

Young reseller clinches three-year partnership with NEC

By [William Maher](#) on Mar 11, 2014 9:05 AM

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Stacked executive team helps year-old firm punch above its weight.

A 22-person Darwin reseller has shown that size isn't everything by becoming the go-to company for multinational giant NEC to service clients across the Northern Territory.

Vertical Technology Group (VTG), which started trading a year ago, has signed a three-year partnership to work with NEC to help service the multinational's government clients.

NEC is a significant player in the NT, with multiple contracts with the government. In addition to buying the solutions business of Darwin-based CSG for \$227.5 million, NEC claims to be the largest ICT employer in the Northern Territory.

But when it comes to the dealing with uniquely challenging conditions of the NT, VTG is showing that much smaller players can prove useful.

The reseller is less than 10 percent of the size of the local outfit of NEC, which has 250 staff in NT. However, VTG has forged a reputation for conquering huge distances and unusual terrain that big-city IT providers would rarely encounter.

NEC now relies on the company to fly or drive technicians to remote locations across the NT, including job sites like Maningrida, Ntaria and Alyangula. As well as work in urban areas, VTG flies its own private fleet of five aircraft to more than 60 locations, including remote locations like Nyirripi, more than 400km west of Alice Springs and to Groote Eylandt in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

"We have instances where the runway might not be in a condition to land on," said managing director Mark Sweet. "There are creek crossings and all sorts of things that can impede services."

VTG's small size belies its channel credentials. Director Denis Mackenzie spent 11 years as managing director at CSG Limited, which sold its IT solutions arm to NEC in 2012 for \$260 million.

Sweet was previously chief executive officer of the department of business and employment in the NT Government, as well as area general manager for Telstra Country Wide NT for five years.

VTG's directors also have ties to the local business community – Sweet has previously been a director for the NT Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Australian Information Industry Association NT branch and Automobile Association of NT.

This Territorian pedigree is a selling point, said Sweet.

"Our head office is Darwin, the managing director is in Darwin, the director is in Darwin," he said. "We're not a US company with a head office in Sydney or Melbourne or overseas."

Last year, VTG was selected along with two other integrators to work on a [NEC's \\$34.6 million contract](#) to service 220 schools and department of education sites. The new agreement now expands that partnership to the rest of NEC's NT government work.

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