

CommsWire

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SMES NEED LOUDER VOICE IN TELCO MATTERS



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CommsWire/Telecommunications Editor: Stan Beer

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

Advertising: CEO and Editor in Chief, Andrew Matler: andrew.matler@itwire.com • Tel: 0412 390 000

SMES NEED A LOUDER VOICE IN TELCO DEBATE, SAYS GERRAND

Professor Peter Gerrand, a trenchant critic of our current telecommunications regime, says Australia's SMEs are underrepresented in debates about telecoms issues.

Professor Gerrand has been one of Australia's top telecommunications consultants and is author of a [recent paper on the future of the NBN](#).

"Since the demise of the Australian Telecommunications User Group in 2011 there has been no effective lobby group representing the views of small and medium-sized telecommunications users," he told *CommsWire*.

"The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network does a good job of looking after the interests of consumers, and the big end of town can take care of itself, but SMEs have no one to represent their interests in telecommunications policy."

ATUG closed its doors in 2011 after 30 years of advocacy for greater competition in Australian telecommunications. Its conferences were well attended and it had significant influence on government policy during the 1990s and 2000s, years of tumultuous changes in the industry.

But those very changes made it less relevant and membership declined until the organisation was no longer viable.

"While I was writing my paper on the NBN it really hit me what a gap the demise of ATUG has left," said Professor Gerrand.

"There are still plenty of lobby groups in the industry, but none are specifically supporting SMEs. This has led to an NBN that is consumer oriented, mainly designed for households to watch streaming video.

"SMEs need affordable high bandwidth symmetrical Internet access to operate in the digital economy, and they are demonstrably not getting it.

"Perhaps if they had a stronger voice they would be able to lobby government for a better deal.

"In New Zealand retail service providers are offering a 900/450 Mbps Ultra Fibre service to SMEs.

"Vocus's Fibre 900/450 product is priced at NZ\$137.42 per month for unlimited data. In Australia there is no national vision for how the NBN can provide competitive advantage for Australian SMEs participating in the global digital economy."

Graeme Philipson

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MACQUARIE WANTS GREATER FOCUS ON CYBERSECURITY

Macquarie Government has called on the Australian Government to give greater focus to building critical sovereign capabilities in cybersecurity to keep Australia competitive.

Macquarie Government managing director Aidan Tudehope (below) made his comments on Monday when commenting on the 2020 Cyber Security Strategy [discussion paper](#) released by the Minister for Cyber Security Peter Dutton and the Department of Home Affairs last week.



As [reported by CommsWire](#), Dutton has said that the 2020 strategy will build on the 2016 strategy that was put in place by former Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, and would be developed in close collaboration with industry, research partners and community groups.

Tudehope said the Government's discussion paper "acknowledges not only the evolving threat landscape we're facing as a country, individuals and businesses, but recognises the increasing importance of technology and cybersecurity to drive our national economy.

"I believe some of the most critical areas to address are our sovereign capabilities and skills in cybersecurity and IT generally, which can help us hold our ground and ultimately win the war on cybercrime," Tudehope said.

"These skills can't be offshored, particularly when state actors play an ever-increasing role in cybercrime."

In other comments, Tudehope said:

- Global GDP is already heavily dependent on the digital economy and this will only increase; we need the right sovereign capabilities to futureproof Australia's global position, particularly in today's uncertain economic times. The Government should call out the importance of building these skills in the 2020 Cyber Security Strategy.
- It is crucial that Government, at all levels, are exemplars in how they bake in cyber security to everything they do. Innovation without the strongest cyber security underpinnings are a train crash waiting to happen. Government needs to know where citizen data resides and whether 24x7 global support models mean unknown individuals have privileged access to government systems.

Peter Dinham



John de Ridder

Telecommunications Economist

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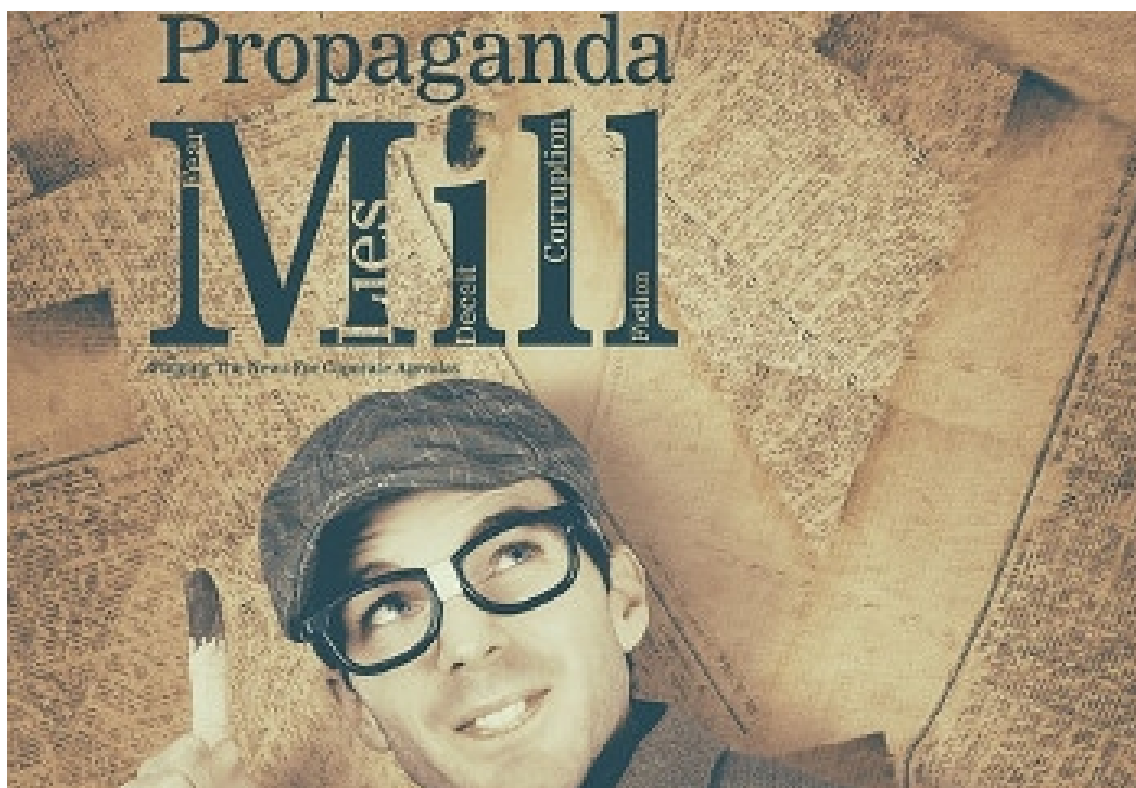
GOVT SHOULD STOP MISLEADING PEOPLE OVER WEBSITE BLOCKS

OPINION: The loud noise that the Federal Government is making over blocking websites that host videos with terrorist content is a futile attempt to show that it is doing **"something"** to prevent abhorrent material from being accessible to people in Australia.

But only the uneducated would be deceived by [all the talk and bluster](#).

For that is precisely what it is.

Once a file is uploaded to the Internet, no matter where it is done, it is well-nigh impossible to get rid of it.



Of course, those without a clue would be blocked by their ISPs.

But there are many people who use virtual private networks. Is the government planning to ban all use of VPNs?

And there are lists and lists and lists of open proxies, using which people can look at material that is blocked in their own country.

That is a well-known fact, going back to the early days of the network.

Add to that browsers like Opera which have built-in proxies that enable one to circumvent website blocks

Is the Australian Government planning to block the use of Opera in the country?

It is somewhat disappointing to note that a person who has been given the title of e-safety commissioner is indulging in this kind of dramatics.

One would expect words which are a little more sober to emerge from someone given this title.

But then this is the same individual who wrote [an op-ed](#) in *The Australian* last month, in which the use of end-to-end encryption was claimed to be facilitating the spread of child pornography.

This shows ignorance of a very high order, but then anyone who has followed the process that led to the passage of the encryption law last law would be familiar with this kind of scare-mongering.

Whenever Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton talks about the encryption bill, he mentions terrorists and paedophiles.

Dutton never mentions the fact that he is able to pay his bills online without fear of losing his money because of encryption.

But if Dutton spoke the truth about encryption, then he would earn the ire of the spooks in this country, the ones who are driving the agenda with a little help from their American masters.

A few months ago, I contacted Akamai, probably the biggest content delivery network.

The company's [take](#) on blocking offensive content like child pornography stored by its own customers was that it would block such content if it deemed it to be in violation of its acceptable use policy.

And Cloudflare, a well-known reverse proxy and DDoS protection provider, [said](#) it would not stop providing services to a client even if it had clear indications that the site in question was hosting child pornography.

The company said it had a process it would follow and it would not act out of step.

Australian Communications and Cyber Safety Minister Paul Fletcher would do well to note this before he comes out in public next time and starts making pronouncements about blocking this, that or the other.

Sam Varghese

VAULT INKS MULTI-YEAR SINGAPORE PURCHASE DEAL WITH M1

Australian risk and safety technology vendor Vault Intelligence has announced the signing of an agreement for the purchase of Vault Solo subscriptions by Singapore communications provider M1.

Following extensive and positive trials, [Vault](#) (ASX:VLT) says it has successfully secured a significant contract with M1, to drive Singapore's smart nation initiatives.

Vault – whose share price was up 15% on announcement of the deal - says M1 has committed to a five-year agreement with “significant volume growth” over the term and new contracted annualised recurring revenue (CARR) of A\$580k - the average over the contract term.



Vault Solo, which launched late 2018 in partnership with Samsung and its Galaxy Watch says “the innovative solution led by M1 comprises Vault Solo wearable and platform, M 1 data services and Samsung Galaxy watches and will enhance the safety and productivity of Singapore's workforce.”

David Rose, COO and Executive Director at Vault said, “This agreement is a fantastic achievement for Vault in conjunction with M1 and Samsung in Singapore.

“The Vault team has worked extensively with M1 and Samsung to satisfy all requirements and help position the partnership for future growth.

“Singapore, as a forward thinking country with a distinct and committed focus on innovation and worker safety, through the Smart Nation Initiative, is leading the way and we are delighted to assist in achieving that objective.

“We continue to experience significant demand for the Vault Solo product and as a result, we are on target and remain confident of delivering on our FY20 target of a minimum A\$10M CARR.”

Willis Sim, M1 Chief Corporate Sales and Solutions Officer said, “M1 is delighted to partner with Vault to provide an innovative solution for our customers through our data services and the Vault Solo wearable and platform, to enhance the safety and productivity of our customer's workforce.

“As a leading communications services provider, we will continue to stay at the forefront of technological developments to support Singapore's Smart Nation initiatives and enable our customers in today's digital economy.”

Peter Dinham

NOKIA, SMART TEAM UP ON SE ASIA 5G 'STANDALONE' TRIAL

Nokia and Smart – Philippines carrier PLDT's mobile arm – say they are working together to bring Industry 4.0 to Southeast Asia following the recent completion of a live 5G 'standalone' video call trial in the Philippines.

According to Nokia and Smart standalone systems will become increasingly important as the Philippines and the entire Southeast Asian region moves towards Industry 4.0, and industry becomes increasingly connected.

The companies cite a McKinsey and Company report that industry 4.0 is expected to deliver between US\$216 billion and US\$627 billion in value amongst the member economies of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

A key component of this architecture is network slicing, which allows service providers to partition their networks into discrete 'slices' to support specific use cases or sectors," Nokia and Smart say.

"Coupled with ultra-reliable low-latency capability, network slicing will enable the delivery of new use cases, such as real-time remote control of robotics, autonomous transport vehicles and other enterprise-led 5G use cases."

Andrew Cope, Head of Philippines at Nokia, said: "Southeast Asia is already home to the world's top social media users, and 5G will bring them faster connections, but its true beneficiaries will be industry sectors".

"The trial we conducted with Smart shows that Industry 4.0 can become reality for the Southeast Asian region.

"The opportunities are immense, and we are looking forward to working with Smart to allow the Philippines, and the wider region, to reap the rewards of 5G."

"By working with partners like Nokia in unlocking the full potential of 5G for Filipino enterprises and customers, we are putting the Philippines at par with the rest of the world in preparing for the deployment and adoption of 5G," says Joachim Horn, Chief Technology and Information Advisor at PLDT and Smart.

"It gives us great pleasure to be one of the pioneers of the 5G SA deployment in the region and we are looking forward to moving onto larger scale deployment of 5G to tap into new business and industrial opportunities - to help transform the face of the country's economy."

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