

# 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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## 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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