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Trade Talks

AUSTRALIA'S TELECOM HORIZON: CHARTING THE FUTURE WITH CONNECTED FUTURE 30

Five years ago, Australia's telecom sector was at a turning point—5G was nascent, fiber-to-the-node (FTTN) was still widespread, and mobile data usage averaged just 8GB per user per month. Fast-forward to 2025, and the industry has undergone a marked transformation: Telstra's 5G coverage now reaches over 89% of the population, monthly mobile data usage has climbed to 14GB, and fiber broadband accounts for over two-thirds of fixed-line subscriptions.

The market has pivoted from legacy voice and DTH services to digital-first infrastructure, setting the stage for the next phase of inclusive, intelligent connectivity.

As the sector evolves, it is entering a transformative phase defined by rapid 5G adoption, regional digital inclusion, and AI-driven infrastructure. With mobile penetration projected to reach 195% by 2029 and 5G comprising 86% of subscriptions, the trajectory is clearly digital-first.

Notably, mobile data usage per user is expected to nearly double—from 14GB in 2024 to over 25GB by 2029—driven by richer content consumption, cloud gaming, and IoT use cases. At the same time, fixed broadband adoption continues to rise, supported by government-backed fiber upgrades and fixed wireless expansion across regional areas. Network investments alone are no longer enough—future-readiness also hinges on programmability, automation, and ecosystem agility.

At the heart of this transformation is Telstra's Connected Future 30 vision—an ambition to deepen connectivity, reconfigure network operations, and unlock new possibilities through a programmable, secure, and intelligent platform.

It underscores Telstra's conviction that connectivity should be universal and inclusive, especially for rural and remote Australia.

Delivering Connected Future 30, however, is a collaborative endeavor. Alongside the efforts of domestic teams, Telstra's global footprint—including its presence in India—plays an instrumental role in enabling innovation at scale. Capabilities spanning AI, cloud engineering, automation, and digital platforms are being co-developed to enhance customer experience, simplify operations, and future-proof the network. This integrated approach ensures that technological evolution keeps pace with rising customer expectations and data demands.

To bring this vision to life, Australia is investing heavily in future-ready infrastructure. Telstra has already reached 89% 5G mobile population coverage, and the Connected Future 30 roadmap focuses on scaling network programmability and edge intelligence to meet evolving demands. These upgrades are complemented by regulatory moves such as mid-band spectrum reform and enhanced consumer protection frameworks, ensuring digital growth that's resilient, inclusive, and transparent. The future of telecom lies not just in faster speeds, but in smarter, more inclusive systems. Australia is not only preparing its networks for the next decade but is also setting a precedent for how cross-border collaboration and digital innovation can work in lockstep to deliver on bold national ambitions like Connected Future 30.

@Source – GlobalData – Australia Telecom Operators - Country Intelligence Report Series
June 2025 Report Code: GDT0487MR

