



21st Century Telecommunications



*Optus CEO
Kelly Bayer
Rosmarin's address to
ACCANect #Digital
Download audience on
8 September 2021*

Thank you to ACCAN for inviting me to speak with you today and, for those of you tuning in, for listening.

ACCAN's purpose – to work for the delivery of communications services that are trusted, inclusive, accessible and available for all – has grown exponentially as consumers and small business' use of communications services has grown. ACCAN is the 'voice' of the consumer and the customer champion.

While Optus is a commercial organisation, we strongly believe that if we do the right thing by our

customers, that if we are champions for our customers and if we earn customers' loyalty, this ultimately benefits not only customers, but also our shareholders.

And at the heart of all the products and features is the fact that we care about our customers and want to put them in control of options that can improve their lives. This is why we have launched our Optus Living Network.

By using the latest technology, the Optus Living Networks brings our customers a range of features and products, some already launched, that will enhance their well-being, help with day-to-day challenges and provide a more-personalised network experience.

It's complicated technology, but for customers – it's simple!

For instance, Call Translate allows people speaking two different languages to have one phone conversation in real time.

And in a country like ours, that has 5 million whose first language isn't English, consider what it would be like to eliminate challenges that speaking a different language can sometimes impose – such as booking a medical appointment.

One of the first Optus Living Network features that we launched – and one that is near and dear to my heart – is Donate Your Data. With a couple of taps in the My Optus App, customers can give their unused data to underprivileged youths.

By enabling these connections, our customers are helping individuals, developing Australia's talent and truly making the future brighter.

As one of the program's beneficiaries, Amelia, summed up so well: "They deserve gold medals." It's a feature that makes a real difference.

We've also launched Optus Pause, which allows customers to put all our household devices – basically control the network – on pause with a simple tap. We loved a tweet received from Mark Williamson, the owner of a small business called "All Marketing" that simply stated, "a great tool for family and focus time."

Well said, Mark!

Tomorrow is R U OK day. This makes it the perfect time to announce our latest feature, Optus Sidekick, which encourages your mates to check in with they need it.

Optus Sidekick is NOT a safety solution, but it is a way of providing reassurance to our customers when they need it. It's a little thing we can do to help consumers, but it is the little things that matter. Especially now.

We also recognise ACCAN's call to improve our service interactions with customers, and this is an area we've made tremendous achievements. We want to deliver Customer Care that's simple, personal and works.

In addition to the Living Network features, we've also embedded the My Optus App digital service support options like a messaging features which allows customers needing one of our experts to log what they need, then get on with their day while we work on the solution. For customers who like digital engagement – and that's more than 80% of our customers – this is ideal.

And the reasons some customers prefer digital are varied – consider this note we received from one of our customers, Kerry, who is a member of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing community:

"For us to navigate the world in a hearing-dominant society makes living in this world on a daily basis challenging. I thank you because you have added an access for us by using messaging on your app that we can access without using the relay service by waiting in line. So THANK YOU. Keep up the great work."

We also understand that some customers prefer to pick up the phone and speak with someone on the phone. And we know they DO NOT want to be put on hold or transferred.

So we completely reimagined how we organise our customer care teams. Optus customer care is now set up in teams or what we call a 'community of experts'. Our close-knit experts work together side-by-side in communities dedicated to customers in a specific local area, so they have a real understanding of the customers they look after.

When a customer needs help, they go straight to their dedicated team, who will be able to help. The expert on the end of the line, will be empowered to solve the query and the knowledge to do it. No passing the buck, no bouncing customers around. We take it and own it.

And while one complaint is one too many, this focus on customer service has resulted in a consistent two-year decline trend in our TIO complaints with the latest report showing our lowest ever TIO complaints. And this is a hard time.

Let's face it – the past sixteen months have been tough for so many, and many customers require a different type of support. Over this time, we've provided customers with payment support 1.9m times and each individual's arrangement is considered with our customers' unique circumstances top-of-mind.

Our goal is to keep customers connected while they get back on their feet. As a demonstration of the cultural change we are driving, we changed the name of the department that was once called 'the collections team' to 'Customer Payment Support'. It's a small thing, but it shows our preference to support

customers so we can maintain lasting customer relationships.

What I'm trying to say is that, like ACCAN, we believe in championing the customer.

And when Optus actively advocates Government on issues, you will find that one of our key pillars relates directly to an award which ACCAN presented to us in 2019 and is one that we treasure: the Challenger Champion award.

Our increased presence in regional areas drives customer experience improvements from our competitors as customers have options – and flexible contracts and improved pricing plans become options, too. Communities benefit from competition.

So even if you aren't an Optus customer – although I hope you all are! – know that we are raising the bar for all telcos so that all of YOU benefit.

And this is the central theme to so many of our discussions with decision makers, regulators and government. Choice matters.

Consumers challenges are our challenges, and we are energised to find solutions to challenges that deliver what is best for our customers. Driven by an ethos that we believe ACCAN shares, Optus believes we can redefine what connectivity can be for all of us.

Thank you for listening and I hope you all enjoy the rest of ACCANect.

Check against delivery