

TURN TO NETWORK: THE ESSENTIAL NEW MARKETING CAREERS RESOURCE, PAGE 51

Marketing

FEBRUARY 2004

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M & C Saatchi's Andy Pontin,
Direct Marketer of the Year



Print Post No. 09874512 097237523





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Malcolm Auld concludes his two-part article on the damaging consequences to a brand when the promises of broadcast advertising and the customer experience are two different things.

Hangin' on the telephone... still

Despite a litany of problems as a Telstra broadband customer – and because I'd missed the first Telstra float – I decided to go big time on the Telstra II float. Damn!

So to qualify for a bundled discount and to continue to do my bit for the share price, I decided to transfer my mobile to Telstra from the African telephone company. The sales assistant asked me if I would like the bill sent to my Melbourne address – this was in a store in Brookvale, in Sydney, just after we had discussed me living in the next suburb. When I asked what Melbourne address he was referring to, he showed me the list of my addresses on the database – and the one at the top was a Melbourne address I hadn't used for about eight years. I wasn't aware my account details going back almost a decade were sitting on a file like this – when I asked if he could delete it, he said he wasn't authorised. I'd better check the Telstra Privacy Policy and see what options I have to correct the data myself.

As you know there have been some very serious problems with the Telstra email service lately, with customers' businesses being badly

affected and many considering civil legal action. It certainly had an impact upon one of my businesses and we're still doing an audit to determine what business may have been lost thanks to the email system that didn't work. I've had to establish a new email service for my business with another supplier.

On a personal level, a friend of mine sent an email about the sad death of his father and the details of the funeral, but unfortunately the email didn't arrive, or if it did, it arrived late and many friends didn't get to the funeral.

Once again last week, the system was broken. My wife runs part of our business from a home office, via the ADSL service and again the internet service wasn't working. When she rang Telstra to find out

why not, she passed the security formalities of identifying herself and they were very accommodating in trying to resolve the problem.

The service technician explained there was a problem in Victoria, but it was possible it may have slipped into New South Wales in a few areas. He directed my wife to run a software program from within the hard drive but this didn't fix things, so he suggested she try to log on again in an hour. She tried again later, but this time there was a different error message – Telstra didn't recognise the stored password. My wife keyed the password in manually, but it still didn't work. When she rang Telstra again, she wasn't allowed to get the problem solved because she wasn't registered as the user; despite the fact Telstra had

helped her with the earlier error problem during the day. Apparently she is only registered as a user on some of our telephone lines, but not the internet line – the things you learn, hey? Consequently she was unable to get any work done for the day.

So the next day, Saturday, I opened the email system and it worked perfectly – the marvels of technology. But I had a notice from Telstra that we had exceeded our 100 percent usage allocation for the month. This seemed strange, given how poorly the service had been operating for most of the month, so I checked the usage meter. It indicated that the previous day, when we couldn't use the system, we had apparently downloaded over 100 megabytes of data in a

IF YOU AREN'T A TELSTRA CUSTOMER YOU CAN GET TWO MONTHS FREE SERVICE WHEN YOU BECOME A CUSTOMER. YET WE POOR CUSTOMERS WHO ARE FUNDING THE ADVERTISING OF THESE MESSAGES, ONLY GET TWO WEEKS FREE SERVICE AS COMPENSATION FOR A SYSTEM THAT HASN'T BEEN WORKING.

