



## Introducing the Optus Living Network



*Optus CEO Kelly Bayer Rosmarin presented this address at the CommsDay Summit\* on 4 May 2021.*

For a while now, the telco industry has been seen as a commodity by our customers; it's all about our pipes, fibre and towers. Customers don't think about us much; they take for granted that data magically arrives on their phone or over their WiFi; and their interactions with us are about receiving bills and calling in if things don't work 100% of the time.

With all of our amazing network expertise and innovative thinking, I don't believe we have done enough to solve real world customer problems and encourage a shift in that customer relationship. Until now.

Today, I wanted to take a short hop into hyperspace and explore the Network and Customer of 2030, which is not to be found in a galaxy, far, far, away...but less than ten years from now.

If you think about it, a lot can happen in ten years - particularly in the universe of technology. As Yoda would say: *"always, in motion, is the future."*

While it is difficult to see exactly what the future will look like, we must accept that as the future hurtles towards us, today's technology will have a finite shelf-life and the marvels in our hands may become irrelevant.

I was recently driving through an area where I couldn't receive a radio signal and had to resort to the 6-disc CD stacker in my car. It made me realise how many technology advancements we loved and heralded have already been almost phased out: Myspace, Walkman, Blu-Rays and DVDs, digital cameras, plug in GPS units in cars, calculators. Actually, our phones allow us to replace all these items with one device, a device that keeps changing as new things emerge. Who would have predicted this 15 years ago?

This – Nokia 1110 – was the top selling device for most of 2005 [hold up device] but was soon knocked from its perch by the Nokia 6288 [hold up device], launched late 2005 and with its 'super innovative' slide feature. Ta-da!

So, as the conduits of connectivity, the enablers of today's most revolutionary tech, we must ask ourselves are we relevant to 2030's customers?

**Yes. We are. We most certainly are.** Optus has considered what the backbone of our business – our Network – must be to meet customers' needs in 2030. And, more broadly,

what role our business will play in the lives of our customers.

And we are delighted to unveil our vision today, a vision to invigorate our network beyond its utility in a way that is so unique, so ALIVE, that it captivates customers.

Today, I present to you the Optus Living Network.

It's a network that isn't static and fixed, but one that comes alive in your hands at the touch of a button. It's not dollars for gigs, but unique features that enable the network to adapt to our customer's needs, at their demand. And we've already started rolling this out!

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Before I provide you with a few examples of how the Optus Living Network might look for a customer, let's start with our experience today.

In my family, which is not dissimilar to many families, the ability to connect is a given – it is expected – much like the ability to flick a switch to turn on a light.

With my daughters, their ability to connect means access to Tik Tok; Zumba on OS Fitness and hours on Youtube watching old episodes of Friends (I know, go figure?).

For my husband and I, it's instant news, our Optus Sport and laughing over the Good Place on Netflix.

As a family, we pour over photos, posting the perfect holiday pics on Instagram, in between movie nights, checking in on our socials, or on each other, friends and colleagues – wherever they are in the galaxy.

Not once while we do all those things, do we think about the key enabler of the entire experience, our connectivity – EXCEPT, if it doesn't work. If that signal disappears for a few minutes, or a page takes more than one

second to pop into focus or that movie takes too long to download, we become outraged.

Currently, we only think about telco networks if they aren't there. The Optus Living Network is poised to change that perception. The Optus Living Network places control into the hands of our customers – to let them decide how they use our network and engage with us.

Let's start with our customers network **experience**: In the past it has been hidden; now it can be exposed. When we are speaking of experience, we can consider **how customers feel about their use of our network**, so we provide them with environmental and social causes that matter to them.

Our first foray into this is our **Donate Your Data** feature. If you have excess mobile data, you have the option to donate it to underprivileged Australian youth.

It is tremendously powerful for Optus customers to participate in programs like this because it truly makes a difference, and that – I believe – is what matters to people.

To date, our customers have donated in excess of 25 million GB of data that has helped more than 14,000 young Australians in need. And we have created the tool for customers to do this simply, in a just few clicks in the My Optus App.

And the NPS is off the charts – customers control the Optus Living Network to shrink the digital divide. Knowing you are making a difference is a powerful feeling.

Another example is when you need more mobile data to enjoy that rainy Saturday afternoon Mandalorian marathon. Our Living Network offers an **Unlimited Data day** boost through a couple of taps via the My Optus App.

This little \$5 add-on gives you unlimited data use during its 24-hour activation period. So, even if a customer has already exceeded their data allocation, they can still have that injection of data when they need it. It gives customers more options and flexibility – instead of throttling their service.

I recently heard a lovely story from a customer who had a real in-the-moment need for this service earlier this year: the customer said – *"I needed to "live stream" a very good friend's funeral which I couldn't travel to. I didn't know how much data it would take so I chose your add on for \$5 a day. It was nice to have that safety net there for such an event.*

If you want to prep for a day of high intensity online team-gaming why not improve your latency through our Game Path service.

Game Path typically reduces lag by 30% - making it Gamers' ultimate secret weapon against packet loss and jitter – critical to winning those online battles – and the accompanying bragging rights.

We are making the services that customers love work even better!

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Another facet of our Optus Living Network is how it enhances our customer's wellbeing.

If, like my connected family, you occasionally need to take a timeout while you enjoy a Sunday night family dinner without notifications and interruptions, activate **Optus Pause**.

Optus Pause places all the mobile and household devices on the Optus Network on a brief hiatus – so the dinner table becomes about the conversation, not online chat, or interruptions.

What's truly unique about Optus Pause is that we are not just doing the equivalent of putting one device into flight mode or switching off the plug of the modem – we are giving our customers the control to simultaneously pause any or all devices at a network level. It's quite profound for a network that's not built to be controlled by the push of a button on an app from a single customer.

Personally, I love Optus Pause because as a working parent, it means that I can enjoy the precious moments I might miss with my family; and for my family, it means they can enjoy time with me without work interruptions edging in.

Today, I wanted to exclusively preview one of the most exciting Optus Living Network features to date.

One of the things that I love about Australia is its diversity. We are one of the most multicultural countries by light years.

The last Census showed that more than 20% of Australians – that's 5 million of us – speak another language at home.

And in a country like ours, in which around 300 languages are spoken, consider what it would be like to eliminate comprehension challenges that speaking a different language can sometimes impose.

So, imagine you want your English-speaking child in Sydney to chat easily over the phone with their Italian speaking Nonna in Melbourne... or...when is English is a second language – consider the ease of simply **booking a medical appointment** or managing an **over-the-phone customer service enquiry**.

Call Translate solves language barriers for customers. It is the ability, in a native voice call, to enjoy a real-time conversation translated into the language of your preference, in real time.

This allows new Australians, from non-English speaking backgrounds AND English-speaking customers to enjoy the freedom of communicating meaningfully.

We are working with Google who have partnered with us to provide the natural language translation, but what's completely unique is that we digitalise the voice by translating the voice traffic in real-time.

These are a just few of the customer-in-command features Optus has brought to life as part of the Optus Living Network – with many more currently in development.

The Optus Living Network has just been born and it will continue to grow and develop.

In the original Star Wars film, Obi-Wan Kenobi says to Luke Skywalker so eloquently: ***"Your eyes can deceive you. Don't trust them. Trust the Force."***

For the engineers and tech-heads – of which I can proudly say I am one – **networks AND network technology** is a force.

It's a force that has been evolving and will continue to grow in its strength – from 4G to 5G, 5G Stand Alone, Software Defined Networks, Carrier Aggregation, Smart Networks, Dynamic Spectrum Sharing, and mmWave.

And in parallel to these network technology shifts has been the adoption of their consumer applications: OTT subscription services, VR, AI virtual assistants, drones, Robotics and all sorts of connected wearables.

It's ironic that as customers increasingly think nothing of networks or network connectivity – except for when its absent – our industry continues to think about building and expanding network coverage for customers.

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At Optus, we've embraced a simple plan to change how customers think about their network. In addition to experiencing their network reliably, customers must be able to control how their network works in their everyday lives.

If you want the best network, you need to deliver more of what the customer loves; so, we are delivering more of what customers love.

And this is what the Optus Living Network does.

I am optimistic that the integration of 5G with the Optus Living Network will take how we engage and excite customers - and how we can help solve their challenges - to the next level.

And that's why in our 5G rollout, we are focussed on quality, not size.

By prioritising software defined networking, edge compute and network slicing, 5G will transform how we can shape and blend technology to suit customers' needs.

5G will encourage innovation across IoT and the increase of intelligent automated applications in our day-to-day lives.

So, whether it's your car's GPS speaking with a city's smart grid to find a convenient parking spot with a charging station; OR, integrating urban and regional classrooms though AR to improve learnings...5G's amplified reliability will improve lives and mean more convenience.

It is no Jedi mind trick to provide customers with what they want. It is simply putting them at the forefront of our strategy and innovation – and giving them the control.

Over the course of 2021 and beyond, we will unveil more exciting Optus Living Network innovations. Customers can expect our range of different features will captivate them with options.

As an engineer, I have always been mesmerised by science, how things work, solving problems and technology.

If you hadn't already guessed, I am Star Wars fan and love the idea of trusting – maybe not quite the force – but in technology to be the roadmap to a better future.

When I was appointed as CEO in April 2020, our company set an aspirational vision to become Australia's most-loved everyday brand with lasting customer relationships. While it's a lofty goal, I'm amazed at the early indicators of how we've advanced toward achieving this vision already.

**"Do or do not, there is no try"** is the mentality we have adopted to enhance our interactions and solve real problems for our customers. Our vision, supported by the Optus Living Network will see this aspiration to come to life.

And as 2030 grows nearer, the Optus Living Network will further increase customer's options, change the perception of what a network is, and set the benchmark for what connectivity can be for customers.

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**\*Check against delivery**