FOR IMMEDIATE MEDIA RELEASE

Virgin Mobile and Dave Hughes launch Aussie inspired ‘eMEjis’

• 44% of Australians want a more ‘Aussie’ emoji keyboard
• 40% of Australians admit emojis express how they feel better than words

Australia, Sydney, Tuesday 4 October 2016 – Australians love filling their text messages with winky faces, hand gestures and food, but have also admitted they feel there’s a void in the official emoji keyboard on their phones that needs to be filled.

With almost half (44%) of the nation crying out for an emoji keyboard that’s, well, more Aussie, Virgin Mobile is planning to petition to turn up the current range with the launch of ‘eMEji’ – emojis that actually represent the way modern Aussies communicate which have been requested by Aussies, to provide a more awesome mobile experience.

51% of Aussies are also requesting a say on what emojis are included on their mobile phone keyboards. So whether it’s meat sweats, hangry or even Tony Abbott in his budgie smugglers, with the help of social commentator Dave Hughes, Virgin Mobile hit the streets and social media to ask the nation what words, phrases and emotions they felt needed to be turned into an everyday emoji.

Commenting on the campaign, Dave Hughes said, “I’ve made a living out of talking about all sorts of emotions and how people communicate – we’re a weird bunch! Once my kids taught me what an emoji actually was, I realised how big a part they’re playing in how we express ourselves nowadays, even for fellas my age.

“But for me, emojis need a refresh and to move with the times. Where’s the emoji for when I need to ask a mate to do a late night servo pie run? Or when I’ve eaten too much from the BBQ and can’t talk? We need eMEjis, and we need them now.”

With 40% of the nation admitting emoji express how they feel better than words, Aussies have responded to the call in waves and put forward their eMEji suggestions.

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1 Survey of more than 1,000 respondents conducted by Pureprofile on behalf of Virgin Mobile 12 September 2016
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Virgin Mobile and Dave Hughes have picked the best suggestions and turned them into red hot eMEjis. We hope our Aussie eMEjis will then be taken up in the next official emoji keyboard update set for release in 2017.

The top 20 eMEjis were:
1. YOLO
2. Meat sweats
3. Hangry
4. Budgie smugglers
5. Thong
6. Sorry-not-sorry
7. Aboriginal flag
8. BBQ
9. Digital overload
10. Hungover
11. Marriage equality
12. Champ
13. Ute
14. Meat pie
15. Salad Sandwich
16. Binge-watching
17. Meditating
18. Joy-of-missing-out
19. Nonplussed
20. Espresso Martini

David Scribner, CEO of Virgin Mobile Australia said, "We’re famous for doing things a little differently at Virgin Mobile, and for good reason – our customers. Emojis have changed mobile communication indefinitely for them and as the research shows, Australians want a greater say on what emojis make it into their mobile phone keyboards.

“So we’ve given the power back to the people by bringing to life their emoji requests and petitioning for them to be included in the next emoji keyboard update – because that’s just a little bit more Virgin Mobile.”

To see all the eMEjis that made the final cut, visit the Virgin Mobile Facebook page - [https://www.facebook.com/VirginMobileAus](https://www.facebook.com/VirginMobileAus)

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

Additional statistics from the research conducted by Virgin Mobile also found:

- 50% of Aussies use emojis to inject some fun and spice up an otherwise dull message
- 24% of Aussies are calling for a shake up to the current selection
- 66% of emoji users don’t have a personal favourite
- 32% of Aussies love emojis / think they are great

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7 Survey of more than 1,000 respondents conducted by Pureprofile on behalf of Virgin Mobile 12 September 2016
• 17% of Aussies say emojis have changed the way they communicate
• 51% of Aussies want a say on what emojis are included on their phone’s keyboard and to be able to put forward new emojis to be added

About Virgin Mobile Australia

From the moment Sir Richard Branson drove a tank across the Sydney Harbour Bridge to launch Virgin Mobile in 2000, we’ve been driven by our brand purpose of changing the game for good. In a world where most Australians feel powerless against their mobile provider, Virgin Mobile is here to restore the power balance.

After all, we’re famous for doing things a little differently, and for a very good reason – our customers.

First of all, we deliver a fairer and more genuine experience by delivering above and beyond on the basics, with award-winning customer service and irresistible prices on the latest handsets, backed by the Optus 4G Plus network. We also offer loads of red hot extras, from data-free music-streaming on eligible Postpaid mobile plans, to the Australian-first innovation of Data Rollover which is still exclusive to Virgin Mobile on new Postpaid mobile plans.

But it doesn’t stop there. When you join us, you’re joining the Virgin family too, so if you’re on a Postpaid plan you can earn Velocity Points just for paying your bill and get access to discounts and deals across other Virgin brands. You’ll also feel part of something bigger, as we invite you to help make the world fairer and brighter through our partnerships with OzHarvest, R U OK?, and Oasis.

And we do all of this with a side serve of unmistakeable Virgin swagger. Why? Because we don’t just play the game, we change it for good.

Now that’s Virgin Mobile.

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