

Day 1, 2015 Conference – Apps For All Challenge

Teresa Corbin: So we're just going to transition quickly into our final thing for the day, which is our awards ceremony for the Apps for All Challenge, so I think we will cue another video while that happens and we'll bring up our Telstra and our special speaker to the stage.

OK, so that was just our promo to get people to put up ideas and there was plenty in that last session for our ideas garden on the side of the walls and it is also online. We will take a quick little comfort break for anybody who needs to duck out for a second while we just get organised for this. So just bear with us.

Teresa Corbin: OK, if I can get everyone's attention - not necessarily sitting, fair enough at this time of the day you may not want to sit, especially since you are hanging out to go out and sample some of those beverages and cocktails. Alright, so, this is the Apps for All Challenge Awards ceremony and together with Telstra, ACCAN brings you this challenge. Australia's only competition for accessible mobile apps, aiming to raise awareness of the issues faced by people with disabilities and older Australians, with using apps on smartphones and tablets. The awards acknowledge the apps that excel at including everyone. Sadly, Karsten Wildberger, who is on your program, will not be joining us today, because he is not well. We wish him a speedy recovery. But we are very happy that Andrew Coull, the executive director of Telstra country wide is taking his place and we have Ron McCallum assisting us also today and he will give us a little presentation about the Apps for All Challenge.

Ron has had a very distinguished career as a former Dean of law at Sydney University and as an inaugural member of the UN committee on the rights of people with disabilities from 2009 to 2014. Those are only just two of the highlights! He is recognised for his contribution by our own Australian honours awards system and he is an Officer of the Order of Australia for his services not just to people with disabilities but to all citizens of Australia for his work in doing all kinds of things, not just, obviously, the law, there's an enormous long list of things Ron has made a contribution to and some of those are outlined in the program for you to see. Ron uses apps for communicating, reading and navigation and if I could just welcome him to the podium, I'm sure he will tell you some more.

(APPLAUSE)

Ron McCallum: Thank you very much, Teresa. And hello, everyone. Let me begin by paying my respects to the original owners of the land, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. You know the elders in Aboriginal tribes are the custodians of the law and I'm a professor emeritus, which means a retired, or has-been professor! But it also means I'm elderly and I'm a custodian of the law! So I pay my fellow custodians, elders past and present, my deepest respect.

All of us in this room have found computers and apps and technology has altered our lives. There wouldn't be one person in this room who would say that technology hasn't altered their lives. But I'm willing to say to you that we persons with disabilities have had our lives altered by technology and by computers more than the rest.

For me, technology is doing the work that my eyes can't do, because they're plastic inserts. And today, I want to talk a little bit about - and only for a few minutes - the apps I use and technologies I use to make life easier.

Well, I get up of a morning and want a look at the news and I have my iPhone with its iOS, voice-over technology, which is in all iPhones. If you want to find out your voice on your iPhone, press Siri and

ask it to turn voiceover on, but remember to get Siri to turn it off because it can become quite confusing. The first app I will go to will be The Guardian app and I will read the headlines on The Guardian. That's probably the first thing I do. Then, I have a daughter at university who will want some money!

(LAUGHTER)

Do you know, even married children seem to need money - it's an interesting phenomenon! So I get out my wallet and I pull out the money. I don't want to give her the wrong amount - and so I use my money reader app, which photographs the notes and will tell me whether it is Australian or American or \$50 or \$10 or \$20.

When I walk down the street to get the - or in the city - it's not an app but one of the technologies that makes my life so much easier are the clicking lights.

Because they take the angst, they take the chanceness, out of crossing a road. It's a bit like Russian roulette! I also love bank machines. And you will see me running down the street about 6:00 am with my tracksuit and my earphones and I go to the bank machine and I put in my earphones and my card and I get my money out. Before we had those, and my children were teenage, and if my wife was away, I would have to get one of them to come down with me to the bank machine and they'd say, "Dad, what's my cut"? And I would say, "Jeez, hang on"!

But, as for Apps, well, when I'm walking with my dog, I use Ariadne GPS which is an app that will actually tell me when I'm walking along the numbers of the housing I'm passing - not only the street, but the numbers of the houses. You're now at 17 Tindale Road, so I can't get lost. I also use Blind Square, which will tell me what are the precincts and shops around if I'm looking for a particular shop. I was on a bus with my earphones, listening to Blind Square and it was telling me the shops I was passing and I thought, is this like Scene? I have another app which takes a photograph, it's called Tap, Tap, See and it takes a photograph and it goes up into the Cloud and tells me what the photograph is it says, "Please don't take pornographic photos". I'm a bit shy to try, will it say "I'm not going to tell you what this picture says"? I've mainly used it on wine bottle labels. I use an app called Voice Dream. When anyone sends me something in an email, I download it, if it is a book, a paper, an article, and I have it read out to me in high-quality speech, up to 500 words a man. It's hard to know how things will get better.

I must tell you another funny story. I was at a conference and you wouldn't think it, when I'm up on the stage, I'm a little bit of a different persona. I can talk like this. But if I'm one-to-one I'm a bit shy and I was with all these new people at this conference and they didn't know much about disabled people and I was very nervous and I'm in the hotel room and I couldn't find the kettle. And I thought, do I go out and ask one of these people? And I thought, "They'll think I'm stupid". So I phoned a colleague on FaceTime and said, can you help me find my kettle? If I move around like this with the front view, and she said "Stop there"! The kettle's just ahead. It's hard to know how technology will get better. It's made my life, and my independence extraordinary. I have another app that is named after Ray Cursall(?), the great guru, and if I'm in a restaurant I can just use the scanner and it will scan the menu and read it out to me.

And then I can work out, rather than someone telling me, what I'd really like! You know, you get people and they skim over the menu, and they say, "Oh, you wouldn't like that" and I say, "Hang on, I might"! Particularly the wine list! It's hard to know what will come next. But for we disabled persons, technology has been one of the most remarkable liberators and I don't know what I did to be born during this age. We blind people have been on the world as long as humans have. We were with you in the caves. We were with you in hunter-gatherer societies. We were with you in

agriculture. We were with you in the Middle Ages, we were with you in the gospels of Jesus Christ. But, for whatever reason, I'm amongst that very few of the 33 million totally blind people in this world who live in a developed country and have access to technology that no blind person ever in the history of our world has had so many doors opened. Bless you all, take care, thank you very much.

(APPLAUSE)

Andrew Coull: Good afternoon, everybody and congratulations and thank you very much indeed, professor, that was quite amazing. I have to say, I'm not - as was announced - I'm not Karsten Wildberger, so apologies on his behalf that he is not well, he has got tonsillitis, so my name is Andrew Coull and I look after our Telstra countrywide business and I'm delighted to be here. And before we kick off I'm delighted to be here for a couple of reasons. Having heard the professor just talking now, and also I was very lucky to have had the opportunity to engage in a conversation in the last 15-20 minutes before we came in and I've learnt lots about - and I'm going to try a lot of the apps and the technology you have just referred to, there, actually. The only one I was a bit disappointed in, we tried the "Tap, tap see" one outside and the professor kind of took a picture of me and he said it will read back what it is, and of course, the picture was taken and it came back and I was hoping it was going to come back and say the picture is of a 25-year-old man with a black suit and red tie on, but it just said there was a man sitting on a chair with a black suit and a tie on.

So I didn't get the full equivalent of the app! But it is quite incredible, I think, and it's - it actually makes me feel very, very proud and really excited about the fact that technology can make such a significant difference to people's lives in the way you have just described there. You know, our ambition is to be a world-class technology company and when I think about technology in the spirit of making a real difference to the way people can live their lives and do things they may not otherwise be able to do, I think that's quite fantastic and it makes me feel very excited. And if I may just congratulate you on the wonderful work I know you have done with the United Nations, professor, as well. It's quite stunning from what I've learned in terms of what you have done and I know it has been an inspiration to many, many people to continue that work, so many, many congratulations. We know that people with disability in Australia are much less likely to be able to access the internet. In fact, there is a stat that I think is quite an important one to reflect on. That is that if you look at the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics statistical figures, from 2012, only 58% of people with a disability access the internet at home, compared with 80% overall. So I guess, if anything, that presents and describes some of the scale of the opportunity that we've got in front of us, which is really important.

And our job, I think, and one of the things that excites me most about what I get to do is to try and close that digital divide, because that digital divide shouldn't be there and we need to work to close it. As the internet becomes the default medium, as I think we've just heard, in communicating, informing and interacting, the disadvantage of being offline for many groups in our society only increases. So that digital divide does need to be significantly closed. As some of you know, Telstra has been investing for quite some time in communications equity for many years - more than \$2 billion of customer benefits in just the last decade through our access for everybody programs. I've personally been involved in one of the other ones, which is our tech-savvy seniors program which I think is fantastic and that is growing very, very quickly as we find more ways to partner with state governments to assist older Australians in developing their technology, skills and confidence, which is also important, that they need to connect, participate and interact safely in the digital world. I'm proud that Telstra was also one of the first large corporates in Australia to introduce a disability action plan back in 1996, a long time before I joined Telstra.

This work continues to help us to ensure all of the diverse areas in our company, from the telephone services to our retail stores, which I look after, are accessible for our people with disability and in my role, as I say, looking after our retail stores, that is something that is of the upmost importance - that accessibility in every way, shape or form for people with a disability. We're now actually coming to the end of our sixth disability action plan, 2013-16, which has delivered a number of things - an accessibility portal on Telstra.com, that is making it easier for customers to compare mobile devices. The removal of the CAPTCHA s from our websites because they cause significant difficulty. Contributing to technology innovation for people with disability, for example in Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory where we're providing iPads to support Indigenous people with MJD so they can communicate with each other, with doctors, and to continue with their education whilst suffering this very debilitating disease. And I'm pleased to say that we're already starting now to think about our accessibility and inclusion plan in the next phase, to continue our momentum.

I wanted to touch briefly on a theme that I know has been part of the conversation today around affordability. Over the past year we've worked hard to continue to really face into this really, really important issue of affordability. You may know that we launched extra data, giving eligible mobile customers the option to receive additional data in 1gb blocks as they reached their monthly data limit. This works in line with what I believe are industry-leading real-time data alerts where we tell people, we show our customers, where they're reaching 50, 85 or 100% of their monthly data allowance. I think it's really important that as customers we can remain in control of our data usage.

We've also launched mobile plans with more data inclusions and these changes are all about trying to, as I say, build confidence that people can be in control of their own expenditure, which is important. But coming back to the theme of digital access and inclusion, it's something that a broad range of policy-makers I know and business and community organisations need to dress if we're going to change that significant gap I mentioned earlier on. So I'm pleased to announce that Telstra is about to kick off - and I think this has already been announced in the conference today - a new three-year collaboration with Swinburne University, the universe's institute for social research and the centre for social impact, which is the Telstra digital inclusion index. I believe, as I say, this was referred to earlier on today by Professor Julian Thomas but let me give you a tiny bit more insight.

This Telstra digital index will measure the extent of digital inclusion in Australia today and contribute to a national conversation about the nature of our digital society. It will help focus policy-makers, businesses and community organisations through extensive consultation on the issue of digital inclusion and, importantly, enable us to measure progress in improving digital inclusion. To that end, I would ask or encourage you all to register interest in this project. I think there is a leaflet in everybody's bag today so I would ask you all to join in because we would love to have everybody here at the ACCAN conference joining in the conversation and offering assistance in attempting to close that gap, as I talked about at the beginning.

So please, grab hold of the flyer and see if you can get yourself included in that. But my real job today is to celebrate the Apps for All, which I'm really pleased that we're able to support. It's another practical way I think we can help to ensure more Australians can take advantage of the possibilities of the digital world. This enabling people to connect goes to the very heart of what we stand for, as I said at the beginning. So on behalf of Telstra, I'm very, very proud to congratulate all of the nominees and, of course, the winners for this evening and thank you for helping open up possibilities for people and communities right throughout Australia with these quite incredible apps. As I said, I'm going to go and try some more apps which I've learnt about in the last 15 or 20 minutes as part of my ongoing education, but in the meantime, thank you very much indeed for having me here on behalf the Telstra and I'm looking forward now to presenting the prizes for the winning apps. So many thanks, thank you.

Teresa Corbin: Right, we have the envelope that we've kind of opened, except it's not really an envelope! But anyway! Just visualise that! OK, and, Ron, I might have to describe what an envelope properly is like later! Anyway! But on the Academy Awards that's what they do, is open these envelopes. But we promise not to have big pauses after we say who the nominees are.

So the nominations for most accessible mainstream app is, one, RentRight and, two, Grow (ANZ).
Andrew Coull: And the winner of the most accessible mainstream app is RentRight. Congratulations.

Teresa Corbin: We're going to take a photograph later on but I hope you don't mind waiting around but congratulations.

OK, so the second category of the Apps for All Challenge is most innovative app design for people with disability or older Australians and the nominations are, one, the NRS app, two, Open Access Alerts and, three, Open Access Chat.

Andrew Coull: And the winner is the NRS app. So congratulations.

(APPLAUSE)

Teresa Corbin: Alright, the third category of the Apps for All Challenge is, most accessible children's app. The nominations are: One, Big Baby, two, Stay Still Squeaky! And three, Thread.

Andrew Coull: And this is definitely one I'm going to try as a father of five children! So I shall definitely try this, the winner of the most accessible children's app is Thread.

Teresa Corbin: And unfortunately, they couldn't be with us today.

Teresa Corbin: The fourth and final category of the Apps for All challenge is most accessible game app and the nominations are: One, Bouncy Bits and, two, RapiTap.

Andrew Coull: The winner of that category is RapiTap. Congratulations.

Teresa Corbin: And once again, they couldn't join us today, but could you please congratulate all the winners for the Apps for All Challenge.

(APPLAUSE)

Teresa Corbin: We'll take some photographs with the winners, if they don't mind, just over here in the corner. And we'll join you for drinks in a minute. So please feel free to move out to the foyer and have some drinks and canapés. Thank you.