

From: Craig
Sent: Friday, 21 March 2008 2:40 PM
To: National Broadband Network Taskforce
Subject:

To National Broadband Network Panel of Experts,

I am just a member of the public who happens to use broadband technology for both private home use & a business, I have no vested interest in the broadband industry other than been a end user.

From what I can see Telstra is the biggest single limiting factor in improving broadband deployment/technology. To clarify that point Telstra needs to be split into wholesale & retail sections, there is a mountain of anecdotal evidence that the wholesale section provides the retail arm with a better/higher/faster level of service than the wholesale section offers/provides to competitor's despite the ACCC assurances that there's a "level playing field" for all.

A case in point was when I applied for ADSL with iinet, the application was not successful with a lack of "ports" at the exchange been blamed. I then applied with Telstra (bearing in mind this was within a 48 hr time window) & the application with Telstra was successful, I then canceled the application & re-applied with iinet which was once again the excuse was a lack of "ports". I honestly can't see why iinet would "make up" an excuse so one must conclude that the "lack of ports" was from Telstra. I also can't see why iinet would purposely turn customers away, yet I can see why Telstra would be happy to see a competitor with fewer customers.

The above example is not an isolated instance, in reading on a few IT/tech/broadband sites it's a common & recurring occurrence.

I also understand that a competitor is at liberty to build their own network, however a competitor faces logistical hurdles & barriers that Telstra never had to contend with i.e. land/space to build the physical exchanges to house switching gear, routers, DSLAM's etc

Furthermore "we" as a nation don't yet have the population base to support 2 or more national duplicated networks, but it is "us" the end users who are being held ransom by a monopolistic entity & are being dictated to as to how fast "our" internet will be & how much "we" are forced to pay. Yet we are also being asked by Government to compete on the world stage. Which is difficult or near impossible when we are being hamstrung by Telstra all the time.

To demonstrate that point I live in Darwin (which is considered a suburb of Adelaide by Telstra) & I constantly hear the complaint of "back haul data cost" (imposed by Telstra) now while I don't know the full in's & out's of it all, my understanding is that the backhaul data is nothing more than an electronic pulse that travels along the cable. Now there are no "manned" exchanges (that I'm aware of) between Darwin & Adelaide so one must conclude that this back haul data is handled by an automatic system & as there is little to no manpower required for it to operate I fail to see why or how Telstra claim it is so expensive to operate.

I hope anyone reading this does so with a bit of latitude to take into account my limited technical knowledge & that I don't intend for this to be a rant against Telstra but as I said at the beginning the way I see it is that Telstra are the biggest single limiting factors within the broadband industry. And while they have an obligation to their shareholders they also have an obligation to the country as a whole, why should a rural farmer/ cattle station owner who exports millions of dollars worth of produce/meat/dairy a year be forced to do so on dial-up speeds of 30-50kps.

Regards
C. Burke