

Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts

Who Owns Us

We are locally owned company – The principal owner is Arthur Hissey

Who We Are

We are a group of companies – all with the same ownership. These company's are:

- Hissey and Associates – The main umbrella company for:
- Computer Research and Technology – an Information Technology Company
- Maxspeed Australia and New Zealand – Importer and Developer of Computer Networking Technology
- Premier Solutions – a software engineering development company.
- CRT.Net.au

What We Do

We are principally a “business to business” company that provides Information Technology and Telecommunication solutions for small to medium business enterprises in regional and metropolitan areas of Australia.

We are also engaged in Research and Development. We specialise in IT infrastructure and voice / data networking solutions in both Local Area Networks and Wide Area Networks.

We are Internet Service Providers (ISP) and Application Service Providers (ASP)

Where we are located?

Our Head Office is located in Dubbo NSW Australia. We have branches or partners in :

- Dubbo NSW – Australia
- Hamilton – New Zealand
- Palo Alto – California – America.

What Sectors Do We Service

- Small to Medium private enterprise.
- Govt and Semi Govt organizations
- Retail – Manufacturing – Education – Mining – Medical – Engineering – Information Technology and Telecommunications.

Our Perceived Issues and Concerns

Overview.

Issues we perceive with Telstra – and its associated bodies. I also note, that in the main, the areas of concern expressed are the opinions formed based on my experience in the “real world”, pragmatic, application of business technology solutions in the Information Technology and Communications areas for my own companies and that of our customers.

Small to medium business is historically very good at delivering service to other small to medium business. By and large independent or private, accountable organisations are also very good at delivering what their market expects and wants of them. Their very survival depends upon it. It is often considered that Government is

not always a good provider of highly flexible – adaptive business or consumer services.

Telstra seems to have a highly debilitating and damaging identity crisis. It does not seem to know where it fits and is not doing a particularly good job at fitting into the regulated / deregulated – privatised or not privatised mode. Conversely whilst denying it vehemently Telstra appear to be doing a pretty good job of “having its cake – and eating it too.

If Telstra were to concentrate on their real area of investment, which is being the owner and operator of a telecommunications infrastructure, and allowed competition to occur at the “deployment” level of the technologies and systems – then they would be more able and capable to sustain and resource their investments in the longer term without the need to “steal from the plates” of more competent providers.

By allowing a distinction and separation of the services offered the consumers of the Information and Communications technologies would receive a level of products and services they expect from an industry. They can reasonably expect that its providers have a deep understanding of, and the capacity and expertise required to meet the markets expectations and needs on a profitable and sustained basis.

It is for this reason that we see multiple “carrier class” organisations and many private deregulated competing providers of developed, converged and advanced technologies in many other developed countries. Few of these carriers or providers are government owned.

It is essential for true competition to exist, that it not simply be a sponsored or “spin doctored” version. Dedicated industry specialists – big or small – can readily surpass the service levels being failed by Telstra at this time.

Telstra remain insulated from the market forces that shape the performance of organisations in any industry sector, let alone one as demanding as the IT&T. They are simply hamstrung by their historical baggage, leadership and mindsets to meet their consumer’s needs and requirements.

1. *Telstra do not have a commerce mindset for converged technologies* – this is damaging to the business community and that of the business communities consumers. Deploying solutions that involve Telstra and their service are often a nightmare for organisations forced to co-exist with them. Often, by simply being involved, an integrator or facilitator of business systems can end up incurring very substantial costs, with little or no hope of recovering them – let alone acknowledgement they existed in the first place.
2. *Many of Telstra’s cultures are deeply rooted in the past.* They often suffer from a “voice technology” or telephone mind set – they do not, for all intents and purposes understand the uptake and needs of modern highly reactive small to medium enterprises who use communications as critical, everyday business tools. They often damage the capacity for businesses and consumers to realise a communications full potential at a reasonable cost.

As Business Technology Providers to business, we use Telstra's services as an "enabling" component – often critical – in assisting our customers to deliver their business goods and services. Deploying solutions that involve Telstra and their services are so often a nightmare. As a honourable company trying to meet our customers expectations we are often trapped in the "no-win no-win" situation between the customer and Telstra. That is, we cannot fulfil our commitment to the customer without Telstra doing their job, which they almost inevitably fail to provide... on a frighteningly frequent basis.

3. *Telstra's behaviour in the market place is sometimes duplicitous and misleading* – it purports itself to be a flexible commercial provider of communications technologies. In fact, it exerts unfair market pressures by virtue of its size – position – and infrastructure ownership. Then unlike real world businesses that are forced to either live or die by their true performance in a market place – they then hide behind a curtain of bureaucracy and government protection as and when the need suits them.
4. *Telstra are often removed from reality when it comes to meeting customer service levels.* Telstra Service Levels are often simply appalling.

At an assistances and problem support level Telstra are an "obstacle driven" organisation. The obvious result is very, very, low levels of service to the consumer. Consequently the capacity for higher levels of service, performance and efficiencies at sustainably lower costs are inevitably sacrificed. It seriously negates the capacity for business especially, to gain a competitive advantage and gain access to markets on both a regional and international level.

5. *Telstra can be monopolistic and remove the capacity for others to compete on a level playing field by having a closed shop policy on technology uptake.* Telstra appear to engage in predatory cannibalistic behaviour. They compete with their own customers. They are, by and large, not able to provide business level installation of data communication systems at an affordable delivery. Yet they continue to contaminate this space with ill conceived installations.

By their actions Telstra often stifles real world competition in the market place. They have chosen not to remain in their area of specialisation, that is, their areas of historical expertise

6. *Telstra have undertaken unethical business practices in regards to their Internet Broadband policy.*
7. *Telstra's "real world" pricing policy is prohibitive, selective and discriminatory.* Telstra severely and negatively impacts on "downstream" organisations (such as ISPs / IT companies / Business Application Solution providers) trying to deliver technology solutions that involve using Telstra's infrastructure services and more specifically their last mile costs.

If, as a business, you are dealing outside of “local call loop” your communications cost will be extraordinarily high and your access to alternatives will be seriously limited.

Technology readily exists whereby other solutions, eg wireless, thin client technology etc, can be used as an alternative – Telstra has the added advantage of even owning many of the towers that could be utilised. Telstra do not have the mind set – capacity or desire to consider alternative technologies to those they are now failing to deliver eg Broadband Internet capacity in areas outside the immediate major cities.

8. *Telstra have proven to be a serious impediment to the delivery of serious, competitive, business in rural and regional Australia* by not considering alternative technology solutions, leveraging partnering opportunities, or gaining the maximum potential of their existing infrastructure. They inhibit the ability to deploy wide area networking solutions – either voice / data / or converged technologies.

Their provision of existing technologies to potential users and competitors alike appears to be highly selective and apparently discriminatory. They appear not to allow fair access to the system, by way of example Fibre Optics / Wireless Systems / Etc.

9. *Telstra does not foster competition.* Private, often local technology companies are penalised, and, for all intents and purposes forced to use Telstra’s infrastructure and services. Telstra often prove to be difficult in the extreme when it comes to being of assistance with design, implementation and maintenance of systems they provide and are consequently a weak “critical” link.

When we do have customers that migrate from Telstra’s services the one thing that is consistent is that they are unhappy with Telstra’s capacity to delivery helpful, dedicated and local service. The one thing Telstra did understand however is that if they can use their multiple services monopolies to “lock-in” theirs and others customer bases it clearly prohibits competitors from entering the market place.

It appears Telstra’s real world ambitions are not to foster better communications and technology uptake in the community. Instead its policies and actions are often quite predatory and aimed at “taking out” competition – or the longer-term value in a provider’s willingness or capacity to invest in the future. Government’s role should be setting the principles and guidelines of acceptable practice – not competing in the market place.

10. *It is almost impossible to get Telstra to be held accountable for their actions within the small to medium business communities.* Small business does not have the time, resources, or pragmatic knowledge of access to Telstra as an accountable, responsible, provider of technology. SME’s clearly understand the difficulty, if not impossibility of “taking on” Telstra in a legal battle.

Telstra have exhibited, on occasion, to be not only intractable but also downright vindictive when challenged with such possibilities.

11. *In reality many of Telstra's best, and often local, people have left* – either of their own volition or by being “sponsored” out via redundancy etc. This leaves a gaping technical support gap. Telstra pay lip service only to the provision of service and support for the operation of small – effective business competitors and providers.

Random Sampling of Telstra Incidents

Incident No. 1

Company effected: XXXX

Issue : Reoccurring, ongoing email, internet connection issues

Course of Events: Multiple requests for fault testing - all assured OK
After many months of fault logging – Telstra equipment replaced,
problem resolved

Incident No.2

Company effected: XXXX

Issue : Disconnected the wrong ISDN Line, then tested it as OK

Course of Events: We requested our service to Parkes to be disconnected
They disconnected our Wellington service
Requested to test as ISP service for Wellington down
Assured that the Telstra infrastructure was fine – line tested OK
Requested further testing - service still down after replacing our own
equipment
Advised that the wrong line had been disabled

Incident No. 3

Company effected: XXXX

Issue : Reoccurring, ongoing email, internet connection issues

Course of Events: Multiple requests for fault testing - all assured OK
After many months of fault logging – Head Office relocated to Sydney,
problem resolved

Incident No. 4

Company effected: XXXX

Issue : Reoccurring, ongoing ADSL connection issues

Course of Events: Multiple requests for fault testing - all assured OK
After many months of fault logging and site without reliable ADSL
Connection – more Telstra line bought into the area for new business
next door, problem resolved

Incident No. 5

Company effected: XXXX

Issue : Application for PSTN and ADSL service delayed, ongoing ADSL
connection issues

Course of Events : Many trip and many hours work our part trying to prove to Telstra beyond
all responsible doubt that the issue was theirs

Incident No. 6

Company effected: XXXX

Issue : Reoccurring, ISDN line disconnection issues from Melbourne branch to
Dubbo Head office

Course of Events : Multiple requests for fault testing - all assured OK
After many months of fault logging – Replaced with ADSL service,
problem resolved

Incident No. 7

Company effected: XXXX

Issue : Upgrading from Current service to DW6000

Course of Events : Multiple requests for status of current system - Telstra unsure
recommended we ask the client