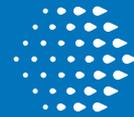


Tips for small businesses



Telecommunications
Industry
Ombudsman

on reducing phone and internet problems

Sign up to products that meet your business needs

Consider your business needs

Before you enter an agreement, take the time to **consider the phone and internet needs of your business**. Know your budget. Know the length of time your business can commit to. Shop around for the right product.

Be aware of sales pressure

Even if you're feeling pressured by a salesperson (whether in store or at your business), **don't rush your decision**. Feel free to ask for an unsigned copy of the agreement you or an adviser can review later.

Understand what you're signing

Carefully read the agreement and ask the provider to explain any terms you are uncertain about before signing. If you think a product does not meet the needs of your business, ask the provider about alternatives. Keep a full copy of the agreement you signed.

Make it easy for your provider to organise a new connection

Check your business' address

When filling out an application form for an NBN service, **check the business address you've provided matches the address in your lease agreement** or utility bills. Tell your provider if your business operates from a shared office space, shopping strip, or shopping centre.

Allow enough time for connection

Allow your provider enough time to process your connection request, especially if you have multiple numbers or additional services (such as fax lines). Ask your provider for an estimate of connection time.

Keep existing phone services active

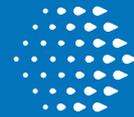
When waiting for a new phone service to be connected, **keep your existing phone service active**. This is because your provider can't transfer a phone number associated with a disconnected service.

[Click here to read our Systemic Investigation Report, June 2020 on addressing the causes of small business complaints](#)

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Tips for small businesses



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Work together with your provider to resolve faults

Know who is responsible for fixing the fault

If a fault arises, check your phone and internet agreements **to ensure you're contacting the right party** for assistance.

Be part of the solution

Make yourself or your staff available to **complete troubleshooting of the fault**. Keep a record of the troubleshooting steps you've taken.

Actively communicate with the provider

Maintain regular contact with your provider, **answer questions** and **supply information** you think will help identify the cause of the fault.

Develop a back-up plan to avoid financial loss

Be prepared with a back-up plan

Prepare a back-up plan in case there's a fault with your phone or internet services. Consider what alternative services your business can rely on and what you can do to stay in touch with your customers. **Check whether your provider offers interim services** when faults occur.

Protect your business

Contact your provider to report the fault and **take steps to protect your business**.

For instance:

- When a telephone service fails, ask the provider to divert incoming calls to a mobile phone number
- When an internet service fails, purchase a mobile internet device
- When a telephone number is lost, advertise an alternative number

Be prepared if you want to claim

To claim compensation for business loss, you will need to **show the steps you took to protect your business and demonstrate the loss you incurred** as a result of your provider not meeting its obligations.

For more information about claiming compensation, please see our Factsheet [Consumer guide to compensation for financial loss](#).

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