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## Report to Members 2007

2007 has been a busy year for ATUG, the communications sector and for business users of communications services as policy and product developments unfolded a pace throughout the year.

For ATUG, the year started with the move to Chatswood in January 2007 and this has proved to be a very successful decision. Directors, members and industry partners have easy access to the new office and ATUG is closer to many stakeholders who have made the move from the City to the Macquarie Park ICT area during the last 12 months.

The February Strategy Day discussions provided a good framework for activities throughout 2007 and into 2008. The short-term objectives of operational strength, brand awareness, campaign focus and expanded interest in smaller business users were all achieved.

Operational performance was strong resulting in a surplus for the year ended December 2007. Work on ATUG's website and information services for members resulted in many very positive comments during 2007 and provides a good basis for further Web 2.0 based services from ATUG. Links with media remain very strong with many requests for comment from print, radio and television services in metro and regional areas.

ATUG's 2007 Protect Australia's Competitive Telecommunications , **PACT** campaign began in March 2007 and was followed up with meetings in Canberra in May and a 10 year Celebratory Dinner in June. The campaign provided a clear focus for ATUG comments on the many policy and regulatory developments during 2007. Competition is the core objective for ATUG and must be continued through any policy or platform developments in the sector.

ATUG strengthened its links with other communications users during 2007. ATUG hosted a workshop with community sector representatives to focus attention on the needs of this sector for better communications services to deliver benefits to stakeholders. ATUG built links with SME focused industry and government groups culminating in a series of successful seminars targeted at SME users to inform them about communications services, prices, effective negotiating techniques and marketing strategies based on communications platforms.

ATUG also hosted a longer-term focused series of forums looking at "A High Capacity Communications Future for Australia" which were well supported by

expert speakers and robust discussion among members. The topics covered were:

- A Demand side view
- Technology Landscapes
- Encouraging Innovation and Investment
- Next Gen Policy and Regulation frameworks

The findings of this year long discussion will be presented at ATUG 2008.

During the year ATUG presented the Inaugural Awards for the Effective Use of Broadband to users from all over Australia. ATUG also presented the 18th Annual ATUG Awards for innovations, telecommunications management, innovation and service performance. ATUG's Charles Todd Award for 2007 went to Professor Trevor Barr from Swinburne University, Smart Internet Cooperative Research Centre and co-chair Telstra Consumer Consultative Council. An additional Charles Todd medal was presented by the Minister to retiring ATUG Chairman, George Maltby.

ATUG held over 100 events during 2007, ranging from the ATUG 2008 and ATUG Regional Conference to monthly Cross Connect events in all States and Territories including Tasmania, Future Forums, Regional Roadshow events in 13 centres from Townsville to Esperance, 8 SME events from Newcastle to Brisbane, Election Policy events and Product events. In all over 2000 people attended ATUG events during 2007.

ATUG sent ATUG This Week and ATUG Opinion every week to keep members right up to date with developments locally and internationally of relevance to their activities and decisions on communications. We received very positive feedback on many occasions. ATUG also maintained a strong focus on "currency" on the ATUG website home page, using this tool to bring latest information to members immediately.

ATUG made submissions to, and attended meetings with, the ACMA, the ACCC, DCITA, the Minister and Shadow Minister, the National Broadband Development Group, the Australian Health Information Council and the Communications Alliance Board to represent the interests of end users directly. We participated in discussions on the Expert Taskforce Guidelines for the Fibre to the Node proposals, the Australian Broadband Guarantee Program Guidelines, the ACCC Strategic Framework for Fixed Services, the ACCC Infrastructure Audit, Mobile Termination Rate reductions, Applications for Exemption from Local Carriage Service, Wholesale Line Rental and Regional Transmission services, the USO review, the Regional Telecommunications Inquiry Review, Accounting Separation Review, extending wireless broadband services for regional users.

ATUG led the Affirmative Team at the Communications alliance debate, "10 years on – is telecom competition policy still working?" The affirmative team won by four points!

ATUG reviewed its Focus Policies in 2007. The topics for 2008 are:

- Communications Needs
- Competitive Communications
- Targeted regulation
- Secure Online Environment
- Broadband
- Regional Communications
- Wireless and Mobile – CDMA closure, international roaming rates
- Specific Issues – Expert Taskforce, OPEL, backhaul, USO, IP transition, SME

The significant policy and regulatory decisions of 2007 included:

- FTTN – Telstra, G9, Expert Taskforce
- Mobile termination rate reduction to 6 cpm
- The Australian Broadband Guarantee
- ALP National Broadband Plan
- Legal action by Telstra against the ACCC and Minister
- Structural separation for Telecom NZ
- CDMA switch-off
- OPEL network

Internationally, ATUG attended APECTEL 35 in The Philippines, INTUG and OECD meetings in May and November. ATUG also attended CommunicAsia 2007 in Singapore and the 10th International Submarine Cable Conference also in Singapore. These meetings provide an opportunity to represent the views of end users on emerging issues in communications and information policy developments. The meetings also provide ATUG with information on the latest thinking on subjects relevant to Australian telecommunications users.

On behalf of ATUG's Board, I would like to thank ATUG staff for their focus throughout 2007 on bringing information, events and opportunities that were of great value to members.

I would also like to record ATUG's appreciation to you, our members, for your financial support, your interest in our activities and the information you provided throughout the year, which has made it possible for us to represent you even more effectively in 2007.

Yours sincerely,

  
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