



Media release

Northern Rivers businesses ride the 'lifestylepreneur' wave

Local entrepreneurialism boom spurred by connectivity

The Northern Rivers has been named one of the nation's top entrepreneurial hotspots according to leading KPMG Demographer, Bernard Salt.

Commissioned by **nbn**, the *Northern Rivers lifestylepreneur report* reveals there has been a four per cent uplift in local start-ups (1-4 employees) in the last two years, in part due to the region's increased connectivity through access to fast broadband.

The research reveals business owners are embracing digital technologies to expand in to new markets and highlights key pockets such as Kingscliff (up 19 per cent), Mullumbimby (up 19 per cent) and Bangalow (up 18 per cent) are leading the charge.

Strong tourism numbers continue to drive growth in the accommodation and retail service businesses in the region. However, sectors such as public administration (up 50 per cent), utilities (up 50 per cent) and education (up 25 per cent) have shown the greatest uplift since 2015.

KPMG Special Advisor and Demographer, Bernard Salt said:

"The Northern Rivers has all of the right attributes to make it a lifestylepreneur destination. It has a thriving population, growing cultural sector, great weather and a private sector workforce.

"With increased connectivity and access to cloud-based applications, the barriers of distance which once existed in towns such as Byron Bay will fade as local business owners will be able to connect and compete on a global stage.

"In order to effectively work outside of the capital cities, small businesses require the ability to send files, store data and to easily interact with clients and staff. I anticipate with greater access to the **nbn**[™] broadband access network, we'll see more entrepreneurs flock to this lifestyle location."

nbn's State Corporate Affairs Advisor for New South Wales, Marcela Balart said:

"Job growth, innovation and opportunity are no longer restricted to businesses within the major cities as fast broadband provides small and medium businesses similar access to their big city counterparts.

"As the rollout of the **nbn**[™] access network ramps up within the Northern Rivers region, we are seeing local businesses maximise their productivity and improve their work-life balance by embracing new technology."

Co-founder of online fashion business, Bimby + Roy, Mindy Halabe said:



“It was really important I didn’t sacrifice living in Byron Bay for the sake of my business dream. My sister and I lived in different states when we first started out, so being able to communicate clearly was crucial for running our online fashion business.

“Whether it’s responding to orders, using cloud-based marketing tools for our creative designs or communicating with each other via video chat, having access to the **nbn**[™] access network makes it possible for us to live in separate states, while continuing to expand our business across the country.”

There are more than 50,000 homes and businesses in the Northern Rivers region which are currently able to connect to the **nbn**[™] access network through a retailer. Construction work to build the network for an additional 27,000 homes and businesses across Byron Bay, Hastings Point, Terranora and Lismore is also underway.

Visit the [nbn[™] website](#) to learn more about what you need to know before connecting your business to the **nbn**[™] broadband access network as well as how to get the best experience out of your internet connection.

Questions to ask before connecting your business to the nbn[™] access network:

- What business products are offered?
- Which service providers are available to me?
- How much data do I need?
- Will my existing services be affected?
- Will my devices be compatible?

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Resources

- [The Northern Rivers Lifestylepreneur report](#)
- [Images](#)
- [Video](#)

Notes to editors

About nbn:

- **nbn** is building a new and upgraded, fast wholesale broadband network to enable communities across Australia to access fast broadband from their retail service provider. Our goal is to connect eight million homes and businesses by 2020.
- The rollout of the **nbn**[™] access network sets the scene for one of the biggest transformations to Australia’s telecommunications industry involving retail service provider network upgrades and the establishment of a network of networks to bring fast broadband to all Australians.



- Connecting to the **nbn**[™] access network is not automatic and is a process which may take some time and preparation. **nbn** is working with the service providers and industry to help them better understand who is responsible for which portions of their internet experience and what steps they can take in order to receive the best possible service.
- The speeds experienced on services over the **nbn**[™] access network are determined by a range of factors such as the technology used to deliver the network as well as some factors outside our control like equipment quality, software, broadband plans, signal reception and how your phone and internet provider designs their network.
- Fast broadband like that delivered via the **nbn**[™] access network can provide a range of benefits for Australians such as opportunities to work from home, access to online education tools and options for on-demand entertainment.

For more information, visit www.nbn.com.au