ONEWIFI & INFRASTRUCTURE PITCHES THE BENEFITS OF ACTIVE NEUTRAL HOST MODEL TO ACCC

5G mobile active neutral host solutions provider OneWiFi & Infrastructure has lodged its position to the ACCC on the Regional Mobile Inquiry and other industry developments, arguing that the mobile active neutral host model will maximise the value and outcomes for publicly-funded mobile blackspot programs in the future.

OneWifi & Infrastructure (OneWiFi) argues that an active neutral hosting model where mobile network operators (MNOs) share the active mobile equipment such as the radio access network (RAN) on an equitable basis represents an efficient use of capital to expand regional mobile coverage at the lowest cost.



It claims the model can improve economic and social benefits through greater consumer choice, service and price competition.

These economic and social benefits have yet to be adequately delivered in regional Australia, under traditional passive infrastructure sharing models and past public mobile coverage grant programs.

"Under an active neutral host model, we estimate that an additional 30% to 40% of the capital and ongoing cost savings can be achieved beyond what is currently being achieved via traditional passive infrastructure co-locations in regional Australia through MNOs sharing active mobile equipment and transmission," said OneWiFi managing director Mevan Jayatilleke.

"The additional savings are not just through the consolidation of multiple sets of RAN equipment into one, but also other related cost drivers, such as decreased power requirements and consumption, which also potentially enables the use of renewable power solutions to reduce carbon handprint."

"By onboarding multiple MNOs to the active neutral host service, we can enable greater mobile service options for consumers and facilitate service-based and price-based competition. For the MNOs, the model reduces the cost-to-serve in areas which may not have commercially viable if they were to deliver mobile coverage on their own."

"For government agencies and regulators, there are tangible and lasting social, economic, and competition outcomes, which could be further amplified with wholesale service enablement mandates, such as MVNO access. It truly represents a win-win-win scenario for the consumers, MNOs, and the regulators," he added.

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Over the past 24 months, OneWiFi has been working in the background on this potential game changer for mobile coverage while enabling allied industries and adjacent markets in regional Australia, from a commercial, regulatory, and technical perspective to make the model viable, equitable, and attractive for all stakeholders.

"Multi-Operator-Radio-Access-Network (Moran) and Multi-Operator-Core-Network (MOCN) are not new, hence the model can be technically delivered today with the current RAN and baseband technologies, but there are of course some nuances and trade-offs that need to be considered around RF power and MNO spectrum holdings in the technical design and RAN configuration when it comes to sharing of radio resources," said OneWiFi head of RF planning and design Neil Robinson.

"The active neutral host solution, as it stands, is future-proofed to support LTE (4G) and new radio (5G) and can also support a hybrid solution where Moran and MOCN co-exist."

"The Active Neutral Host model social, economic and environmental benefits are not only limited to regional and remote Australia, but also apply to urban, suburban, peri-urban and in-building environments, where there are also other considerations beyond pure cost, such as visual aesthetics, infrastructure harmonisation, smart city development overlays, productivity, end-user choice, and reduction in carbon footprint," concluded Jayatilleke.

"We are looking at Active Neutral Host not just in the regional context, there are also opportunities to deliver the model for different use cases and environments, such as growth precincts, major transport corridors, and in-building coverage, to really leverage the benefits of shared network economics and infrastructure harmonisation."

Kenn Anthony Mendoza

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