The home of outback connection, communication and co-working

The clear need for Outbackhubs

We have a duty to provide a clear pathway that continues to bring the outback into the modern world, harnessing innovation to engage our communities, strengthen our regions, unlock business potential and prepare our people for the jobs of the future.

The Central Western region, like many others of similar geography in Australia, has significant challenges ahead. These challenges are magnified because of geographical remoteness, declining populations, skills shortages, and economic instability through reliance on a small number of key industries. The impacts of climate change, social isolation and changing family dynamics trigger irrevocable events such as self-harm with fatal consequences.

Smart Central Western Queensland - A digitally enabled community strategic plan, 2017 provides a framework for Central Western Qld to be a region of choice for families and individuals to build a rich, fulfilling life. This includes being a place to build a successful business; with the same levels of service experienced in more populated areas.

Focusing on digital enhancement of our regions delivers capability across all the five Regional Priority Areas; Technology and the Digital Economy, Infrastructure and Services, Economic Development, Health and Well-being, and our Regional Narrative.

We are grateful to receive Advance Queensland's Advancing Regional Innovation Program support to begin this initiative in recognition of the importance of developing Outbackhubs capabilities in our region.   We will challenge the outside perception that we are wed to the archaic ways that will inevitably lead to deterioration and ghost towns. Outbackhubs is just part of the regional narrative that we are building to break this misconception.

Through Outbackhubs we will provide the physical space, state of the art facilities and technical and commercial know-how to enable our Communities, Councils, Businesses and all of those who live in and visit our outback region the opportunity to create global connections that melt away the tyranny of distance.

The way we work is changing and work must be thought of as something we do, not a place. 9-5 office jobs are becoming less common as the shift is to measure productivity, not time spent "at work". Knowledge workers must take responsibility for their own productivity and as 80% of the economy is now the service sector there is greater propensity for teleworking, corporate remote working and freelancing with a more flexible approach.

When we combine this with the fact that there is a massive shift in consumer values from ownership to access of products and services (collaborative consumption) then the timing is right to provide the infrastructure and engagement model to direct the benefits from this new world and way of working and engaging into our outback.

"Workplaces will no longer be a site of containment but a place where people meet, learn and share" Deloitte, 2013

So long as you can find a space to be productive and you can effectively connect with your customers (virtually) then you can do your work from anywhere. Why not one of our Outbackhubs? This approach will diminish the threat from over reliance on key industries and open another world of opportunity.

Through Outbackhubs we will make sure our region is aware, ready, willing and able to enthusiastically and skillfully embrace the opportunities that digital technology and all the innovation that accompanies this global phenomenon is opening.

About

Outbackhubs

Established in 2017, Outbackhubs is a collaborative initiative to provide Communities, Councils, Industry and Individuals with a home from which they can connect and communicate with the rest of the world, participating through world-class technology, unrivalled connectivity, software and expert know-how.

More than just a co-working space, Outbackhubs is about innovative shared resources in a supportive environment that will encourage collaboration, growth and connectivity.

It will be a home for a growing community of like minded people and organisations that fosters innovation and provides a platform for ideas to flourish and businesses to grow.

Through globally recognised industry leading technology solutions such as "Zoom Room" a software-based conferencing platform we open easy to use channels for our members and visitors to engage with their audience.

Outbackhubs aims to retain and optimise the benefits for the outback's future health and prosperity.

Locations:

With five co-working sites already in place throughout the Central Western Region including Blackall and Longreach, we have a further six in the pipeline, to be in Boulia and across Barcaldine Regional Council area. We have the opportunity to add more *and* to increase their use to generate more value within and between each area through connection and shared services (especially community groups).

Each will be part of the affiliated co-working network of Outbackhubs and as such members will be able to access facilities in other areas. Currently we are in negotiation with and have aspiration for affiliate members in McKinlay Shire and South West Regional Economic Development area, as well as metro centres such as Brisbane, Mackay and Townsville, extending out network even further.

Facilities, Services and Who will use them:

Through globally recognised industry leading technology solutions such as "Zoom", a software-based conferencing platform we open easy to use channels for our Members and Visitors to engage with their audience.

Whether that is Councilors communicating with their remote Constituents or Peers, or our Business Customers seamlessly and professionally meeting those they serve elsewhere in the world.

🏛	Council Employees, Councillors		Community Groups & Associations		Industry & Small Business
	Freelencers & Teleworkers		Not for profit Organisations		Education Institutions & Students
	Federal Government		State Government		Remote Workers & Visiting Professionals

Each Outbackhub site provides fully digitally enabled co-working spaces, designed with services to attract people from within the region, nationally and internationally. Facilities and services will vary according to demand but may include:

zoomrooms conferencing platform	Outbackhubs network (Affiliated Co-working space)	Hot desks	
Administration/ office equipment	Access to training and workshops	Fixed desks	
Networking events	Tea, coffee & catering	Shared work spaces	
Virtual office support	Technical support	Private meeting rooms	

Opening hours will be between 8.30am and 6pm, or outside of this by prior arrangement. Outbackhubs provides a home for an hour, a day, a week or a month.

All our customers have to do is turn up with a laptop, connect to the network and get started.

Customer Value proposition:

Customers of Outbackhubs will include Locals, the Transient Workforce and Visitors passing through. Whether for a government organisation, a business venture or a community group or project, they each have varying needs that Outbackhubs is designed to service, as the table below illustrates.

Customer profile	Reliable high speed connection	Professional work space	Fixed desk	Hot-desk / Flexible working arrangements	Collaborative workspace	Social connection	Regional / Community connection	Peer networking opportunity	Ancillary office equipment	Training / Support	Tea/ coffee & catering	Alternative to home "work" base informal	Virtual office – serviced administration	Private meeting room facilities	Conferencing platform–software & hardware	Supporting professional services	Administrative support (virtual office)	Access to training / workshops	Networking events	Business Coaching
Individuals, Students & "Side-Giggers"	Y	X	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	X	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	X
Community Groups	Y	X	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	X	X	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	X
Industry & Professional Associations	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	X	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	X	X	Y	Y	X
Government & Corporate Employees	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	X	X	Y	Y	X	X	X	Y	Y	X
Freelancers	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Independent professionals & Entrepreneurs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Remote workers & Teleworkers	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	X	Y	X	Y	X	X	X	Y	X
Temporary visiting workers	Y	Y	X	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	X	X	Y	X	X	X	X	Y	X
Visitors & Tourists	Y	X	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	X	X	Y	X	X	Y	X	Y	Y

The communities will build, so that a wide pool of experts, enterprises and talent begin to reinforce one another and add value through proximity. Outbackhubs are the next generation of co-working spaces linking regions into global networks and opportunities, offering knowledge workers the opportunity to work in, or much closer to, their region of residence.

Designed outcomes include:
- a digitally connected community building resilience and capacity
- fostering new entrepreneurial talent
- increasing productive capacity of local businesses, contributing to the broader prosperity of the regions
- opportunities to embrace the new way of working, and be ready for the jobs of the future
- ability to tap into global opportunities that drive economic change
- a space to meet physically or virtually to tackle community challenges creatively
- a co-working environment for the public service (see note 1)
- a place to develop healthy working synergies between peers across geographical divides

Outbackhubs in practice

Roles and Responsibilities:

Outbackhubs:	Local Government / Outbackhubs Partner:
On-site setup of facility (at cost) including hardware and software	Provide a suitable location with adequate internet access
Establish and manage a reliable digital conferencing platform	Provide funds for appropriate IT hardware
Advise and/or purchase most appropriate IT hardware	Cover all electrical and carpentry costs for installation
Obtain and maintain all appropriate software licencing	Ensure annual software licence and management fee are paid to Outbackhubs to maintain connection to conferencing platform
Negotiate for optimum rates from software suppliers	Provide all appropriate furniture
Co-ordinate all bookings	Ensure dedicated IT hardware is maintained as per direction/assistance from Outbackhubs
Will promote availability of facilities through Outbackhubs	Provide site contact person (per site) to be trained and act as onsite assistant for remote support from Outbackhubs

Investment & resources required:

Outbackhubs Sites:

Outbackhubs Partners will be required to provide an appropriate venue for establishment of the facilities. As a minimum it must include a dedicated meeting room to house the technical hardware and software for the conferencing platform. Ideally it should also provide a space for co-working, possible break out space, a private meeting room, basic kitchen facilities and amenities. The location should have easy access to local amenities and be a positive representative space for a digitally enabled community as part of the regional narrative. This will be a well frequented site by locals and visitors alike and will be a showcase for the region. The site may be within an Outbackhubs Partner's premises or a separate location as appropriate. Ideally the chosen location should be available for a minimum of 12 months due to the cost of establishment.

All about
zoomrooms

RAPAD have installed and extensively trialed "Zoom rooms" our chosen conferencing platform for:

- Regular [weekly] team meetings (RAPAD, RFCSNQ, RAPAD Skilling)
- Community meetings (Red Ridge)
- Training (RAPAD Skilling)
- Workshops (Daniel Johnson, Tim Gentle, Impact Innovation)
- B-2-B (Business to Business) meetings. Various users who don't have access to strong internet, or where a group are meeting, have utilised these facilities
- Virtual face-to-face meetings i.e. speaking with a company for the first time
- Virtual collaborative planning/meeting
- Face to face collaborative planning/meeting where a group needs to work on an electronic document screen sharing.
- RAPAD weekly team meeting including RFCSNQ and RAPAD Skilling

zoomrooms   **Benefits**

	Connected physical and virtual co-working space		Ability to join a meeting with one touch
	Easy to set-up, cost effective solution		Dedicated meeting room, collaboration space
	Easy connectivity to region, nation or internationally		Any device can be used: computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone
	Calendar integration		Screen / Content sharing capabilities

Outbackhubs

Investment required per Customer type:

Customer Type	Set up costs	Software fee	Outbackhubs Annual Management fee	Outbackhub Relevant Discount		Hot-desk facilities	Fixed desk options	Private meeting rooms	Facilitated Connect services	Office / Administrative services	Virtual office services	Members network	Training & CPD	Business/ Entrepreneurs support	Technical support	Networking events
Outbackhubs RAPAD Member Council	=	=	$8,800	75%*	$2,200	√	√	√	=	√	=	=	=	=	√	=
ARIP Partner / RAPAD region entity (Airports, Community based entities)	=	=	$8,800	50%	$4,400	√	√	=	=	=	$	=	$	$	=	=
External / Commercial	$	=	$8,800	none	$8,800	√	√	$	$	$	$	$	$	$	$	$

√	included
=	at cost
$	Commercial rates

Minimum IT equipment required:

Establishment costs	
Computer:	$1300
TV [55"]	$1000
iPad:	$450
Microphone and speaker:	$2000
Mobile stand [with lockable cupboard for equipment]: OR	$750
Wall mount:	$200
Min total cost IT equipment – per site	$5700
On-site set up costs by Outback Digital (exc. carpentry & electrical)	At cost
Annual costs (per site)	
Software licence	$750
Outback Digital management fee	$2200

Management fee:

The base management fee will include all necessary support activities to ensure that the physical Outbackhub works effectively and that the Outbackhub Partner is regularly informed of all pertinent technical and performance issues. It will include the initial training of the Partner allocated on-site person and reasonable remote support for them to operate their location. It will also include required preventative maintenance of IT hardware and technical site facilities by Outbackhubs.
*There may be additional discounts available when multiple sites are established in any region.

The intent is to build community based technical capability and capacity and Outback Digital will be proactive in this regard with the relevant Partner. Outback Digital will centrally promote the Outbackhubs network, facilities and services through Outback Telegraph.

Potential returns

Outbackhubs proposes a business model is to be agreed upon according to the services and packages provided but the following gives an indication of successful approaches from other affiliated co-working spaces.

Outbackhubs	Hot Desk	Fixed Desk	Meeting Room	Zoom-Room (inc set up)
Hour	$5	N/A	$25	N/A
Half Day (3 hours)	$10	N/A	$50	$100
Full Day	$15	N/A	$75	$150
Week	$40	$75	On request	On request
Month	$100	$150	On request	N/A

Included:
Desk
Free tea/ coffee
Free high-speed wi-fi access
Remote basic technical support
Free car-parking
Security access 8.30am to 6pm
Free access to break-out space

Councils may choose to subsidise different End-user types according to whether they are permanent in the region, visiting or commercial customers. There are additional potential income streams from services such as Training Programs, Virtual Office Services and Outbackhubs Network Membership that will increase the financial returns, at the same time as extending demand driven services. Even with half a dozen Outbackhubs Network Memberships from State and Federal Government, the financial benefits are improved. (see note 1)

In addition to the financial returns generated by the use of Outbackhubs, there is considerable economic benefit and potential to build community resilience and regional capacity and capability

Note 1. Australian Government has committed to supporting 12% of the public service to be regularly teleworking by 2020 (Digital Economy Strategy, 2011).

	Council		Community		Workers & Business
	Encourages innovation to community by providing the enabling environment and technology		Builds resilience – connecting out community to each other and regional, national and global opportunities and networks		Provides a professional workspace with state of the art technology to connect seamlessly to their global audience
	Improves engagement with community by providing a place to meet physically and virtually (especially remote Constituents)		Connects our community across towns, regions and virtual communities. Removes distance as a barrier		Access to high-speed broadband; video conferencing; technologically-enabled events and training,
	Reduces workspace overheads, space requirement and building overhead costs by using shared resources		Fosters choice of where, when and how to work – reducing barriers through flexibility (especially to parents of young)		Stimulates the creation and use of innovative services using technology, new partnerships and business models
	Increases productivity and impact potential by using advanced collaboration tools		Prepares our community for the jobs of tomorrow		Reduces disadvantage of remoteness
	Travel time and costs are reduced, as are accident risks		Provides facilities and connection needed to encourage participation in Community organisations		Fosters worker autonomy, flexibility and productivity
	Improves connectivity to peers creating opportunity to build stronger relationships and share best practice		Influences community culture and openness to embracing technology and new ways of living, working and playing		Access via technology to a wider ecosystem of accelerators, incubators, angel investor networks, local and national government programs and international markets
	Opportunity to optimise use of Council buildings and premises and showcase Council to Outbackhubs Customers		Outbackhubs provides Communities with a place to thrive through connected people, spaces and places		Offers economy of scale through shared facilities and technology. Benefits of collaborative consumption

Technical Detail:

After extensive testing we can say with confidence that once the Zoom room is set-up, it is easy to use. The software application is available on Mac (OS X 10.9 and higher) or Windows (7 and higher) and turns a dedicated Mac Mini or windows computer (Such as an Intel NUC) into a dedicated meeting room collaboration space, previously only achieved by costly hardware and often difficult to use platforms. Zoom Rooms screensharing capabilities are like Apple Airplay, Google Chromecast etc. Zoom offers several integrations with a few third-party solutions, including: Skype for Business (S4B) / Lync. RAPAD Outbackhubs to date have not utilised this function but can investigate for Council if this is required. Outbackhubs Virtual Zoom Rooms bookings will be managed and coordinated across the whole network from a central point. Stage two will be for on-site coordinators at each local government to coordinate local bookings. We will provide further technical detail on request.

Beyond RAPAD. The Outbackhubs Members Network of affiliated co-working spaces.

Partners to RAPAD in the ARIP [Advancing Regional Innovation Program] funding, McKinlay Shire Council and SWRED councils of: Paroo, Murweh, Quilpie and Bulloo are keen to join the Outbackhubs network, providing virtual connectivity across the whole outback and spaces for members and visiting corporates to work or meet when visiting other communities.

Want to see examples of how Outbackhubs will work? Go online to see more.

https://zoom.us/zoomrooms   https://avprojects.com.au/zoom/   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YeFIZXCYa5A
https://rookieoven.com/coworking/ https://www.themeltingpotedinburgh.org.uk/coworking-in-edinburgh/view-our-spaces/

Outbackhubs is enabled by Outback Digital, put in place by RAPAD to imagine a strong and vibrant future for the RAPAD area and translate it into reality leveraging digital technologies and capability strategically. It will manage the multiple digital initiatives to ensure that our region becomes internationally recognised as a digitally enabled region of excellence embracing innovative application for greater community and opportunities in outback Australia.

Prepared by

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