

Radio Days – 2011-07-23

Tip of the Week – Caveat Emptor

As usual in my business I meet the same problem from many clients in many forms. This week the main focus was people not switching their bullshit meter on. This took many forms, from the person who let a stranger (remember **Stranger Danger?**) talk them into buying an anti-virus program to a support person from a major telco who talked them into swapping their ADSL broadband for wireless. Both were a backward step: the “anti-virus” program cost a lot to remove and the wireless broadband stopped working when the local mobile phone tower had a major problem for a few days.

Please remember that there are many people out there who make an excellent living from conning other people out of their money!

NBN Co Satellite

The Australian Broadband Guarantee has now ended. This was the Australian government’s guarantee that no internet user would be unable to access broadband (ADSL, wireless or satellite) from their home or office.

No more applications have been taken since 31 May. The satellite service is for households or small businesses who want broadband internet access but are unable to access either ADSL (using a landline telephone connection) or wireless (using a mobile phone connection). ADSL is my preferred connection method because of its reliability and consistent speed. Satellite is my next preferred method because the costs are the same as ADSL but it still suffers from the unreliability of all wireless connection methods (ever had a mobile phone dropout?).

In the olden days (two months ago) you had to ring the Satellite Infoline and be sent a list of providers from which you selected your preferred supplier. Now you select your preferred supplier from the list on the NBN Co’s website and have all your dealings with them. While it may seem strange that you have to use the internet to select an internet service provider (the modern version of **Catch 22!**) it is not as bizarre as it sounds because most people have access to the internet from a friend’s computer, an internet café or an online centre.

For the first few months (July to October) NBN Co will have limited capacity to install new satellite broadband connections. This is expected to change in November when the NBN Co expects to be able to install up to 1,000 new connections per month. If you need satellite broadband then you may have to wait until later this year or early next year. Don’t let this put you off applying now as you may well be surprised at the response! Currently there are six satellite providers: Activ8Me, BorderNet, Clear Networks, Harbour IT, ReachNet & Skymesh. If you are interested please contact one of these providers: they will tell you where to go (nicely, of course!).

I was asked during the week if I was in favour of the NBN. My answer is that it is a necessary utility like the road or rail network. As the federal government is the only organisation with the capital to develop it, the NBN needs to be a federally-funded organisation to do the job. The only other alternative, using wireless connections as suggested by the federal Opposition, will not give the same coverage, reliability or speed as the NBN and will cost nearly as much despite their promises.

Yes, many people will want mobile broadband coverage. This will still be provided by the mobile phone network under the NBN.

Further Information

NBN Co www.nbnco.com.au