



Media release

Tuesday, 26 May 2020

nbn™ Australian Covid-19 Behavioural Change Survey: 8 in 10 experiencing better work/life flexibility

- **81% of respondents say the experience of working from home has positively changed the way they think about managing work/life flexibility.**
- **67% say they expect to work from home more after the COVID-19 crisis has ended.**
- **81% of work from home respondents agreed access to fast broadband had made them feel more secure in their jobs during COVID-19, and 83% agreed they could not have completed their jobs without access to fast internet.**

Australians who have been required to work from home during COVID-19 have found a silver lining, with 81 per cent saying the experience has positively impacted how they view their work/life flexibility, according to new research commissioned by NBN Co.

The nbn™ *Behavioural Change Survey* investigated Australians' internet usage habits before and during social distancing, to understand how consumption needs were changing and the behaviours that might endure post-restrictions being lifted. The research, conducted by Venture Insights and commissioned by nbn found that access to fast broadband had made 81 per cent of respondents who could work from home feel more secure in their jobs during the COVID-19 crisis, with 83 per cent saying they could not have completed their jobs without it.

This reliance on fast broadband has been reflected in network data demand over the **nbn™** network, which has experienced increases of up to 70% in business hours traffic volumes since social distancing measures were implemented on 1 March.

“The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the digitisation of our lives and highlighted the very reason the **nbn™** broadband network was built. The way Australians use the internet to work, learn new skills and connect with their family, friends and colleagues has been transformed, and we expect that many of these new behaviours are here to stay,” said Brad Whitcomb, Chief Customer Officer at NBN Co.

Mr Whitcomb also said NBN Co itself had been walking the working from home walk, with all employees except field technicians shifting to remote working seven weeks ago.

“Having successfully transitioned such a high percentage of our own staff to working from home, we have had a very real experience of what has been occurring for workers across the country. We expect the experience to inform our thinking about how we work as a company in the future and I expect that many other companies are considering how remote working may become a more permanent feature for their teams after social distancing measures are eased,” Mr Whitcomb said.

Already Australians have begun to embrace their new ways of working, with more than two-thirds of respondents (67 per cent) who worked from home indicating they expect to work from home more after the COVID-19 crisis has ended. This number was higher for those living in metro areas (69 per cent) than those in regional areas (54 per cent).

“As working habits have changed over the past several weeks, many preconceptions about the viability of long-term remote working seem to have shifted,” said Nigel Pugh, Managing Director of Venture Insights.

“We’ve seen in the research that, for many Australians, this change in routine has given them the freedom to embrace greater work/life flexibility. In light of this, it’s not surprising that two-thirds of respondents who worked from home are interested in maintaining their new ways of working even after restrictions are lifted.”

The home workspaces of Australians have also transformed to reflect the ‘new normal’. Since COVID-19, 69 per cent of respondents have purchased one or more devices to support their online activities, and that number increases to 79 per cent when looking at respondents working from home. Of the people who are working from home, 56 per cent have created new or dedicated office space.

“As people settle into their new routines, they are beginning to consider how their professional habits might change in the longer-term. For NBN Co, it’s vital that we continue to invest in understanding what those changes are so we can best support Australians to get more out of their in-home internet experience well beyond the COVID-19 crisis,” Mr Whitcomb said.

For more information on the *NBN Behavioural Change Survey* and to learn more on what NBN Co is doing to support Australia through COVID-19, please visit: www.nbnco.com.au/campaigns/covid-19

Tips for managing your broadband setup*

- Check your speed plan suits your needs. If your internet is slow it may be because you are on an entry level internet plan. Call your internet retailer and talk to them about the number of devices you have connected and how you are using the internet to find out if you have the right retail plan to support your needs.
- Get the right plan. Most home internet plans are used primarily to download (web browsing, movies, music) and as such have good download speeds, but are not as strong when it comes to uploading. When it comes to working from home you may have a greater need for uploading files and joining Skype calls so speak with your internet retailer to make sure your plan has the upload speeds you need to work from home.
- Check your in-home set-up. Check your Wi-Fi router is in a central location in the home, ideally close to the devices you need to connect. Some routers may not deliver high performance and speeds. If you are concerned about the age or quality of your router or modem, seek advice from your internet retailer on possible upgrade options.

* Your experience, including the speeds actually achieved over the **nbn**[™] network, depends on the **nbn**[™] access network technology and configuration over which services are delivered to your premises, whether you are using the internet during the busy period, and some factors outside **nbn**'s control (like your equipment quality, software, broadband plan, signal reception and how your service provider designs its network). Speeds may also be impacted by the number of concurrent

users on the **nbn**[™] Fixed Wireless network, including during busy periods. Satellite end customers may also experience latency.

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For further information, visit www.nbnco.com.au

Notes to editor:

This research was undertaken by Venture Insights on behalf of NBN Co. The research took place in April 2020, and was completed on 28 April. 1,006 respondents aged 18+ completed the survey and they were proportionally spread across ACT (2%), NSW (31%), NT (0.5%), QLD (20%), SA (8%), TAS (2%), VIC (26%) and WA (10%). 77% of the respondents belonged to a metro area, and 23% to a regional area.