

Queensland Communities in transition

Goondiwindi Communications and Country Broadband Network – closing the digital divide

Goondiwindi Communications is a local business who has been keeping both the town and surrounding farms connected for over 29 years. Frustrated with expensive, unreliable and slow internet with limited data, this enterprising business has sought to develop a local solution delivered by local people.

The 2018 Australian Government independent committee review into regional telecommunications, found that digital agriculture could increase the gross value of Australian agricultural production by \$20.3 billion, a 25% increase from 2014-15 levels. It also found strong connectivity increased visitor numbers to regional areas by an average by 4.1% per annum in the last five years.¹ However, for regional, rural and remote (RRR) businesses to take advantage of new digital applications and opportunities, they need access to a reliable broadband and mobile coverage.

The reality is that many RRR businesses are relying on satellite services which includes data limitations, congestion on the fixed wireless network and poor mobile coverage.

“Country Broadband Network was born from the inability of the major carriers to supply business and residential customers with fast, reliable and affordable internet.”

Trent Murray, Director, Goondiwindi Communications

HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Locally developed broadband network
- ✓ Quick installation
- ✓ Prompt local support and technical services
- ✓ Reliable and fast internet service to help grow the town's business capacity



Goondiwindi Communications has been helping to deliver a combination of telecommunication and precision agriculture technologies since 1985.

In the last 18 months the business has taken the logical next step and developed its own local broadband network without ties to any of the major mobile phone or satellite network providers. More importantly, the business also provides a 24/7 support service to ensure customers can receive prompt assistance with technical issues, to reduce wait times from months to just hours.



Its Country Broadband Network (CBN) delivers internet connectivity from a fibre optic connection over a wireless network to the customer. A typical installation consists of a mast on the roof with a dish pointing back to one of the CBN access points. Instead of building expensive towers, the CBN utilises local infrastructure such as the town's water tower and grain silos. The communications servicing range is currently 20 kilometres plus from the town centre with some sites up to 40km or more from town. This service delivery model can be used anywhere in Australia

