

CommsWire

Essential daily reading for the communications industry executive

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NBN CO UNVEILS SOLUTION FINDER, NEW BUNDLES



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NBN CO LAUNCHES 'SOLUTION FINDER', NEW DISCOUNT BUNDLES

National Broadband network provider NBN Co has launched a “solution finder” online tool designed to help businesses find the right broadband plan for their needs and has also unveiled new discounted wholesale bundled broadband plans.

NBN Co suggests the solution finder too will help businesses understand the type of solution they should discuss with their retail service provider,.

NBN Co says the tool was created in response to “extensive research with Australian businesses and service providers that revealed most businesses are not sure what business products and service attributes they need for their unique business demands”.

And to support the launch of its finder tool NBN Co has also launched a [dedicated page](#) on its website, which will go live this afternoon, designed to help businesses find the right solution.

Release of the solution finder coincides with NBN Co’s launch of its new wholesale discount bundles over the fixed line broadband access network.

NBN Co promotes the wholesale discount bundles as offering service providers a combination of access to high speeds, committed bandwidth and premium service levels at a discounted wholesale charge – “designed to deliver savings to retail service providers and assist them to meet the needs of businesses”.

The wholesale discount bundles include:

- business NBN Basic Bundle: Wholesale speeds of 50/20Mbps or 100/40Mbps optimised for smaller businesses
- business NBN Premium Bundle S: Wholesale speeds of 50/20Mbps or 100/40Mbps with symmetrical committed speeds of 1/1Mbps designed for multiple phone lines for medium-sized businesses
- business NBN Premium Bundle M: Wholesale symmetrical committed speeds of 20/20Mbps with a minimum of 100/40Mbps peak information rate for medium to large businesses requiring highly reliable networks to carry their business-critical applications
- business NBN Premium Bundle L: Wholesale symmetrical committed speeds of 50/50Mbps and a minimum of 250/100Mbps peak information rate^^ for data-intensive and multi-site organisations
- A minimum 12-hour enhanced service level agreement with 24x7 support between NBN Co and retailer is included in all the wholesale discount bundles.

NBN Co says the enhanced service assurance levels will be supported by the new business Operations Centre with a dedicated team of more than 100 experts to provide specialist technical support.

“In addition, to help improve service continuity and reduce interruption for businesses, selected wholesale discount bundles also include the option to install a subsequent line to test critical applications before connecting to the NBN access network.”

NBN Co Chief Customer Officer, Paul Tyler, said: “Australia is a nation of growing businesses and we want to give all businesses confidence they are on the right broadband plan to service their unique business needs. The business NBN solution finder is an easy to use online tool that will help businesses order the most suitable business-grade solution available from their Internet provider.”

“For businesses of all sizes, it’s important that they select the appropriate business NBN solution to meet their needs, including the right speeds, committed bandwidth and service level assurance.”

Tyler says that extensive research of Australian businesses and internet providers found that many businesses may not be connected to the right broadband plan to meet their needs.

According to the research, around two thirds of micro businesses (1-4 employees) operate from a residential premises and more than three quarters of those are currently using a residential plan rather than a plan designed for business purposes such as video conferencing, video surveillance, access to remote back-ups and cloud application software.

Council of Small Businesses of Australia Chief Executive Officer, Peter Strong said: “We are pleased to see NBN Co recognise the unique service requirements of different businesses and that they are working together with retail service providers to highlight the broadband choices available. Using the solution finder, our members will have a better understanding of their needs and how to have a productive conversation with their retailer about NBN solutions.”

“Businesses going digital have a great opportunity to create new ways of working, improve efficiency, drive productivity and get closer to their customers,” said Australian Information Industry Association Chief Executive Officer, Ron Gauci.

We have businesses with varied levels of digital maturity Australia, and what we know is that one thing they all need is the right tools, including broadband. Being able to match their unique business needs with broadband solutions with the NBN solution finder is a great step towards increasing their capability.”

Peter Dinham

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SLOW NBN? WE HAVE THE SOLUTION, SAYS HUAWEI AUSTRALIA

A Huawei Australia official has used his address to a 5G Business Summit in Sydney to push his employer's wares as the solution to the slow NBN connection issue that many Australians face, through the medium of 5G fixed wireless.

David Soldani, the company's chief technology officer and a former Nokia tech chief, told Tuesday's summit that if the Government did not use 5G fixed wireless to service areas where the NBN was in many cases proving to be slower than ADSL, it risked leaving hundreds of thousands of Australians waiting for bytes to be transferred over the network.

"As the completion of the national broadband network comes into view, it's time to face a very simple fact: the NBN project has failed and Australians need to stop expecting NBN Co to deliver high-speed broadband to all Australians – it is just not going to happen," he told delegates.



Soldani (left), who has been heavily involved in the process of planning the specifications for 5G, said that given there was no additional funding pledged to the network by either side of politics, those who were stuck on congested fixed-wireless connections and on fibre-to-the-node lines which had long lead-ins of copper had no chance of getting better service.

"Australia has somehow managed to invest \$51 billion on a network that can't even deliver 50Mbps to about one million of its fixed-broadband end-user premises," he said.

"In fact, the actual cost of the NBN is much more than that, given that reports suggest NBN Co is paying Telstra around \$100 billion in subscriber migration and lease payments over the coming years.

"We have spent about \$10,000 for every activated premises on the NBN fixed wireless network and yet hundreds of sites are only delivering 6Mbps or less at peak-time to end-users – worse speeds than many were getting on old ADSL services."

The US has banned the use of Huawei equipment in its 5G networks. Australia followed suit last year, while New Zealand stopping one telco from rolling out a solution that included Huawei gear.

Soldani suggested using the Mobile Black Spot Program as a model and encouraging mobile network operators to extend regional networks and use that available spectrum to deliver 5G fixed wireless services to consumers.

"Alternatively, we could look to take a leaf out of what has been happening in Victoria where the state government and local councils have collaborated to deliver a contract to private operators to deliver high-speed fixed wireless services of up to 1Gbps to regional end-users," he added.



Soldani said it made little sense to allow NBN Co to move forward with 5G fixed wireless services given that the network's problematic pricing model actively discouraged RSPs from even offering ultra-fast broadband – with the bulk of end-users opting for 50Mbps packages.

And if 5G fixed wireless was going to be the solution, then the best 5G technology should be used, he argued. "It makes no sense for Australia to continue to exclude the world's leading 5G technology provider from the marketplace.

"In the last couple of weeks alone Huawei has been the technology provider of choice to 5G launches from both EE in the UK and Vodafone in Spain – with plenty more to come in due course."

Huawei provided the radio access network for the EE network in the UK; the core was from other providers.

"The technology is already there to solve the challenges Australia is facing – there is no doubt about that – what we need now is for that technology to be allowed to do what it was designed to do and for our leaders to recognise that we need to adopt a different approach with regard to delivering universal high-speed broadband," Soldani said.

Sam Varghese



John de Ridder

Telecommunications Economist

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click here to go to www.deridder.com.au

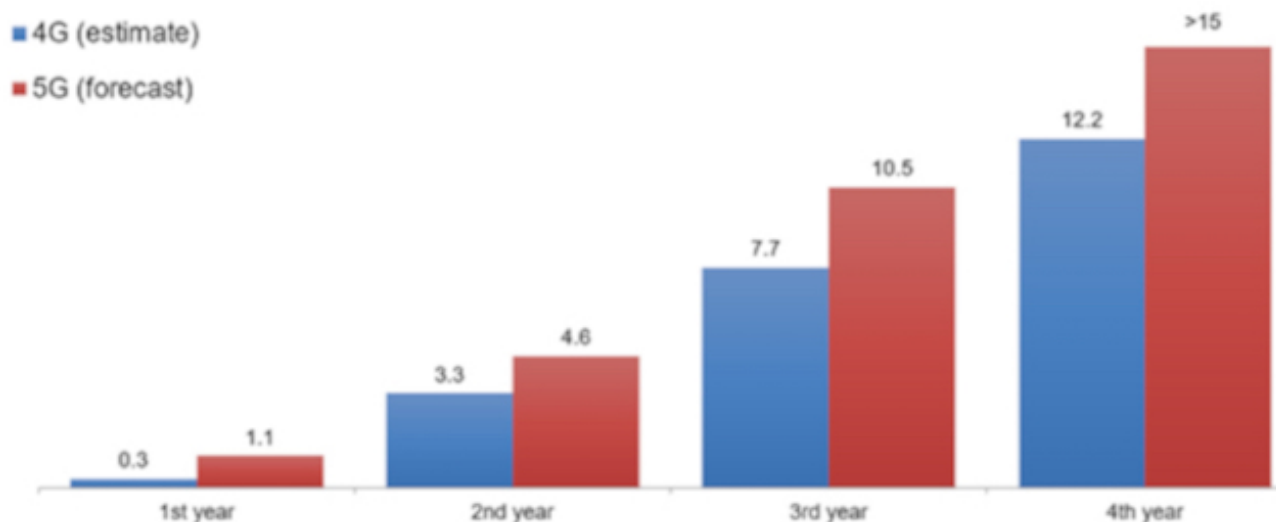
ADOPTION OF 5G DRIVES MOBILE SERVICES MARKET: REPORT

With more than 15 million 5G handset services in operation (SIOs) expected by the end of June 2023 in the Australian market, the adoption of 5G is set to be faster than the previous generations of cellular networks, according to a new analyst report.

According to the Australian Mobile Services Market Study 2019 from analyst firm Telsyte the local Australian market is forecast to reach 15 million 5G handsets between 6 to 12 months sooner than when the market shifted from 3G to 4G technologies.

Australian smartphone installed base growth and expectations by 4G vs 5G

Australian smartphone installed base growth and expectations by 4G vs. 5G (millions)



Source: Telsyte Australian Mobile Services Market Study 2019

Source: Telsyte Australian Mobile Services Market Study 2019

The Australian mobile services market grew by around half a million new SIOs in the six months to December 2018, reaching 35.4 million at the end of December 2018 - with Telstra and MVNOs the top two for SIO net growth, driven by IoT and competitive handset plans, respectively.

And the research shows more than 70% of handset SIOs (including prepaid, post-paid BYO M2M and post-paid BYO contract) are now BYO, up from around 64% in 2015.

“The prolonging smartphone replacement cycle and attractive pricing have been driving the BYO market,” Alvin Lee Telsyte Senior Analyst says.

Lee expects the BYO market will continue to grow steadily in Australia, but says, however, that handset contract plans will benefit most initially from the arrival of 5G as there will be more 5G handsets priced above \$1,000 in the next 18 months.

And he says that the availability of 5G handsets and networks is set to be faster than previous generations, with consumers expected to respond.

“The smartphone market is ripe for upgrades with survey data showing a quarter of consumers are holding off buying a new smartphone until 5G becomes available.

“Unlike 4G, 5G handsets are already available from the outset.

“The first 4G handset in Australia (HTC Velocity 4G) was released three months after Telstra officially launched 4G.

“Australia is at the very beginning of 5G, but when 5G becomes the standard, consumers won’t be able to look back” Lee says.

Telsyte also anticipates widespread network availability to be quicker for 5G than it was for 4G with Optus and Vodafone moving faster with their roll outs than with 4G.

According to Telsyte’s mobile services research, the total services revenue (measured half-yearly) has been in decline since December 2017.

The decline was mainly due to price-driven competition, giving carriers added incentive to try and arrest declines.

Telsyte research shows 5G has the potential to halt declining revenues.

And in a positive sign for carriers, some 1 in 4 Australian mobile users are willing to pay more for a 5G service compared to their existing service. Among those willing to pay more for 5G, the average is between \$5 and \$10 a month.

The report forecasts that the arrival of 5G is also expected to drive business investment, especially with the potential of next generation IoT applications.

Telsyte forecasts enterprise 5G opportunities driven by application development, IT services, platforms and connectivity could reach around \$45 billion per annum by the mid-2020s.

The share of total 5G spending on network connectivity is expected to increase from around 1% in 2020 to nearly 15% by the mid-2020s as more devices and services connect to the 5G networks.

Peter Dinham



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KIWIS TO BE CANVASSED ON TELCO SERVICES 'LIKES AND DISLIKES'

New Zealand's competition regulator, The Commerce Commission, is looking for feedback from the public about their experiences using phone and broadband services.

The Commission has just launched an [online questionnaire](#) asking New Zealanders for their views after Parliament made changes that direct the Commission to collect and report on the quality of service consumers receive from their telco providers.

Tell the Commerce Commission about your phone and broadband experience

What do you like and dislike about your phone and broadband services?

What information would be useful to help you make choices about your phone and broadband options?

Click here to have your say

www.comcom.govt.nz/feedback

Help us help you

We are setting up a programme to provide useful information to consumers to help them choose phone and broadband services.

Your feedback will help us identify what information we should collect and publish to help consumers compare the quality of services from different providers.

We want to know what you think. To get you started, across the page are some examples of what we think might be important to consumers and some current phone and broadband experiences that we have seen.

To provide feedback, simply click the link at the top of the page and fill out our online form. Alternatively you can email us your feedback, or email us your contact details and we'll get in touch.

Our email is regulation.branch@comcom.govt.nz, please use the subject line 'Telco feedback'. Clearly mark any confidential information as we may publish the feedback we receive.

If you are letting us know your organization's views, we'd prefer that you email us rather than filling out the online form.

Why are we doing this?

The Commerce Commission monitors the performance, competition and development of phone (landline and mobile) and broadband services on behalf of New Zealanders.

The aim of our new programme is to help New Zealanders choose the best phone and broadband providers and services for them by publishing information about service quality. We also hope that promoting this information will encourage providers to compete on quality as well as on price.

We are starting with phone and broadband services, but we may expand our programme to other telecommunications services in the future.

More information can be found on our [website](#)*

What's next?

Following your feedback, we will hold workshops with telcos, consumer advocacy groups, and interested consumers to help decide what information we will collect and how we will collect it.

We will then seek advice on the best ways to provide that information to consumers.

We need your feedback by Wednesday 31 July

*<https://comcom.govt.nz/regulated-industries/telecommunications/projects/telco-service-quality>

"We want to know what New Zealanders like about their phone and broadband and about the things that frustrate them.

"We also want to know what information is useful to help them make choices about what providers and services they sign up to," Telecommunications Commissioner Dr Stephen Gale said.

"We're calling for consumers to share their thoughts via a couple of online questions.

"We've also released a summary paper which includes examples of what we think could be helpful for consumers when choosing their phone and broadband services.

"We know price isn't the only thing New Zealanders care about and our new powers will help us highlight the quality of service

that consumers experience.

"The aim of this work is to lift the level of service overall by encouraging providers to compete on quality, not just dollars and data."

Following feedback, the Commission says it will hold workshops with industry, consumer advocacy groups and interested consumers to help decide the information that it will collect and how it will collect it.

And the Commission will then seek advice on the best ways to provide that information to consumers.

Peter Dinham

VERIZON ROUTE LEAK DISRUPTS ACCESS TO SITES WORLDWIDE

Content delivery services provider Cloudflare has blamed giant US telecommunications service provider Verizon for a large-scale border gateway protocol leak on Monday night Australian time that caused many large sites to be inaccessible.

Many of these routes instead transited through DQE Communications, a small company in Pennsylvania.

Cloudflare's Tom Strickx said in [a blog post](#) that the problem had been magnified by the involvement of a so-called BGP optimiser product from a company known as Noction. The problems began at about 10:30 UTC (8.30pm Monday night AEST) and were sorted two hours later.

"This was the equivalent of Waze routing an entire freeway down a neighbourhood street — resulting in many websites on Cloudflare, and many other providers, to be unavailable from large parts of the Internet," Strickx said.

"This should never have happened because Verizon should never have forwarded those routes to the rest of the Internet."



Explaining what this optimiser did, Strickx wrote: "This product has a feature that splits up received IP prefixes into smaller, contributing parts (called more-specifics).

"For example, our own IPv4 route 104.20.0.0/20 was turned into 104.20.0.0/21 and 104.20.8.0/21. It's as if the road sign directing traffic to 'Pennsylvania' was replaced by two road signs, one for 'Pittsburgh, PA' and one for 'Philadelphia, PA'.

"By splitting these major IP blocks into smaller parts, a network has a mechanism to steer traffic within their network, but that split should never have been announced to the world at large. When it was, it caused today's outage."

DQE was using a BGP optimiser and announced such specific routes to its customer Allegheny Technologies; this information was sent to its other transit provider, which happened to be Verizon, Strickx said.

Verizon advertised these "better" routes to the entire Internet; they were "better" because they were more granular and more specific.

"The leak should have stopped at Verizon.

"However, against numerous best practices outlined below, Verizon's lack of filtering turned this into a major incident that affected many Internet services such as Amazon, Fastly, Linode and Cloudflare," Strickx said.

More than eight hours after the incident, Strickx said Cloudflare had not heard back from Verizon despite trying to make contact both through phone calls and email.

Launtel chief executive Damian Ivereigh told iTWire that Australian sites were not affected a great deal by the incident.

"From what I can tell we were not affected very much, I was not personally online at the time and I haven't seen any posts in our Facebook Users Group complaining of slow speeds etc," the head of the small Launceston-based ISP said in response to an inquiry.

He said: "Given the anatomy of the leak - namely a route in the US being badly optimised by a small provider in the US - it would make sense that we would not be affected much.

"Cloudflare uses different addresses for different areas of the world.

"The optimiser would have only been manipulating routes for destinations close to it (because it only wants to optimise routes to high-traffic areas - people in the US don't send much traffic to Cloudflare in Oz).

"Thus it would have only been the US cloudflare servers whose routes would have been affected. Given that Australian users don't often talk to US cloudflare servers (they talk to local ones), it would not have affected us much."

CommsWire has contacted Verizon for comment.

Disclosure: CommsWire uses Cloudflare's services.

Sam Varghese

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