

Media Release

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Cairns on track to become a 'silicon beach'

Local entrepreneurialism boom spurred by connectivity

Cairns has been named one of the nation's top entrepreneurial hotspots according to leading KPMG demographer Bernard Salt.

Commissioned by **nbn**, the *Cairns Lifestylepreneur report* reveals there has been a four per cent uplift in local small businesses (5-19 employees) in the last two years in part due to the region's increased connectivity through access to fast broadband.

The research reveals small businesses are embracing digital technologies to expand in new markets and highlights key pockets such as Yorkeys Knob (up 58 per cent), Brinsmead (up 50 per cent) and Bentley Park (up 31 per cent) leading the charge.



Local lifestylepreneur, Adam Mills

While hospitality remains the backbone of the local economy, small businesses in media and IT industries have shown exponential growth in the last two years (up 100 per cent) as more creative entrepreneurs flock to Cairns.

KMPG Demographer, Bernard Salt said:

"Small businesses in Cairns have always had an inherent resilience as they have never been offered the natural support of a capital city job market – businesses must make a go of it or go out of business.

"The growth in Cairns is underpinned by an entrepreneurial energy as baby boomers look to reinvent themselves and young start-ups pursue their business venture in a town known for its laidback lifestyle.

"The tyranny of distance is fading with greater connectivity allowing Australians to work from wherever they choose to meaning business owners are now empowered to expand their operations and connect with suppliers and customers from anywhere in the country."

nbn's Head of Business, Ben Salmon said:

"Job growth, innovation and opportunity are no longer restricted to businesses within the major cities as the **nbn**[™] network provides small and medium businesses similar access to their big city counterparts.



“As the rollout of the **nbn**[™] network ramps up within Cairns and surrounding regions, we are seeing Australian businesses maximise their productivity and improve their work-life balance by embracing new technology powered by access to fast broadband.”

Co-founder of KoalaSafe, Adam Mills said:

“When I was given the opportunity to move KoalaSafe to Queensland I was excited at the prospect of living and working in a lifestyle-oriented region like Cairns while staying connected to our Silicon Valley headquarters in the United States.

“Communication with our remote team and cloud-based software requires a fast and reliable internet connection so I had to be sure the region’s infrastructure could support our global business needs.

“Knowing that I could connect to **nbn**[™] network in Cairns meant I could get the benefits of a lifestyle location without sacrificing the needs of the business.”

There are almost 100,000 homes and businesses that can currently connect to the **nbn**[™] network within the Cairns Regional Council and Douglas Shire Council regions with the final 7,000 premises currently under construction.

Visit the [nbn[™] website](#) to learn more about what you need to know before connecting your business to the **nbn**[™] network as well as how to get the best experience out of your internet connection.

Questions to ask before connecting your business to the nbn[™] network:

- What business products are offered?
- Which service providers are available to me?
- How much data do I need?
- Will my existing services be affected?
- Will my devices be compatible?





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Resources

- [The Cairns Lifestylepreneur report](#)
- [Images](#)
- [Video](#)

Notes to editors

About nbn:

- **nbn** is building a new and upgraded, fast wholesale broadband network to enable communities across Australia to access fast broadband from their retail service provider. Our goal is to connect eight million homes and businesses by 2020.
- The rollout of the **nbn™** access network sets the scene for the biggest transformation to Australia's telecommunications industry involving retail service provider network upgrades and the establishment of a network of networks to bring fast broadband to all Australians.
- Connecting to the **nbn™** network is not automatic and is a process which may take some time and preparation. **nbn** is working with the service providers and industry to help them better understand who is responsible for which portions of their internet experience and what steps they can take in order to receive the best possible service.
- The speeds experienced on services over the **nbn™** network are determined by a range of factors such as the technology used to deliver the network as well as some factors outside our control like equipment quality, software, broadband plans, signal reception and how your service provider designs their network.
- Fast broadband like that delivered via the **nbn™** network can provide a range of benefits for Australians such as opportunities to work from home, access to online education tools and options for on-demand entertainment.