
AUSTRALIAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS GIANT, OPTUS, CONVICTED OF MISLEADING ADVERTISING



Optus, Australia's second-largest telecommunications company, was taken to court by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) over what the ACCC calls misleading broadband ads. The company has been advertising "unlimited broadband" plans that actually have caps of 15GB and 30GB. After the cap is exceeded, the service would shift to 256 kilobits per second. Justice Anthony North ruled that the company was in breach of the Trade Practices Act for not sufficiently and prominently disclosing the shift in download speeds. ACCC chair Graeme Samuel gave a statement regarding the ruling. "Telecommunications providers should think very carefully before claiming that their service offerings are unlimited. If there are any limitations, then they run the risk that the advertisements are misleading and that they will receive unwanted attention from the ACCC," said Samuel. "It is simply unacceptable to make bold headline claims like 'unlimited' and then to bury important conditions or qualifications in the fine print as Optus did in this case." Company officials claim that Optus has stopped advertising 'unlimited broadband.'

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