

Managing Building Telecommunications for Profit and Performance

Introduction

Telecommunications is emerging as the major enabler for business in the 21st century. Not only are Governments and businesses embracing telecommunications to deliver their strategic goals but social networks and personal entertainment are dramatically changing society.

In recognising the economic and social benefits of an advanced telecommunications environment, on 7 April 2009, the Australian Government announced that it will build a national fibre-to-the premise broadband network, the National Broadband Network (NBN). These developments can if effectively managed provide considerable commercial opportunities to building owners.

Telecommunications Deregulation

The deregulation of the telecommunications industry has been the catalyst for the development of the competitive telecommunications industry in Australia. This industry now underpins the revolution that we are now observing. This process began in the 1990's with the Telecommunications Act, 1997 which deregulated the market. Prior to that Telecom (Telstra) had a monopoly. The Telecommunications Act introduced new powers and opportunities for building owners.

These powers are defined by:

- Telecommunications Act
- Telecommunications code of practice
- ACIF Industry guidelines
- ACMA standards and
- TIO determinations

The most significant opportunity is derived from the requirement under the act that building owners should be compensated for any costs that they incur in providing access to a carrier .

Opportunities for Building Owners

In addition to the commercial opportunities that are emerging from the deregulation process other similar opportunities are driven by emerging technologies. Collectively we see the major commercial opportunities as:

Charges for antenna placement for:

- Wi-Fi
- Cellular mobile
- WiMAX
- 3G, Microcell technology etc.

- Additional licence fees for equipment and cables through alignment with market rates.
- Better utilisation of roof space.
- Improved facilities for access seekers.
- Increased range of communication services for tenants.

Building Communications Advice

The complexity of the current telecommunications environment coupled with the potential for earning considerable revenue has encouraged building owners and managers to seek professional advice in this area. Telecommunication consulting companies can provide owners with advice on the following:

- Application of regulatory powers and responsibilities in relation to carriers.
- Site audits to review existing lease/licence, OH&S compliance & revenue opportunities.
- Market rental levels & lease renewals.
- Optimise the services to tenants.
- Managing system installations.
- Plan the communications equipment rooms and services provided to Telco carriers and service providers.

The fees for these services are often paid for by the access seekers making it cost neutral to the building owners.

Case Study – Major CBD Multistorey Building

Problems: Substantial carrier and service provider infrastructure installed.

- Existing risers were full, and no management of base building communications infrastructure.

Solutions: A Telecommunications consultant conducted an audit to identify existing infrastructure issues and revenue opportunities.

- Ongoing assistance in license negotiation.
- Resulted in the capture of considerable fees primarily from existing carrier installations.

The consultant recommended the establishment of a process for ongoing management of low impact communications infrastructure for the building.

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