

Supporting a strong, accessible, and neutral internet

One of the most important pieces of infrastructure to support a futureproofed economy and connected society is strong and reliable internet, both fixed and wireless. Specifically, we support continued government investment into broadband and wireless networks and a competitive market of service providers to ensure that internet is accessible and affordable for all Australians and New Zealanders. It is also essential that wholesale and retail internet service providers should not and do not discriminate against video game content and data.

How important is high quality internet infrastructure to video games?

The community's love for video gaming, like most aspects of modern digital life as well as the digital economy, needs fast and stable internet. Our local game development studios have also told us how access to an effective and reliable internet connection is essential for their work. For these reasons, we support continued investment by governments into building, maintaining, and improving internet infrastructure, such as Australia's NBN Network and New Zealand's Ultra-Fast Broadband initiative, as well as support for the fast rollout of 5G in both countries. We believe access to the internet should be high quality and affordable in both urban and regional areas, and also support policies that ensure consumers have choice of service providers and plans.

Does video gaming put a heavy load on internet infrastructure?

One of the myths around video games is that they take or use up a lot of internet bandwidth to play. Aside from the many games that can be played offline, most games that are played online use minimal data, even when playing with friends and family. In fact, most online games only take up a fraction of the bandwidth needed for even standard definition video streaming, even when the game's graphics look cinematic, as many modern games do. While many Australians and New Zealanders still buy boxed games, many also download games and while some game and update files can be large, our industry takes great care to deliver downloads as efficiently as possible. Games companies use a range of technologies and practices to minimise their impact on bandwidth, including pre-seeding data prior to release, using Content Delivery Networks to shorten the distance that data travels, managing bandwidth capacity, and scheduling releases for off-peak periods. Our industry works with Australia's NBN Co to help them manage bandwidth.

What is IGEA's position on net neutrality?

We believe that the internet should be open and free from unreasonable traffic discrimination, such as blocking, metering, or throttling internet traffic, or charging different costs for different kinds or sources of internet traffic. Any such discrimination of online content is detrimental to competition, harms consumers, and stifles innovation. Thankfully, unlike in some territories, net neutrality is largely a consensus issue here, and we are appreciative that support for an open and neutral internet is generally widely shared by Australian and New Zealand governments, by industry, including wholesale broadband and retail internet service providers, and by consumers.

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