



Telstra tops in Asia-Pacific award

By Garry Barker, Telecommunications Reporter
November 8, 2005

THE curtains of smoke and flame blanketing Telstra's war of words with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission have cleared for a moment to reveal an award from the Gartner Group, which has dubbed Telstra the best network operator in the Asia-Pacific region.

Telstra Global's extensive international virtual private networking business grew 67 per cent last year, with customer numbers rising by 53 per cent.

Telstra spokesman Warwick Ponder said it was "great to see what can happen when the shackles of regulation are removed". Gartner's report showed Telstra's competitiveness in internet-based communications, he said. "The challenge (now) is to harness that competitiveness ... so we can overcome some of the regulatory disadvantage that inhibits our growth in Australia."

Multinational customers using Telstra's internet protocol virtual private network system in Asia include Bloomberg, Hewlett-Packard, Sun Microsystems, Morgan Stanley and Woodside.

Gartner's report said Telstra "significantly improved its support capabilities, one of its weak points in the past, because of its geographic distance from the key regional hubs. It has increased local support in key markets, improved its processes, and built new support systems to improve its network and service management capabilities." The assessment covered network reliability and performance, support, installation and repairs as well as options and pricing.

Gartner said an increasing number of large organisations were deploying IP VPNs, many for mission-critical tasks.

Much of the traffic was handled through REACH, Telstra's joint-venture network system that, Gartner said, was "strong in high-capacity services, because of its superior regional connectivity, especially for links to China".

"It has good geographic reach and abundant capacity, which translates into better network performance," the report said.