



The Boost. Community

Catering to a demographic of Gen Z and Y consumers, Boost Mobile has found its niche in the telecommunications world.

Images courtesy of Boost Mobile

Boost Mobile knows exactly who its target market is. The mobile phone service provider focuses solely on the youth segment, and this gives it a clear sense of purpose and identity in all that it does. The business is an independent brand living on the retail side of Telstra and offers only pre-paid services predominantly to its key demographic of people born post 90s or in the new millennium.

CEO Paul O'Neile has been with Boost since day one. The company was established in Australia in 2000, and New Zealand operations followed a year later. In 2002, he was appointed to the top spot just as the business was expanding into the US. Prior to Boost, Paul worked for IBM for eight years in local and regional Asia-Pacific roles and subsequently spent three years at Optus where he held sales, marketing, strategy, and business development positions.

This in-depth experience in the large corporations taught Paul about structure, clarity in presentation, establishing and selling ideas, and motivating people from a range of cross-functional backgrounds to achieve a common goal—all of which he applies to his job today.

Up until 2012, Boost had partnered with Optus, and during the first five years of its existence the growth was fast. "It was hectic and terrific. We were not only bedding down the program with Optus in Australia but also establishing the brand and recalibrating the program to be suitable for overseas markets at the same time," Paul says. Eventually the NZ and US counterparts were sold to the host carriers and Boost was able to focus all its attention on the Australian market. In 2013, it moved into a partnership with Telstra, and that relationship has developed from strength to strength, benefiting Boost in a myriad of ways.

"There's a couple of aspects to it," Paul says. "First is the Telstra organisation and the people—they have been very engaging with us. It's a natural fit between the two brands. The brand and program strength of Telstra squarely sits in segments that we don't naturally serve, and conversely our brand strength and the segments that Boost resonates with are completely different to where Telstra's brand lives. When we clinically segment the market, it's a 'hand in glove' fit from a brand perspective.

"Second, the people, management, and leaders of Telstra are very mature in their approach to the market. They understand segmentation, they understand the differing needs of the segments, and they understand that segment success requires a different approach to the market. This maturity of thought has been key to our success with a Boost program on the Telstra network.

"When talking about how Telstra enables Boost, we place a high level of importance on the openness of communication at all levels—from our board through to the day-to-day operational elements. This is a testament to how strong and how open the relationship needs to be between two companies that are culturally quite different. Telstra has been very open-minded on the nature of the Boost engagement."

Boost sees its alignment with Telstra as a long-term commitment, which is exactly how it approaches relationships with all of its partners, including suppliers. "Whether it's daily run-on printers, providers of office services, or more strategic marketing partners, we take a long-term view," Paul says. "A focus on long-term success enables different decision-making >



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frameworks compared to continually driving for short-term outcomes. We get better results both for ourselves and for the partners if we engage with a longer-term view of the relationship.”

Boost’s primary role is to work with Telstra to bring telecommunications products to market that are suitable for the Gen Z and Y environments. To do this successfully, it has a decision-making and engagement framework which enables it to immerse itself into the youth culture and calibrate relevant and authentic products. Boost engages with students on university campuses and schools where other mobile phone providers don’t naturally fit. “It’s about relevance and naturally adding value to the audience,” Paul says.

“For example, we created a program called ‘Rock the Schools’, which was an amalgamation with a number of other organisations such as the School of Audio Engineering. We worked with

music labels to bring up-and-coming bands, give them a stage in schools, and put on a gig to entertain the students. After the show, students who were musically oriented and had aspirations to work in that industry could spend time with audio engineers, lighting engineers, band managers, band members, and so on to gain a deeper understanding of the industry they loved.

“It was an authentic engagement with that particular audience. Focusing on Gen Z and Y, we are always asking ourselves: Are we authentic? Are we relevant? And how do we have to recalibrate our brand and products to maintain these crucial elements? That’s definitely our point of difference. It enables our brand to have partnerships with other brands that naturally live in that younger space too.”

According to Paul, Boost has an empowered workforce who are



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- Paul O’Neille

highly engaged and enthusiastic. The structure is flat and the work is autonomous and fun. Staff are able to make their own decisions, but understand the importance of a well-understood framework.

“There’s very open communication between everyone. We make sure we don’t have any feeling of hierarchy or intimidation among the ranks. Staff feel as if they can walk into anyone’s office, sit and have a conversation about just about anything. We have our sit-downs, we huddle around a specific issue, and everyone has an opinion, and that’s encouraged.

“A creative person who spends most of their time delivering amazing, creative solutions is encouraged to have an opinion on how Boost is presenting at retail and how we as an organisation can improve our engagement with Telstra. There’s a lot of value in encouraging and capturing these perspectives.”

Boost has an exciting future ahead. Paul says the focus will continue to be on customer intimacy, developing programs and technological platforms that enable it to be more engaged with the segments it serves. “The role Boost can play in serving those segments with new and innovative products is phenomenal, and I think we have the right partner in Telstra. We are already successful in building a big, profitable base of mobile customers, and we will keep looking at how we can make a difference beyond the enablement in those sectors. It’s all very exciting.”

“Our partners bring our brand to life in the market, and we couldn’t ask for a more dynamic partner than Boost Mobile. They have done a great job in carving out an important niche in the youth market, and are now evolving their brand even further.” - Sam Skontos, Regional Managing Director, ANZ and Pacific, ALCATEL ONETOUCH

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