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If you've been hearing about the NBN rolling out fibre upgrades across Australia, you might be wondering whether you should get in now before it starts costing you money. For many eligible homes and businesses, upgrading to Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) currently comes with no separate upfront installation charge under the NBN Fibre Connect Program, provided you meet the eligibility and plan requirements. But that doesn't mean every upgrade is free, and there are some pretty good reasons to consider making the switch sooner rather than later.

What Exactly Is an FTTP Upgrade?

Depending on where you live, your NBN connection might still rely on older copper cabling for part of the journey to your property. With Fibre to the Node (FTTN), fibre runs to a cabinet in your neighbourhood, with copper wiring covering the remaining distance. Fibre to the Curb (FTTC) brings fibre much closer to your property, but still relies on copper for the final stretch. FTTP is different. The fibre runs all the way to your premises, providing a better foundation for faster and more consistent internet speeds.

Think of it like replacing an old road with a proper highway. It doesn't matter how much traffic you can push onto the highway if the last section of road is holding everything up. And as our homes and businesses become increasingly dependent on the internet, that last section matters more than ever.

Will the Upgrade Be Free, or Will You Have to Pay?

Under the NBN Fibre Connect Program, eligible properties can receive a standard FTTP upgrade without a separate upfront installation charge, subject to the program's conditions. However, there are a few things worth understanding.
Your monthly internet plan may cost more. Some upgrades require you to move to an eligible higher-speed plan through a participating internet provider. If you're currently paying for a basic internet plan, that could mean a higher monthly bill.
Some installations may involve extra costs. Standard installation arrangements don't cover every possible situation. If your property requires additional private cabling, difficult access work or other non-standard installation requirements, extra charges may apply.

Not every address qualifies. If your property isn't eligible for the standard upgrade program, alternative options such as NBN's Technology Choice Program may be available, but these can involve substantial construction costs.
So, will FTTP upgrades eventually start costing money? Some already do in particular circumstances, and there's no guarantee that future upgrade arrangements will always have the same conditions as today's program.

Why Would You Want to Upgrade Anyway?

Even if your current internet seems to be working reasonably well, there are some real advantages to having fibre run all the way to your property. And no, it's not just about downloading things a little faster.

For the Gamers:

If you're a gamer, you'll know how frustrating it is when your connection starts lagging at exactly the wrong moment. FTTP can provide a more consistent connection and may help improve latency compared with an older, struggling copper connection. But let's clear up a common misconception: faster download speeds don't automatically mean lower ping. Your internet provider, game server location and home network all play a part. Where fibre can help is providing a better connection to work with, particularly when your existing service is unreliable or struggling under load. And if you're downloading a massive game update while someone else is streaming Netflix

and another person is on a video call, a higher-speed plan can make a noticeable difference. There's nothing quite like the whole household blaming the person playing games for the internet slowing down. Sometimes it's the connection, sometimes it's the Wi-Fi, and sometimes everyone really is trying to do too much at once.

For the Average Family:

Modern households have phones, tablets, smart TVs, gaming consoles, laptops and all sorts of connected devices competing for bandwidth. Add a couple of people working from home, children studying online and several streaming services running at once, and the demands quickly add up. FTTP gives eligible customers access to higher-speed plans, including plans with better upload speeds. That can help with video calls, cloud backups, uploading photos and sharing large files. Of course, fibre won't magically fix every Wi-Fi dead spot in the house. If your modem is tucked away in a cupboard and your Wi-Fi struggles to reach the back bedroom, you may still need to improve your wireless network. As we've said before, your internet connection is only as strong as its weakest link.

For Business Owners:

For businesses relying on cloud applications, Microsoft 365, online accounting, video conferencing and cloud backups, a reliable internet connection is becoming increasingly important. When your connection becomes a bottleneck, it can affect productivity across the entire business. FTTP can provide access to higher speeds and improved upload capacity, depending on the plan you choose. This can be particularly useful for businesses regularly transferring large files, synchronising documents or backing up important information to the cloud. Download speeds get most of the attention, but businesses often need to send just as much information as they receive.

And if your business depends on the internet to operate, having a capable connection isn't just convenient. It can be essential to getting the job done.

Don't Forget the Equipment Inside Your Property

One thing we regularly see is people upgrading their internet plan and expecting everything to become faster overnight. Sometimes it does. Other times, the connection improves, but the equipment inside the property becomes the next bottleneck. Your router, Wi-Fi access points, cabling and individual devices all influence the performance you actually experience. You could have a very fast FTTP connection coming into your home, but if your router is outdated or your Wi-Fi struggles to reach your devices, you might never see the full benefit. That's why it's important to look at the whole setup rather than treating the internet connection as an isolated piece of equipment.

So, Should You Upgrade Now?

If your address is eligible for an FTTP upgrade, it's certainly worth investigating your options. You don't necessarily need the fastest internet plan available, but having access to full fibre gives you more flexibility as your requirements change. For some

households, it means better performance when everyone is online. For gamers, it provides a better foundation for a reliable connection. For businesses, it can help support the cloud services and online systems they depend on every day.

At Kerr IT Solutions, we can help you assess your current setup, identify potential bottlenecks and work out what needs to change to get the most from your internet connection. Because there's not much point upgrading to a faster internet connection if the equipment inside your property can't keep up.

If you're unsure whether your home or business is ready for fibre, come and have a chat with the team!

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