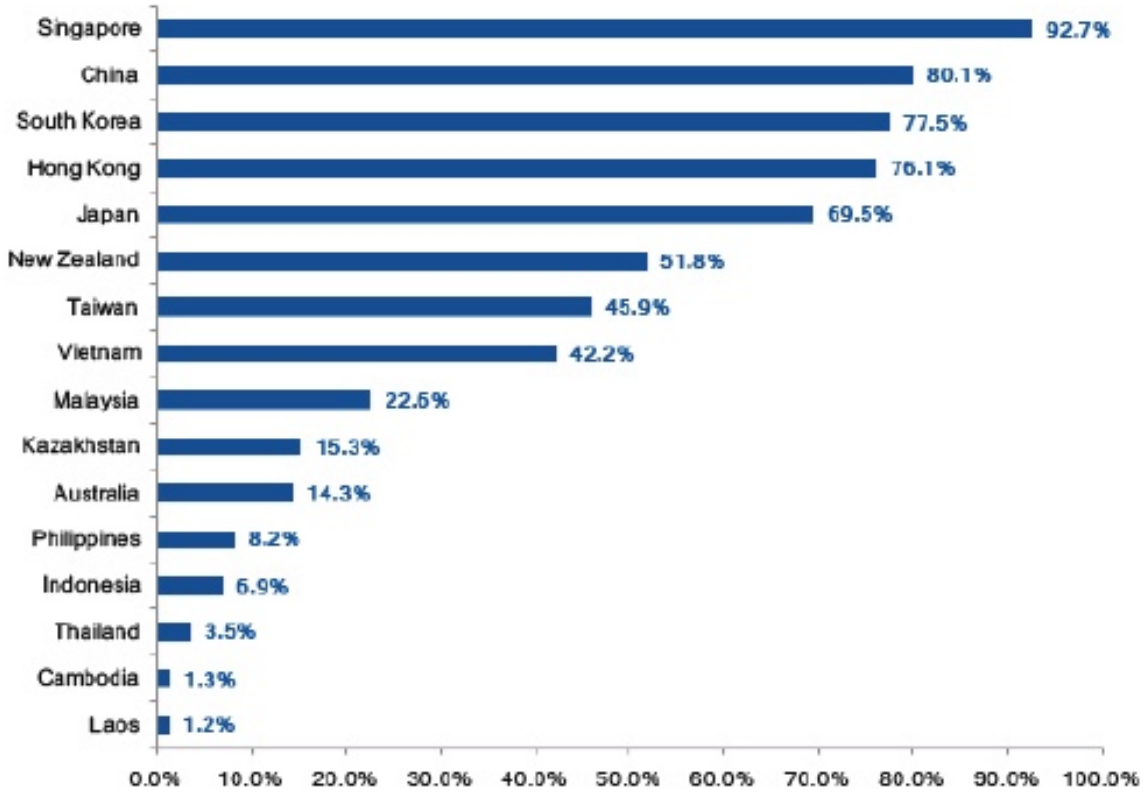

Fig 1:APAC Ranking as at December 2018

Includes countries of +200k Households in which FTTH/B subscribers represent at least 1% of total households

And even New Zealand has achieved fibre penetration of 51.8%, while behind market leader China, Thailand and the Philippines have rates of 35% and 28%.

Collectively, fibre take-up rate across the APAC countries is now at 77.6%, which is 10.1 percentage points higher than the previous year.

And in comparison with 2014, the number of subscribers has quadrupled and the number of homes passed has grown by a factor of 1.7.

By December 2018, the 21 APAC countries under study had reached almost 550 million homes with FttH/B networks representing coverage of 61.5% compared to the total number of homes.

China maintains its peak position, representing 74% of the total FttH/B homes passed in the APAC region.

The highest annual growth rates were seen in Thailand (+35%), the Philippines (+28%), Sri Lanka (+25%), Kazakhstan (+24.9%) and Indonesia (+24.6%), while the largest increase in subscribers was seen in the Philippines (+168.6%), followed by Bangladesh (+149.6%), Indonesia (+59.5%), Thailand (+37%) and New Zealand (+30.2%).

The FttH Council says PON (Passive Optical Network) is clearly the preferred connectivity technology across the APAC region, with FTTH GPON remaining the norm for fibre networks in APAC.

Compared to other regions, the council says there is a high proportion of MDUs (Multi Dwelling Units) as a consequence of high population densities.

“Furthermore, LTE is becoming increasingly mature across the region, with South Korea, Japan and city-countries are leading the way and China playing an essential role. LTE is also spreading in less advanced markets thanks to a wide range of drivers, such as increased competition, dropping prices, and a generation of young digital users,” the FttH Council notes.

The report also reveals that some two-thirds of around 64% of all homes in the region have been passed by alternative ISPs, with the remainder covered by incumbents.

According to the report, homes passed by FttH networks are expected to increase by 18% (~649 million homes) by 2023, while FTTH subscribers will grow by 35% (~576 million subscriptions) - at first, mainly taking place in the most densely populated countries.

“Across the region, public-private initiatives and National Broadband initiatives are fuelling growth,” says Venkatesan Babu, President, FTTH Council Asia-Pacific.

“Alternative players are taking a leading role in FttH/B alternatives. Continued migration away from copper and 5G will be a key factor in promoting fibre deployments, boosting investments from public and private players.

“These latest figures show a continued accelerated momentum. Full fibre is the way forward and the results of the Panorama provide compelling evidence of this. Fibre expansion is booming in many countries and today more consumers are aware of the benefits of fibre.

However, there is still a long way to go until every citizen and business has access to the benefits of full fibre.”

Peter Dinham

NEWCASTLE SELECTS NNNCO PLATFORM FOR SMART CITY STANDARD

Australian regional city Newcastle has selected a data platform from IoT network operator NNNCo as part of the Newcastle City Intelligent Platform implementation.

The city standardised on the middleware platform as it prepares to roll out and scale multiple smart city applications. It also specified NNNCo's N-tick device certification program for all devices to be deployed in the city region.

NNNCo Founder and CEO Rob Zagarella said, "This is a breakthrough in the IoT market to have a major city standardise on a common data platform and device certification program."

The deal between NNNCo and Newcastle City Council includes an agreement to run thousands of IoT devices through the platform for multiple city use cases.

NNNCo CTO Tony Tilbrook added, "The middleware saves organisations having to create database systems to ingest data from each type of device. It sits between networks and visualisation and analysis applications and converts IoT data into a single restful API."

Newcastle Smart City Coordinator Nathaniel Bavinton said the selection of the data platform put City of Newcastle at the forefront of smart city development in Australia.

"Having a common data platform gives us centralised control over the data that flows through the various subsystems and enables us to route the data to other systems where it is required," Bavinton said.

"Because of the platform's multi-tiered multi-tenanted architecture, it also provides a secure method of sharing data within our security policy.

"It negates the need to be locked into one technology, vendor or system and opens up a wide variety of potential solutions, competitive pricing and continuity of supply."

NNNCo was selected by Newcastle in 2018 to install a carrier-grade Long Range Wide Area Network (LoRaWAN) to provide low-power connectivity for wireless IoT devices. A pilot program in 2018 tested the deployment of the N2N-DL Data Platform across multiple applications.

Peter Dinham

AIRTEL TIES UP WITH CISCO FOR SD-WAN AND WEBEX SERVICES

Indian telecommunications service provider Bharti Airtel and global technology provider Cisco have signed an agreement to offer advanced networking and connectivity solutions for businesses of all sizes in India.

Under the deal, Airtel will offer SD-WAN services, which are built on the Cisco-Viptela platform, providing real-time analytics and in-built security.

Airtel will also offer the Cisco-Webex service for its conferencing and collaboration needs.

Airtel Business chief executive Ajay Chitkara said, “We are delighted to announce this alliance which further strengthens the deep relationship we have with Cisco.

Digital India has opened up a huge residual opportunity to help businesses in their digital transformation journey and achieve the next level of growth.

"We look forward to working closely with Cisco to bring best-in-class digitisation and collaboration solutions to customers and consolidate Airtel’s leadership position in the Indian B2B segment.”

Cisco India & SAARC president Sameer Garde said: “Airtel is well positioned to offer next-gen digitisation solutions to enterprise customers in India and meet the quality of service expectations.

"We are excited to partner with Airtel; this not only reinforces our existing relationship but also highlights Airtel’s commitment to offering a flexible, highly secure and reliable digitisation and collaboration solutions to their customers.”

Airtel Business serves over 1000 global enterprises, 2000 large and 500,000 medium/small businesses in the country.

Sam Varghese

ERICSSON, SWISSCOM TEAM FOR EUROPE COMMERCIAL '5G FIRST'

Ericsson and Switzerland's largest telecommunications service provider, Swisscom, have partnered to switch on what they say is the first large-scale commercial 5G network in Europe to support commercially available smartphones.

The long-term strategic partners went live with the network on 17 April, following Swisscom's securing of a commercial 5G licence.

The two companies say that, as all the other component parts were already in place, securing the licence meant the partners simply had to switch on the network.

Swisscom had already flagged the impending launch of the network, and introduced smartphone and mobile router ecosystem partners, at a 10 April ceremony in Zurich.

The commercial 5G network, and related 5G services, are now available in 54 cities and communities in Switzerland, including the major population areas of Zürich, Bern, Geneva, Basel, Lausanne and Lucerne.

Ericsson says subscribers with commercial 5G smartphones and routers in covered areas will immediately benefit from the high speed, low latency and enhanced mobile broadband features of 5G services across infotainment, gaming, virtual reality, and immersive media experiences.

And they say the 5G network switch-on also opens the door to exploring new opportunities in the Internet of Things and Industry 4.0.

Swisscom chief executive Urs Schaeppi says: "With the launch of the first commercial 5G network in Switzerland, we are laying the foundation for diverse, new applications and business models. This will not only be great for Switzerland but also inspiring for the people who will now be part of the digital world whether they are living in the city, countryside, or in the mountains."

"This is a momentous occasion for Swisscom and Europe – 5G is now commercially live. As we continue our close ties with Swisscom, we are also strengthening the 5G ecosystem by reducing the time-to-market for chipset and device makers," says Arun Bansal, president and head of Europe and Latin America, Ericsson.

"We ensure multivendor operability with 5G devices and networks, enabling more 5G devices to come to the market so consumers can enjoy the benefits of 5G services."

Swisscom previously announced its aim to have its 5G network operational all over Switzerland by the end of 2019 – with close to 90% nationwide population coverage.

The company says this will be achieved by using Ericsson Spectrum Sharing software that "dynamically shares spectrum between 4G and 5G carriers based on traffic demand".

"This solution will enable fast nationwide 5G coverage with 5G-ready 4G radios and today more consumers are aware of the benefits of fibre."

Sam Varghese

AVAYA FILLS TWO AUSTRALIAN ROLES FROM TRAINING ACADEMY

The latest cohort to complete the Avaya Academy training course staged by the Santa Clara based unified communications company includes two people in Australia.

Daniel Mariani and Zaina Parekh (below) were among the 17 people taking part in the six-month training program.

The Avaya Academy program includes working in various roles across the EMEA and APAC regions, supporting the company's sales, engineering and marketing organisations.

Those completing the program become fully-fledged Avaya employees.

Mariani is taking on the job of associate project manager, while Parekh becomes a channel account manager.

"I welcome our new recruits into the Avaya workforce, and thank them for entrusting us with their future," said Avaya International president Nidal Abou-Ltaif.

“Over the last six months, these 17 talented men and women have already made an impression on everyone who has worked with them, and I'm truly excited about the passion, determination and raw ability that they will bring to bear at Avaya.”

The number of people in each intake varies on the number of roles to be filled. There were 50 in the first intake, and the next cohort will be somewhere between 17 and 50, according to a Avaya spokesperson.

Successful applicants are aged in their 20s and typically have 1-2 years' experience.

As Academy training has been accelerated from a year to six months, Avaya can now run two intakes a year if there are sufficient positions to be filled.

Stephen Withers