

# CommsDay Wholesale Congress

## Andrew Walsh speech as part of the nbn Showcase

Wednesday 16 October 2024

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

Thank you, Ohnmar.

Hello everyone. It's great to be with you today.

### **The Australian Story**

Australia is defined by many great stories.

No story resonates more strongly than Australia as a growing nation.

And today, it's one with an insatiable appetite for new housing.

By 2032, Australia will swell to be a nation of 30 million people.

And the Australian Government has been very clear with its ambitions: we need another 1.2 million new, well-located homes over the next five years to serve the needs of our rapidly growing population.

### **Our focus on Australia's property developers**

Seizing this opportunity, the **nbn** New Developments team has devoted itself to deeply understanding the needs of Australia's property developers.

It was an obvious move.

Property developers are building the new Australia and choosing which broadband network operator gets to deploy its network for their projects.

But why does that matter to all of us in this room?

Well, when nbn succeeds in winning the buying decisions of Australia's property developers, nbn's Retail Service Providers – so many of whom are represented here today – gain access to these incredible, new customer acquisition opportunities.

And, for those choosing to lay down roots in Australia's newest communities, they get to enjoy the promise of the nbn network – a future-ready, open access, wholesale only network enabling the delivery of innovative and reliable services for decades to come.

In other words, a network that gives them “The Freedom To Do Great Things”.

I'm pleased to say that nbn is winning the lion's share of these opportunities in new development markets, including our fair share of the most profitable, most heavily contested projects.

Last financial year, we added 147,000 new development premises to our network, with 92 per cent of them built with nbn full fibre.

And, just a couple of months ago, we achieved a magnificent milestone: more than a million active services on the network we've built for new developments.

## **How we've done it**

But how we've created this success is just as important.

Rather than succumbing to short-term tactics that drain the value out of our industry, we've succeeded by helping Australia's property developers understand the unique, enduring value of nbn full fibre.

We've shifted the perception of broadband networks from being seen as a "compliance spend" to what it truly is – the critical enabling infrastructure of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, an essential feature of any new property of quality.

And we've worked hard to become an exceptional construction partner, delivering a reliable, predictable network deployment experience for developers and their builders.

Our reputation in new development markets is built on trust. It's inspired loyalty. And its driving demand for nbn as a "must have" partner for many of Australia's leading property developers.

The result is shown on the slide behind me.

When asked how likely developers are to recommend nbn as their broadband network partner, our advocates continue to grow.

### **The opportunities we're creating for Retail Service Providers**

But, back to what this means for all of us in this room.

The nbn New Developments team is striving to ensure all new development opportunities are presenting to our Retail Service Providers as low cost, low effort, high probability customer acquisition opportunities.

And we recognise that selling broadband services in this market can be tricky:

- When will the house or apartment be built?
- When will the occupant begin thinking about their broadband choices?
- What type of connection experience is my customer going to have?

It's why we're focussed on getting the fundamentals right – all things that don't sound sexy but make a real difference to the outcome:

- Maximising accuracy in addressing.
- Minimising infrastructure and network shortfalls.
- Helping our Retail Service Providers identify the properties that are “ready to target” as distinct from the ones that are still grassy lots of land.

We'll keep anticipating and responding to the needs of our Retail Service Providers as things continue to evolve.

The prize, of course, is worth fighting for.

We're talking about:

- Aspirational customers, excited to be living in brand new homes, served by nbn full fibre that's been deployed into brand new pit and pipe.
- Customers who are interested in setting up their new homes the right way, including setting up their in-home environment for the best in digital living.
- And, given we're serving nearly all these new properties with nbn full fibre from the get-go, there's no need for us to come back and disturb the customer relationship, which our Retail Service Providers have worked hard to establish and rightfully want to preserve.

## **nbn Smart Places**

And as always, we're looking to the future.

Two years ago, I stood on this stage and spoke about a new type of nbn connection, one using a small form factor pluggable – a small, energy efficient, reverse powered, hot swappable network connection device.

Today, this product is known as nbn Smart Places.

We know the demand is there...

Last year, nbn partnered with International Data Corporation to quantify the demand for fibre to IoT devices and fibre to critical infrastructure that exist in our communities. All those places and things that are non-addressable.

We found that the market, including fibre, cellular, and satellite, will grow 5 times to 1 million non-addressable connections by 2030, compared to just over 204,000 in Australia today.

By 2030, fibre connectivity specifically is expected to soar 4.5 times to 320,000 with network traffic increasing a staggering 18 times.

And so, we've been busy working with many of Australia's most innovative smart technology companies to support Australia's property developers to create smarter communities, making the most of nbn full fibre into homes and businesses, and nbn Smart Places to places and things.

I'm pleased to see so many of Australia's leading property developers leveraging this capability, relying on it to create greater visions for their projects, including

one of Australia's single largest property developments – Walker Corporation's pioneering project at Appin in NSW.

Right now, nbn Smart Places has been, or is in the process of being, deployed at 85 different property development projects across Australia.

nbn Smart Places is also making significant strides in the enterprise and government space.

Transport for NSW has chosen Vocus and TPG for the largest rollout of nbn Smart Places in Australia to date. This initiative will provide full fibre connectivity to 1,300 traffic light controllers and 700 roadside CCTV cameras.

Today, I am also excited to announce that we have nearly completed the construction of nbn Smart Places for Water Corporation WA through Vocus. We are helping them to transition their network of over 180 pumping stations from copper to fibre to improve the reliability and resilience of their network.

## **Accelerating Smart Development for Australia**

With our national reach, working on thousands of new development projects across the country, we have a unique perspective on what might hold Australia back from realising smarter new communities.

Right now, there are property developers, planning authorities and policy makers feeling unsure how to understand the return on investment from smart technologies in new communities.

So, I'm pleased to say that with our partners – Urbis and Delos Delta – nbn is leading the way with the creation of a new “blueprint for best practice” when it comes to creating smarter new communities for Australia.

We've just started work on an industry wide initiative to create a prospectus for Australia's property development industry – “Accelerating Smart Development for Australia” – which will be made available to the public in early 2025.

This prospectus will bring together global research and insights, inspiring case studies, and the wisdom and experience of many of the leading thinkers from industry, government and academia.

It's another example of how we're working to lift the digital capability of Australia.

But we can't do it alone. The best result will come from industry collaboration. So, if you're keen to contribute, please get in touch me or my team.

## **Wrap up**

With all that said, it's now my pleasure to introduce our final speaker, Kim Iliff, to discuss what we're doing “in the field” to help improve customer experience.

Thank you.

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