Motor Caravanner Article, May 2022

by NZMCA member Ernie Newman

**WIRELESS NATION - SPECIALISTS IN CONNECTIVITY FOR MOTOR CARAVANNERS**

Motorhomers are different.

We’re way more nomadic than those ordinary city people. We often start the day with no firm idea where we’ll spend the night. We’re compulsive travellers, internationally as well as locally. Some of us are often away from “home” for months at a time.

Our lives in many ways are quite simple. But when it comes to being connected to the Internet and phones, we’re as fussy as the rest of them. If something’s wrong we need it fixed – now.

That’s what telecommunications company Wireless Nation came to understand back in 2016 when it added the NZMCA community to the short list of market niches to which it provides tailored solutions.

Wireless Nation’s founder, the personable and charismatic Tom Linn, started up in 2005. A recent immigrant from Myanmar, Tom was frustrated trying to get decent broadband in his high rise Auckland apartment. With passion and deep understanding of technology, Tom started by providing connectivity to Auckland apartment dwellers.

Then Tom identified rural dwellers as a second market niche. Rural New Zealand at the time had a seriously poor Internet dependent on antiquated copper lines, yet farmers needed connectivity even more than city people. So Wireless Nation entered that market using customised mixes of satellite, cellular and landline services to meet the individual needs of each customer - years before the big phone companies ventured beyond the cities.

Next, with its talent for spotting market niches, Wireless Nation set about understanding and serving our large and well-organised cluster of motorhomers. A crucial issue for us is not wanting to pay for two completely separate services – one at home and one when away – simultaneously. Just having one wireless modem that can be used on the road and when at home is so convenient! Plug into power - your choice of 12V or 240V and it works, easy as pie.

We also need to know that we have the very best connectivity each area can get, even in the most remote spots. And we need confidence that a call to a help desk will be answered within a couple of minutes, by someone who recognises the name of the place we are calling from and understands our specific needs when we say “motor caravan.” The call centre delay for which the giant phone companies have become famous are unacceptable when you’re in the middle of a downpour in Haast.

Along the way, Tom partnered with well-known business entrepreneur Bill Smale, allowing the business to grow and compete effectively against the telecommunications industry giants. They now have a team of around 25 – there’ll be more about them in a future article. Don’t be fooled by the accents – the entire help desk team is in Auckland even though the multinational team members speak Chinese, Indian, German, Hindi, Phillipine and Spanish – not forgetting English and Te Reo.

Fast forward six years and we have thousands of satisfied NZMCA members using Wireless Nation for their Internet connectivity and voice services – at home as well as away.

So what do the customers think?

NZMCA member and Waikato branch secretary Des Austin is a fan. He’s been using the service for 4 years.

“I did away with the home landline once we joined,” Des told me. “We use the Wireless Nation modem in the Motorhome as well as at home. In the caravan we have the option of 240 or 12 volt connections. We’re heavy users of the Internet for research, social networking and YouTube – often at home we have 2 or 3 computers online at once, and it works just fine. And when we have a problem or query the Auckland office always answers promptly and understands our needs – their support service is exceptional.”

(To test out the claims of timely service, I made a quick check while writing this article – 10.30am on a weekday morning. From picking up the phone, to speaking to a live technician, it took 2 minutes 21 seconds. Compare that with the industry giants!)

NZMCA member Joye Halford has been a customer since 2019. “My previous supplier was too inflexible,” she said. “I travel overseas a lot, but they wouldn’t put my account on hold even when I was out of the country for months at a time. And they understood nothing about the life and special requirements of motor homing. Wireless Nation has been far more understanding and flexible.”

Many other members have posted their praise for the service on the Google reviews about Wireless Nation. Member Colin Wilson says “I had been shopping looking for a mobile solution for travelling around the country. Wireless Nation provided an easy quality solution and now we have everything. Our energy system can be viewed remotely by our systems technicians, and we get all the online functions for our TV. It’s perfect."

“Perfect.” That’s a high standard.

So does all that mean a high speed connection is available absolutely anywhere, anytime? Of course not – New Zealand has isolated areas that are notoriously hard to service. Their isolation is part of their appeal and motorhomers are experts at finding them. But within those constraints, Wireless Nation stands out as the very best option for motorhomers’ specialised needs.

The relationship brings benefits to the NZMCA as well as to the members. Each year Wireless Nation contributes a six-digit sum to the Association to invest in more property and member services. And it supports many NZMCA activities – allowing staff to stay up to date with members’ needs as well as sell their product.

It’s a relationship that works well for everyone. Long may it continue!

END