

# PAUL BUDDE COMMUNICATION

by Jonathon Jermev

Paul Budde is Australia's best-known telecommunications lobbyist and a frequent critic of the industry activities of Telstra, Optus, AAP1 and others, as well as various government policies. His company, Paul Budde Communication (BuddeComm), supplies telecommunications research and analysis from around the world, made generally available through his Web site at <http://www.budde.com.au>.

## Usability

The site makes extensive use of cookies, but no harmful effects seem to result from blocking these. There are a few spelling mistakes – I spotted 'resonable' for 'reasonable' and 'applicions' for 'applications'. The site is mercifully free from much of the jargon associated with communications technology, though there are occasional lapses.

The layout of the site is rather cluttered, with a navigation bar at the top and side, three columns in the centre, a 'what's new' box at the top ('From Paul's Desk') and what seems to be a welter of text formats. Unfortunately, links don't change colour when clicked, making it substantially more difficult to keep track of where you've already been. There are some problems with text wrap in lists and the main drop-down menus are over-long, sometimes resulting in entries disappearing off the bottom of the screen. It was not always possible to identify the rationale behind the sequence of items in lists. BuddeComm appear to have done their design in-house rather than going through a Web design service, which gives the site a more individual and personal focus.

However, the site structure was relatively simple and finding things was not difficult. A 'Quick Search' box at the left brings up an unstructured list of reports and publications, which match the entered keywords.

## Content

There are five main links on the site: to Web Reports, e-Newsletters, Publications, Consultancy Service, and Company Info. In addition to these, a current-awareness PDF document ('Paul's Analysis') is available for free, and users can join free Australian and/or international issues mailing lists. A discussion board is available for debate on topics of general interest but there is little activity here; interest in the hot topics of deregulation and the Telstra monopoly appears to have petered out.

## Web Reports

Reports are provided to customers in the form of PDF files. These can be accessed through a link to what is incorrectly called an 'index'; it is in fact a list of categories, organised by country, but otherwise in no particular

order. A complete list of report topics can also be downloaded; these are mostly company names, although there are country-specific reports available as well.

The reports available under 'Australia - Broadband Markets - High Speed Access' are shown below as an example:

- Australia - Broadband Market Stats and Forecasts
- Australia - Broadband - HFC - MDS - Satellite
- Australia - Broadband - Market Analysis 2001
- Australia - Broadband Infrastructure
- Australia - Broadbanding Australia - INTUG's Analysis and Stats Overview
- Australia - Broadband - Content
- Australia - Broadband - Vision for a National Policy
- Australia - Broadband - Broadband Advisory Group (BAG)
- Australia - Broadbanding Local Communities
- Australia - Broadband Retailers
- Australia - Broadband Network Operators and Wholesalers
- Australia - Broadbanding Regional Australia
- Australia - Broadband - Developments and Analysis 2002 - 2003
- Australia - Cable Modems and Cable Telephony
- Australia - High-speed Access Networks - xDSL
- Australia - Information Highways - Government Policies
- Australia - Information Highways - Research and Marketing
- Australia - Information Highways - Overview (tables only)
- Australia - UtiliTel
- Australia - Webcasting, Streaming Video
- Australia - Wireless Broadband Projects
- Australia - Wireless LANs (IEEE 802.11)
- Australia - Wireless Broadband
- Australia - Wireless LANs (IEEE 802.11) Key Players
- Global - Services - Content Networks
- List of Broadcasting Services
- List of Broadband Services

These function as links which bring up detailed overviews of the papers, including a synopsis and a table of contents. This is headed with a summary (which some

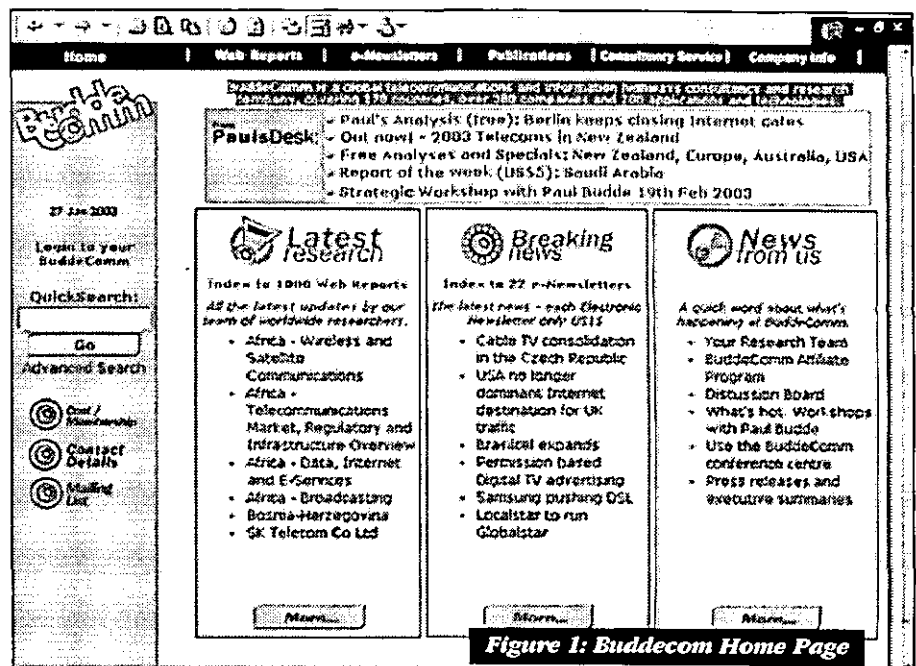


Figure 1: Buddecomm Home Page

other information sites could usefully copy), showing number of pages, file size, price and date of last update. Standard report prices are moderate by the standards of other information sources, varying between US \$30 and US \$50, apparently depending on whether the report is sourced locally or from overseas. There are discounts of 30% and 40% for personal or corporate members, who pay an annual fee and/or subscribe to the annual Buddecomm newsletter.

**2002/2003 AUSTRALIA BROADBAND MARKET**  
Price US \$595.00, excluding 10% GST: total cost US \$654.50\*

*Annual report on access technologies: highspeed Internet, cable modems, xDSL, LMDS, broadband wireless, IEEE802.11, KA-band satellites, webcasting, Interactive TV in Australia.*

Report also contains:

Australian analysis 2002

Market forecasts

User statistics

Revenues and forecasts

Industry policies

Regulatory, research and marketing issues

Fixed broadband infrastructure and projects

Wireless broadband infrastructure and projects

Content networks

Killer applications

#### Consultancy Service

This consists of six strands: Strategic Workshops, Business Plans, Executive Briefings, Presentations, Interactive Seminars with Paul Budde, and Virtual Consultancy. Detailed descriptions of these services can be found on the site.

The screenshot shows the 'Latest Research' website interface. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for 'Home', 'Web Reports', 'Newsletters', 'Publications', 'Consultancy Services', and 'Company Info'. The main content area is titled 'Web Reports' and features a report titled 'Australia - Broadband - Developments and Analysis 2002'. Below the title, it states 'Last updated on Tuesday September 21, 2002', 'File size is 55K', and 'Number of Pages 12'. The price is listed as 'Price: US\$130.00 EX GST (Member Discounts Apply)'. A brief synopsis follows, mentioning developments between 2000 and 2002 and analysis of Telstra and the Federal Government's policies. A table of contents is visible at the bottom of the report preview.

1	Synopsis
2	Analysis of market development so far (August 2002)
2.1	Broadband making good
2.2	The end of the broadband
3	Pricing analysis from Tel
2.1	Content networks and

Figure 2. Synopsis of a Web Report

#### e-Newsletters

These appear monthly covering a variety of topics, and are available to non-members for US \$5. The Australia -- Broadband newsletter is described as follows:

*'This newsletter covers developments in fixed and wireless broadband at the technology, policy and customer segment levels. Accordingly, news items may cover xDSL, where Telstra is rolling out a national network; cable modem developments from the cable TV operators; fibre to the home from both telecom and utility organisations; and regional developments in local comminations and regional centres. Other topics include analyses from various think tanks and consultancies, demand and supply issues, and content distributed over broadband networks.'*

It lists the following topics for December and January:

1. Synopsis
2. Sydney Wireless – January 2003
3. Samsung pushing DSL – December 2002
4. COLT (Ballarat) — December 2002
5. The Optus broadband challenge – December 2002
6. Controlled 802.11 applications — December 2002

#### Publications

The 'Publications' menu provides access to more detailed and elaborate analyses than can be found under 'Web Reports'. Costs here are higher too: the cost of a regional 'Africa report' is US \$395 for between 81 and 159 pages. Most publications are updated annually. Details of the 'Australian Broadband Report' as shown on the site are:

Seminars are run on a quarterly basis; other services are provided as required. The Virtual Consultancy network allows for world-wide communication with clients.

#### Company Info

This rather over-full menu provides information on Paul Budde himself and the structure and goals of the company. Lists are given of staff and overseas representatives, clients serviced, and awards won, and there is a photo and description of the company's home base in Bucketty, NSW. There is also an FAQ, but I found this sparse and unhelpful. Contact details are easily accessible, and the contact page contains one extremely useful item for overseas users wanting to get in touch: an indication of the current date and time at the home office. Contact is also by 'normal' e-mail, rather than by one of those annoying feedback forms that constrain the user; this means, too, that the user has a record of their message in their own outbox.

Overall, the impression given of BuddeComm is of a small friendly highly-competent group; very different to the high-tech image of corporate anonymity pursued by many other information sites. Considering the impressive depth and scope of the company's coverage, this is a considerable achievement. The site itself is well-thought-out and easy to use, although a little more attention to detail would be nice, particularly in terms of sequencing.

*Jonathan Jermy is an independent author.*