

## Foreword

From the perspective of an industry player, the first commercial priority is to understand my customers so that I can deliver what they want at a profit. That is no easy task and many ISPs are too small to afford the research that achieving such understanding requires. So, this book provides a welcomed leg-up for those who have the perseverance to digest this material.

I spent nearly 20 years as an economist and pricing manager at Telstra, the incumbent telecommunications carrier in Australia. There, I saw how effective market research can be in predicting customer behaviour. The current management team under CEO, Sol Trujillo, obviously thinks so too, employing large-scale market research to redefine its customer segments. As the broadband market matures and industry growth slows, it will be those who best understand their customers that will prosper most.

This book is not a handbook for our industry on how to conduct market research. Within the limitations of university based research, only the survey instrument could be used. With the greater resources available to leading industry operators, other techniques could also be used, which can only be mentioned in this book. But, the way in which the survey instrument has been used is carefully explained and there is an extensive review of previous related research.

For industry practitioners, whose time is very limited, Chapter 11 is a good place to start. It summarises the preceding chapters and helps draw out some of the implications of these findings for industry. For example, there are some hints about using such research to segment the market to provide better entry-level pricing to poorer customers. But, developing this idea is beyond the scope of this study.

I think industry readers would probably find Chapters 6 to 11 in the empirical section to be the most rewarding. Some of it will confirm what you already know or suspect, such as the importance of age, education, and income to the adoption of broadband. But, here is more evidence based on new and original survey work.

The hypotheses about what drives customer adoption and use of broadband are important for governments as well as industry players. This research is still in its

infancy and much of what is being done is commercially sensitive and not in the public domain. So, the publication of this book is a very welcomed contribution to understanding our customers.

*John de Ridder*

*Telecommunications Economist*

*[www.deridder.com.au](http://www.deridder.com.au)*