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SAMENA TRENDS

FOR SAMENA TELECOMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL'S MEMBERS

BUILDING DIGITAL ECONOMIES

THIS MONTH

HUMAN-CENTRIC INNOVATION, COLLABORATION, AND TECHNOLOGY IN AN AI-MEDIATED WORLD

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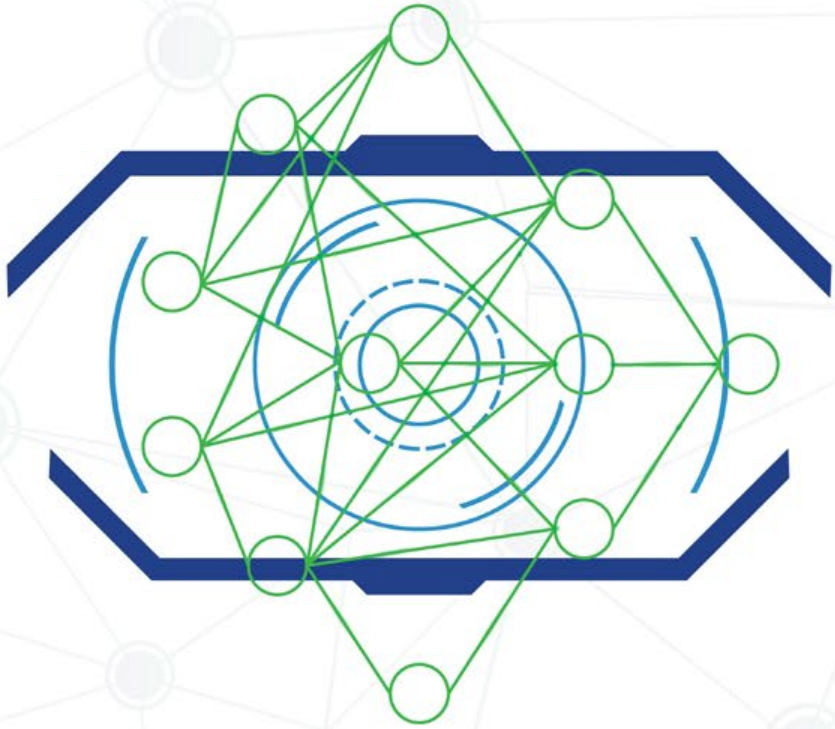

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SAMENA
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Publisher
SAMENA Telecommunications Council

trends@samenacouncil.org
Tel: +971.4.364.2700

Editor-in-Chief
Bocar A. BA

Editorial Director
Izhar Ahmad

Contributing Editors
Ali Tahir
Javaid Akhtar Malik

Knowledge Contributions
Nexign

Subscriptions
subscriptions@samenacouncil.org

Advertising
ads@samenacouncil.org

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Human-Centric Innovation, Collaboration, and Technology in an AI-Mediated World

As the digital economy continues to evolve, the focus across our region and globally is shifting from high-level visions to practical execution. The recent CRO-IAGDI deliberations, chaired by the SAMENA Council and held during GSR-25 in Riyadh, underlined an urgent and shared commitment to addressing the most pressing regulatory and developmental challenges facing the global digital ecosystem, and challenges that require not just technological innovation but also unprecedented cooperation.

Much is changing around us. We are witnessing a transformation in core industry models. Instead of static service offerings, we are now aiming for dynamic, end-customer value models that prioritize real-time personalization, flexible service bundles, and immersive digital experiences. Customer loyalty now strongly depends on receiving tailored services that meet individual expectations. For telecom operators, this shift enables a focus on revenue-generating activities by concentrating on personalized offerings, thereby improving overall business efficiency. This transformation is increasingly powered by AI-driven systems that enable rapid reconfigurability (as discussed in this edition). It is the ability to quickly adapt and customize services in response to evolving customer needs, customer choices, and overall market demand.

Embracing such agility is also critical for regulators, operators, and technology partners alike in an AI-mediated world.

Agility also merits an understanding of the themes and industry issues present around us. Themes such as connectivity infrastructure, spectrum efficiency, universal access, and security governance are no longer standalone topics, but are deeply interconnected components of a new digital foundation being built across our region and beyond. New technologies such as 5G-A, AI, IoT, and NTN-terrestrial integration are introducing both possibilities and complexities. Addressing these requires regulatory agility, investment innovation, and above all, strong public-private partnerships that are aligned with local priorities while also interoperable with global standards.

One of the clearest takeaways from ongoing industry dialogues is that harmonization of policy and frameworks is essential. This aids not only regional integration, but also creates an environment conducive to cross-border services, data flows, innovation, investment, and accelerates standardization. In the latter context, the recent strategic partnership between the WAA and the SAMENA Council marks a timely step toward strengthening broadband development, WLAN optimization, scenario-based performance standards, and to help foster broadband affordability, digital inclusion, and long-term sustainability of the Internet.

On the satellite front, the appointment of Dr. Badr Alsuwaidan as President and CEO of Arabsat brings renewed momentum to the sector and to the SAMENA Council board of directors, especially as new concepts and issues emerge in the satellite/NTN domain requiring proactive leadership.

Overall, in parallel to discussions taking place on regional priorities, major platforms such as GITEX Global continue to reflect the region's drive to lead in emerging technologies and digital services, offering a clear view of how AI, connectivity, and public-private cooperation are converging. Such gatherings, and the SAMENA Council's own member-sponsored industry meetings, delineate the urgency of aligning regulatory frameworks and innovation agendas to sustain growth in an increasingly digital and interoperable world.

Bocar A. BA
Chief Executive Officer
& Board Member
SAMENA Telecommunications Council

From creating infrastructure to ensuring it meets real, evolving user needs, there is a dire need to work together, put in place initiatives that facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration, practical policy innovation, and continuous investment in capabilities, frameworks, and trust. The connected, inclusive, secure, and intelligent future that we all are striving to create requires our regional strengths, shared knowledge, and a long-term commitment to digital inclusion, timely technology deployment, and careful attention to the changing requirements of our evolving digital ecosystems and the many industries that are now interlinked.

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SAMENA Council On

Digital Development & Regulation

Industry Advisory Group for Development Issues and Private Sector Chief Regulatory Officers' Meeting (IAGDI-CRO) Held During GSR-25 to Deliver Key Recommendations on Digital Development and Regulation

The Industry Advisory Group for Development Issues and Private Sector Chief Regulatory Officers (IAGDI-CRO) convened on the sidelines of the Global Symposium for Regulators 2025 (GSR-25) in Riyadh. The meeting, chaired by the CEO of the SAMENA Telecommunications Council in his capacity as Chairman of IAGDI/CRO, brought together private sector leaders to discuss and recommend practical actions to address the most pressing development and regulatory challenges facing the global digital economy. With the theme "An Industry Perspective on Development and Regulatory Issues", the session focused on three core priorities: Expanding Inclusive Connectivity, Sustaining Investment and Innovation, and Strengthening Agile and Trusted Governance. Participants

emphasized the importance of combining satellite and terrestrial infrastructure, streamlining permits and rights-of-way, and accelerating infrastructure sharing to achieve universal and meaningful connectivity—especially for rural and underserved areas. The need to consider not just population, but also geographic coverage and connected devices serving critical sectors like agriculture and public safety, was underlined. The meeting also addressed the persistent "usage gap" in digital access. Industry representatives stressed that connectivity alone is not enough—digital inclusion requires affordable devices, relevant content and services, digital skills development, online safety measures, and enabling infrastructure such as electricity and identity systems. Co-designing these efforts with local communities was highlighted as essential to ensure relevance and effectiveness. In terms of investment and innovation, the group called for clear and predictable multi-year regulatory and spectrum roadmaps, rationalized tax policies, and supportive rules for infrastructure sharing and, where appropriate, market consolidation. The importance of phasing out legacy networks with minimal disruption to consumers was also noted. To support long-term investment, participants encouraged the use of public-private partnerships (PPPs), blended finance, and infrastructure funds, along with commercial frameworks involving major beneficiaries of digital infrastructure. The group also strongly advocated for agile, interoperable, and outcome-based regulation, including regulatory sandboxes, time-bound reviews, and collaborative approaches to address issues such as privacy, cybersecurity, online harms, and the growing risks posed by artificial intelligence. Support was expressed for exploring independent AI testing and voluntary certification for high-risk AI applications. The IAGDI-CRO Meeting presented six priority recommendations to regulators and development stakeholders.

> *Participants emphasized the importance of combining satellite and terrestrial infrastructure, streamlining permits and rights-of-way, and accelerating infrastructure sharing to achieve universal and meaningful connectivity—especially for rural and underserved areas.*

> *The meeting, chaired by the CEO of the SAMENA Telecommunications Council in his capacity as Chairman of IAGDI/CRO, brought together private sector leaders to discuss and recommend practical actions to address the most pressing development and regulatory challenges facing the global digital economy.*

Participants at the CRO/IAGDI session, which included representives from the SAMENA Council membership, including stc, Mobily, Nokia, among others, emphasized practical actions to advance universal and meaningful connectivity. They called for combining mobile and satellite technology, to ensure coverage reaches not only people but also underserved geographic areas. To speed up deployment and reduce costs, they urged streamlining authorizations and rights-of-way, promoting infrastructure sharing, and prioritizing connections to public institutions. Bridging the usage gap was another key area pressed upon, with support for affordable devices, digital skills, locally relevant services, online safety, and access to essentials like electricity and ID systems. Participants also highlighted the importance of clear, multi-year spectrum plans, greater harmonization across markets, and close collaboration on future network development. To encourage ongoing investment, they advocated for predictable and fair spectrum renewals, tax reforms, infrastructure sharing, and support for device affordability and inclusion programs. Finally, the session underscored the need for agile, interoperable regulation that fosters innovation, protects users, and builds public trust—alongside stronger governance for artificial intelligence, including independent testing and voluntary certification for higher-risk AI systems. These priorities are reflected in the IAGDI-CRO Outcome Statement adopted at GSR-25.

GSR-25: Driving Global Digital Transformation through Inclusive Regulation, Industry Innovation, and Collaborative Governance

The Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) 2025, held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, marked the 25th anniversary of the International Telecommunication Union's flagship regulatory event. Over the course of three days, GSR-25 brought together more than 1,200 participants, including ministers, heads of regulatory authorities, industry leaders, and digital policy experts from around the world. The Symposium served as a pivotal platform to chart the future of regulation in an increasingly interconnected and complex digital era.

At the heart of the event was the endorsement of the GSR-25 Best Practice Guidelines, which outline practical tools and frameworks to help regulators build inclusive, sustainable, and innovation-driven digital ecosystems. These guidelines aim to support the delivery of essential national services such as healthcare, education, and finance while also fostering innovation, strengthening institutional capacity, and enhancing international cooperation. As digital technologies evolve rapidly, the guidelines emphasize the need for agile regulation that adapts to change while promoting long-term development and social inclusion.

> *At the heart of the event was the endorsement of the GSR-25 Best Practice Guidelines, which outline practical tools and frameworks to help regulators build inclusive, sustainable, and innovation-driven digital ecosystems.*

ITU Secretary-General HE Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin reflected on the journey of the Symposium over the past quarter-century, noting that GSR has spent 25 years lighting the path from dial-up connectivity to fully digital societies. She underscored the importance of regulators in bridging the divide that still leaves 2.6 billion people unconnected, describing them as the bridge to a future where everyone can thrive online.

In addition to endorsing the guidelines, GSR-25 featured discussions on some of the most pressing regulatory challenges facing the global digital community. These included governance frameworks for Artificial Intelligence, the emerging opportunities of the space economy, and the need to ensure that digital transformation remains sustainable and inclusive. The role of regulators in navigating these evolving dynamics was seen as more critical than ever.

> *GSR-25 featured discussions on some of the most pressing regulatory challenges facing the global digital community. These included governance frameworks for Artificial Intelligence, the emerging opportunities of the space economy, and the need to ensure that digital transformation remains sustainable and inclusive.*

HE Eng. Haitham AlOhali, Governor of the Communications, Space and Technology Commission of Saudi Arabia and Chair of GSR-25, emphasized the collective responsibility of regulators to reimagine regulation for the digital age. He highlighted the importance of collaboration

> *During GSR-25, the SAMENA Council also convened a high-impact panel titled "Designing Responsible AI Governance: From Principles to Practice." This session highlighted the Middle East and Africa (MEA) region's growing relevance in shaping responsible, inclusive, and interoperable AI governance frameworks on the global stage*

and innovation, particularly in areas such as AI and big data, as key to empowering societies, strengthening economies, and ensuring that digital transformation delivers equitable benefits.

Since its establishment by the ITU in 2000, the Global Symposium for Regulators has become a cornerstone of global regulatory dialogue and progress. ITU's Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BTD), Dr. Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, called the Best Practice Guidelines a chronicle of our digital age and praised GSR for its role in supporting regulators amid continuous waves of technological change. He expressed appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting this milestone edition of the Symposium.

Alongside the main program, several important initiatives and meetings took place at GSR-25. ITU and CST launched the second edition of Policy Practices for E-Waste Management, a practical guide with an interactive toolkit designed to support regulators in developing balanced and fair approaches to managing electronic waste within a circular economy.

> *A significant contribution came from the SAMENA Council – chaired Industry Advisory Group on Development Issues and Private Sector Chief Regulatory Officers (IAGDI/CRO), whose discussions resulted in an outcome statement summarizing private sector priorities.*

The Symposium also hosted a meeting of the Digital Regulation Network (DRN) and Regional Regulatory Associations, chaired by Eng. Omar Abdulrahman Alrejraje, Deputy Governor of CST's Regulation and Competition Sector and representative of the Arab Regulatory Network. This meeting explored how regulatory cooperation across sectors and borders can accelerate sustainable digital transformation. Another highlight was the Heads of Regulators Executive Roundtable, where participants shared strategies for embedding innovation into the core of regulatory work and formally adopted the GSR-25 Best Practice Guidelines.

During GSR-25, the SAMENA Council also convened a high-impact panel titled "Designing Responsible AI Governance: From Principles to Practice." This session highlighted the Middle East and Africa (MEA) region's growing relevance in shaping responsible, inclusive, and interoperable AI governance frameworks on the global stage. The panel examined how AI governance needs to transition from high-level principles to practical implementation. Discussions covered a broad range of topics, including the development of national AI strategies, cross-border regulatory cooperation, and the use of risk-tiering approaches to categorize and manage AI systems based on their potential impact. Emphasis was placed on ensuring that governance frameworks are agile and future-proof, capable of addressing both current challenges and emerging risks—particularly in the context of rapidly advancing generative AI technologies. The session served as a platform for sharing regional experiences and best practices, reinforcing the MEA region's potential to play a leading role in global AI governance dialogues.

A significant contribution came from the SAMENA Council – chaired Industry Advisory Group on Development Issues and Private Sector Chief Regulatory Officers (IAGDI/CRO), whose discussions resulted in an outcome statement summarizing private sector priorities. These included the integration of complementary technologies to improve geographic and population coverage, streamlined authorization processes, spectrum predictability, infrastructure sharing, investment-friendly policies, and governance frameworks that promote trust and innovation. The statement was presented during the closing ceremony by Bocar BA, Chairman of the IAGDI-CRO and CEO of the SAMENA Council.

> *The GSR-25 outcomes uphold that effective regulation is not only a technical exercise but also a foundation for equitable digital transformation.*

The Symposium also featured a special session of the Network of Women (NoW) in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector, which addressed inclusive regulation, the role of artificial intelligence in building green and trusted digital environments, and the importance of women's leadership in digital policy.

As the 25th edition of the Global Symposium for Regulators concluded, it reaffirmed the ITU's and the global regulatory community's shared commitment to enabling meaningful, inclusive, and sustainable connectivity. The GSR-25 outcomes uphold that effective regulation is not only a technical exercise but also a foundation for equitable digital transformation. Looking ahead, the lessons and partnerships forged in Riyadh will continue to guide efforts to build digital societies where no one is left behind.

SAMENA Council On

WLAN Performance & Wi-Fi Technology

WAA and SAMENA Telecommunications Council Forge Strategic Partnership to Accelerate Broadband Development across Emerging Markets

The World WLAN Application Alliance (WAA) and the SAMENA Telecommunications Council have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to work jointly on accelerating broadband development in the emerging markets including in the South Asia – Middle East – North Africa (SA-ME-NA) region. This collaboration entails strengthening wireless broadband development, particularly through addressing technical and policy-related challenges in WLAN technologies.

WAA, a global non-profit dedicated to improving Wi-Fi technology, performance standards, and international certification, brings its global expertise to the partnership. The SAMENA Council, an industry body representing telcos and techos as well as digital ecosystem partners across South Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa, focuses on digital development and policy advocacy to support sustainable economic growth in the region.

Through this MoU, the two organizations plan to share knowledge, organize industry events, support common standards, and improve Wi-Fi testing and certification processes by leveraging each other's reach and strengths. These steps are expected to help operators and service providers, including the including the SAMENA Council Members, deliver more reliable and higher-quality broadband services in both urban and underserved areas.

The collaboration covers a wide range of joint activities, including participation in each other's events, coordination on industry research, exchange of practical experience, and cooperation on emerging technology use cases such as smart cities, IoT applications, and future wireless systems like 6G. The agreement also includes the development of pilot projects, shared publications, technical workshops, and targeted capacity-building events. These initiatives will focus on practical challenges such as network performance, regulatory compliance, and broadband expansion in underserved markets.

By combining the WAA's technical capabilities with the SAMENA Council's regional reach, experience and policy engagement both regionally and globally, the partnership is designed to reduce fragmentation in WLAN development and encourage more consistent and efficient rollout of broadband infrastructure. Both organizations also aim to jointly engage stakeholders across government and industry to expand the impact of their initiatives beyond national boundaries.

A spokesperson from WAA noted that this partnership represents a strong step toward creating a more unified global approach to Wi-Fi development and certification. Secretary General of the WAA, Yang Tao, stated: "The collaboration with the SAMENA Council holds significant meaning. By integrating resources and strengths from both sides, we will jointly promote the establishment of international standards for the WLAN industry, the promotion of industry norms, the application of technological innovations, and market expansion, thereby contributing more substantially to the prosperous development of the global WLAN industry."

CEO of the SAMENA Council and Board Member, Bocar BA, stated: "This collaboration agreement with the WAA is a part of the SAMENA Council's broader strategy to support digital transformation by enabling better connectivity, enhanced end-user experience, and more inclusive broadband access across the SA-ME-NA countries. The SAMENA Council is committed to supporting the private-sector as well as growing digital economies as they strive to achieve new digital transformation milestones. For this, quality broadband access is fundamental."

This collaboration between the WAA and the SAMENA Council will remain in effect for two years, during which both organizations anticipate working closely to represent the growing needs of the ICT Industry and making tangible progress on the WLAN front.

SAMENA Council On

AI Driven Visual-Intelligence

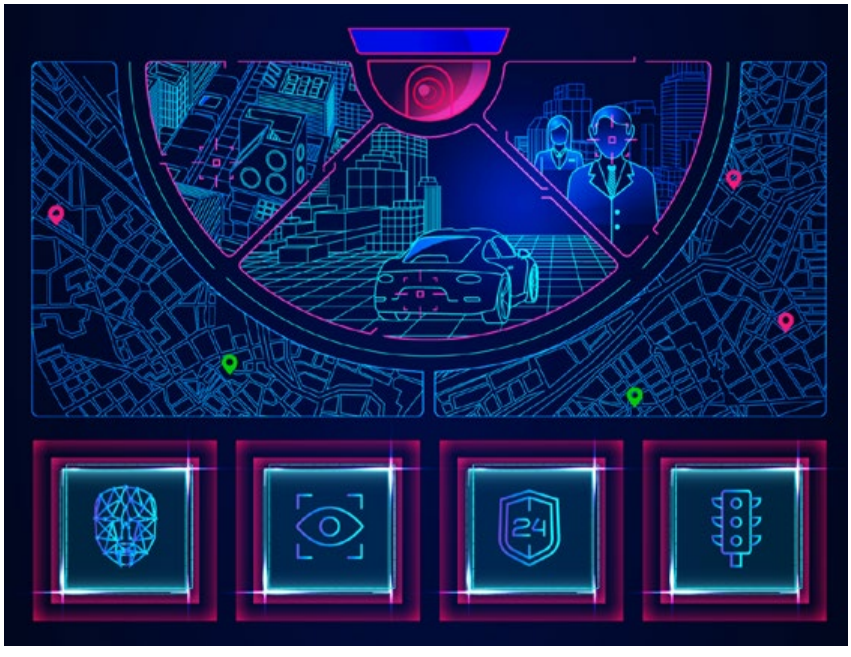
SAMENA Council Identifies Visual-Intelligence as a Key Opportunity for 5G-Advanced Networks & Fixed Wireless Access Growth

As telecom operators across the South Asia - Middle East - North Africa (SA-ME-NA) and Central Asia regions accelerate their 5G and 5G-Advanced deployments, the SAMENA Telecommunications Council is planning to unveil a new whitepaper highlighting visual-intelligence as a key opportunity area that will help unlock the full potential of next-generation networks, thus adding to the momentum in driving the growth of Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) in the region.

The whitepaper is aiming to highlight the growing significance of visual-intelligence technologies, such as AI-powered video analytics, machine-vision, edge-based vision processing, cloud technologies, and real-time data interpretation, in transforming network management, customer experiences, and service offerings, including for both private and public domains. The work-in-progress also intends to highlight how visual-intelligence can serve as a catalyst for FWA's growth ofacross the SA-ME-NA and Central Asia regions.

Visual-intelligence, when paired with the ultra-reliable, low-latency capabilities of 5G, offers telecom operators a unique opportunity to deliver a wide range of new applications, from smart-city solutions to advanced industrial automation and real-time security systems.

"We are at the forefront of a transformative era in telecommunications," said Bocar BA, CEO of the SAMENA Council. "As telecom operators continue to evolve their 5G and 5G-Advanced capabilities, and as regulatory demand for video-capture and intelligent decision-making rises, visual-intelligence is emerging as one of the most promising use-cases and can drive innovation across multiple sectors and industries. The integration of visual-intelligence over modern networks presents new revenue opportunities, enriches service offerings, and enhances network performance, making it a critical area of focus for operators today."



FWA is increasingly being adopted as a cost-effective solution for providing high-speed broadband access, particularly in areas where traditional fiber infrastructure is difficult or expensive to deploy. The SAMENA Council has already linked FWA to digital inclusion, and positioned it as a reliable complement to and pillar of regional digital infrastructure development plans. By adopting visual intelligence, operators can offer a range of new services, from AI-driven surveillance to real-time traffic management. This not only boosts the operator's bottom line but also drives broader socio-economic benefits by enhancing urban living, improving public safety, and fostering innovation in industries including retail, healthcare, and manufacturing.

"FWA has become a reliable solution for expanding broadband connectivity in underserved and remote areas," continued Bocar BA. "However, the real value of FWA lies in its ability to deliver not just connectivity, but the foundation for new, next-generation services. By combining FWA with visual intelligence, telecom operators can address regional connectivity gaps while simultaneously enabling cutting-edge use-cases in sectors like public safety, transportation, healthcare, and urban development. This integrated approach offers telecom operators the opportunity to not only meet growing demand for broadband but also establish themselves as leaders in the emerging digital economy."

The whitepaper provides actionable insights, policy recommendations, and case studies to help telecom operators navigate and accelerate the integration of visual-intelligence into their 5G strategies, ensuring they are well-positioned to capture the full potential of this transformative technology.

To access the whitepaper or for further information, please visit the SAMENA Council website.

WBBA Welcomes EFTS Group as New Member to Strengthen Global Efforts in Bridging the Digital Divide

The World Broadband Association (WBBA) is delighted to announce that EFTS Group, a leading consulting firm specializing in digital connectivity and strategies to close the digital divide, has joined its global member community.

The WBBA, a Switzerland-based multilateral and independent organization, serves as the collective voice of the broadband industry, bringing together operators, infrastructure providers, technology companies, regulators, and investors to accelerate digital transformation and ensure broadband becomes a catalyst for inclusive and sustainable growth.

Based in Mexico, EFTS Group brings proven expertise in strategic broadband planning, geospatial analytics, and digital inclusion frameworks. Its flagship initiative, the Municipal Connectivity Score (SMC), is already a regional benchmark, helping decision-makers move beyond coverage maps to measure real impact. By combining data-driven analysis to reveal connectivity gaps with agile high-level design to plan the infrastructure and investment needed to address them, EFTS ensures that broadband investments translate into inclusive growth and measurable social and economic value.

"We are delighted to welcome EFTS Group into the WBBA community," said Martin Creaner, Director General of the WBBA.

> *As a WBBA member, EFTS will actively engage in working groups, flagship research such as the Broadband and Cloud Development Index, and international events like the Broadband Development Congress. Its addition reinforces the WBBA's mission to connect the world by bringing the benefits of broadband to all.*

"Their experience in Latin America and their innovative Municipal Connectivity Score will add significant value to our global efforts to close the digital divide. Together, we can ensure that broadband expansion not only connects people, but truly empowers communities worldwide."

Francisco Pérez, CEO of EFTS Group, added: "Connectivity without purpose is just infrastructure. By turning data into actionable insights, we ensure that every investment strengthens competitiveness, inclusion, and opportunity. Joining the WBBA allows us to share Latin America's experience and collaborate with global leaders to accelerate meaningful connectivity everywhere."

As a WBBA member, EFTS will actively engage in working groups, flagship research such as the Broadband and Cloud Development Index, and international events like the Broadband Development Congress. Its addition reinforces the WBBA's mission to connect the world by bringing the benefits of broadband to all.

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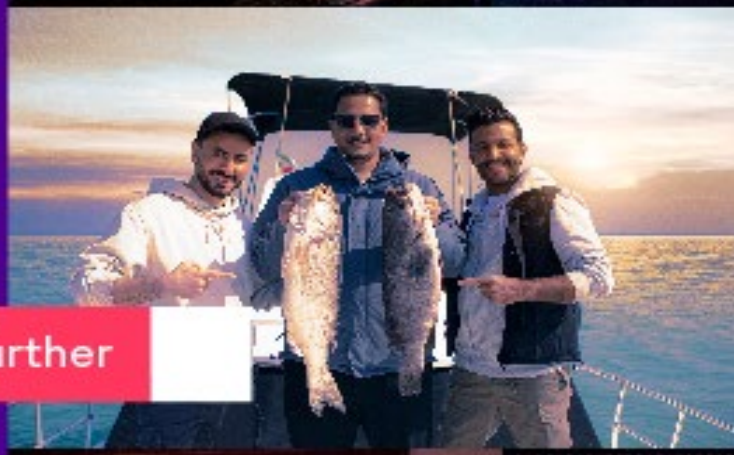
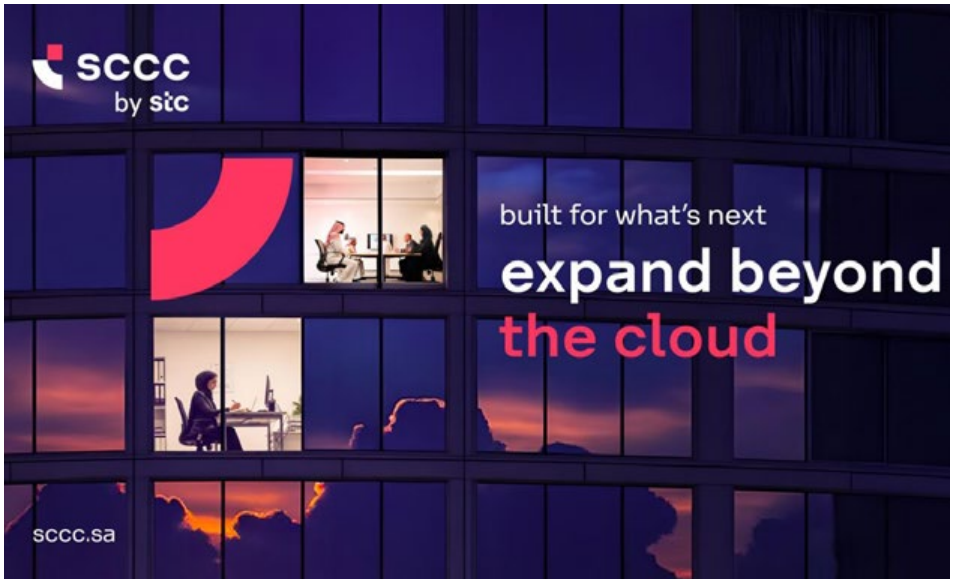


stc

MEMBERS NEWS

stc Group Launches 'sccc by stc' as New Identity for Its Cloud Subsidiary

stc Group, a leading digital enabler, has introduced "sccc by stc" as the new identity for its cloud service subsidiary, formerly known as the Saudi Cloud Computing Company (sccc). This new identity underscores the company's commitment to empowering Saudi Arabia's key sectors with hyperscale cloud infrastructure and secure that islocally hosted solutions. Established in 2022, sccc by stc delivers an extensive portfolio of advanced global cloud services, offering more than 100 local cloud products across Infrastructure as a Services (IaaS), Platform as a Service (PaaS) and Software as a Service (SaaS) models to public and private organizations across key sectors. Together, these services provide organizations with flexible infrastructure, streamlined development tools, and ready-to-use software, all within a scalable, cost-effective and integrated ecosystem. As a strategic arm of stc group, sccc by stc is seamlessly integrated into the group's digital ecosystem, enabling the delivery of innovative services and globally benchmarked security standards. The company ensures that all data is hosted within Saudi Arabia, reinforcing data sovereignty, while also developing a locally built billing system and SaaS marketplace to guarantee full compliance with local regulations and effectively address the evolving needs of the Kingdom's key sectors. The transition to "sccc by stc" marks a significant milestone in the company's journey. With a mission to make digital transformation simple and accessible for everyone, sccc by stc remains dedicated to supporting the Kingdom's vital sectors and industries with high-speed, reliable, and secure cloud solutions, cementing Saudi Arabia's position as a leading regional hub for advanced cloud computing.



stc Group and Huawei Achieve First 2.4T Trial Globally on Live Optical Network

stc Group, a leading digital enabler, and Huawei have successfully trialed an ultra-high-speed optical solution capable of delivering data transmission speeds of 2.4 terabits per second (Tbps). As the first operator globally to deploy this cutting-edge solution, stc group is establishing a pivotal foundation for Saudi Arabia's transformation into a premier global

digital hub. As Saudi Arabia undergoes rapid digital transformation, the demand for Peta bps-level data transmission is surging, driven by data-intensive industries and advanced computing applications. Leveraging Huawei's next-generation optical transport platform OptiX OSN 9800 K12, the solution achieved a single-fiber capacity to 96Tbps while delivering 2.4Tbps per port, equipping the Kingdom to address the escalating demands of advanced digital services over the next decade. Data security is guaranteed through Quantum Key Distribution (QKD), a leading encryption technology that ensures unbreakable protection for critical government and financial information. Intelligent automation boosts operational efficiency by enabling day-level service provisioning and real-time fiber performance monitoring. These innovations mark a significant step toward L4 self-healing network capabilities, empowering cloud providers to effectively manage sudden traffic surges while reducing service deployment cycles by over 70%. The collaboration between stc group and Huawei sets a global benchmark for connectivity, security, and operational excellence, enabling industries, businesses, and communities to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

Arabsat Announces the Appointment of Dr. Badr Alsuwaidan as Its New President and Chief Executive Officer

With over 25 years of experience in the space industry, Dr. Badr has demonstrated proven leadership across multiple disciplines, including satellite operations, engineering, and strategic development. Since 2020, Dr. Badr has served as Senior Vice President and Chief Technical Officer, where he played a pivotal role in enhancing operational performance and driving technological advancement. His leadership has been instrumental in elevating Arabsat's capabilities and reinforcing its position in the global satellite communications sector. Dr. Badr's appointment marks a period of rapid industry evolution, creating new opportunities for Arabsat to lead, innovate, and drive sustainable growth. "I am honored to be entrusted by the board of directors with the leadership of Arabsat during a time of dynamic transformation in our industry," Dr. Badr said. "The pace of progress and the emergence of new players present exciting opportunities. I look forward to working with our talented team to deliver exceptional value to our customers and lead Arabsat into its next chapter of growth." Established in 1976, Arabsat is an initiative launched by 21 Arab countries and is wholly owned by the Arab League. It is considered the first provider of satellite services in the Arab world and enjoys an advanced position among satellite operators globally. Thanks to a fleet of 8 satellites, equipped with state-of-the-art technologies, Arabsat is adept at providing a full spectrum TV and radio broadcast, telecommunications, broadband, advanced data transmission network solutions, and a range of satellite ecosystem services as well as multi-channel communications services, in addition to Internet services for government and commercial entities around the MENA region. Arabsat provides satellite and Internet broadcast services for more than 260 encrypted television networks and HD channels. It provides its services through advanced technologies, ensuring the highest quality to over 650 TV channels and more than 245 radio stations, reaching tens of millions of households in more than 100 countries in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and Central Asia. These channels and stations are followed by more than 300 million viewers in 21 Arab countries. Arabsat seeks to empower itself as the world's best satellite operator. To do so, it follows an approach based on passion, stimulating innovation, and developing partnerships with the most prestigious satellite companies worldwide. This approach enabled Arabsat to acquire Hellasat, the most prominent satellite company in Southeastern Europe. In addition, Arabsat signed agreements with value-added services integration and advanced technology companies, which paved the way to launch Badr 8, the latest seventh generation satellite in its fleet. Furthermore, Arabsat aspires to launch more satellites equipped with optical communications technologies, which represent a real addition to the Arab satellite communications ecosystem.

e& Deploys GCC's First Dual-Band 64T64R MetaAAU, advancing 5G Network Sustainably

e& UAE has deployed the GCC's first Dual-Band 64T64R MetaAAU, an advanced radio unit from Huawei, on its live 5G network. This new technology not only improves how 5G networks perform but also uses less energy and reduces the amount of equipment needed, delivering a better, more sustainable experience for customers across the UAE. Abdulrahman Al Humaidan, Senior Vice President/Access Network Development, e& UAE, said: "This deployment is a breakthrough in compact, high-performance network technology and an important marker on our road to net zero by 2030 and 5G-Advanced. By merging two key 5G frequency bands into a single, intelligent unit, we've halved the amount of equipment needed at our mobile sites while significantly improving coverage, speed, and energy efficiency. It's a smarter, greener way to deliver better connectivity to our customers." The Dual-Band 64T64R MetaAAU combines multiple frequencies (2.6 + 3.5GHz) in a single unit, cutting hardware needs and lowering power consumption by 35 per cent. Smart energy saving features, like symbol-level sleep, further lower energy consumption by an additional 15 per cent during low traffic periods. Using advanced antenna technology with double the capacity of traditional units, 384 antenna units compared to 192 units, the coverage capability is improved significantly, strengthening indoor signals, and enhancing connectivity in busy areas by 30 to 60 per cent. Unlike traditional setups that require separate installations for each band, this integrated solution reduces equipment footprint by 60 per cent and halves the deployment time, making network rollouts quicker and more efficient. As 5G progresses, technologies like Dual-Band 64T64R MetaAAU are instrumental in creating a more connected and energy-efficient future for the UAE and pave the way for 5G-Advanced connectivity. This deployment reinforces e& UAE's commitment to building smarter, more sustainable 5G networks that cater to both customer needs and the nation's digital future.

e& UAE Launches Monitoring-as-a-Service for Business Continuity

e& UAE says it has launched a new business continuity service – billed as "monitoring-as-a-service (MaaS)" – that it says provides enterprises complete observability over their infrastructure environments. In an announcement, e& UAE said the MaaS offering is managed end-to-end by e&'s technical teams that ensure clear, real-time visibility into infrastructure health, enabling clients to detect issues early, make informed decisions about resource allocation, and sustain reliable operations across their environments. e& UAE also said the service is flexible and modular, which means it can be tailored for the specific demands of each organization's particular industry via targeted partnerships that align with the needs of different sectors. The MaaS offering aims to help organizations maintain continuity, reduce risk, and gain deeper infrastructure insights so that they can navigate complexity, ensure seamless, uninterrupted operations and have greater control over their network environments, said Hamad AlMarzooqi, senior VP of presales and business operations at e& UAE. "We have made substantial investments in both talent and technology to develop a robust portfolio of services across multiple domains, including the rapidly expanding MaaS," he said in a statement.

e& Enterprise Plans to launch OneCloud, Powered by Oracle Alloy, Enabling Secure UAE-Sovereign Cloud Services for Regulated Sectors

e& enterprise, the digital transformation arm of global technology group e&, plans to launch the next generation of OneCloud, a UAE-sovereign hyperscale cloud platform powered by Oracle Alloy that brings more than 200 Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI) services to organizations that must keep data in-country and meet strict regulatory requirements. Delivered from its UAE data centres for low-latency performance and high availability, OneCloud offers a sovereign hyperscale cloud platform with AI-ready infrastructure that provides data residency, transparent SLAs, and usage-based pricing - backed by e& enterprise's cloud advisory, migration, and 24/7 managed services. As the UAE positions itself as a global leader in artificial intelligence and digital innovation, sovereignty has become a cornerstone of national strategy. Government entities, regulated sectors, and application builders require cloud platforms that not only unlock the scale of AI and advanced digital services but also guarantee that data remains securely within the country. Building on e& enterprise's cloud credentials, OneCloud enables customers to adopt cloud and AI services at scale while ensuring that all infrastructure, data and operations are managed locally, to meet stringent cloud regulatory and sovereignty requirements. With an integrated stack across IaaS, PaaS, and SaaS, combined with built-in AI and Gen AI services, OneCloud helps customers in the government and regulated sectors to confidently migrate, modernize, build, and scale their entire IT portfolio in a fully sovereign environment. Khalid Murshed, CEO of e& enterprise, said: "With OneCloud powered by Oracle Alloy, we are establishing a sovereign cloud fabric for the UAE's digital economy. It brings the breadth of Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI) together with local governance and the expertise of e& enterprise, enabling leaders to scale artificial intelligence (AI), modern applications and data-led services at home. This is about accelerating innovation, strengthening trust and giving every organization —from public institutions to industry leaders — the confidence to grow on UAE soil." "The technology landscape is changing dramatically due to the growing importance of data sovereignty and localization, which has become a critical consideration for public and private sector cloud and AI deployments in the UAE and beyond," said Richard Smith, Executive Vice President and General Manager, EMEA Cloud Infrastructure, Oracle. "Oracle Alloy is a complete cloud infrastructure platform that enables Oracle partners like e& to become cloud providers and offer a full range of cloud and AI services to expand their businesses while meeting local regulatory and compliance requirements." The new OneCloud enables customers to accelerate their Cloud and AI transformation with access to: Sovereign Hyperscale Cloud Platform: Hosted in e& enterprise data centres in the UAE with built-in compliance, security, and data residency, ensuring sovereignty for government and regulated industries. Full Oracle Cloud Services, Locally Delivered: Tap into 200+ Oracle Cloud and AI services in the UAE with in-country residency and sovereign control. Trusted Local Expertise: e& enterprise provides a single point of contact for support, billing, cloud advisory services and managed services, simplifying operations and improving business outcomes. Hybrid and Multi-Cloud Flexibility: e& enterprise enables seamless integration of OneCloud with private cloud, hyperscale clouds and colocation to design the right cloud model for your business requirements. Securely Connected Cloud: e& enterprise delivers complete cloud solutions with advanced connectivity and robust security solutions ensuring resilience and reliability for mission-critical workload. The next-generation OneCloud sovereign hyperscale platform will be available early next year to government organizations, regulated industries, and enterprises across the UAE, empowering them to accelerate AI and digital innovation with full confidence in sovereignty

e& Enterprise and Serbia's Office for IT and eGovernment Ink Landmark Deal to Strengthen Regional Digital Infrastructure

e& enterprise, the digital transformation arm of global technology group e&, and the Office for IT and e-Government of the Government of the Republic of Serbia signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The agreement sets a framework for cooperation on advanced digital infrastructure projects, including plans to expand Serbia's data center capacity and strengthen the country's position as a regional hub for sovereign cloud and digital services. The MoU, formalized at e&'s Al Kifaf headquarters in Dubai by Khalid Murshed, CEO, e& enterprise, and Dr. Mihailo Jovanović, Director of the Office for IT and eGovernment of Serbia, is set to triple the country's current capacity by adding up to forty megawatts to Serbia's existing 14-MW Tier-4 campus in Kragujevac. Khalid Murshed said, "Data centers are at the heart of every digital economy, and Serbia has already proven its capability with world-class infrastructure, quickly becoming a digital nerve-Centre for Southeast Europe." He noted that "By combining the Office's proven eGovernment engine with e& enterprise's global expertise and cloud ecosystem, we're setting the stage for new data-Centre capacity that not only meets Serbian demand but also serves as the backbone for every startup, bank and AI workload in the Balkans, positioning Serbia as the regional hub powering digital growth for neighboring markets." Dr. Mihailo Jovanović added that the partnership accelerates Serbia's ambitions to become a trusted regional hub for EU-grade sovereign digital infrastructure. "Our first Tier-4 build proved we can deliver world-class infrastructure; this next phase, fueled by e& enterprise's expertise, gives us a stronger platform to expand our capacity, attract international partners, and ensure that our infrastructure meets the highest global standards for resiliency and data governance," he said. "The result will be lower latency for citizens, more runway for entrepreneurs, and a stronger digital spine for an entire region." The Office for IT and eGovernment has played a pivotal role in advancing Serbia's digital transformation since it was established in 2017, including the development of the country's first state-owned Tier 4 data center with a capacity of 14 MW and 1,080 racks. With land already secured for a future expansion block of up to 40 MW, Serbia is preparing to scale its infrastructure to meet increasing national and regional demand. Through this MoU, e& enterprise and the Office will explore joint opportunities to expand data center capacity and establish conditions for Serbia to become a trusted regional host for critical workloads, including sovereign government data, hyperscalers, and enterprises. The inked partnership builds on the momentum of e&'s recent MoU with 4iG Group in Hungary. The preliminary agreement includes the potential for joint digital infrastructure initiatives in Serbia and the wider Balkans through e& and PPF Telecom, alongside plans for broader cooperation across subsea and terrestrial networks, advanced connectivity, and other digital infrastructure projects that link the Balkans with e&'s Middle East backbone and upcoming Africa-1 and other subsea cables, enabling seamless and secure traffic flows between the MENA region and Europe.

Omantel At COMEX 2025: Technology Partner Reshaping Oman's Digital Future

Under the evocative theme “At Sight”, Omantel steps into COMEX 2025 not merely as a participant, but as the pulse behind Oman’s digital transformation. As the official technology partner of the exhibition, Omantel brings to life its strategic vision of a seamlessly connected future, where innovation is not an abstract promise, but a lived reality aligned with Oman Vision 2040 and the National Digital Economy Program. At the heart of the exhibition, Omantel unveils a suite of advanced technologies that reflect its role as a national enabler: artificial intelligence, space technology, smart communications, cloud computing, and cybersecurity. These aren’t just technical showcases - they are instruments of empowerment, designed to accelerate innovation, enhance institutional agility, and reshape the digital landscape across sectors. The opening day marks a pivotal moment, as Omantel will sign a series of strategic agreements with government entities, private organizations, and emerging start-ups. These partnerships are more than formalities; they are building blocks of a unified digital ecosystem that positions Oman for a smarter, more sustainable future. Omantel has succeeded, through the integration of its operations, processes, and extensive expertise in the field of communications and digital technology, in establishing its position as a leading telecommunications company within the Sultanate of Oman and beyond. The company's innovative approaches have

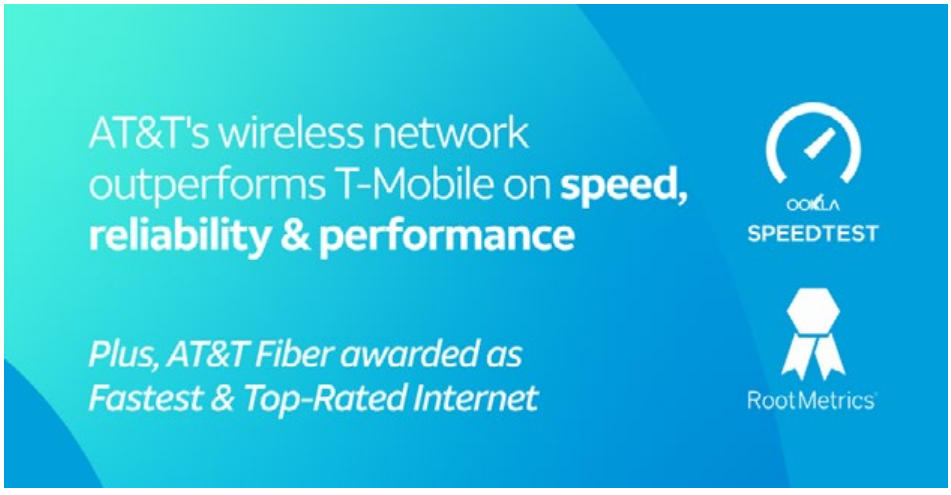
contributed to providing state-of-the-art solutions to different consumer and business sectors. The company aims to deliver an unparalleled, exceptional experience to its customers and strives to always exceed their expectations. To achieve the objectives of Oman Vision 2040, Omantel invests in emerging technologies and provides cutting-edge ICT solutions, such as cloud solutions, AI, Smart solutions, cybersecurity, and much more, in addition to harnessing its technological capabilities to enhance innovation and leadership in new and advanced technologies.

Enhancing the Purpose of Innovation: Zain Great Idea (ZGI 2025) Accelerator Program Expands Across the Region

Zain Group announces the regional expansion of its award-winning startup accelerator program, Zain Great Idea (ZGI 2025), powered by Zain Ventures, the Group’s venture capital arm, and ZainTECH, its regional digital solutions enterprise arm. For the first time in the program’s 15-year history, the 2025 edition will welcome applications from innovators in Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and UAE, offering unprecedented access to mentorship, capital, and global exposure including a trip to Silicon Valley for a two-week intensive program. Zain Ventures is a key driver of ZGI’s regional expansion, aiming to invest in and capitalize prime opportunities, while ZainTECH will cooperate with the ZGI team throughout the accelerator program, working closely with and providing the startups selected to visit Silicon Valley strategic advisory and identify technologies such as Cloud, Ai, Analytics, Robotics and other emerging technologies that will further support their growth throughout the year. This milestone marks a transformative leap from ZGI’s Kuwait-centric roots to a Group-wide initiative, reinforcing Zain’s commitment to nurturing innovation and entrepreneurship across the region. Since 2010, ZGI has empowered over 7,000 entrepreneurs, facilitated 110+ bootcamps, that led to over USD 135 million funds raised from regional investors during the last 5 years alone. The ZGI 2025 program complements Zain’s ‘4WARD – Progress with Purpose’ strategy, which emphasizes meaningful innovation, inclusive growth, collaboration, and AI powered digital transformation with real societal impact. By backing the regional startup ecosystem, Zain reinforces its commitment to building a future where progress is fueled by purpose, and innovation is driven from the region for the region. Bader Al-Kharafi, Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO said, “Zain Great Idea has become a beacon of innovation in Kuwait and beyond. Expanding ZGI across our footprint is a natural evolution of our commitment to nurturing regional talent and driving meaningful change. Through the collaborative efforts of ZGI, Zain Ventures and ZainTECH, we aim to support startups that have the potential to have a marked and lasting impact on technological innovation and job creation across the region, fulfilling our purpose of uplifting economies and societies”

AT&T's Wireless Network Outperforms T-Mobile in Speed, Reliability, and Performance

Recent awards from RootMetrics and Ookla showcase AT&T's unique ability to provide seamless connectivity that keeps customers connected at home and on the go. Best Overall Wireless Network Performance means that AT&T customers can count on a strong connection wherever they are, fueled by over $145 billion invested into our network during the past five years. As the largest wireless network in North America, our network covers 99%+ of the United States population. In fact, AT&T's wireless network extends 300,000 square miles – an area larger than the state of Texas – further than T-Mobile's network.3 Most Reliable and Fastest Wireless Network recognizes the speed and consistency our customers deserve, helping provide smooth browsing, virtually lag-free gaming, and ultra-fast video uploading. Best Call Performance means our customers experience fewer dropped calls than with competitors. Whether it's an important work call, a family check-in, or an emergency, you need a network you can count on. And with the Fastest, Top-Rated Internet, you can simultaneously power multiple connected devices in your household. On top of being recognized for the fastest and most reliable service, we are proud to be the only provider that guarantees both our wireless and fiber networks. The AT&T Guarantee promises our customers that we will deliver the connectivity they can depend on, the deals they want, and the prompt, friendly service they deserve. And if we fall short of this, we'll take action to make it right.4 Unlike our competitors, we're not just talking – we are fully equipped to stand behind our network with real accountability. "These wins highlight our unwavering dedication to putting the customer first in everything we do," said Jenifer Robertson, EVP and GM, AT&T Mass Markets and Mobility. "Our mission is to be the connectivity provider our customers can trust wherever life takes them, and AT&T's network performance is head and shoulders above the rest. We are so confident in the strength of our network that we offer a guarantee for both wireless and fiber networks – a promise our customers can rely on." AT&T Business customers have also shared their trust in AT&T, with J.D. Power recognizing AT&T for being #1 in customer satisfaction for large enterprise and medium business internet service. "Businesses, first responders, and the communities they serve all depend on fast, secure, reliable connectivity and we're proud to set the industry standard for our customers," said Melissa Arnoldi, EVP and GM, AT&T Business. "For organizations, it means having the confidence to innovate, serve customers, and stay ahead in a fast-paced world. For first responders, it means knowing their calls, data, and emergency communications will get through when every second counts. This recognition demonstrates our commitment to empowering those who power our communities with the very best connectivity, every single day."



AT&T and Ericsson Drive Innovation in High-Performing, Energy-Efficient Networks

AT&T and Ericsson have embarked on a network modernization initiative to meet the telecommunications industry's growing data demands and support energy efficiency goals. This USD 14 billion agreement establishes a comprehensive strategy for infrastructure evolution, leveraging Ericsson's advanced technologies to build a high-performing, energy-efficient, and sustainable network to meet growing data demands and enhance the customer experience. Key components include multi-band radios, Open Radio Access Network (Open RAN) technology, and advanced software, each contributing to greater agility, efficiency, and energy optimization. Additionally, streamlined supply chain and logistics practices annually avoid almost 23,000 metric tons of carbon emissions, setting new benchmarks for performance, efficiency, and sustainability in the telecom industry.

AT&T and Cisco Deliver Comprehensive Secure Access Service Edge (SASE) Solution

AT&T Business and Cisco have joined forces to introduce the new AT&T Secure Access Service Edge (SASE) with Cisco, a comprehensive, cloud-delivered networking and security solution. This collaboration underscores AT&T and Cisco's shared vision to build innovative, scalable, and secure solutions that address the challenges of today's dynamic digital landscape. By combining AT&T's industry-leading network expertise with Cisco's cutting-edge security and networking technologies, this collaboration delivers a unified service that simplifies IT management, strengthens protection against evolving threats, and ensures dependable connectivity. AT&T SASE with Cisco is designed to support an array of organizations – from mid-sized businesses with multiple branches and commercial enterprises modernizing legacy platforms to highly distributed global enterprises focused on optimizing for scale, security, and resiliency. Fragmented, multi-vendor solutions create complexity and security gaps. AT&T SASE with Cisco provides a cloud-native architecture that ensures consistent security, optimized application performance, and proactive network management in a single platform. The solution also includes intelligent zero-trust security, predictive path optimization, and centralized policy enforcement, all of which simplify IT operations and enhance the user experience. "Today's businesses require solutions that not only enable seamless connectivity but also provide advanced security to protect their devices and data," said Shawn Hakl, Head of Product, AT&T Business. "Our long-standing relationship with Cisco allows us to deliver a unified, cloud-based service that simplifies network management and enhances security for businesses to safely grow and adapt in a rapidly changing environment."

Key Features and Benefits of AT&T SASE with Cisco:

Multilayer defense through robust Secure Service Edge (SSE) deployment.

Intelligent network routing and optimization powered by SD-WAN.

Enhanced observability and reporting from the edge to the cloud.

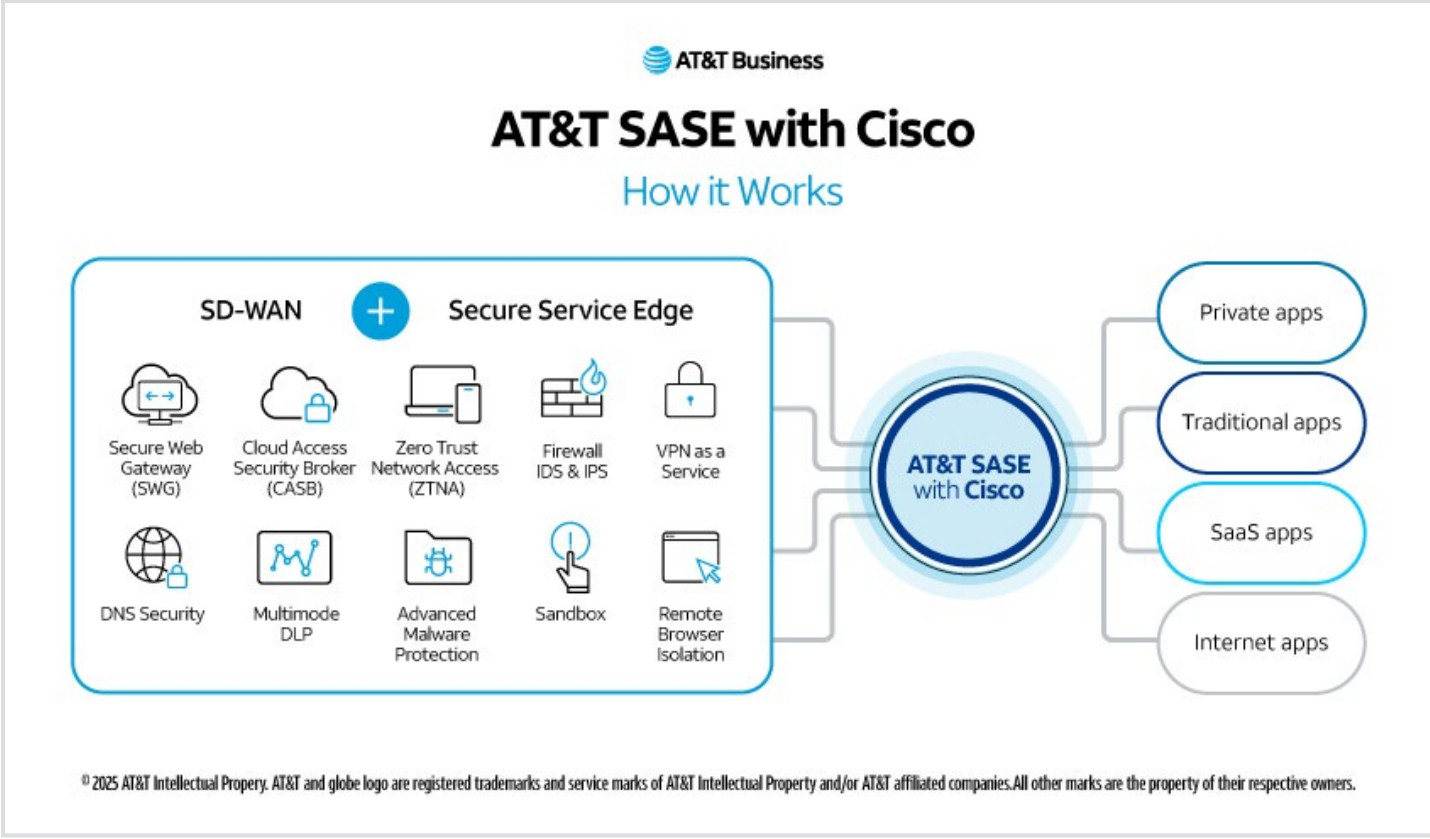
Automated security workflows and real-time threat intelligence.

Multi-cloud connectivity for seamless integration across platforms.

Simplified network management with a single, unified service.

Advanced security to protect users, devices, and data across the entire network, from the edge to the cloud.

"We're proud to work with AT&T to deliver a unified SASE solution with industry-leading security and performance that today's businesses demand," said Raj Chopra, SVP & Chief Product Officer, Cisco Security. "By combining our leading security and SD-WAN technologies with AT&T's powerful network, we're helping businesses of all sizes achieve secure, scalable, and efficient connectivity, no matter where their users or devices are located." AT&T SASE with Cisco is now available for organizations to combine reliable connectivity with advanced security. Together, AT&T and Cisco continue to deliver innovative solutions that empower businesses of all sizes to stay ahead of the curve and thrive in an increasingly connected world.



AT&T to Acquire Spectrum Licenses from EchoStar

AT&T has agreed to purchase certain wireless spectrum licenses from EchoStar for a total of approximately $23 billion, subject to certain adjustments. AT&T and EchoStar have also agreed to enhance their long-term wholesale network services agreement, enabling EchoStar to operate as a hybrid mobile network operator (MNO) providing wireless service under the Boost Mobile brand. AT&T will be the primary network services partner to EchoStar as it continues to serve wireless customers. "This acquisition bolsters and expands our spectrum portfolio while enhancing customers' 5G wireless and home internet experience in even more markets," said John Stankey, Chairman and CEO, AT&T. "No one brings wireless and fiber internet to more places or does it better than AT&T – and we do it with the industry's first and only guarantee for both wireless and fiber. We're adding fuel to our winning strategy of investing in valuable wireless and broadband assets to become America's best connectivity provider." AT&T will acquire approximately 30 MHz of nationwide 3.45 GHz mid-band spectrum and approximately 20 MHz of nationwide 600 MHz low-band spectrum for approximately $23 billion in an all-cash transaction, subject to certain adjustments. These licenses cover virtually every market across the U.S. – over 400 markets in total – significantly strengthening AT&T's low-band and mid-band spectrum holdings. AT&T intends to begin deploying these mid-band licenses, which are compatible with its 5G network, as soon as possible. The Company expects to support the deployment of these licenses, as well as the acquired low-band licenses, within the multi-year capital investment* guidance provided with its second quarter 2025 earnings release. Additionally, AT&T maintains the fiber expansion targets it provided with its second quarter earnings release. The transaction is expected to close in mid-2026, subject to certain closing conditions, including regulatory approvals.

AT&T is Ranked #1 in Customer Satisfaction for Business Internet Service

AT&T once again demonstrates its commitment to delivering reliable, innovative, and customer-focused internet solutions for businesses of all sizes. In the J.D. Power 2025 Business Internet Satisfaction Study, AT&T is ranked #1 in Customer Satisfaction for Medium Business and Large Enterprise Internet Service. This recognition underscores AT&T's leadership in empowering businesses with the secure, converged connectivity they need to thrive. AT&T's unmatched track record of awards underscores the company's position as an industry leader. AT&T is the only brand to be awarded 8 years in a row for Customer Satisfaction with Large Enterprise Internet Service, making it the most awarded provider in this category according to J.D. Power. Additionally, AT&T has earned recognition for Medium Business Internet Service for 3 consecutive years, solidifying its position as a trusted partner for large and medium businesses. "Receiving this recognition year after year is a testament to our reliable connectivity, secure network, and experts who truly understand the unique needs of each business," said Melissa Arnoldi, executive vice president and general manager, AT&T Business. "As technology evolves and transforms the way businesses operate, we're proud to provide the excellent connectivity that is the backbone of every business, from start-ups to Fortune 500 companies." With nearly 150 years of expertise, AT&T provides reliable fiber and 5G networks designed for decades of performance. In 2024 alone, we had $22.1 billion in capital investment4 which was invested primarily in our networks which supports nearly 2.5 million businesses and government agencies globally with cutting-edge solutions that enhance productivity and connectivity. With a proven track record of excellence and a commitment to continuous improvement, AT&T is proud to be the trusted choice for businesses across the nation.

China Mobile Seals MVNO Deal with Maxis in Malaysia

China Mobile International (CMI) reached a deal to use Maxis' network in Malaysia to launch an MVNO, expanding its global footprint following launches in Singapore, Japan, Thailand, Italy and the UK. CMI's MVNO offering, called CMLink, will be hosted on Maxis' nationwide mobile and fiber networks. It will target the Chinese community living in the country. Key features include one card, multiple numbers and China-Malaysia data sharing services. The companies forged the partnership at the China Mobile SEA Cooperation Conference in Kuala Lumpur. A year ago, Maxis signed an agreement with CMI with the aim to accelerate 5G initiatives. Maxis is the second-largest mobile player in Malaysia, with 11.5 million connections at end-June, data from GSMA Intelligence showed. CelcomDigi is the market leader with 20.3 million connections. In one of a number of similar agreements expanding its reach, CMI moved into the UK market in 2017 when it agreed to use EE's network for the service.

China Mobile and Huawei Jointly Win the 2025 Leading Lights Award of Outstanding Use Case: Telco Cloud

At the 21st Leading Lights Awards, China Mobile Network Business Unit, China Mobile Henan Network Management Center, and Huawei were honored with the Outstanding Use Case: Telco Cloud award for their groundbreaking project "TICC Cloud-Native Platform Empowering China Mobile's Next-Gen Telco Operations." This pioneering initiative, built on the industry's first converged dual-engine architecture and enhanced with AI, allows seamless migration of traditional services to the cloud-native platform. By advancing green and sustainable telecom practices, the project sets a new global benchmark for Telco Cloud transformation. The Leading Lights Awards, hosted by Light Reading—one of the world's foremost telecom media titles—are widely regarded as among the most credible and authoritative honors in the industry. Established in 2004, the awards recognize companies and projects that have delivered outstanding achievements in communications technologies, applications, services, strategies, and innovation on a global scale. Telco Cloud has become the cornerstone of 5G and the digital world. With the rapid advancement of 5G-A and AI technologies, Telco Cloud is steadily evolving toward containerization and intelligence. As early pioneers and key contributors to Network Functions Virtualization (NFV), China Mobile and Huawei spearheaded the introduction of the industry's first OpenStack-Kubernetes dual-engine converged architecture. By integrating foundation models and intelligent agents, they jointly developed the industry-leading Telco Intelligent Converged Cloud (TICC) platform. This platform delivers carrier-grade stability, automated O&M, energy efficiency, and AI-driven capabilities. As a result, service rollout time has been reduced by 50%, while network upgrade efficiency has improved more than sixfold. China Mobile Henan Branch and Huawei have collaborated to jointly develop the "Green Core" system-level intelligent Telco Cloud energy-saving solution, built on the

TICC platform. Powered by AI, this solution allows collaborative optimization across hardware, the Telco Cloud platform, and O&M sectors. It greatly reduces network device energy consumption, drives the green transformation of telecom infrastructure, and provides the industry with a demonstrable and repeatable path toward sustainable infrastructure evolution. Winners of the Leading Lights Awards were selected by a panel of analysts and media experts from hundreds of entries across 20 categories. Regarding the "Outstanding Use Case: Telco Cloud" Award, the jury emphasized that the project presents a systematic approach to Telco Cloud evolution—allowing operators to migrate traditional services while embracing cloud-native agility. This comprehensive methodology allowed the project to stand out in a highly competitive category. The jury further noted that the achievement was particularly remarkable given the scale and scope of the customer base involved. Looking ahead, Huawei will continue to collaborate with operators and industry partners to advance Telco Cloud toward greater efficiency, intelligence, and sustainability, consistently delivering new value to individuals and industries.

Cisco Delivers Critical AI Infrastructure for Top NFL Franchises

Cisco has announced the addition of six new NFL franchise and venue partnerships this season, further expanding its growing portfolio of clubs and properties leveraging Cisco's industry-leading enterprise networking and cybersecurity solutions. Through new partnerships with the Arizona Cardinals, Buffalo Bills, Carolina Panthers, Chicago Bears, Las Vegas Raiders, and Miami Dolphins, and alongside existing partnerships with the New England Patriots and San Francisco 49ers, Cisco will continue to connect and protect the NFL, its clubs and its stadiums this coming season. "Cisco's unified technology platform demonstrates its strength and reliability providing AI-ready infrastructure, future-proofing League and club workplaces, and ensuring digital resilience across the entire league ecosystem," said Rob McQueen, Vice President of Global Sponsorships at Cisco. "This robust technology platform supports our rapidly growing partnerships with individual clubs and stadiums, which have tripled ahead of the 2025 season." While each NFL Club and venue partnership is bespoke, all draw on Cisco's comprehensive suite of technology solutions. Whether its secure networking infrastructure, high-density Wi-Fi 7 or Cisco Hybrid Mesh Firewall, Cisco's solutions are powering scalable, future-ready fan experiences, and protecting Club and stadium operations. "We've relied on Cisco as an official NFL partner these past five seasons to deliver world-class networking and cybersecurity solutions to the league and our teams," said Aaron Amendolia, Deputy CIO at the NFL. "We're pleased to see so many more teams and venues taking advantage of Cisco's expertise to better connect and protect their operations, venues, and fans." "Partnering with Cisco marks an exciting step forward in our commitment to delivering a world-class experience at Bank of America Stadium," said Eric Sudol, Chief Revenue Officer, Tepper Sports & Entertainment. "With Cisco's powerful and secure networking solutions, we're enhancing everything from game-day operations to the digital experience our fans enjoy — ensuring seamless connectivity and reliability at every level." At the league level, the NFL and Cisco have worked together to deploy a networking and cybersecurity playbook that ensures global events like the Super Bowl, NFL International Series, and the NFL Draft are running securely in the face of any disruption. From cyberattacks to outages and technical failures and beyond, Cisco is helping make sense of massive amounts of data to help the NFL respond to threats in real-time and keep their users and data safe. In addition, every NFL's stadium's replay control room is built on Cisco technology and connected to the Art McNally Gameday Central in New York via Cisco's network.

Cisco Supercharges Observability with Agentic AI for Real-Time Business Insight

Cisco has announced agentic AI-powered Splunk Observability, an AI-native approach to observability that sets a new standard for how customers can strengthen their resilience. The enhanced Splunk Observability portfolio unifies observability across environments, surfaces actionable business context, and deploys AI-powered agents across the full incident response lifecycle, while monitoring both its performance and quality. Through integrations across Cisco technologies with Splunk, customers gain unmatched visibility and correlation of data insights across their networks, infrastructure, and applications to improve the reliability of their entire digital estate. "Our mission is clear – to help organizations put AI applications and agents to work, while retaining visibility and control," said Patrick Lin, SVP and GM of Splunk Observability. "With the latest innovations in Splunk Observability, we are empowering enterprises to proactively monitor their critical applications and digital services with ease, resolve issues before they escalate, and ensure the value and outcomes they derive from observability are commensurate with the cost." Agentic AI is reshaping what it takes to build a leading observability practice. As AI-assisted coding gains steam, applications will be built with less human involvement. At the same time, a new wave of AI-enabled applications and AI agents demand specialized telemetry to confirm models are performing as intended – aligned to business purpose and cost. To keep pace, organizations need unified, in-context, visibility across all of these environments to prioritize issues based on business impact.

Cisco Advances Open Data Ecosystems with Splunk Federated Search for Snowflake

Cisco has unveiled Splunk Federated Search for Snowflake, a new Splunk Platform integration that empowers organizations to seamlessly connect, query, and combine operational and business data across Splunk and Snowflake environments. By establishing this integration with Snowflake, the AI Data Cloud company, Cisco is underscoring its commitment to foster an open data ecosystem and help organizations gain faster, richer insights from their data. In the agentic AI era, organizations face an unprecedented surge in data volumes and sources, with critical information scattered across multiple platforms. Unified visibility across diverse data sources is essential to meet security, observability, and operational objectives. Splunk Federated Search for Snowflake directly addresses this challenge by enabling teams to query Snowflake data from within the familiar Splunk interface, enrich it with Splunk data, and drive new levels of analytics and insights. "Splunk Federated Search for Snowflake makes it simple for customers to access and act on their data, uniting business and operational insights in one view," said Kamal Hathi,

SVP and GM, Splunk, a Cisco company. "Together with the Snowflake integration, we're creating a more open ecosystem to help organizations use data to make faster decisions, accelerate innovation, and deliver more trusted customer experiences." "Our integration with Splunk extends Snowflake as a trusted platform for unifying and simplifying data access at scale," said Carl Perry, Head of Analytics, Snowflake. "Through the integration, Snowflake and Splunk will be able to more effectively connect data and break down silos for our joint customers. This makes it easier for organizations to harness business and operational data, enabling insights to flow to where they are needed most to power data insights and AI innovation at scale. This integration will give enterprises the power to drive faster data-driven decisions and will help them stay ahead in the AI era where data is paramount." With Splunk Federated Search for Snowflake, users will use the Splunk interface to perform queries on Snowflake data and seamlessly join it with data already in Splunk. This enables teams to set business context for critical ITOps, SecOps, and engineering use cases, eliminating data silos and accelerating issue detection, triage, and resolution.

Cisco Secure AI Factory with NVIDIA Unlocks Enterprise Data for Agentic AI

Cisco has unveiled a solution for building AI infrastructure designed to support workload data fabrics, further enabling enterprises to securely use their data for agentic AI at enterprise-scale. With this new solution, the Cisco Secure AI Factory with NVIDIA expands to new use cases, including the acceleration of retrieval-augmented generation (RAG) pipelines with faster data extraction and retrieval. This new capability ensures AI agents have instant, secure access to the data they need, when they need it. Cisco AI PODs, the AI Infrastructure building blocks of the Secure AI Factory, are now available with VAST InsightEngine, a core capability of VAST Data AI OS. These AI PODs deliver a fully integrated solution using the NVIDIA AI Data Platform reference design to transform raw data into AI-ready datasets. Within the AI PODs, the Cisco UCS server portfolio with NVIDIA RTX PRO 6000 Blackwell Server Edition GPUs together provide exceptional performance for next-generation AI applications. RTX PRO Servers from Cisco are some of the first systems to deliver the NVIDIA AI Data Platform reference design. NVIDIA accelerated computing and AI software ensures low-latency model interaction, and Cisco's high-performance ethernet networking connects compute and data seamlessly. This unified solution enables AI agents to operate with near-real-time business insights, backed by the security, governance and flexibility of the Cisco Secure AI Factory with NVIDIA architecture. Through this architecture, customers can gain unique visibility into their environments with Splunk, and apply safety and security guardrails to every token using Cisco AI Defense. "Agentic AI has the potential to unlock the value of AI for enterprises around the world. Moving beyond chatbots to agents that can help solve true business challenges is revolutionary, but only if enterprises can effectively leverage the right data at the right times. Cisco, NVIDIA and VAST are working together to give customers a simple path to unlocking the value of their data," said Jeremy Foster, senior vice president and general manager, Cisco Compute. "We are designing the architecture for how the enterprise will build the next generation of AI factories."

"The next wave of agentic AI will be fueled by enterprise data, enabling agents to tap into business knowledge during inference for precise, up-to-date insights," said Justin Boitano, vice president, Enterprise AI at NVIDIA. "Bringing together Cisco Secure AI Factory with NVIDIA and VASTInsightEngine creates an integrated platform for running powerful AI agents at scale." "By integrating the VAST Data InsightEngine into the Cisco Secure AI Factory with NVIDIA, we're giving enterprises the first integrated design for RAG acceleration at scale," said John Mao, vice president of strategic alliances at VAST Data. "This collaboration with Cisco and NVIDIA represents a major milestone in the evolution of enterprise AI. The integration of the VAST InsightEngine into the Secure AI Factory architecture sets the stage for a new era where intelligent agents can operate securely, collaboratively, and at unprecedented scale." Agentic AI workloads place unique demands on IT infrastructure. Enterprises across industries are looking to deploy AI agents that can communicate with knowledge workers and other AI agents to solve complex challenges. However, this requires support for workload data fabrics that remove data bottlenecks and lower latency, so agents have access to the right data, while providing the security and governance necessary to ensure organizations stay safe. The new capabilities offer customers a secure AI infrastructure solution for fast data extraction and retrieval to unlock agentic AI use cases. VAST Data will be the first vendor to integrate with Cisco AI PODs to offer enterprise customers an NVIDIA AI Data Platform reference design. Customers can now experience:

Eutelsat and Tata's Nelco Ink Agreement for Offering LEO Connectivity Services Across India

Eutelsat and Nelco Limited a Tata Group company and one of India's leading satellite communication service providers, have signed an agreement to deliver OneWeb low Earth orbit (LEO) satellite connectivity services across the India region. Under the agreement, OneWeb India Communications, Eutelsat's local operating entity, will partner with Nelco to deliver secure, low-latency LEO connectivity for customers on land, at sea, and in the air. Service coverage will extend across India's borders, territorial waters, and remote regions, supporting a wide range of secure government and enterprise applications. These capabilities will strengthen India's digital infrastructure and national security, while ensuring reliable connectivity in underserved areas. Nelco is well geared to offer these services to its customers as soon the OneWeb LEO services become commercially operational in the country. Neha Idnani, Regional Vice President for APAC, Eutelsat and Director of OneWeb Communications India commented: "We are proud to partner with Nelco, part of the respected TATA Group, to deliver advanced LEO connectivity services in India. This agreement strengthens our strategic footprint in one of the world's most dynamic and fast-growing connectivity markets and underscores our commitment to supporting India's digital and security ambitions." P J Nath, Managing Director and Chief

Executive Officer of Nelco, commented: "We are pleased to partner with Eutelsat to bring OneWeb LEO satellite connectivity services to India. This partnership marks a significant step in enabling reliable, secure, and high-speed communication solutions based on LEO services for critical sectors across land, sea, and air. It reflects our strategy to provide comprehensive multi-orbit satellite connectivity services for advancing India's digital ecosystem and supporting the country's strategic communication needs."

Eutelsat Releases Full Year 2024-25 Results

The Board of Directors of Eutelsat Communications, chaired by Dominique D'Hinnin, reviewed the financial results for the year

ended 30 June 2025. Total revenues for FY 2024-25 stood at €1,244 million, up by 2.5% on a reported basis and by 1.6% like-for-like. Revenues of the four Operating Verticals (excluding 'Other Revenues') stood at €1,226 million, up by 0.8% on a like-for-like basis. LEO revenues amounted to €187 million, up 84.1%2, driven by strong demand momentum. They represent c.15% of revenues. Adjusted EBITDA stood at €676.2 million on 30 June 2025 stable on a like for like basis. The Adjusted EBITDA margin stood at 54.2% at constant currency (54.4% reported). This was in line with our financial projections of Operating Vertical Revenues around the same level, and an adjusted EBITDA margin slightly below the level of the previous year. Jean-François Fallacher, Chief Executive Officer of Eutelsat Communications commented: "FY 2024-25 results were in line with our objectives, and the year was marked by genuine traction in our LEO revenues, which grew by over 80% and now represent 15% of revenues. I am excited to take the helm of Eutelsat as it enters a new chapter, centered on the deployment of LEO, a revolution for the Satellite industry. Thanks to its differentiated GEO-LEO positioning and global coverage, Eutelsat is positioned to be a key player in the development of the European sovereign space of tomorrow and beyond, as showcased by the framework agreement with the French military. Finally, the recently announced €1.5 billion capital increase will give Eutelsat the requisite financing to implement its strategic roadmap, enabling us to deliver growth and value for all our stakeholders."

Eutelsat and Station Satcom Expand Long-Standing Partnership, Integrating LEO Capacity to Deliver Global Maritime Connectivity

Eutelsat and longtime partner Station Satcom, a leader in maritime communications headquartered in India, have signed a new agreement to deliver Eutelsat's OneWeb LEO connectivity services to the global maritime sector. The deal marks a significant strategic expansion for Station Satcom, which will integrate OneWeb's LEO capabilities into its portfolio to provide hybrid satellite connectivity across the world's oceans. This advanced solution enables Station Satcom to combine the reliability and coverage of Eutelsat's GEO services with the high-speed, low-latency performance of LEO, ensuring uninterrupted connectivity for vessels operating along major shipping routes and in remote offshore environments. Through this integrated offering, Station Satcom will be able to meet the growing demand for real-time data, operational efficiency, and improved crew welfare, while also supporting the digital transformation of global maritime operations. Thierry Polycarpe, Vice President of Global Maritime at Eutelsat said, "We are proud to expand our long-standing partnership with Station Satcom as they bring OneWeb's LEO maritime service to market. This agreement reflects the growing demand for high-performance connectivity at sea, and reinforces our commitment to delivering secure, high-speed, low-latency solutions that power the digital evolution of the maritime industry." Anshul Khanna, Chief Executive Officer of Station Satcom added, "This is a game-changer for the maritime sector at large. By integrating OneWeb's LEO satellite service, we can now offer seamless connectivity for ship owners, crew welfare and offshore operations."

Eutelsat Initiates Brand Shift

Eutelsat Group moved to simplify its brand recognition and bring all activities and subsidiary companies together under the simple moniker of its forename. The satellite service provider stated the change was prompted by recent activity, not least of which was a tie-up with low Earth orbit (LEO) operator OneWeb in 2023. Eutelsat's shift will involve merging its own and OneWeb's websites into a single digital platform, a move the company stated would provide "intuitive access" to its suite of services. "This new brand is about ambition and clarity," CEO Jean-Francois Fallacher said. The executive expects the single brand to "make it easier for our customers, clearer for our stakeholders" and generally strengthen Eutelsat's proposition. Eutelsat emphasized its position as one of the only satellite companies in the world offering LEO and geosynchronous Earth orbit (GEO) connectivity under one roof following its OneWeb move. It is creating fresh branding combining elements of each company's original logos to reflect its global footprint and the "human side" of its services.

Eutelsat and BHS Renew Capacity Deal at 7/8° West, MENA's Leading Orbital Position

Eutelsat announced the renewal of its longstanding partnership with BHS Telecommunications, a key regional player in TV distribution and broadcast services in the MENA region. Under the new agreement, BHS will lease Ku-band capacity on the EUTELSAT 7 West A satellite, located at the 7/8° West orbital position, the prime broadcast neighborhood for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. BHS, a long-standing Eutelsat partner, specializes in the delivery of end-to-end broadcast and telecommunications solutions, including satellite and fiber distribution, IP connectivity, streaming, playout and video monitoring. With decades of experience in the region, BHS is a trusted partner for global and regional broadcasters seeking robust content distribution. The 7/8° West video neighborhood reaches over 66 million TV homes across MENA, offering exceptional coverage, signal quality and access to a strong line-up of regional and international content. Through this renewal, BHS will continue to support broadcasters in delivering diverse programming to millions of viewers via satellite. The new contract reinforces the ongoing collaboration between the two companies reaffirming both partners' commitment to delivering reliable, high-performance satellite services in one of the world's most dynamic broadcast markets. Raymond Estphan Rahme, RVP MENA Sales, Eutelsat's Video Business Unit, said, "The renewal of our partnership with BHS not only confirms the enduring strength of our collaboration but also highlights the unmatched strategic value of the 7/8° West orbital position. This agreement strengthens our leading position in MENA and showcases our ability to provide flexible, high-quality satellite solutions tailored to our customers' evolving needs." Hamid Rahmani, CEO & Managing Director of BHS, added: "In Eutelsat, we see a partner with whom we have built

a long-standing relationship, as we work together with Eutelsat, we will be placing our expectations in the sky and focus on the next milestones in the journey ahead together. Our goals are centered on giving our broadcast customers the best value proposition without them worrying about service interruptions. This is more important than ever in today's media market which is constantly changing and developing."

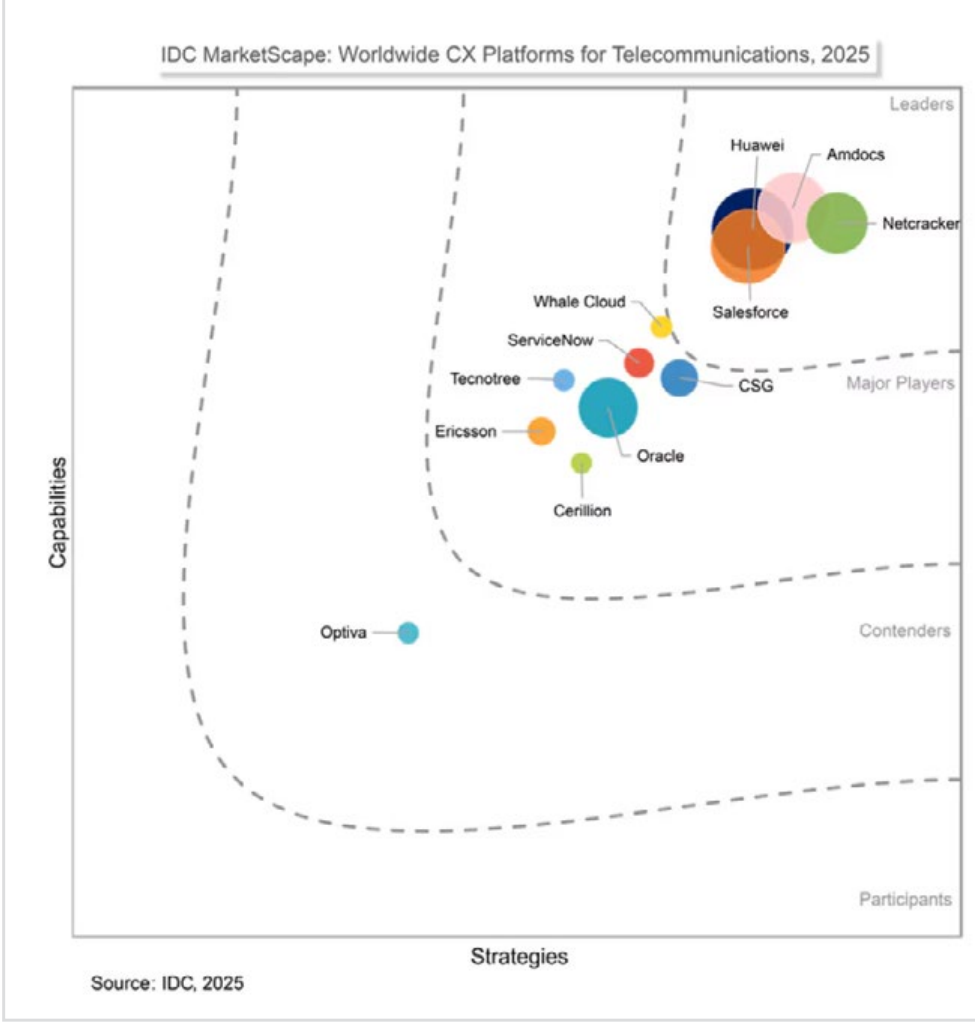
Huawei Lays Out Roadmap to Lead Global AI Computing

Huawei rotating chair Eric Xu detailed the company's roadmap for AI computing platforms, with plans to release the world's most powerful single system in Q4 2026 and double the performance with a new launch a year later. In his opening keynote, Xu unveiled the Atlas 950 SuperPoD supporting more than 8,000 Ascend GPUs and scheduled for launch in Q4 next year. It will feature 128 computing racks and cover about 1,000 sq meters. The announcement is the first time the company has shared its long-term chip plans and comes after years of remaining silent on key technology developments. He compared the development with Nvidia's

next upgrade, scheduled to come out in H2 next year. The Atlas 950 will deliver 6.7 times greater computing power and 15 times more memory capacity, reaching 1152TB. In Q4 2027, Huawei will ship the Atlas 960 SuperPod fitted with up to 15,488 Ascend 960 chips. The system will have a computing power of 30 exaflops and memory capacity of 4,460TB. Xu stated the two systems will lead the world in key metrics and remain the world's most powerful super nodes for many years to come. He added Huawei believes the impact goes beyond AI, as the technology can bring significant value to general purpose computing on the demand side in China. Huawei has been subject to sanctions from the west, blocking its access to the most advanced semiconductor manufacturing process nodes, he noted. "We need to put together less advanced chips and form them into a super pod, which can work as one computer." He acknowledged at the chip level, the performance of an individual AI Huawei chip is not as good as Nvidia's, "but at a super pod level, we can deliver the most powerful systems in the market". Speaking a day after a Chinese regulator reportedly ordered domestic technology companies to stop buying Nvidia AI chips, Xu reminded the audience of a forecast he made last year at the event that China will continue to lag behind in semiconductor manufacturing for "a very long time". Over the next three years, Huawei will release three new series of Ascend chips: the 950 series, including the 950PR and the 950DT, the 960 and the 970. Within the 950 line-up, the Ascent 950PR is optimized for the prefilled stage of inference and for recommendation, and will be available in the first quarter of 2026 in two form factors. The 950DT, with interconnected bandwidth reaching 2Tb/s, will ship in Q4 2026. The Ascend 960 will have twice the computing power, memory bandwidth and memory capacity of its predecessor and will be available in Q4 2027.

Huawei Named a Leader in IDC MarketScape's "Worldwide Customer Experience Platforms for Telecommunications"

Huawei's SmartCare and Business Support Systems solutions have received top marks from IDC, a leading research and consulting firm, earning a spot in the "Leaders" quadrant of the firm's IDC MarketSpace assessment of technology vendors ("IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Customer Experience Platforms for Telecommunications 2025 Vendor Assessment". According to the IDC MarketScape, the telecom industry is at a crossroads, where basic connectivity is seen as a utility with limited room for differentiation. Improving customer experience is telcos' #1 means of achieving competitive differentiation. Leveraging AI and big data analytics is a core requirement and significant differentiator among suppliers. Huawei's SmartCare solution integrates advanced technologies, such as spatiotemporal digital twins, cross-domain (OSS + BSS + Social) data convergence, GenAI and LLM, and has achieved remarkable results in user experience optimization, satisfaction management, and differentiated experience monetization.



Huawei 5G Core Named "Leader" for the Seventh Consecutive Year and Awarded

GlobalData has released its 5G Mobile Core Competitive Landscape Assessment report which again identifies Huawei 5G Core as a leader. This marks the seventh consecutive year Huawei has received this recognition. For the past two years the company also achieved the highest scores across all evaluation categories. The report evaluates global 5G mobile core solutions in eight areas including architecture, cloudification, performance, multimedia, network automation, evolution, solution maturity, and standards leadership. According to GlobalData the construction of standalone 5G core networks has become essential to support functions such as network slicing, private networks, and autonomous networks. These functions are seen as central to enabling business models and preparing for future network development. GlobalData stated that 5G has emerged as a key driver of the digital economy. Operators are accelerating the construction of 5G SA core networks to offer capabilities such as network slicing, industry-specific private networks, and autonomous networks, driving 5G business monetization and preparing for future network evolution. Huawei 5G Core uses a cloud native and microservice based elastic architecture. This design is built to ensure stability, efficient software iteration, and flexible deployment. It allows networks to maintain continuity under heavy traffic while keeping services available without interruption. The report highlights Huawei solutions that focus on service innovation. The Intelligent Personalized Experience system uses real time user data to adjust service quality and support monetization of user experience. The Single Voice Core solution provides compatibility across different generations of voice services and enables AI supported calling and high definition video communication. In enterprise markets Huawei 5G Core is positioned to support industry digitalization through tailored solutions. The company has also introduced the Telco Intelligent Converged Cloud which integrates artificial intelligence to improve energy efficiency and expand service innovation. At Mobile World Congress 2025 Huawei announced what it called the first AI native core network. The company has stated that it will continue to advance and deploy AI based core networks worldwide to improve efficiency and deliver more intelligent and personalized communication services. Looking ahead, Huawei will continue to promote and apply the AI core network worldwide, driving the entire industry towards the intelligent world and bringing more intelligent, efficient, and personalized communication services to users.

Zong, Huawei Jointly Launch Innovative GigaAAU FDD Massive MIMO

Zong, Pakistan leading 4G mobile network operator and Huawei jointly launched GigaAAU FDD Massive MIMO in the network. This deployment has resulted in an average increase of 150+% in downlink traffic and an average improvement of 330+% in user experience. Zong Pakistan has consistently prioritized technology and innovation, particularly in 4G and cloud-based services, positioning itself as a leader in digital transformation within the Pakistani telecommunications industry. They were the first to launch 4G in Pakistan and showcasing their commitment to staying at the forefront of technological advancements. Over the past three years, there has been a notable increase in Zong 4G users and data traffic. The number of active 4G users has risen by 57%, while user traffic has increased by 58%. In light of the current trend, it is important to enhance 4G network capacity and efficiency to effectively address the increasing demand. Huawei's latest GigaAAU FDD Massive MIMO supports dual bands (1.8G & 2.1G), with a maximum transmission power of 480W and with less power consumption. It can deliver 3-fold to 4-fold downlink capacity gains (vs LTE 4T4R) on 4G networks, thereby effectively alleviating network congestion. To handle complex traffic and interference, the solution utilizes enhanced intelligent beamforming to achieve dynamic beam movement with users and intelligent interference avoidance, ultimately enhancing the user experience. The solution also features "0 bit 0 watt" energy saving, with off-peak power consumption near zero watt to promote environmental protection and greener network. Zong and Huawei, as strategic partners, continue to enhance network performance and digital connectivity across Pakistan. This collaboration reflects the commitment of both organizations to provide innovative solutions and reshaping the telecommunication landscape. As advancements in multiple antenna technology continue, Zong and Huawei are positioned to play a significant role in setting new standards for high-capacity mobile networks.

Nexign Boosts CSP Revenue with TCO-Efficient Solutions for 5G SA and Satellite Connectivity Monetization

Nexign, a leading provider of BSS and digitalization solutions, is driving new monetization opportunities for communications service providers (CSPs) by unveiling cost-efficient, AI-powered products. They help CSPs accelerate business growth in emerging areas such as Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite connectivity, 5G Non-Terrestrial Networks (5G NTN), and 5G Standalone (SA) services.

Advancing Satellite-to-Cellphone Connectivity: With satellite-to-cellphone technology gaining momentum worldwide, 42 countries are already investing in partnerships that promise to open new revenue streams for CSPs. New use cases include extended coverage, IoT connectivity in remote areas, enhanced resilience for critical communications, and connectivity for the aviation and maritime industries.

To address this demand, Nexign BSS now enables satellite operators to launch and monetize LEO satellite services based on 5G NTN technology. The solution automates and optimizes business processes, such as customer service, product configuration, and monetization. It can also manage the full lifecycle for satellite terminals: ordering, sales, warranty service, and remote diagnostics. Additionally, Nexign BSS supports geo-dependent rating and charging, country- and region-specific service access policies, and service-level agreements tailored to satellite industry requirements, such as latency, jitter, and availability. The platform's architecture provides satellite operators with the flexibility to deliver services across B2C, B2B, and B2G segments, monetize B2B2C scenarios, including wholesale agreements, for example, for airlines and mobile network operators (MNOs).

Supporting Efficient 5G SA Monetization

The rollout of 5G SA networks is accelerating. Today, 173 operators in 70 countries are investing in public deployments, while 77 have already launched or trialed 5G SA services, according to GSA. In the Middle East, 5G SA development is advancing in a strategic manner, led by Gulf countries, such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia. However, despite this growth, CSPs continue to face the challenge of balancing large-scale capital expenditures with network complexity arising from managing hybrid 2G/3G/4G/5G networks.

To mitigate these challenges and accelerate ROI from 5G, Nexign has introduced Nexign Network Monetization & Efficiency Suite that provides a convergent TCO-efficient approach to monetization and ensures seamless customer service across 3G, 4G, and 5G networks. The suite incorporates converged charging, policy management, and signaling solutions. These solutions help CSPs transit to 3GPP-compliant, converged network architecture and ensure smooth subscriber migration through 4G/5G core interoperability. Positioned for Tier 1 and Tier-2 operators, the suite has already proven its efficiency—in one of our recent projects, Nexign Converged Policy Management (PCRF/PCF) demonstrated up to 40% performance improvement comparing to the legacy solution, allowing a Tier-1 operator to optimize its annual investments in network infrastructure.

Leveraging AI for Industry Transformation

Artificial intelligence (AI) continues to play a pivotal role in telecom innovation, with 77% of the industry's executives acknowledging its impact on agility and responsiveness to market disruptions. Nexign is expanding its integration of AI

technologies within its BSS to support such functions as automated billing, ML-based segmentation for personalized offerings, and GenAI-driven optimization of product and service configuration. Additionally, Nexign Anomaly Detector leverages AIOps and ML-techniques to identify anomalies in complex business processes, monitor business efficiency, safeguard revenues, and reinforce service continuity for subscribers.

"Nexign remains committed to advancing modernization of telecom operations and enabling CSPs to capture opportunities in new growth areas," states Maxim Nartov, Chief Business Officer, Nexign. "With the introduction of our AI-powered, converged product portfolio, we provide operators with the technological and operational foundation to optimize costs, strengthen resilience, and accelerate innovation across various network types and generations."

Nexign is going to present its cost-efficient, AI-powered solutions at GITEX Global 2025, taking place on October 13-17 at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

Nokia and INX-ZA Future-Proof Internet Connectivity for South Africa's Digital Communities

Nokia has been selected by INX-ZA, the Internet Exchange Point division of the Internet Service Provider Association (ISPA), to modernize its exchange infrastructure. INX-ZA will deploy Nokia's high-performance IP routing portfolio to offer new 400GE and expanded 100GE services to its customers across the country. As a result, businesses and internet users can now experience faster, more resilient, and future-ready Internet connectivity in South Africa. Internet exchanges are a critical component of the digital ecosystem, enabling data to be exchanged locally and reducing dependency on expensive international bandwidth. Yet many IXPs across Africa still operate on aging platforms that lack scalability and efficiency. INX-ZA's shift to Nokia's solution addresses these limitations head-on, opening the door to more energy-efficient, scalable and high-density infrastructure that can evolve alongside the region's digital ambitions. "Upgrading to Nokia's 400GE-ready infrastructure isn't just about adding capacity – it's about reimagining how South Africa connects. With this modern, energy-efficient platform, INX-ZA can deliver faster, more reliable, and more sustainable interconnection services while maintaining the uptime and performance our community has come to expect of us. Nokia's technology gives us the scale and capability to keep our exchanges at the forefront of global standards and power the country's digital economy for the future." Nishal Goburdhan, INX-ZA's General Manager said, Nokia will upgrade INX-ZA's Internet Exchange Points in Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban, beginning with Johannesburg – home to JINX, Africa's oldest Internet Exchange Point, which has achieved 100% uptime since its launch in 1996. Together, Nokia and INX-ZA will expand JINX from seven to ten data centers by year-end, deploying thirty high-performance platforms in phase one to preserve its industry-leading availability while extending its reach. "As people are consuming and producing more content and businesses are moving their loads to the cloud, Internet Exchanges are an essential and critical part of digital infrastructure. Working with customers like INX-ZA, which is deeply committed to technical excellence and community enablement, aligns with our belief in delivering resilient, sustainable and scalable trusted infrastructure in South Africa. Our platforms offer the flexibility and openness needed to meet today's interconnection demands while paving the way for future innovation with SR Linux and automation."

Nokia Unveils Commercial 5G Solution for Next-Gen Digital Railway Operations Supporting FRMCS

Nokia has announced its new 5G radio solution, designed to deliver high-capacity, high-performance and resilient real-time communications to rail operators worldwide, setting the foundation for the Future Railway Mobile Communication System (FRMCS). As a cornerstone for smarter, safer and more efficient rail networks, the solution supports greater digitalization and automation, driving benefits for passengers, businesses and the environment. The launch features the

industry's first commercial 5G radio for the 1900 MHz (n101) band, along with Nokia's Core Enterprise Solution for Railways, purpose-built to accelerate the sector's digital transformation. In the coming decade, FRMCS will upgrade the current 2G Global System for Mobile Communications – Railway (GSM-R) and become the next-generation global standard designed for all railways. Its 5G-based successor, with built-in security and high reliability, enables enhanced automation, new digital applications, improved passenger services and secure cross-border communication. Nokia is a global leader in railway communications with decades of experience in GSM-R deployments across more than 20 countries. The company has been at the forefront of FRMCS development, collaborating with rail operators, governments, industry and standardization bodies to help shape the standard and enable its global deployment. The drive toward digitalization demands the kind of high-speed connectivity and data capabilities that legacy systems simply can't provide, creating an urgent need for rail operators worldwide to modernize. Our commercial 5G solution, backed by decades of proven rail industry expertise, reflects our commitment to laying the foundation for the next generation of railway operations. We offer a future-proof, flexible technology platform that supports a smooth transition to FRMCS while improving operational efficiency, safety and the overall passenger experience. Tommi Uitto, President of Mobile Networks, Nokia said, Nokia's new 5G radio is built for mission-critical communications and

supports strategic coexistence, enabling railways to migrate to 5G alongside legacy systems like GSM-R with no disruption. In addition, its fully optimized, cloud-native 5G SA core supports the full suite of FRMCS functionalities for the transport stratum. Modular, flexible and scalable, the solution enables both regional and nationwide deployments. It will also be tested under the EU-funded FP2-MORANE-2 project, which builds on earlier FRMCS initiatives to advance the digitalization of rail operations across Europe. The shift to a 5G solution introduces powerful capabilities that align perfectly with the operational needs of modern railways, particularly in border crossing scenarios. Here are some of the main benefits for rail operators and passengers: Automated train operations: Enabling real-time control and monitoring of trains to improve safety and efficiency and decreasing energy consumption and emissions. Passenger information systems: Providing real-time updates and information to passengers for a better travel experience. Mission-critical voice communication: Integrating voice, video and data services in a single, standardized platform to enhance operations and infrastructure management. Smart rail maintenance: Utilizing predictive maintenance and real-time monitoring to reduce downtime and maintenance costs. Nokia is committed to driving the digital transformation of the railway sector through advanced, future-ready technologies. The new solution includes a commercial 5G radio for the 1900 MHz band from its industry-leading AirScale portfolio, paired with its railway-optimized Core Enterprise Solution. It is complemented by the company's extensive portfolio of mission-critical IP, optical and data center networking products. Nokia's solutions are also compliant with the highest standards and feature a best-in-class cybersecurity framework.

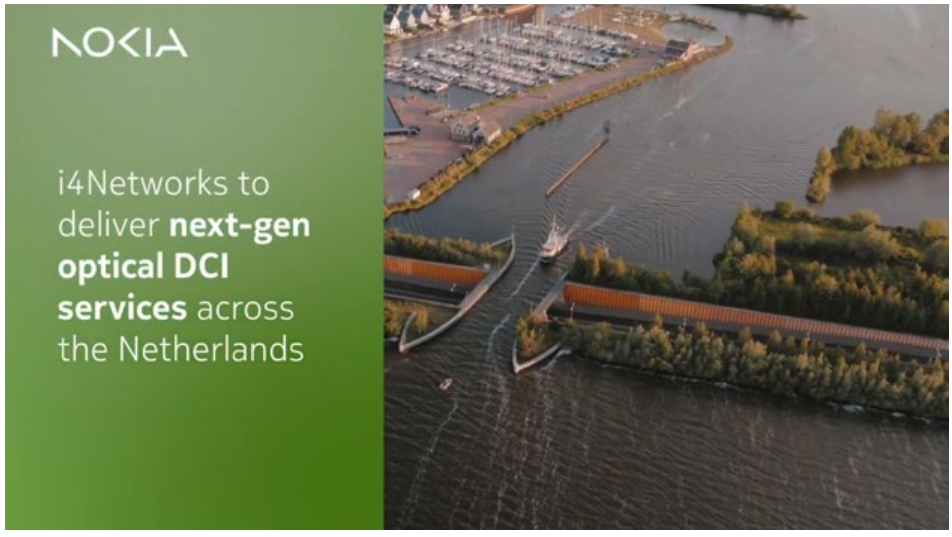
Nokia and KONGSBERG Sign Agreement to Advance Defense Communications with 5G Technology

Nokia and Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace (KONGSBERG), Norway' leading defense technology provider, specializing in advanced systems across land, sea, air, and space domains, announced the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to collaborate on enhancing tactical communications solutions for the defense sector. The agreement brings together KONGSBERG's expertise in military tactical communications and Nokia's leadership in commercial 4G, 5G, and private wireless technologies to deliver secure, resilient, and high-performance networks for defense organizations and allied nations. The collaboration will aim to simplify the deployment of 5G in tactical systems, enhancing reliable and interoperable battlefield communications. It will also explore opportunities including tactical 5G capabilities, integration with unmanned systems and sensors, and participation in European Defense Fund initiatives like 5G COMPAD and the Federated Advanced Cyber Physical Test Range (FACT) program. Longer term, the companies will look at future technologies such as Nokia's 6G "network as a sensor" (Integrated Sensing and Communication) to enhance situational awareness and military readiness. "By combining KONGSBERG's tactical communication assets with Nokia's leadership in industry-standard

technologies, we can speed up the use of civilian telecom solutions in defense. Together, we'll explore how 5G and 6G can support the developing connectivity requirements in tactical systems, from secure voice and real-time data to unmanned systems and advanced sensors," said Kjetil R. Myhra, EVP Defence Systems at Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace. "Many of our products in Nokia are inherently dual-use, serving both commercial and military needs. This collaboration with KONGSBERG underscores our commitment to providing advanced, secure and fast 5G mobile networks and integrating Nokia's Banshee radio portfolio to strengthen operations capabilities for a range of tactical scenarios," said Giuseppe Targia, Head of Space and Defense at Nokia.

i4Networks Deploys Nokia's Optical Solution to Deliver Data Center Interconnection Services Across the Netherlands

Nokia has announced that i4Networks has deployed its optical solutions to deliver next-generation optical DCI services across the Netherlands and abroad. The new next-generation DCI platform reinforces the Netherlands' position as a leading European internet hub, delivering faster and more cost-efficient connectivity while supporting the rapid expansion of data centers and cross-border data flows. The deployment enables i4Networks' SDWS solution, empowering the company to activate capacity for their customers in days, rather than weeks or months typical of traditional optical connections. This capability represents a significant shift for i4Networks, moving beyond transparent IP/MPLS connections. By extending this agility to the optical layer, the company can now offer the same level of on-demand service activation at higher capacities and with greater security, addressing the fast-growing needs of cloud providers, AI workloads, media services, and financial trading platforms. Leveraging the Nokia 1830 PSS-8 and 1830 PSI-M optical platforms, the new network delivers faster and more reliable interconnection between data centers while giving i4Networks customers the ability to easily scale capacity to 100G or 400G as demand surges, while built-in resilience automatically reroutes



traffic in the event of fiber cuts or other disruptions. "With Nokia's solutions, i4Networks' SDWS optical service gives our customers unprecedented flexible ways at deploying optical connectivity between data centers in the Netherlands at a fraction of the cost of the current solutions. What once required complex engineering and long lead times can now be done in days, opening new possibilities for resellers, internet exchanges, and cloud providers to deliver secure optical services when and where required," said Dirk Pol, CEO of i4Networks. "This deployment with i4Networks demonstrates the power of Nokia's optical solutions to deliver secure data center interconnection services. By using the latest generation of ROADM technology, we can dynamically add, drop, or redirect individual wavelengths of light in the network without disrupting other traffic, enabling automated service activation at the optical layer. We are helping our customers to reduce operational complexity, accelerate new service rollouts, and strengthen Europe's digital backbone.," said Mark Vanderhaegen, Head of Business Development, Data Center Networks at Nokia.

Nokia Expands Defense Portfolio with Two Advanced Tactical Communication Solutions

Nokia announced the launch of two advanced tactical communication solutions - Nokia Mission-Safe Phone and an upgraded Nokia Banshee 5G Tactical Radio - expanding its defense portfolio and reinforcing its commitment to providing a comprehensive, secure, high-performance system for modern military operations. Delivering unmatched bandwidth, mobility, and reliability at the tactical edge, these innovations enable real-time battlefield intelligence and mission-critical communications in even the most demanding environments. As 5G technology accelerates battlefield digitalization, defense forces require end-user devices capable of harnessing their full potential. The Nokia Mission-Safe Phone is a purpose-built defense smartphone engineered for resilience, security and performance. Developed and manufactured in Europe, the new product features a long-lifecycle chipset from Qualcomm. The Nokia Mission-Safe Phone is an open, customizable platform designed to seamlessly integrate new features, applications, and accessories, adapting to diverse customer needs and preferences. For demanding conditions, Savox Communications' complementary solutions can deliver superior audio performance and clear communication. Visitors to this year's DSEI UK (9–12 September) can explore these innovations at the Nokia booth. Validated with the Nokia Banshee portfolio of 4G and 5G tactical communications solutions, the Nokia Mission-Safe Phone offers military-grade durability and supports high-bandwidth applications, including multimedia and data-intensive operations. It is available in three versions, each adapted to support a range of missions and operational needs. All variants are MIL-Standard 810H and IP68 certified, ensuring resilience, reliability and mission readiness in any environment. Its rugged design and strong security make it a trusted choice for defense teams operating in demanding operational scenarios. Nokia is also launching the upgraded Banshee 5G Tactical Radio, now enhanced with 5G capabilities. This rugged, portable mobile 'network in a box' is designed for quick setup, strong security, and easy transport. With 5G, it offers higher bandwidth, faster speeds, and lower latency, making communications more reliable in challenging conditions. This Banshee radio gives teams a powerful tactical network anywhere it is needed, enabling instant coordination, fast data sharing, and better situational awareness in the field. "By harnessing the power of 5G and edge computing, Nokia is accelerating the digital transformation of battlespace. This launch marks a step toward unified battlefield communications. With the Nokia Mission-Safe Phone and the Nokia Banshee 5G Tactical radio, we're enabling next-generation connectivity and resilience. And with our fully integrated tactical communications ecosystem, we are uniquely positioned to meet the complete end-to-end needs of modern defense operations," Giuseppe Targia, Head of Space and Defense at Nokia said.

Optus, Nokia Create Portable Tower

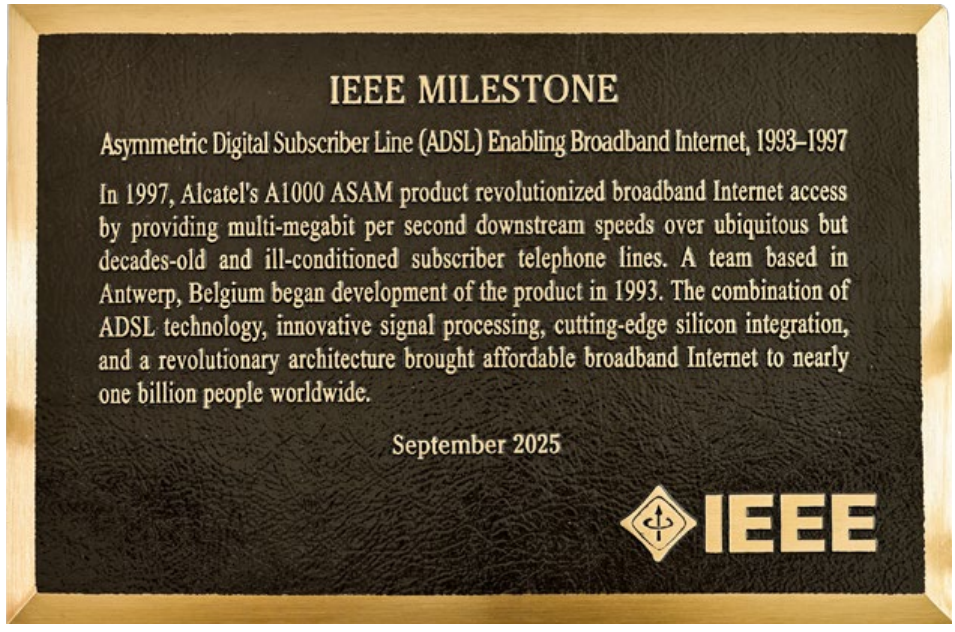
Australian operator Optus and Nokia partnered to develop a tethered drone system fitted with a small cell, functioning as a portable tower to maintain mobile coverage during emergencies. Nokia's small cell connects to Optus' core network by satellite, allowing it to work independently without relying on a mobile tower, the companies stated. Integrating the technologies enables rapid restoration of voice and data services in disaster-affected areas, they explained. The drone made by Melbourne-based unmanned aerial vehicle technology company XM2 can run for up to seven days without re-charging, as its powered from a ground station. It can operate at altitudes of up to 120m and is designed to deliver 4G and 5G coverage with voice and SMS across about a 2km radius. Optus CTO of Networks Tony Baird suggested there is strong potential for the technologies to play a role in improving preparedness and response during future natural disasters. The drone system delivers 4,500W of continuous power and high-speed fiber connectivity to a heavy-lift drone platform, supporting payloads up to 15kg. Tests of the drone and small cell systems took place at Macquarie University, with Optus investigating integrating them into its operational disaster response toolkit.

Nokia Modernizes Open DC AI Data Centers

Extreme Broadband (EBB) subsidiary Open DC selected Nokia to upgrade its AI data centers, with the vendor's energy-efficient IP network equipment to interconnect six facilities in Malaysia. In a joint statement, the companies explained the agreement supports Malaysia's National Cloud Computing Policy, and meets the requirements of the country's banking and financial services industry. The deal covers Nokia's interconnect routers, and data Centre gateway and quantum-safe network equipment. Open DC MD Wong Weng Yew noted Nokia's systems will improve security and scalability, enabling it "to build connectivity hubs that support AI-driven innovation and create new revenue opportunities for enterprises". Nokia also reached a deal with EBB to develop a joint go-to-market strategy for data Centre and AI connectivity, offering quantum-safe network, enterprise connectivity and value-added services for its clients.

Nokia Recognized with IEEE Milestone Award for ADSL Breakthrough, Enabling the Evolution from 1 Mbps to 100 Gbps Broadband

Nokia announced that IEEE, the world's largest technical professional organization advancing technology for humanity, recognized the company for its introduction and worldwide deployment of ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line) as an IEEE Milestone. Close to one billion people benefited directly from this innovative technology breakthrough that laid the foundation for modern broadband. Developed in 1993 in Antwerp, Belgium, ADSL was the first large-scale broadband technology. It delivered multi-megabit internet over standard telephone lines, making broadband accessible and affordable for billions around the world. This innovation transformed digital connectivity and helped shape the internet-driven world we live in today. The IEEE Milestone program honors significant achievements found in unique products, services, seminal papers and patents that have stood the test of time and brought lasting benefit to humanity. ADSL now joins a distinguished list of IEEE Milestone-recognized breakthroughs, including Maxwell's equations, the transatlantic cable, and the Compact Disc. "The IEEE Milestone Program recognizes great moments throughout our world's long history of technical innovation. They are a symbol around the world of how electrical engineering and computing have built the modern world," said Kathleen Kramer, 2025 IEEE President & CEO. "Milestones can also help to increase the public's understanding of the contributions to society made by electrical, electronics, and computer engineers, and the strides made by countless technologists as they sought to advance technology to benefit humanity." "ADSL signified the birth of broadband," said Geert Heyninck, General Manager of Broadband Networks at Nokia. "It was a moment of transformation — moving beyond the dial-up era to a new world of always-on, high-speed connectivity. And it didn't stop there. From those first 1 Mbps ADSL demos to our recent 100 Gbps proof-of-concepts, we've been pushing the limits of broadband innovation for over 30 years." Since ADSL, Nokia has pioneered many broadband breakthroughs including VDSL, 10G PON, 25G PON, and most recently, 100G PON — technologies that are up to 100,000 times faster than the original ADSL proof of concept.



Ooredoo Unveils Salalah Data Center and Cable Station

Ooredoo has launched the Salalah Data Centre and submarine cable landing station, a key project that aims to establish Oman as a key digital hub in the region. The new data Centre is located in the Dhofar region and has been launched to connect Asia, Europe and Africa. Meanwhile, this new facility is the first in southern Oman to combine a class 3-compliant data Centre with a submarine cable landing station and supports new cloud, AI and edge computing services. The Centre will start with space for 125 server racks and will expand to 500 over time, setting a new standard for digital infrastructure in Oman, Ooredoo revealed. The Salalah hub will also support Ooredoo's wider network, allowing other Ooredoo branches to use it to land traffic, host cloud services and share digital infrastructure. According to the company, the move provides a secure southern gateway for international cables, improves network strength, lowers delays and offers faster, more reliable connections. It is also expected to attract global companies, cloud providers and hyperscalers to Oman, boosting the economy and creating jobs. Ooredoo director of infrastructure, Saed Al Ghafri, said: "The Salalah data Centre and landing station is a catalyst for Oman's digital future. "It reinforces our role in driving economic diversification, attracting global digital investment and enabling the next wave of cloud and AI innovation. By creating a southern gateway for international connectivity, we are strengthening Oman's position as a regional leader in the digital economy and unlocking long-term value for businesses, communities and the wider region."

SES Tests Optical Ground Links

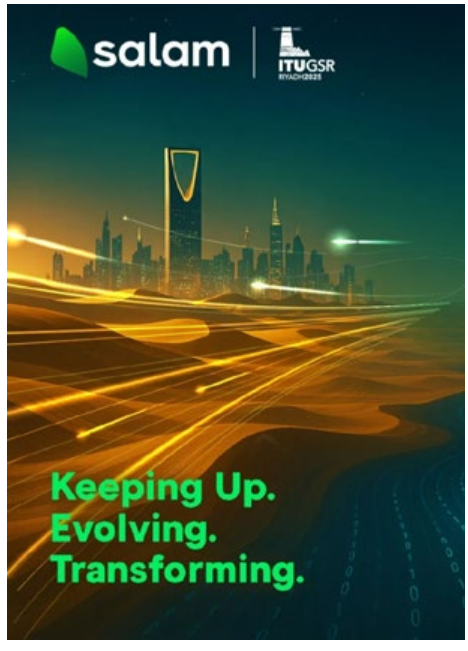
Satellite player SES detailed plans to explore a method of transmitting data to ground stations without using radio, looking into the potential to increase data rates and security. SES stated it plans to test optical ground stations constructed by France-based Cailabs, a specialist in laser light technology for sectors including aerospace and defence, welding and manufacturing, and fiber networks. The satellite player highlighted lasers offer potential data rates of up to 10Gb/s, along with strong resistance to jamming and interception. But it acknowledged the Earth's atmosphere is a challenge for light-based transmission, creating turbulence which can cause beams to vacillate and break up. Cailabs offers a solution in the form of multi-plane light conversion technology, which SES explained adapts to ensure the clarity of the laser signal. It plans to test the optical links at ground stations capable of delivering two-way transmissions at 10Gb/s. SES noted the optical approach would be a radical departure from radio-based transmissions which have dominated satellite communications since the 1960s, addressing various issues including increasingly busy airwaves. Cailabs CEO Jean-Francois Morizur said its optical ground station technology is "already field-proven with a variety of satellites and terminals", providing "top performance in mitigating atmospheric turbulence". Carmel Ortiz, SVP of MEO programs at SES, added the ground stations could become a central component in the satellite company's global network of gateways.

SES, HD PLUS Aim to Enhance TV and IPTV Services in Germany

SES, the operator of the ASTRA satellites, and HD PLUS GmbH, the operator of the hybrid SAT and IPTV platform HD+, will be working more closely together following a leadership change in HD PLUS GmbH. Christoph Mühleib, Managing Director at SES in Germany, will take over from Andreas Müller-Vondey, as the new Managing Director of HD PLUS GmbH and join the management board of HD PLUS GmbH with effect from October 1, 2025. Christoph will oversee both SES's businesses in the DACH region. Müller-Vondey will step down from his role at HD PLUS GmbH on September 30, 2025. HD PLUS GmbH is a wholly owned subsidiary of SES established in 2009. It markets the product HD+, which offers a range of HD and Ultra HD channels receivable in Germany via SES's ASTRA satellite system. Over 16 million TV households in Germany receive their TV programming via ASTRA satellites – completely free of connection costs or monthly subscription fees. HD+ offers consumers in Germany access to high-definition television and numerous convenient TV services via satellite and IP. Together, the two companies reach not only all SAT TV households via the HD+ branded operator app in many TV sets from major TV manufacturers, but also numerous other TV and content fans via IPTV. Deepak Mathur, President Media Vertical at SES said, Andreas has played a decisive role in shaping HD+ since 2010. We appreciate Andreas for his commitment over the past 15 years, and wish him all the best for the future. As TV and video consumption patterns evolve, the strategies of TV broadcasters and hardware manufacturers are also changing. We believe a closer integration between SES in Germany and HD PLUS will bring valuable opportunities for TV broadcasters, content providers and consumers

Etihad Salam Telecom Company Announced as Gold Sponsor of the Side Event Exhibition at the Global Symposium for Regulators

Etihad Salam Telecom Company ("Salam"), the national leader in telecommunications and information technology in the Kingdom, announced its participation as the Gold Sponsor of the Side Event Exhibition organized by the Communications, Space and Technology (CST) Commission on the sidelines of the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR25). The event will be held from 31 August to 3 September 2025 at the King Abdulaziz International Conference Centre in Riyadh. The Event will showcase the latest digital technologies and solutions, with the participation of leading local and international companies. It reflects the Kingdom's pioneering role in the ICT sector and contributes to driving innovation and supporting the advancement of digital sustainability. On this occasion, Eng. Ahmed Al-Anqari, Chief Executive Officer of Salam, stated: "We are proud to be the Gold Sponsor of this Side Event Exhibition, which allows us to present our innovative solutions and services, and to contribute to supporting the Kingdom's digital transformation goals while strengthening its position as a pivotal hub for technology and telecommunications." It is worth noting that the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR25), organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in partnership with the Communications, Space and Technology Commission, is a prestigious global platform that brings together more than 190 countries, with the participation of ministers, regulatory authorities, policymakers, and private sector leaders to discuss the future of digital regulation and policies that support innovation and sustainability.



stc Pay Bahrain Wins Fintech Telecommunications Award at Middle East Technology Excellence Awards 2025

stc pay, Bahrain's most innovative and accessible mobile wallet for digital financial transactions, has won the Fintech – Telecommunications category at the Middle East Technology Excellence Awards 2025. The recognition highlights stc pay's role in driving Bahrain's digital transformation and delivering secure, accessible, and innovative financial services to individuals and businesses across the Kingdom. Licensed by the Central Bank of Bahrain, stc pay has quickly become a leader in the country's fintech sector, offering services such as local and international transfers, bill payments, prepaid cards, and payroll solutions. Key initiatives include a partnership with the Labor Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) to provide new expatriates with instant IBAN-linked wallets, a Wage Protection System-compliant payroll service used by over 100 companies, and exclusive Mastercard products such as the Elite Card and Family Cards. The platform also supports Apple Pay, Samsung Pay, and Google Pay for seamless contactless transactions. Khalid Al Osaimi, Chairman of stc pay and CEO of stc Bahrain, commented. "This award reflects our commitment to providing secure, accessible, and innovative financial solutions for everyone in Bahrain. stc pay is more than just a mobile wallet – it is part of our vision for a cashless Bahrain, in line with the Kingdom's digital transformation strategy. We will continue to innovate and collaborate with our partners to make digital financial services even more inclusive and convenient for all." The Middle East Technology Excellence Awards celebrate innovation and excellence across the region's technology sector. By combining telecommunications expertise with advanced fintech solutions, stc pay continues to support Bahrain's vision of a fully digital economy and strengthen its position as a leader in the region's digital payments landscape.

Tech Mahindra and MIT Technology Review Insights Release Report on AI's Growing Role in Sustainable Product Design

Tech Mahindra, a leading global provider of technology consulting and digital solutions to enterprises across industries, in collaboration with MIT Technology Review Insights, released a joint report that emphasizes how enterprises can leverage artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance sustainability in product design and development. The report highlights that enterprises combining AI with sustainability in their design and prototyping processes will gain a significant competitive edge. The study finds that while AI adoption in product development is on the rise, many organizations are still in the exploratory stage. Full-scale implementation remains limited due to cost constraints, knowledge gaps, and rapidly shifting market dynamics. At the same time, increasing regulatory and societal expectations are putting corporates under pressure to reduce environmental footprints while continuing to innovate. Narasimham RV, President - Engineering Services, Tech Mahindra, said, "Enterprises today are under increasing pressure to innovate while reducing their environmental footprint. At Tech Mahindra, we empower enterprises to achieve this by embedding AI into the earliest stages of product development through tools like digital twins, simulations, and rapid prototyping. The joint study with MIT Technology Review Insights reinforces the importance of measurable, AI-driven frameworks that reduce emissions and help businesses future-proof their models responsibly." According to the research, nearly 80% of a product's environmental impact is determined at the design stage. AI-powered tools such as digital twins, simulations, and rapid prototyping can optimize designs for functionality, manufacturability, and sustainability, significantly reducing waste, emissions, and resource usage. Despite these opportunities, the study identifies key challenges enterprises face in embedding sustainability into product development. These include:

- Customer confusion about what makes a product truly sustainable
- Rapidly changing regulations and standards, a shortage of specialized talent
- The absence of measurable sustainability metrics to track progress.

The joint report emphasizes that by overcoming hurdles and adopting measurable AI-led frameworks, organizations can harness sustainability as a driver of innovation, ensuring long-term business resilience and contributing positively to the planet.

Tech Mahindra Earns Frost & Sullivan's 2025 Award for BPM

Frost & Sullivan is pleased to announce that Tech Mahindra, a leading global provider of technology consulting and digital solutions to enterprises across industries has been conferred the 2025 Asia-Pacific Technology Innovation Leadership Recognition in the business process management (BPM) industry for its outstanding achievements in digital transformation, intelligent automation, and AI-driven service delivery. This recognition highlights Tech Mahindra's ability to deliver measurable outcomes and drive future-ready operations, strengthening its market position across multiple industries. Tech Mahindra demonstrates how its innovation-led strategy aligns with client needs and is executed with precision, scalability, and speed. "Tech Mahindra continues to lead the BPM industry by building an expansive digital transformation solutions portfolio rooted in analytics, automation, and GenAI. Its Navixus™ business unit exemplifies strategic depth—unifying consulting, CX, intelligent operations, and industry-specific solutions under one framework that delivers business impact," said Sherrel Sonia Roche, associate director for customer experience research at Frost & Sullivan. Guided by a long-term growth strategy focused on digital innovation, customer-centricity, and co-innovation, Tech Mahindra has built a competitive edge through sustained investments in intellectual property development, strategic acquisitions, and R&D. Its AAC (Analytics, Automation, and Consulting) delivery model, powered by a 50,000+ strong multilingual human-digital workforce across 30 countries, empowers enterprises to transform operations and adapt quickly to market demands. Innovation is central to Tech Mahindra's approach. With more than 30 pre-built GenAI solutions and a robust 'AI Delivered Right' strategy, the company is disrupting the BPM landscape by simplifying next-gen technology adoption. Its Project Indus—the first indigenous Hindi-language foundational model—and Garuda, developed in partnership with Indosat Ooredoo Hutchison, showcase Tech Mahindra's leadership in building culturally contextual, conversational AI solutions. Birendra Sen, President, Business Process Services, Tech Mahindra, said, "At Tech Mahindra BPS, our focus is on driving strategic and operational efficiency for our customers by leveraging GenAI and other new-age technology-based solutions. Navixus™ serves as the transformation engine of our Business Process Services, helping eliminate workflow bottlenecks, reduce costs, and enable faster, data-driven decision-making. This award is a testament to all the methodical and productive steps taken by us to achieve the aforementioned."

ZTE and GO Telecom Achieve Saudi Arabia's First Long-Distance 5G-A mmWave Trial with 6 km Coverage

ZTE Corporation a global leading provider of integrated information and communication technology solutions, and GO Telecom of Saudi Arabia, have achieved a significant milestone through successful extensive outdoor trials of 5G-A millimeter-wave (mmWave) technology in the 26 GHz frequency band over a long distance. This pioneering initiative represents Saudi Arabia's first long-distance 5G-A mmWave trial, marking the beginning of a new era in high-capacity last-mile access communication. GO Telecom achieved remarkable results using a single user equipment powered by ZTE's latest mmWave network infrastructure equipment. The 6 km coverage range with 200 MHz bandwidth enabled connected devices to maintain nearly 1 Gbps downlink speeds in field testing, laying a solid foundation for Vision 2030. 5G-A mmWave can provide ultra-high-speed, low-latency, and high-capacity connectivity tailored for industries with demanding communication needs. This significantly boosts GO Telecom's enterprise business growth. Deploying enterprise private 5G-A networks, GO Telecom can support various sectors, such as smart stadiums, industrial automation, healthcare, transportation and logistics, smart agriculture, and critical infrastructure. This support enables real-time data processing, AI-powered automation, and seamless cloud integration. Additionally, the high-bandwidth capabilities of 5G-A mmWave make it an excellent choice for enterprise-grade Fixed Wireless Access (FWA). 5G-A mmWave offers fiber-like speeds in areas where fiber deployment is challenging. By leveraging these advantages, GO Telecom is well on its way to positioning itself as a leader in delivering next-generation digital transformation solutions for enterprises across Saudi Arabia. Sun Xuezhi, CEO of ZTE Saudi Arabia, stated: "This successful trial with GO Telecom demonstrates our shared commitment to advancing Saudi Arabia's digital transformation under Vision 2030. Together, we're unlocking new possibilities for enterprise connectivity across the Kingdom." This achievement marks a significant milestone in the ZTE and GO Telecom partnership, showcasing their joint leadership in delivering cutting-edge 5G-A solutions that drive digital transformation in Saudi Arabia and beyond.

Mobiuz and ZTE Complete Initial Network Upgrades in Uzbekistan

ZTE announced that it has completed the first phase a network modernization project for telecoms provider Mobiuz in the autonomous Republic of Karakalpakstan and the Khorezm region in Uzbekistan. According to ZTE, the project included the replacement of radio relay systems and base stations, along with the activation of over 1,200 new base stations across both regions. ZTE also said the upgrades are already yielding improvements in service quality and connectivity for residents and businesses in both regions. For example, according to independent tests by the Republican Center for Telecommunication Networks Control of Uzbekistan, internet speeds are 20% faster in Karakalpakstan and 33% faster in the Khorezm region. Meanwhile, the boost in network capacity has resulted in data traffic rising by 36% and 34% respectively. "Our advanced equipment and expertise have enabled a future-proof network infrastructure that will serve the people of Karakalpakstan and Khorezm for years to come," said Wang Guangdong, CEO of ZTE Uzbekistan, in a statement. Mobiuz CEO Sobir Aripov said the modernization project isn't just about technology or investment. "It's about our children receiving a good education, doctors utilizing modern opportunities, and entrepreneurs accessing new markets. The outstanding results in Karakalpakstan and Khorezm confirm we are on the right path." ZTE and Mobiuz said their partnership would continue with subsequent phases to further enhance connectivity and digital services, although no details were given.

China Telecom Shanghai Collaborates with ZTE and Industrial Partners to Deploy 5G-A EasyOn·Robot Private Network at WAIC 2025

ZTE Corporation, a global leading provider of integrated information and communication technology solutions, in partnership with China Telecom Shanghai, AgiBot, Donghao Lansheng (the operator of the exhibition and venue), and Shanghai Academy of Next Generation Information and Communications Technology, successfully deployed the cutting-edge 5G-A EasyOn·Robot private network at the 2025 World Artificial Intelligence Conference (WAIC). The WAIC 2025 is imperative to ensure that the network services were both reliable and efficient for the tens of thousands of participants and exhibitors who attended the conference. The 5G-A EasyOn·Robot private network guaranteed a high-reliability and low-latency wireless connection, which supported a variety of AI applications in the whole exhibition halls including the vital area known as "Shanghai Longtang-themed Robotics Street". This year, the exhibition hall saw a significant increase in demand for services such as high-definition video transmission, real-time human-machine interaction, and intelligent device collaboration due to the proliferation of intelligent devices. However, Wi-Fi encountered interference issues in high-density scenarios, resulting in slower speeds or failed connections, while traditional wired solutions were complex and limited in mobility. The exhibition operator Donghao Lansheng turned to the 5G-A minimalist private network, to meet the stringent requirements of applications such as embodied intelligence collaboration and AR demo, which require high reliability, low latency, and high traffic. The 5G-A EasyOn·Robot private network supplied by China Telecom Shanghai and ZTE guarantee an uplink rate of over 100 Mbps per user, a deterministic RTT latency of ≤10ms, and ultra-high reliability of 99.99%, thereby satisfying the requirements of a variety of intelligent terminals and applications. Effectively supporting the diversified innovative applications at WAIC 2025, on-site tests revealed uplink rates of 2 Gbps, downlink rates of 6 Gbps, and air interface latency of below 10ms for 5G-A terminals. The "Shanghai Longtang-themed Robotics Street", a standout feature of the exhibition, showcased the remarkable capabilities of AgiBot's robots through captivating performances. These robots masterfully blended artificial intelligence with traditional Chinese culture, skillfully writing the Chinese character "Fu", performing dynamic drumming, and executing robotic dragon dance. Audiences engaged in real-time conversations with the robots, experiencing how humanoid intelligence seamlessly integrates into daily life, offering innovative services and transformative possibilities for the future. The 5G-A minimalist private network powers exhibitions with high-performance wireless connectivity, offering swift deployment, strong anti-interference features, and exceptional mobility. It transforms exhibitions by enabling swarm intelligence through cloud-edge-device synergy, delivering captivating AR experiences, and providing seamless access to computing power. As a robust connectivity backbone for the conference, it drives cutting-edge, scalable digital and intelligent enhancements to exhibition experiences. Looking ahead, the 5G-A minimalist private network will catalyze smarter, more efficient industries, paving the way for a transformative digital future. This year's theme for WAIC is "Global Solidarity in the AI Era". The exhibition area spans over 70,000 square meters, drawing the attention of over 800 enterprises and showcasing more than 3,000 products.

SACOFA Partners with ZTE to Modernize SACOFA's Statewide Network in SARAWAK

ZTE Corporation, a global leading provider of integrated information and communication technology solutions, and SACOFA, Sarawak's leading telecommunications infrastructure provider, have formed a strategic partnership to modernize SACOFA's infrastructure network, setting the stage for Sarawak's next era of digital growth. This network modernization delivers scalable and ultra-broadband capacity by leveraging full-band Optical Transport Network (OTN) technologies capable of 1.6 Terabyte throughput, augmented with intelligent, AI-driven network control for superior reliability and spectrum efficiency. On the core transport network, it benefits from a 6-in-1 EDN (Enhanced Deterministic Networking) processor, supporting high-speed forwarding with guaranteed low latency and jitter-resilient performance for real-time applications. Together, these advancements bolster scalable bandwidth delivery, elevate service-level performance, and optimize operational efficiency. This initiative marks a significant milestone for Sarawak's connectivity. SACOFA is upgrading the core transport, routing, and optical layers with ZTE's advanced solutions. These enhancements provide a resilient foundation for long-term network availability and performance. Dato Sri Sulaiman Abdul Rahman B Abdul Taib, Managing Director of SACOFA, stated: "SACOFA's partnership with ZTE will bring us closer to the state government's vision of Post-COVID-19 Development Sarawak 2030 and the Sarawak Digital Blueprint 2030. By modernizing the network infrastructure, SACOFA is positioned to transform increased capacity and reliability into economic growth and enhanced operational readiness. This progress supports Sarawak's long-term digital and infrastructure goals. SACOFA marks a pivotal point in its digital transformation journey." Steven Ge, Managing Director of ZTE Malaysia, said: "This partnership combines SACOFA's strong local infrastructure expertise with ZTE's global innovation in core and optical transport technologies. Through this collaboration, we are delivering a future-proof digital backbone that enables 5G, cloud, and AI-driven services, supporting Sarawak's 2030 vision for a dynamic, inclusive digital economy."

Zong and ZTE Launch Industry's First 8x120W Ultra-Broadband Radio and Digital Intelligent Antenna Solution

ZTE Corporation a global leading provider of integrated information and communication technology solutions, and Zong, Pakistan's No.1 data network, have announced the commercial launch of the industry's first high-power 8T8R Ultra-Broadband Radio (HP 8T8R UBR) and Digital Intelligent Antenna (DIA) solution. This pioneering deployment marks a significant milestone for both companies. ZTE's HP 8T8R UBR solution delivers the industry's highest power (8x120W) for FDD dual band (1800MHz and 2100MHz), which are the key bands of Zong network. It is also the first such solution to be commercially launched worldwide. This breakthrough in RRU high integration design enables a single unit to replace multiple legacy RRUs, saving up to 67% of RRUs for towers. This consolidation dramatically reduces the complexity of deployments, minimizes antenna space requirements, and lowers the overall equipment footprint. Coupled with ZTE's DIA antenna solution, the system supports the beamforming function by software definition which enables two 4T4R cells for current network or one 8T8R cell for the next-generation network. The two companies are also exploring cost-efficient deployment strategies. For the scenario defined for newly rolled-out sites, they are used as "422" site which means one 4T4R cell and two 2T2R cells per site, particularly in scenarios where space and power are constrained. Results from Zong's commercial launch revealed significant performance enhancements, including a capacity increase of 34% in daily and 83% in busy hour, a user experience improvement of 173% in daily and 115% in busy hour. Beyond improved performance, it simplifies deployment and has proven to be a reliable and efficient alternative to traditional multi-radio setups.

Zong has expressed strong interest in scaling these solutions across its network, citing clear operational benefits, cost savings, and improved service quality. This milestone underscores the shared commitment of Zong and ZTE to driving technological innovation and delivering next-generation network experiences. Through close collaboration, both companies are not only accelerating the evolution of Pakistan's digital infrastructure but also setting a new benchmark for efficient, high-performance mobile networks across emerging markets. As the partnership deepens, Zong and ZTE will continue to explore cutting-edge solutions that empower users and enable sustainable growth.

ZTE Partners with DroidUp to Enable Embodied Intelligence Via 5G-A EasyOn·Robot Private Network at 2025 World Robot Conference

ZTE Corporation, a global leading provider of integrated information and communication technology solutions, partnered with DroidUp, a humanoid robot company, to demonstrate the groundbreaking capabilities of embodied intelligence via the 5G-A EasyOn·Robot private network at the 2025 World Robot Conference (WRC 2025). The network featuring large-capacity and low-latency 5G-A performance effectively fulfilled the requirements of diverse smart devices, facilitating various embodied intelligence applications. This year, the theme for WRC 2025 is "Making Robots Smarter, Making Embodied Agents More Intelligent". It is committed to spotlighting the latest achievements in robotics while driving global industry collaboration. The exhibition covered around 50,000 square meters and drew the attention of over 1,240 exhibitors. At the event, ZTE and DroidUp showcased a variety of embodied intelligence performances via the 5G-A minimalist private network, including real-time communication and robots' live stage performances. A significant highlight of the demonstration was the interactive display of cutting-edge technologies, enabling visitors to witness the evolution of embodied intelligence and bridging innovation with real-world applications. The 5G-A EasyOn·Robot private network supplied by ZTE guaranteed ultra-high throughput, up to 2 Gbps uplink and 6 Gbps downlink, a deterministic RTT latency of ≤10ms, and ultra-high reliability of 99.99%. These capabilities satisfy the needs of a variety of intelligent terminals and applications, including the seamless streaming of high-definition video from diverse robots, real-time communication, and the coordination of high-frequency, precise motions, effectively supporting the diversified performances at the event. Additionally, the 5G-A minimalist private network serves as a powerful connectivity backbone for exhibitions, supporting advanced digital and intelligent enhancements and driving the evolution of exhibition experiences. The 5G-A EasyOn·Robot private network vigorously promotes technological innovation in the field of artificial intelligence and robotics, further enhancing the capabilities of 5G-A networks to support more advanced applications and services. Moving forward, ZTE will continue to cooperate with industrial partners to provide strong support for the global development of 5G-A networks and ecosystems, deepen industry exchanges, and write a new chapter in the future of artificial intelligence.

ZTE and MTN Commercially Deploy World's First 5-Band RRU

ZTE Corporation a global leading provider of integrated information and communication technology solutions, and MTN, a leading operator in Africa, announced the successful commercial deployment of the world's first 5-band Remote Radio Unit (RRU). This milestone, achieved in South Africa's Western Cape Province, represents a significant breakthrough in global radio frequency technology and injects strong momentum into the technological evolution of Africa's telecommunications industry. As one of Africa's largest and most advanced telecommunications markets, South Africa serves a population of over 60 million people, with MTN providing more than 97% LTE population coverage across the country. This extensive reach reflects MTN's commitment to delivering high-quality communication services to even the most remote communities. With increasing demand for multi-band and multi-module services, network operators face mounting challenges such as power consumption, tower load, and limited space, all of which can hinder the evolution of mobile networks. The recent deployment of MTN's 5-band RRU directly addresses these issues. This innovative solution improves network performance, enhances energy efficiency, and simplifies deployment processes, enabling faster and more sustainable expansion of next-generation connectivity. New frequency bands on a mobile site require new hardware and additional space and power. The 5-band RRU, powered by ZTE's in-house design chipset, integrates all MTN South Africa's low and mid bands (FDD) into a single compact unit. This integration reduces the number of RAN Radio Frequency modules on towers by 50%, decreases equipment weight by 23%, and minimizes wind resistance by 18%. These optimizations streamline site construction, reduce deployment complexity, and free up valuable space on towers. In addition, ZTE's innovative Super-N amplifier architecture utilizes dense arrays of power amplifiers with on-demand activation capability. It overcomes the efficiency bottleneck of traditional Doherty architecture and maintains high efficiency under varying loads, achieving a remarkable 42.7% reduction in overall site power consumption and a 45.8% improvement in energy efficiency (Wh/GB). This not only supports South Africa in building a green, low-carbon society but also sets a new benchmark for sustainable development in the industry, demonstrating the immense potential of technological innovation in balancing economic and environmental benefits. Luca Shen, Chief Executive Officer, ZTE South Africa, remarked: "ZTE has always regarded product leadership as its core competitiveness and is committed to delivering cutting-edge solutions. The in-depth collaboration with MTN not only achieves mutual benefits and win-win outcomes for both parties but also accelerates the rapid upgrade of South Africa's telecommunication network, setting a benchmark for digital transformation across the African continent."

ZTE's 15 Standards Proposals Adopted at Accelerate Asia 2025

ZTE Corporation, a global leading provider of integrated information and communication technology solutions, and TM Forum, jointly hosted the four-day "Accelerate Asia 2025" conference in Haikou, Hainan. The conference brought together over 150 senior experts from global operators, telecom vendors, and the industry. As a core contributor, ZTE has deeply engaged in three strategic technology domains—Composable IT & Ecosystems, Autonomous Networks, and AI & Data Innovation—delivering 15 standard proposals during the conference and emerging as a pivotal force in promoting global industry-standard development. In Composable IT & Ecosystems Mission, ZTE accelerated the standardization process through innovative forms such as API Spec Jam and Component Spec Jam. By focusing on OPEN API contributions, ZTE collaborated with industry partners to advance two standards, the engagement access API and the digital twin network optimization API, while also submitting three new Open API interface proposals, continuously expanding the ecosystem landscape of TM Forum Open APIs. In Autonomous Networks Mission, ZTE, together with industry partners, initiated and secured adoption of the three solution package proposals for home broadband complaint handling, individual service complaint handling and private line service delivery. Furthermore, ZTE took the lead in drafting three standard documents on self-healing domain, deeply participated in writing a standard proposal for autonomous computing networks, and continued to advance the AI native blueprint from concept to standard in the direction of AI and data innovation, solidifying the technical foundation for high-level autonomous networks. In addition to deeply participating in multiple rounds of technical standard discussions, ZTE showcased two catalyst innovation projects on site: "AI-driven proactive customer-centric O&M: empowered by multi-agent and digital twin" and "Multi-layer cross-domain multi-agent systems for 'dark factory' network fault healing", which sparked enthusiastic responses and led to consensus on the follow-up standard initiation and industrial implementation. From standards to practice: driving industry adoption and fostering a seamless ecosystem As the first Accelerate Asia event held by TM Forum in China, this conference not only marked a significant milestone for international technical collaboration, but also highlighted China's leading role in the global digital ecosystem. Zheng Peng, Vice President of ZTE, emphasized that ZTE is not only a contributor to standards but also a committed practitioner. Moving forward, ZTE and TM Forum will further deepen their cooperation to promote the implementation of the conference outcomes. Together with with industry partners, both parties will collaborate carry out pilot projects to validate technical routes, aiming to advance Autonomous Networks and AI innovations through an open architecture and accelerate the journey toward intelligent transformation.

Beeline and ZTE Advance Kazakhstan's Digital Future with Giga City 2.0

ZTE Corporation a global leading provider of integrated information and communication technology solutions, and Beeline Kazakhstan, a subsidiary of VEON Group and one of the country's leading telecom operators, launched Giga City 2.0 – Green and AI New Era, highlighting advancements in smart and eco-friendly telecommunications. Building on the success of the Giga City project launched in 2024, the event marked new milestones in Kazakhstan's ongoing digital transformation. During the event, Beeline Kazakhstan and ZTE unveiled a series of joint pilot projects aimed at enhancing network quality, implementing green technologies, and advancing smart urban infrastructure. The event was held with the participation of representatives from the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations, and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The first Magic Pole smart infrastructure solution in Kazakhstan has been installed in the center of Astana. Developed by Beeline Kazakhstan and

ZTE, the Magic Pole is a multifunctional unit combining a mobile base station and street lighting. The solution optimizes network coverage in dense urban areas and will support smart city services. Its sleek design ensures seamless integration into the urban landscape. Another key initiative is the deployment of autonomous mast-mounted units along the Astana-Borovoe national highway where with no grid connection. Powered by an innovative hybrid power system, that integrates solar

panels and wind turbine only, operational autonomy and exceptional resilience in extreme weather conditions. The advanced hybrid power supply guarantees stable signal coverage even in the most remote sections of the highway, while significantly reducing the environmental impact. The success of this deployment sets a strong foundation for expanding similar solutions across other major highways in Kazakhstan. As part of the Giga City 2.0 presentation, the Qcell solution was demonstrated at the Mega Silkway shopping mall, showcasing its ability to support high-speed applications, eliminate indoor coverage dead zones, and significantly improves connection quality. Kaan Terzioglu, Chief Executive Officer of VEON Group, said, "From dense urban centers to solar-powered coverage along the major arteries of the country, the technologies that we unveil respond to the soaring demand in Kazakhstan for high-quality connectivity everywhere, powering services that reach every corner of this vast country. We are delighted to serve our customers - both consumers and enterprises – with solutions that are the backbone of connected society. We thank ZTE and our technology partners for a great collaboration that enables us to stay well ahead of the curve in customer experience." Xu Ziyang, Chief Executive Officer of ZTE Corporation, noted: "At ZTE, we believe that real progress is rooted in collaboration. Together with our trusted partner Beeline Kazakhstan and VEON, we are proud to integrate cutting-edge innovations that drive Kazakhstan's digital future. The Giga City 2.0 project exemplifies this vision - combining green technologies, AI, and smart infrastructure to transform urban landscapes and connectivity. Kazakhstan's journey toward digitization serves as a regional benchmark, and ZTE remains fully committed to empowering this transformation at every stage of the way." Evgeniy Nastradin, Chief Executive Officer of Beeline Kazakhstan, emphasized: "We showcased three innovative technological solutions in action, all designed to achieve one key goal: delivering wide coverage and stable mobile connectivity wherever our subscribers are. For us, it's essential to leverage cutting-edge technologies to create the best customer experience, no matter the industry challenges." In 2024, Beeline and ZTE completed a large-scale modernization of the 4G network in the Akmola and Turkestan regions, including the implementation of FDD Massive MIMO, which led to a 134% increase in throughput. The Giga City 2.0 initiative demonstrates the partners' steadfast commitment to advancing green technologies, AI-driven solutions, and the sustainable evolution of Kazakhstan's telecommunications infrastructure.

ZTE and TELE System Debut UP Stick the Next-Generation 4K STB at IBC2025

ZTE Corporation a global leading provider of integrated information and communication technology solutions, and TELE System, a renowned Italian consumer electronics brand, jointly announced the launch of UP Stick, a revolutionary 4K Google TV™ set-top box (STB), at IBC2025. This breakthrough product combines the latest Google TV 14 platform with a compact stick form factor, bringing Italian households a new level of entertainment experience with unparalleled portability, performance, and content accessibility. Powered by Google TV 14, the device offers enhanced performance, faster application responsiveness, and improved security, ensuring a seamless and reliable smart TV experience. It supports a wide range of premium content services, advanced voice control, and optimized UI design, creating a truly user-centric viewing experience. Unlike traditional set-top boxes, the stick form factor is ultra-compact, lightweight, and plug-and-play. Users can easily connect it directly to the TV's HDMI port, minimizing space requirements while enabling mobility — perfect for multi-room use or travel without sacrificing 4K UHD quality and advanced smart TV functionalities. The launch marks a significant milestone in Italy's TV device market, combining ZTE's cutting-edge R&D capabilities with TELE System's deep local market expertise and strong commitment to user needs. Looking ahead, the two companies are willing to bring more innovative, convenient, and immersive entertainment solutions to Italian households. Liu Qun, General Manager of Digital Home Product Line at ZTE, said, "This collaboration with TELE System represents a shared vision for the future of home entertainment—a future that is smarter, faster, and more sustainable", Flavio De Poli, CEO of TELE System, said, "By working closely with a tech partner like ZTE, we created an ultra-high-performance and intuitive device focused on the end-user. This UP Stick perfectly meets growing consumer demand for high-performance, feature-rich, and energy-conscious technology, serving as both today's ultimate media hub and tomorrow's smart home gateway."

ZTE

ZTE Business Portfolio: Driving Innovation & Growth

Government & Enterprise

Empowering Thousands of Industries

- Database
- Automotive Electronic
- Private Network
- Data Center
- Servers and Storage Products

Consumer

Creating Smart Life

- Smart Home
- Electronic Peripheral
- Smartphone
- Mobile Internet

Carrier

Building Superb Network

- Wireless Access
- Digital Energy
- Computing Infrastructure
- Fixed Access

Realizing Sustainable Development

- Servers and Storage Products
- Terminals
- Digital Energy
- 5G Industry Applications
- Automotive Electronics

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ARTICLE

How Personalization is Shaping the Future of Telecom Offerings

Maxim Nartov
Chief Business Officer
Nexign

Recently, one of our clients, a Tier-1 communications service provider (CSP) serving more than 70 million customers, reduced the number of its plans by 30% while successfully migrating 60% of its subscriber base to personalized offerings. Which product management approaches within the BSS system enabled achieving this on such a large scale? The answer to this question lies within the concept of catalog-driven personalization.

> *For telecom, the next stage of evolution lies in adopting an end-customer value model. The industry is shifting from the old approach of fixed data packages—such as 1 GB, 3 GB, or 5 GB—toward offerings like lag-free streaming, personalized bundles, and customizable service options. In today's market, the critical success factor is rapid reconfigurability.*

The telecom industry, at its core, is a loyalty-driven business: customer acquisition costs continue to rise, traditional communication channels are losing effectiveness, and the market is increasingly saturated. That is why loyalty remains the central focus. Customer loyalty strongly depends on a personalized offering: modern consumers want to receive only the tailored services they expect. However, personalization also works for CSPs, as it allows them to concentrate on revenue-generating activities, thereby improving overall business efficiency.

> *Developing a personalized service is a full-cycle process that requires careful execution. It starts with identifying customer needs, analyzing their consumption patterns, and creating the most relevant offer. This approach is most often applied when creating personalized propositions for existing customers, as it boosts both revenue and loyalty.*

Personalization as Key to Customer Engagement and Business Optimization

Service personalization has become a matter of survival for any industry. CSPs are actively developing tools and flexible mechanisms that allow them to create new products on the fly—for example, offering tailored data plans or custom discounts that can be seamlessly integrated into a base plan. This trend is now evolving into its next phase. Given the lowering margins in the telecom industry, personalization is not only a response to customer demand but also a potential barrier to optimizing internal operations. The key challenge lies in striking the right balance: delivering the personalized services customers want while keeping costs under control. From a management standpoint, the focus should shift from a traditional "easy way" of multiplying new products to enhancing and refining flexible configuration mechanisms that enable ongoing adaptability.

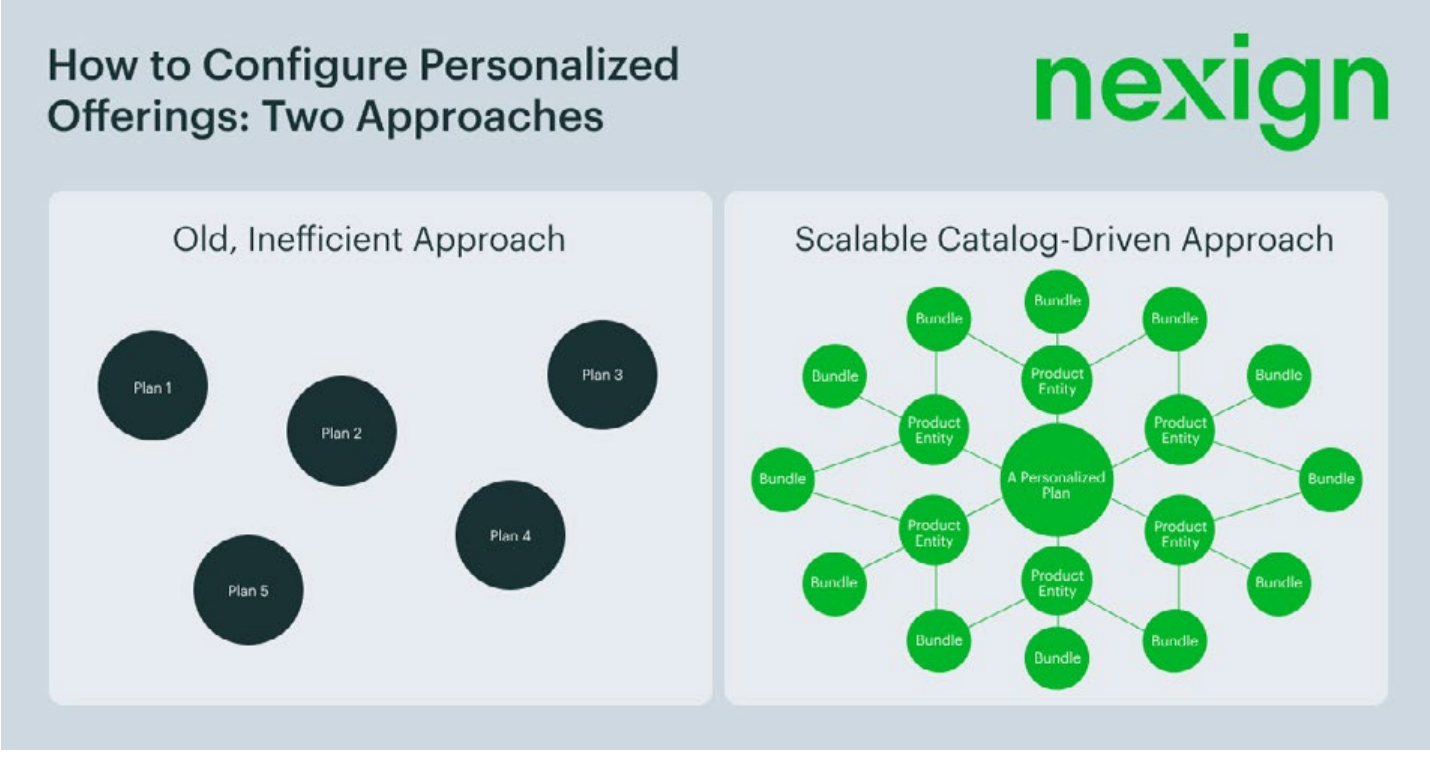
Developing a personalized service is a full-cycle process that requires careful execution. It starts with identifying customer needs, analyzing their consumption patterns, and creating the most relevant offer. This approach is most often applied when creating personalized propositions for existing customers, as it boosts both revenue and loyalty.

It is also important to remember that each personalized product requires ongoing operational support. A mid-sized operator typically maintains thousands of plans in its portfolio. Adjusting them—whether through personalization, campaign-driven modifications, or even straightforward repricing—demands significant input from already overloaded IT teams. Such changes can take months to implement, ultimately complicating product management processes. As complexity grows, the BSS will reach its limits, making personalization economically unsustainable and severely undermining the operator's competitiveness. This is why efficient and scalable personalization is only possible when a CSP leverages a catalog-driven approach to product management within its BSS if and when it supports a proper level of charging flexibility and configurability.

Scalable Personalization in Action: Use Cases from Tier-1 Operators

Flexibility and ease of configuration are critical for both subscribers and operators. One of our clients, for instance, was a pioneer in the market many years ago, introducing a solution that allowed customers to select the number of minutes, gigabytes, and text messages they wanted, add options for unlimited data for selected applications, and instantly see the calculated price of such a fully personalized offering. The key factor is ensuring subscribers feel empowered to configure the services they want themselves.

At the same time, operators must have the ability to design product offerings through modular, Lego-like product entities. This model lays the foundation



for accelerating the launch of innovative marketing ideas that drive customer acquisition. For example, one of our clients, a Tier-1 operator with tens of millions of subscribers, can instantly make any customer's plan "sharable" or "family"—without coding or duplicating product entities in the BSS. Another notable case is a recently launched service unique in the market and rarely available worldwide: during number portability, the operator allows customers to fully copy their existing plan from a competitor. The subscriber retains all key parameters of their current plan—subscription fee, voice minutes, and data volume—even if no equivalent exists in the operator's catalog. The migration is processed seamlessly online via the app or in retail stores.

> *By building dynamic subscriber profiles, AI systems can apply machine learning to segment the customer base, automatically generate personalized recommendations such as Next Best Offers, and provide marketers with insights for designing new products tailored to specific customer segments.*

Another our client, a Tier-1 operator serving millions of clients, has introduced personalized plans to strengthen customer loyalty, migrating 60% of its subscriber base to personalized offerings, and streamline its plan portfolio, reducing it by 30%. The plan has a fixed core that defines the included basic services, applicable limitations, compatibility rules, and billing specifics. On top of this core, variable parameters are applied and dynamically calculated by the Big Data system according to each subscriber's usage patterns. These include data volume, voice minutes, subscription type, and optional add-on products. This approach enables true personalization without adding complexity to the overall offering structure. From a technological perspective, the operator utilizes SID-based product management within the Nexign BSS product catalog to shorten time-to-market for new offerings and enable faster adaptation to evolving customer needs.

Technologies for Improved Personalized Offerings

Telecom operators leverage a broad set of next-generation technologies to design and deliver personalized subscriber services. For instance, artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced analytics are critical for maintaining loyalty. AI enables advanced and more automated personalization for customers. By building dynamic subscriber profiles, AI systems can apply machine learning to segment the customer base, automatically generate personalized recommendations such as Next Best Offers, and provide marketers with insights for designing new products tailored to specific customer segments.

In turn, 5G Standalone (SA) introduces advanced capabilities that significantly enhance the potential for service personalization in telecommunications. One of its key technological opportunities, network slicing, enables operators to dynamically allocate network resources and tailor quality of service (QoS) for diverse applications. This creates a wide range of use cases: for instance, autonomous vehicles can leverage telecom APIs to request latency, bandwidth, and reliability parameters essential for safe operation, while some CSPs already offer pre-configured network slices that B2B clients can purchase and customize to meet their specific requirements.

Personalization opportunities are not limited to 5G but can also be applied within pre-5G service models. In markets where 5G has not yet been rolled out, operators are already offering services that enable subscribers to enhance connection quality on demand. For example, customers can activate an add-on to their existing plan that instantly boosts connection speed by 50%. This capability appeals to premium users and is especially relevant for mission-critical B2B and B2G use cases. From a technological perspective, the service leverages Nexign PCRF and Nexign RCAF, which make it possible to identify subscribers connected to congested base stations and dynamically reallocate network resources. This ensures that customers who have opted for the premium feature receive prioritized connectivity. Indeed, in 5G SA environments, such capabilities can be delivered in an even more seamless and native manner.

Conclusion: The Future of Personalization

When we look toward the future, it becomes clear that telecom services will increasingly be tailored to the specific needs of individual products and use cases. For instance, cost-efficient connectivity may be provided for IoT devices, ultra-high speeds will be crucial for online gaming, while moderate bandwidth will be sufficient when a phone is only receiving messages and notifications. This approach is both convenient for customers and enables operators to maximize network efficiency, ultimately improving profitability.

Telecommunications will continue to evolve in this direction, shifting our perception of connectivity from a simple utility to a complex, demand-driven service. Already, customers value that specific services run seamlessly at the right speed and quality whenever they need them. Step by step, the industry is advancing toward this more dynamic and flexible model of service delivery.

For telecom, the next stage of evolution lies in adopting an end-customer value model. The industry is shifting from the old approach of fixed data packages—such as 1 GB, 3 GB, or 5 GB—toward offerings like lag-free streaming, personalized bundles, and customizable service options. In today's market, the critical success factor is rapid reconfigurability. It is essential that core business systems, such as BSS and charging systems, support the operator's ability to adapt rapidly and launch relevant, engaging services to the market ahead of competitors.

Equally important, the automation of personalization will continue to evolve not only in the B2C segment but also in B2B, where a tailored approach is widely regarded as the baseline expectation for service delivery.

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REGIONAL NEWS

UAE Cybersecurity Council Issues National Warning on Unverified Mobile Apps

The UAE Cybersecurity Council has issued a nationwide alert urging citizens and residents to avoid downloading unverified mobile applications, warning that such apps pose severe risks including malware, financial theft, and data breaches. With daily cyberattacks in the UAE reaching nearly 200,000 in 2025, the Council emphasized that malicious apps are increasingly being used by cybercriminals to steal sensitive data and exploit users, particularly during holidays and major national events. The surge in attacks has heightened the need for caution. Criminals exploit unverified apps to spread malware, commit identity theft, and gain unauthorized access to personal information. This trend has been especially pronounced during times of increased online activity.

Council's Key Recommendations

- Download only from trusted platforms: Apple App Store, Google Play Store, or official provider websites.
- Review app permissions carefully: Reject apps demanding excessive access to contacts, messages, or location data.
- Keep devices updated: Apply regular operating system and app security patches.
- Be cautious with links: Avoid opening files or links from unknown or suspicious sources.
- Leverage awareness campaigns: The Council's "Cyber Pulse" initiative educates the public on safe digital practices.

The Emirates has seen a 63% year-on-year increase in detected mobile vulnerabilities, particularly in finance, healthcare, and logistics sectors. Strict regulatory frameworks, including the UAE Personal Data Protection Law (PDPL) and National Electronic Security Authority (NESA) requirements, obligate organizations to maintain strong cybersecurity practices or face penalties. Meanwhile, the Central Bank has moved away from weaker SMS/email OTPs, mandating more secure app-based verification.

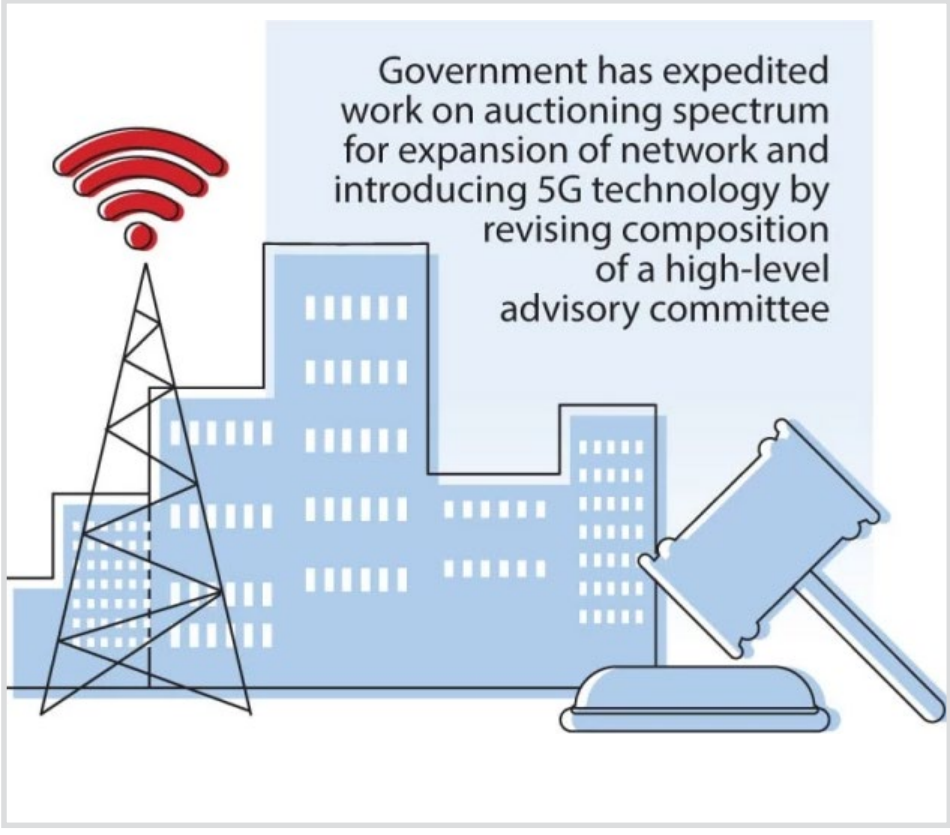
This latest warning underscores the UAE's push to make cybersecurity a shared responsibility across society. By adopting the Council's safety measures, both individuals and businesses can mitigate risks and contribute to a more secure digital ecosystem. The UAE Cybersecurity Council's alert is not just precautionary but a direct response to escalating digital threats. Reinforced by regulatory safeguards and public education, it reflects the nation's broader commitment to building a secure and resilient digital environment.

SDAIA Highlights Saudi Arabia's Global Role in AI-Driven Digital Transformation

Dr. Esam bin Abdullah Al-Wagait, Director of the National Information Center (NIC) at the Saudi Data and Artificial Intelligence Authority (SDAIA), underscored the transformative global role of data- and AI-driven digital transformation during his remarks at the closing conference of the GREAT FUTURES initiative, held alongside the Saudi-UK Strategic Partnership Council's fifth meeting. Dr. Al-Wagait emphasized that AI and data technologies are reshaping economies, societies, and governments worldwide by erasing borders, driving innovation, and transforming daily life. He highlighted "super apps" as a defining example, citing Saudi Arabia's Tawakkalna platform, which now serves over 34 million users with more than 1,000 services from 140+ providers. He also pointed to the Absher platform, which significantly cut government office congestion while saving around 560 million sheets of paper and reducing 500 million kilograms of carbon emissions between 2018 and 2020 — generating annual savings exceeding SAR17 billion. SDAIA has also launched the National Strategy for Data and AI as part of Vision 2030, aiming to position the Kingdom as a global leader in AI economies. Saudi Arabia's rapid progress is evident in the 2024 Open Data Inventory (ODIN) by Open Data Watch, where the Kingdom advanced 28 places to rank 41st globally and climbed to 9th among G20 nations. Dr. Al-Wagait further stressed the importance of international cooperation in tackling challenges such as AI governance, cybersecurity, data privacy, and global supply-chain risks. He noted that Saudi Arabia has taken a leadership role by establishing the International Center for Artificial Intelligence Research and Ethics (ICAIRE) in Riyadh under UNESCO's auspices as a Category 2 Center.

Pakistan Accelerates Spectrum Auction

The government has accelerated work on spectrum auction for expanding the telecommunication network and introducing 5G technology by changing the composition of a high-level advisory committee tasked with overseeing the auction. The Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication briefed the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet, in a recent meeting, that optimum utilization of the available frequency spectrum was critical for expansion of the telecom network, improvement in tele-density and quality of mobile broadband services, including facilitating the 5G road map. It may be noted that the current use of International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT) frequency spectrum for commercial cellular services in the country in 700 MHz, 2,300 MHz, 2,600 MHz and 3,500 MHz bands is significantly lower vis-a-vis global practices. The IT and Telecom Division told the cabinet committee that spectrum auctions for Next Generation Mobile Services (NGMS) had been conducted in 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2021 under the policy directives issued by the federal government. Consequently, paired spectrum in the 1,800/2,100 MHz band, 1,800 MHz band and 850 MHz band was auctioned and assigned to cellular mobile operators. The division stressed that it had since been decided that the auction for the release of more spectrum would be held under the oversight of an advisory committee constituted by the prime minister/federal cabinet. It informed the committee that after approval of the ECC and the cabinet, the advisory committee for the release of unsold IMT spectrum was notified on November 6, 2023 and was subsequently revised on June 28, 2024. It shared that the Ministry of Industries and Production had approached the IT and telecom ministry with the request to include the special assistant to prime minister (SAPM) on industries in the advisory committee. In order to avoid any such issue in future, the IT division proposed that the composition of the committee might be revised by including the SAPM and the minister of state along with federal ministers of IT and telecom, industries and production and law and justice. The advisory committee comprised the federal minister for finance and revenue (chairman), federal minister/ minister of state/SAPM on IT and telecom, federal minister/minister of state/SAPM on industries and production, federal minister/ minister of state/SAPM on law and justice, secretary Finance Division, secretary IT and Telecom Division, secretary Law and Justice Division, chairman Pakistan Telecommunication Authority, executive director Frequency Allocation Board, director general (tech) ISI (co-opted member of the committee), member (telecom) Ministry of IT and Telecom (secretary), and any other member that may be co-opted with permission of the chair. The ECC was apprised by the IT division regarding the revision in composition of the advisory committee. The ECC considered a summary submitted by the Ministry of IT and Telecom titled "Revision in Composition of Advisory Committee on Release of IMT Spectrum for Improvement of Next Generation Mobile Broadband Services in Pakistan" and approved the proposal. The GSMA noted that despite Pakistan's digital ambitions and talent, the country risked falling behind in the region if urgent telecom policy reforms were not introduced. Without reform, investors might leave and citizens would suffer, it warned. At the GSMA Digital Nation Summit 2025, GSMA Head of Asia-Pacific Julian Gorman identified three key obstacles to Pakistan's digital growth: high taxes, limited spectrum and policy inconsistencies. Speaking to media after the summit, Gorman said reducing telecom taxation was possible, even under International Monetary Fund (IMF) programs, citing Argentina as an example. "If urgent reforms are not implemented, investors will move to other countries," he said. "Freelancers in Pakistan may also lose their livelihoods if they don't have adequate internet and electricity." He also said the demand for spectrum had grown and urged the government to close the gap in spectrum usage and availability. Gorman expressed concern over Pakistan's slow pace of digitalization, saying "we are reaching a critical point as artificial intelligence and other technologies are evolving rapidly across the world".



Morocco to Launch Digital for Sustainable Development (D4SD) Initiative at UNGA

Morocco is set to strengthen its role as a digital leader in Africa with the official launch of the Digital for Sustainable Development (D4SD) initiative. The program, developed in partnership with the UN Development Bank (UNDP), aims to integrate the Arab-African region into the global digital economy. Minister Delegate for Digital Transition Amal El Fallah Seghrouchni announced the initiative, describing it as a strategic step to position Morocco as a digital hub bridging Africa and the Arab world. The formal unveiling will take place during the 80th United Nations General Assembly in New York, where Morocco will present D4SD as a driver of economic growth and improved public services. Speaking at the 10th Geopolitical Meetings in Trouville-Sur-Mer, France, Seghrouchni emphasized that digital transformation is becoming central to Morocco's future, both in terms of domestic progress and regional influence. The D4SD initiative underscores Morocco's ambition to lead in digital integration, sustainable innovation, and cross-border collaboration, reinforcing its standing as a pivotal player in the continent's digital landscape.

Qatar's Automotive IoT Market Set to Hit US$357 Million

Qatar's automotive Internet of Things (IoT) sector is accelerating at full speed, with revenue forecasted to reach $369.93m (QR1.3bn) this year, according to a report from Statista. The market is expected to maintain strong momentum, recording a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 7.20 percent from 2025 to 2029, ultimately hitting $488.51m (QR1.7bn) by the end of the decade. This growth comes as Qatar doubles down on its smart city and digital transformation strategies, aiming to integrate advanced connected-car solutions into its urban mobility ecosystem. While the United States is projected to continue dominating the global automotive IoT market, which is expected to generate a staggering $98.86bn in 2025, Qatar's trajectory is notable for its speed and strategic focus. Industry leaders say that Qatar's plans for smart cities such as Lusail and Msheireb Downtown Doha are a major catalyst for automotive IoT adoption. From vehicle-to-infrastructure (V2I) communication to predictive maintenance systems, the country is prioritizing technologies that make roads safer and traffic more efficient. "Connected cars are no longer a luxury in Qatar as they are becoming part of the public infrastructure. As our cities become smarter, cars need to communicate not just with their drivers, but with traffic lights, emergency services, and even parking systems," Abdul Hassan, General Manager at a leading luxury car dealership in Doha, told The Peninsula. The Ministry of Transport has been vocal about using IoT to enhance road safety, reduce congestion, and prepare for autonomous vehicles. Recent pilot projects include smart traffic corridors equipped with IoT-enabled sensors, as well as real-time traffic monitoring integrated into navigation apps. Hassan said, "The national mobility strategy sees connected vehicles as a bridge to fully autonomous fleets as it aims to have near-seamless integration between private cars, public transport, and urban infrastructure." Qatari consumers, known for their early adoption of premium automotive technology, are increasingly seeking vehicles with advanced infotainment, telematics, and driver-assistance systems. According to local dealerships, buyers now routinely inquire about connectivity features alongside horsepower and fuel efficiency. "Customers aren't just asking if a car has Bluetooth—they want to know how their car will talk to the city. It's changing the way manufacturers pitch vehicles in this market," the industry expert noted. While the outlook remains promising, analysts caution that cybersecurity, data privacy, and infrastructure readiness remain key concerns. Researchers stress that the complexity of integrating multiple systems from legacy traffic management software to next-generation 5G networks means that careful planning and regulatory oversight will be critical. With nearly half a billion dollars in market volume projected by 2029, Qatar's automotive IoT industry is on track to become a vital pillar of its diversification agenda. As the country positions itself as a regional hub for smart mobility, experts highlight that the fusion of cars and connectivity may soon be as commonplace as smartphones in everyday life. "We are building cities where the car isn't just a vehicle—it's a node in the network and that's the future we are driving toward," Hassan added.

Tunisia Unveils 138 Projects to Drive Government Digital Transformation

The Tunisian government has announced a bold plan to implement 138 projects aimed at accelerating the digital modernization of public administration during 2025–2026. The initiatives, presented at a recent ministerial council, focus on four priority areas: administrative services, digital economy, cybersecurity, and infrastructure development. A total of 99 projects will modernize administrative services, enabling remote service delivery, improving interconnections across agencies, and strengthening information systems. The digital economy will see 18 initiatives promoting artificial intelligence, e-commerce, digital training, and entrepreneurship. Twelve projects are dedicated to cybersecurity and digital trust, while nine target improved communications infrastructure and expanded network coverage. Key measures include the rollout of a national and sectoral dashboard for monitoring progress, mandatory mechanisms for inter-administrative data exchange, and the development of electronic payments and financial inclusion platforms. The government also intends to create a unified national portal that consolidates services for citizens, investors, and businesses, alongside a new open data policy to enhance transparency and foster innovation. Prime Minister Sara Zaafarani Zenzari emphasized that digital transformation is "essential and necessary" rather than optional, aiming to attract investment, simplify administrative procedures, promote business growth, and align Tunisia with international digital trends. While these plans are highly ambitious, details regarding costs, timelines, and technology partners remain forthcoming. Looking ahead, the government has pledged to develop a unified national vision for digital transformation covering the period 2026–2030. Tunisia's strategy underscores its intent to not only digitize government functions but also build trust, improve efficiency, and stimulate economic development through digital tools.

Afghan Government Starts Shutting Down Fixed Internet Access

The latest government attack on internet connectivity – and one of the most drastic so far – comes from Afghanistan, where ruling group the Taliban imposed an internet ban on the northern Balkh province, where a Wi-Fi shutdown was confirmed. The Taliban has said that the fiber optic internet ban will eventually be nationwide. Indeed, there have already been reports of severe disruption in other parts of the country. According to Reuters, internet access was reportedly cut off in the provinces of Baghlan, Badakhshan and Takhar in the northeast, Kunduz in the north and Nangarhar in the east. So far local media reports suggest that as many as ten provinces have been affected. Local news outlet Afghanistan International has quoted an official statement saying: "The order from the Taliban leader is irreversible and will be enforced nationwide." The ban, which is said to be in order to "prevent immorality", is the first since the Taliban seized power in August 2021. It affects not only consumers and their homes but government offices, the private sector, and public institutions, all of which will be left without Wi-Fi internet. Indeed, Reuters says most Afghan provinces have had fiber optic services until now. Mobile internet remains functional, however, though it is described as being slow and expensive. Officials say alternatives are being found for necessities, though what these necessities may be and how they will be addressed is not clear. The Afghanistan Media Support Organization has condemned the ban as disrupting millions of citizens' access to free information and essential services but also posing a grave threat to freedom of expression and the work of the media. However, as the Sky News service points out, businesses will also suffer as a lot of business is done on the internet. Fixed internet also offers a source of education for girls, which may no longer be available. This seems to be a radical policy reversal given comments apparently made last year by a spokesman for the Communications Ministry. He said that Afghanistan had a fiber optic network of more than 1,800 kilometers and that approval had been given for an additional 488 kilometers.

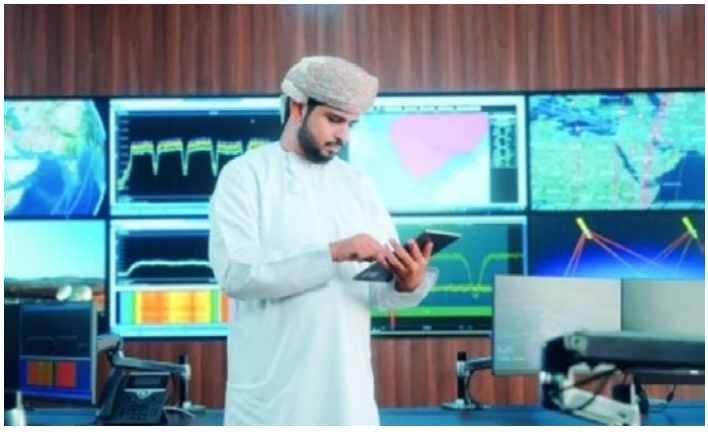
Qatar CRA Updates Telecom Standards to Strengthen Connectivity and Smart Infrastructure

The Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) has introduced an updated version of the In-Building Telecommunications Infrastructure Standards, aiming to deliver faster internet speeds, stronger mobile network coverage, and smarter, future-ready buildings across Qatar. The revised standards are part of CRA's strategy to accelerate digital transformation and ensure residents and businesses enjoy world-class telecommunications services. By aligning with international best practices, the updates will guarantee that new buildings are equipped with cutting-edge telecom systems, while older structures can adapt to meet rising digital demands. According to CRA, this initiative reflects its commitment to building a modern digital environment that supports innovation, strengthens the national economy, and enhances quality of life. The move also directly supports the Qatar National Vision 2030, which prioritizes sustainability, technological progress, and knowledge-driven growth. By modernizing

telecom infrastructure requirements, Qatar aims to boost its competitiveness in the global digital economy and establish itself as a regional leader in smart, connected infrastructure.

Oman's Telecom Sector Expands 15.5%, Driven by Mobile and IoT Growth

Oman's telecommunications sector recorded a 15.5% growth by the end of July 2025, according to the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI). The country reached 8.15 million mobile subscriptions, reflecting the sector's strong momentum and ongoing digital transformation. Prepaid subscriptions rose 4.9%



to 5.34 million, while postpaid subscriptions grew 3.3% to 1.24 million. The standout performer was Internet of Things (IoT) services, which surged by 105% to over 1.56 million subscriptions, underscoring Oman's rapid adoption of smart connectivity solutions. Mobile broadband remained a key growth driver with 5.59 million active users. Fixed broadband also expanded modestly by 2.9% to 591,972, led by fiber optic subscriptions, which jumped 11.2% to 344,505. Fixed 5G subscriptions also inched up 1.8% to 217,657. However, legacy technologies showed steep declines. Fixed 4G subscriptions dropped 41.2% to just 17,261, and DSL subscriptions fell 47.5% to 11,036. Other connection types, such as Ethernet, leased lines, and power line internet, also declined by nearly 12%. Satellite-based internet was the only legacy technology to grow, increasing by 13% to 754 subscriptions. Analysts note that the data highlights both opportunity and risk. For investors and entrepreneurs, Oman's telecom market offers significant potential in IoT services, fiber optics, and 5G expansion. At the same time, businesses must pivot away from shrinking legacy technologies to remain competitive in a rapidly shifting digital landscape.

Jordan's TRC Reaffirms Safety Commitment on Electromagnetic Radiation from Telecom Towers

The Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC) has reiterated its commitment to protecting public health from any potential risks associated with electromagnetic fields generated by cellular towers. In a statement, the TRC stressed that telecom operators must obtain prior technical approval before installing any towers. This process ensures full compliance with international safety standards on electromagnetic emissions. To reinforce public safety and regulatory oversight, the Commission conducts regular on-site inspections to confirm that towers remain within safe emission levels and meet all licensing conditions.

Kuwait Moves to Regulate Delivery Sector and Accelerates Digital Transformation

Kuwait's Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajeel has called for a unified legal and regulatory framework for the delivery sector to safeguard transparency, customer data, and fair competition. Speaking at a meeting with delivery company owners and the Competition Protection Authority, he emphasized that the delivery sector is now a vital pillar of economic activity and requires clearer governance. The ministry aims to simplify procedures, overcome operational challenges, and create a transparent environment that attracts investment while prioritizing consumer rights. The proposed framework will establish clear service standards, introduce oversight mechanisms for consumer complaints, and ensure a culture of compliance. To this end, the Competition Protection Authority plans to conduct workshops for delivery staff and officials. Delivery companies expressed readiness to cooperate with regulators to align services with consumer needs. At the same time, Kuwait's Ministry of Interior (MoI) has achieved a major milestone in digital transformation, shifting government services from paper-based processes to smart e-services. Through the Sahel unified application, the MoI has processed over 30 million electronic transactions, covering 37 services such as visa issuance, residency renewals, driver's license renewals, and traffic violation payments. Automated alerts further streamline user experience. The ministry has also introduced an appointment booking system across 19 departments and launched the Kuwait Visa electronic platform to support tourism, family, and business travel. In line with its digital security agenda, the MoI implemented the Biometric Fingerprint project, creating a database of over five million individuals to combat document forgery, strengthen border security, and accelerate administrative procedures. Kuwait's digital transformation extends to security operations, with unmanned marine vessels deployed by the Coast Guard and AI-enabled traffic monitoring systems introduced under the updated Traffic Law. These initiatives have contributed to a 16% decline in traffic violations, a 45% reduction in accidents, and a 34% drop in road fatalities in the first half of 2025. Collectively, these reforms reinforce Kuwait's New Kuwait 2035 vision, promoting innovation, safety, and efficient governance.

Oman Unveils Digital Triangle Project, AI Zone, and Green AI Alliance at COMEX 2025

Oman used the stage of COMEX 2025 to announce a sweeping set of initiatives aimed at accelerating its digital transformation and advancing its long-term national strategy under Oman Vision 2040. Inaugurated by His Highness Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik al Said, the event highlighted the Sultanate's ambition to position itself as a regional leader in artificial intelligence and sustainable technology. The unveiling of the Digital Triangle Project, a dedicated artificial intelligence zone, and the Green AI Alliance stood out as the flagship announcements, signaling Oman's commitment to fostering innovation and aligning technology growth with sustainability goals. Agreements worth RO 42 million were signed during the conference, reinforcing investor confidence in Oman's digital economy and building on successful deals from previous years. Alongside these investments, the government introduced 30 new services on its Unified Digital Services Portal and launched Maeen, the country's first home-grown AI language model. The showcase featured over 140 start-ups

and 200 companies, underscoring the role of entrepreneurship and private sector collaboration in driving Oman's digital agenda. Key growth sectors on display included semiconductors, data centers, and the space industry, with a strong emphasis on nurturing Omani talent to power future industries. By launching these initiatives, Oman reinforced its message that it is actively building a sustainable, technology-driven economy rooted in AI, digital services, and green innovation—an approach designed to deliver long-term competitiveness and resilience.

Oman Lens to Launch Second High-Resolution Satellite by 2026

Oman Lens has announced plans to launch its second satellite by 2026, building on the success of its first AI-powered optical satellite, OL-1. The upcoming satellite will feature sharper imaging with a 50-centimeter resolution, significantly advancing Oman's space technology capabilities under Oman Vision 2040. OL-1, launched in November 2024, became Oman's first optical satellite registered with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). With its one-meter resolution, OL-1 provides real-time spatial data and imagery to support urban planning, environmental monitoring, and resource management. The new satellite will expand these capabilities by delivering clearer Earth observation data to monitor infrastructure, track urban growth, and support sustainable development initiatives. Oman Lens confirmed that this launch is part of a larger plan to deploy a constellation of 20 satellites, aimed at equipping government bodies, private enterprises, and research institutions with advanced geospatial intelligence. The initiative underscores Oman's ambition to strengthen its presence in the global space sector while driving national innovation and sustainable development.

Iraq Plans More Submarine Cable Landings at Al-Faw

There's been a flurry of submarine cable deals in Iraq recently, including two contracts announced, one with Batelco and the other involving a company called Breeze Investments. In the latest announcement, Iraq's Minister of Communications Hiyam Al-Yasiri has reportedly signed a contract to land a new submarine cable in the Southern Al-Faw Peninsula with Bahraini telecoms company Batelco by Beyon. The contract is Iraq's sixth submarine cable at the Al-Faw station and, the Minister pointed out, by signing this contract, Iraq has entered into submarine and transit cable contracts with all the countries of the Arabian Gulf. The contract will be executed in late 2026 or early 2027. It reportedly has a large capacity, although precise details were not given. It extends from Singapore, passing through Bahrain and other stations in some Arab countries, ending in Iraq. But that's not all. Earlier, it was reported that the same ministry had signed a contract with UAE-based Breeze Investments to land Iraq's fifth submarine cable at Al-Faw. The project, carried out in cooperation with the State Company for Communications and Informatics, is described as a strategic step to strengthen Iraq's position as a regional and global hub for data and international communications traffic, linking through Iraq and Turkey to Europe. Breeze has also been authorized to establish a terrestrial transit network under the name World Link, although there is little available information about either entity. Iraq's cable connections with the rest of the world are clearly a strong focus of late. We reported earlier this year that Qatar-based Ooredoo Group had signed a landing party agreement with Iraqi Telecommunications and Post Company (ITPC) to land Ooredoo's planned Fiber in Gulf (FIG) subsea cable in Iraq. The FIG cable aims to connect all six countries in the Gulf Cooperation Council – Qatar, Oman, the UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait – and Iraq with 720 Tbps of capacity across 24 fiber pairs. There's been a flurry

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Qatar Enhances Regional Cooperation Ahead of Hosting ITU Plenipotentiary 2026 at the Second Arab Preparatory Meeting

The State of Qatar, represented by the Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA), participated in the Second Meeting of the Arab Working Group tasked with preparing for the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 (PP-26). The meeting was organized by the Arab League in collaboration with the ITU and the Communications, Space, and Technology Commission. It took place in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on August 31, 2025. The meeting brought together representatives from relevant entities in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector across Arab countries to discuss a range of key topics in preparation for the upcoming ITU Plenipotentiary Conference, which Qatar will be hosting in 2026. The meeting was held within the framework of joint Arab coordination, contributing to the unification of positions and strengthening the region's presence at this important international event. During the meeting, participants reviewed the responsibilities of the related specialized working groups, focusing on four main areas: public policy and legal affairs; administrative and regulatory coordination; digital policy and internet issues; and strategic and financial planning. The meeting also approved nominations from Arab countries, including Qatar's nomination of Engineer Hussain Abdulla Salatt, Public Relations and Communication Manager at CRA, as Vice-Chair of Arab Working Group tasked with preparing for the PP-26. Ms. Huda Ahmad Al-Korbi, International Relations Researcher at CRA, was nominated as Vice-Chair of the Public Policy and Legal Affairs Working Group. As the PP-26 draws nearer, preparatory meetings will continue in the coming period leading up to the hosting of this global event, and Qatar is moving forward with its preparations to host it in November 2026, reflecting the international community's trust in its ability to organize world-class events, and reaffirming its commitment to fostering regional and international cooperation in the ICT sector. Hosting this conference marks a significant milestone, further strengthening Qatar's role in shaping the future direction of the global ICT sector and supporting international efforts to achieve sustainable development. It is worth noting that the Plenipotentiary Conference is the highest decision-making body of the ITU. Held every four years, it adopts general policies and work plans, sets the strategic and financial frameworks for the upcoming cycle, and oversees the regular elections for the ITU's leadership positions.

Oman Mobile Subscriptions Surpass 8 Million as Broadband Demand Surges

Oman's telecommunications sector continues to expand rapidly, with total mobile subscriptions reaching 8,033,008 by the end of June 2025 — a 15.7% increase year-on-year, according to the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI). Mobile broadband remains the main driver of growth, with 5,516,530 active subscriptions, reflecting surging demand for data services. Postpaid subscriptions rose 5.3% to 1,236,561, while prepaid subscriptions climbed 3.6% to 5,236,191. Notably, Internet of Things (M2M) connections saw explosive growth of 118.6%, reaching 1,560,256. In the fixed broadband segment, subscriptions rose 2.2% to 588,477. Fiber optic connections expanded 10.3% to 339,309, and fixed 5G subscriptions grew 1.5% to 215,434. However, fixed 4G subscriptions dropped 31.7% to 20,952, underscoring the decline of older technologies. ADSL usage continued its steep decline, plunging 52% to 11,289 subscriptions. Satellite internet gained modestly at 8.5% (724 connections), while other services — including Ethernet, leased lines, and internet via power lines — fell 11.2% to 769. The latest figures highlight Oman's steady transition towards fiber and next-generation mobile networks, as businesses and consumers increasingly migrate away from legacy platforms to embrace faster, more reliable connectivity.

Qatar, Represented by CRA, Participates in GSR-25 to Promote International Cooperation and Support Sustainable Digital Development

The State of Qatar, represented by a delegation from the Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) led by Engineer Ahmad bin Abdulla AlMuslemani, President of CRA, participated in the Global Symposium for Regulators 2025 (GSR-25), which was organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in collaboration with the Government of Saudi Arabia and hosted by the Saudi Communications, Space & Technology Commission from August 31 to September 3, 2025. The event took place at the King Abdul Aziz International Conference Center in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Held under the theme "Regulation for Sustainable Digital Development," GSR-25 brought together regulators, policymakers, and digital stakeholders from around the world to discuss the evolving regulatory landscape and the future of inclusive, innovation-driven digital transformation. The gathering served as a platform for regulatory dialogue to develop and adopt guiding principles for best regulatory practices followed by telecommunications regulators worldwide. With the participation of more than 190 countries, GSR-25 provided a forum to exchange expertise and align perspectives on key policy and regulatory issues in the digital sector. The GSR-25 program featured an Executive Roundtable of Heads of Regulators on enabling regulators as digital ecosystem builders, an Executive Masterclass on strategic foresight for Artificial Intelligence (AI) collaborative frameworks, and sessions organized around the following themes: collaborate, connect, trust, protect, include, empower, sustain and innovate. These sessions addressed secure and resilient infrastructure, consumer protection, digital inclusion and skills development, and pathways toward sustainable growth. In addition to that, there were interactive high-level panels on policy and regulatory issues. In this context, Engineer Ahmad bin Abdulla AlMuslemani, President of the Communications Regulatory Authority, stated: "Our participation in GSR-25 reflects CRA's keenness to exchanging expertise and insights with our counterparts around the world and discussing best practices for regulating the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector amid global digital transformations. This international cooperation holds particular importance, as it supports our ongoing efforts to develop the sector locally in accordance with the best regulatory practices and in alignment with CRA's strategy, which is aligned with the objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030, thereby contributing to the sustainable development of Qatar." In his capacity as the Chair-Designate of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 (PP-26), Engineer Ahmad bin Abdulla AlMuslemani, President of CRA, held a series of meetings on the sidelines of the GSR-25 with delegations representing ITU member states and with Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Secretary-General of the ITU. The meetings addressed several issues of mutual interest in the ICT field, as part of the ongoing preparations to host the conference in Doha next year.

UAE Leaps to No.2 in Global AI Rankings

The United Arab Emirates has been ranked the second most capable country in the world for artificial intelligence, according to a new study by US-based Technology Resource Group (TRG). The UAE placed ahead of South Korea, China, the UK, and Germany, with only the United States achieving a higher score. TRG's ranking evaluates computing power, the number of AI-focused companies, and government readiness for responsible deployment. On raw computing capacity, the UAE scored 23.1 H100-equivalent megabytes, thanks to access to over 188,000 advanced Nvidia H100 and A100 chips. Plans are already underway to add millions more, putting the country on par with global tech leaders. The UAE also achieved a high AI readiness index of 70, highlighting its efforts to build data laws, ethics frameworks, and regulatory structures for mass adoption. More than 700 start-ups and enterprises now operate in AI-related fields, while universities are actively training graduates in neural networks and generative models. AI curricula across public schools, preparing nearly one million students to code and use AI responsibly. Abu Dhabi's backing of sovereign AI players such as G42 and the Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence further underscores its long-term vision. The findings point to the Gulf's growing seriousness about competing with established innovation hubs like Silicon Valley, Seoul, and Shenzhen. While many Western countries navigate regulatory hurdles and trade tensions, the UAE has streamlined policies for data centers, chip imports, and start-up growth. Analysts suggest that if this momentum continues, the UAE could soon narrow the gap with the US and set a benchmark for other Gulf nations seeking AI breakthroughs.

Coral Bridge Subsea Cable Connects Egypt and Jordan

NaiTel, a licensed telecommunications service provider in Jordan and the telecom arm of Aqaba Digital Hub (ADH – Jordan's largest carrier-neutral data Centre), and telecom services provider Telecom Egypt, have announced the completion of the laying of the 15-kilometre express subsea cable Coral Bridge connecting Egypt and Jordan, the first direct subsea cable between the two countries in over 25 years. After landing in Taba, Egypt, the cable was laid across the Gulf of Aqaba landing in Aqaba, Jordan. The partners say that Coral Bridge provides an express high-fiber-count digital link across the Gulf of Aqaba. Coral Bridge is also the first telecommunication subsea system to land at Telecom Egypt's new cable landing point in Taba – part of the company's broader, recently established international digital infrastructure in the Sinai Peninsula. In Jordan, the cable landed at ADH's Tier III carrier-neutral facility in Aqaba, supporting redundancy and recovery strategies for businesses, including enterprises and hyperscalers hosted in the data Centre. By leveraging both countries' strategic locations and Telecom Egypt's extensive subsea ecosystem, Coral Bridge provides seamless onward connectivity across Asia, Africa and Europe. The 15-kilometre cable, equipped with 48 fiber pairs, is designed for transporting over 1 Petabit of data traffic, supporting the growing demand for data-intensive digital applications such as cloud computing and artificial intelligence. In addition, say the project partners, its short length significantly reduces latency and lowers data costs. It's also an opportunity. As Mohamed Nasr, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer at Telecom Egypt, explains: "The strategic proximity between Taba and Aqaba creates a vital opportunity to establish a robust corridor for data connectivity across the Middle East and Europe."

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SATELLITE NEWS

Senegal to Roll Out Satellite Internet Nationwide This Year

Senegal President Bassirou Diomaye Faye announced in New York that his government signed an agreement with a satellite operator to deliver full nationwide internet coverage by the end of 2025. The announcement took place at Unstoppable Africa, part of the Global Africa Business Initiative. "We signed with a satellite operator so that before the end of this year we can cover the entire territory with perfect redundancy for higher-quality connectivity," Faye said. He stressed his government's commitment to reducing digital inequalities. Senegal has already deployed about 6,000 kilometers of fiber optic infrastructure. However, large "white zones" remain unserved. The president said the new contract, for which all administrative procedures are completed, will target these areas. The initiative aligns with the government's New Deal Technologies, Senegal's digital roadmap centered on expanding connectivity. Beyond infrastructure, Faye highlighted new projects including a national innovation hub, the GovNum digital governance initiative, and legislative tools such as the Startup Act and Senegal Connect Startup, designed to boost the tech ecosystem. The government has not revealed the identity of the chosen satellite operator. Starlink, SpaceX's satellite internet provider, appears as a likely candidate. Starlink previously announced plans to launch in Senegal in 2025, offering high-speed satellite internet. On its website, the company opened preorders starting at $9 for reservation of equipment,

pending regulatory approval. The rollout of satellite internet could significantly reshape Senegal's digital landscape, especially in rural areas where access remains limited. A July 17 survey by the national telecom regulator ARTP and the national statistics agency ANSD found that only 3% of rural households have home internet, compared with 43.8% in Dakar. The expansion, if completed, could support both inclusion and economic modernization, while strengthening Senegal's ambition to become a regional digital hub.

Viasat, Space42 Poised to Launch D2D Venture

UAE-based spacetech company Space42 partnered up with satellite player Viasat to form Equatys, a jointly-held entity focused on enabling global direct-to-device (D2D) services. The pair stated Equatys represents the industry's first space tower company model, implementing shared space and ground non-terrestrial-network (NTN) infrastructure, with the goal of lowering capital costs and improving spectrum utilization. As well as "uniting" satellite and terrestrial networks, those planning to launch Mobile Satellite Services (MSS) will be able to evolve "to a 5G network environment" through Equatys. It will be able to support well over 100MHZ of harmonized MSS spectrum already allocated across more than 160 markets, with a target of rolling out commercially within three years. Other than that timeline, the companies did not provide any financial details or commitments. The duo signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in March 2025, which advanced a previous commitment to work on technical and commercial studies into an agreement to form a jointly-owned infrastructure company. In operating a so-called towerco model, the venture will offer wholesale D2D services to third parties. They also pointed to advantages for operators to grow profitability, allow governments to own and operate infrastructure to maintain national data sovereignty and allow local space industries to participate in space and ground technology development and manufacturing. Mark Dankberg, chairman and CEO of Viasat, said Equatys will "uniquely make possible a shared multi-orbit network of scale with standards based open architecture to address the significant D2D and next-generation MSS market opportunity". Vodafone and AST SpaceMobile unveiled plans for a similar joint venture satellite business at MWC 2025, targeting launch next year.

Ofcom to Authorize Satellite Networks to Deliver UK 4G and 5G Mobile

The telecoms regulator, Ofcom, has confirmed that they will "move ahead with plans" to make the UK the "first country in Europe" to authorize Direct to Device (D2D) satellite services for use in regular mobile bands via "standard smartphones ". The change could be used to help mobile operators improve their 4G and 5G coverage and roaming features. Several satellite-based broadband operators are currently developing services that can directly connect to unmodified consumer Smartphones via regular mobile spectrum bands. Some examples of this include Starlink (Direct to Cell) and AST SpaceMobile. In fact, some phones, like the latest iPhone series from Apple, already have a basic communication system that can work via satellite (e.g. for emergencies). However, the licenses held by UK mobile operators to provide communications services do not currently authorize transmissions from space. The introduction of D2D services in terrestrial mobile bands would also raise a number of other issues, such as through the potential for an increased risk of interference between the satellite and the ground infrastructure of the mobile operators. But Ofcom says they can solve this. The regulator's previous work has uncovered plenty of support for D2D satellite services within the UK market, and they've issued a statement that confirms their intention to authorize the aforementioned change(s). The new approach could be particularly useful for helping to connect people in some of the remotest rural parts of the UK, as well as around coastal waters, and to act as a backup in case of terrestrial network outages or when needing to contact the emergency services. Some mobile operators, such as Vodafone's deal with AST SpaceMobile, are currently looking to offer such features as a premium add-on (e.g. global or domestic roaming enhancements). Speaking of which, Ofcom are also inviting any mobile operators that plan to offer a D2D service to come forward to the regulator, with a request for a license variation in relation to their specific bands of interest (although the regulator's focus seems to be on most of the spectrum bands licensed to EE, Vodafone / Three UK and O2 below 3GHz). Any license variation will however still be subject to the "comments we might receive on our proposed non-technical and technical conditions ".

NBN Co Partners AWS's Project Kuiper for LEO Satellite Broadband in Australia

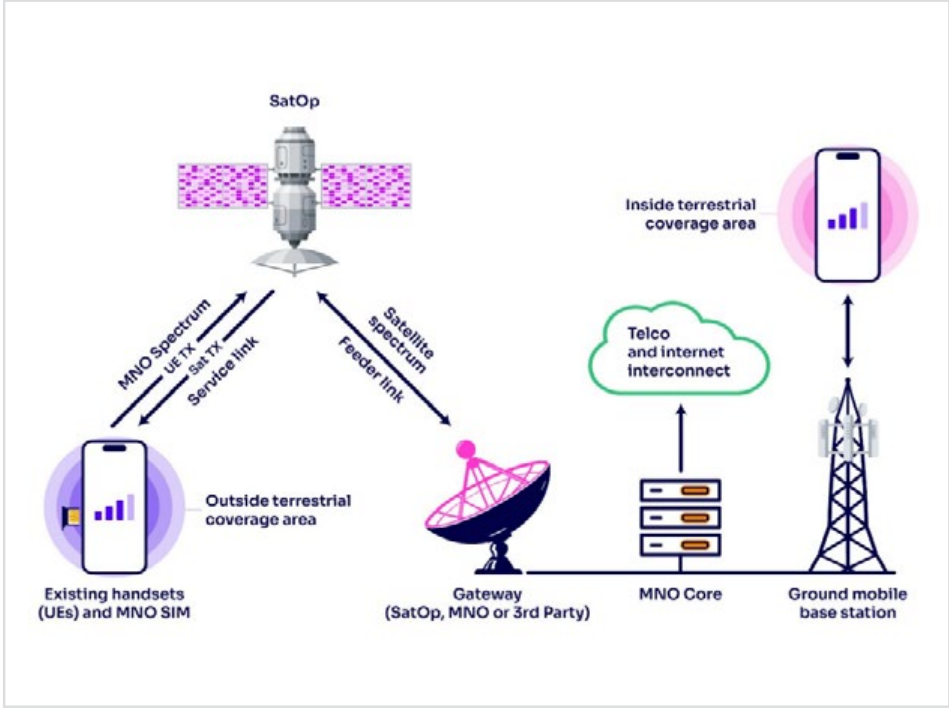
NBN Co and Amazon announced an agreement to deliver high-speed, wholesale fixed broadband to customers in parts of regional, rural and remote Australia via Project Kuiper's low Earth orbit (LEO) satellite technology. Project Kuiper is Amazon's satellite broadband business that will provide fast, reliable internet to customers around the world. Amazon is planning to launch its service in Australia from the middle of 2026. When Project Kuiper launches in Australia, NBN Co plans to offer wholesale residential-grade fixed LEO satellite broadband services to more than 300,000 premises within our existing satellite footprint via participating Retail Service Providers (RSPs). nbn's wholesale LEO satellite offering powered by Project Kuiper will be available to both eligible1 existing and new customers within nbn's satellite footprint, via participating RSPs. The agreement will enable NBN Co to transition from its existing geostationary Sky Muster satellite service over the coming years and will complement NBN Co's investments in fiber and fixed wireless upgrades for regional Australia. NBN Co will shortly start consultation with RSPs, regional communities and stakeholders, to help inform what speed tiers are offered, wholesale pricing and the upgrade for customers. The consultation will consider the offer of equipment and professional initial standard installation and assurance at no cost for existing eligible1 nbn satellite customers, via participating RSPs. Project Kuiper's low-latency, high-bandwidth satellite network will provide significant improvements to the quality and reliability of broadband for eligible regional, rural and remote communities. To achieve its goals, Project Kuiper is deploying thousands of satellites in low Earth orbit —connected to each other by high-speed optical links that will create a mesh network in space—and linked to a global network of antennas, fiber, and internet connection points on the ground. The initial satellite constellation will include more than 3,200 satellites, which began deploying in April 2025 with its first operational launch. There are currently 78 Kuiper satellites in orbit, after three successful launches in less than three months, and Amazon is continuing to increase its production, processing and launch rates ahead of an initial service rollout.

Amazon's Satellite Internet to Launch in Kazakhstan

Minister of Digital Development, Innovation and Aerospace Industry Zhaslan Madiyev announced plans to expand access to high-quality Internet in Kazakhstan, Kazinform News Agency reports. According to the Minister, Amazon's Kuiper satellite internet service is expected to be introduced in Kazakhstan in 2027. The Ministry of Digital Development clarified that it had signed a memorandum with Kuiper (Amazon) in September last year to provide satellite communication services, and that preparatory work has been underway since then. Currently, OneWeb and Starlink already operate in the country. As reported earlier, the Ministry of Artificial Intelligence is set to be established on the basis of Kazakhstan's Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry. Recall that the Head of State stressed that Kazakhstan should turn into a digital country within three years.

Ofcom Sets 2026 Target for UK D2D Launch

UK watchdog Ofcom laid out plans to authorize the launch of direct-to-device (D2D) satellite services using terrestrial mobile spectrum in 2026, moving to update licensing frameworks in a bid to accelerate rollout. Following a consultation earlier this year, Ofcom confirmed it will update MNO license conditions to enable satellite connectivity for standard mobile devices. Since D2D connectivity is not covered by current exemptions, the regulator has proposed fresh rules to allow phones and other SIM-enabled devices to access satellite-based connectivity services in the UK. The new framework will enable MNOs to request variations to their existing licenses, authorizing them to offer D2D connectivity in spectrum bands below 3GHz. The regulator is now inviting operators to submit requests for these variations, alongside launching a fresh consultation on the proposed updates and device exemptions. Ofcom is seeking feedback on the proposal by 10 October. "Subject to our consideration of the responses, and the timing of license variation requests, our ambition is to facilitate the introduction of D2D services in the UK in early 2026," the watchdog stated. D2D deployments will be limited to the UK and its territorial waters, excluding the Channel Islands and Isle of Man. Operators will also need to coordinate with co-channel and adjacent spectrum users and may face additional restrictions to protect spectrum users in neighboring countries. While the regulator is pushing to be among the first in Europe to finalize a legal framework for allowing satellite services on standard consumer smartphones, launches will depend on operator readiness. UK-based Vodafone is arguably leading the European push on D2D services, partnering with AST SpaceMobile earlier this year to form Luxembourg-based SatCo, a satellite joint venture aiming to support commercial direct-to-mobile services across the continent.



Viasat to Expand SouthPAN Satellite Services in Australia & New Zealand

Viasat, a global leader in satellite communications, announced a $252 million AUD award from Geoscience Australia (GA) and Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) to deliver additional satellite services for the region's world-class Southern Positioning Augmentation Network (SouthPAN). This expands on a previous SouthPAN award for the company and the estimated net incremental value for Viasat from this agreement is $214M AUD. SouthPAN is a collaborative satellite-based augmentation system developed jointly by Australia and New Zealand. It provides precise positioning and navigation services to support a number of sectors, including aviation, maritime, agriculture, surveying and emergency response. SouthPAN serves growing end market use cases, including in agriculture to increase productivity through applications like precision spraying, yield mapping, controlled traffic farming, inter-row seeding and livestock management. It is also capable of improving personnel safety on mine and construction sites through smart geo-fencing technologies to accurately identify the location of workers operating vehicles and heavy machinery. This marks the second such award for the company, after Inmarsat – which has since combined with Viasat – was awarded a contract in May 2023 to deliver a satellite payload for SouthPAN. The new agreement, which amends the previous award and comes under Viasat's Communication Services segment, covers the continuation of services from Viasat's existing in-orbit satellites as well as a new payload, marking a significant extension of Viasat's partnership with both Governments. SouthPAN is delivered by Geoscience Australia in partnership with Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand, with early services available to both countries since 2022. Melissa Harris, Chief Executive Officer, Geoscience Australia

said, this agreement secures a reliable satellite service and ground infrastructure, delivering precise positioning across Australia and its maritime zones – enabling industries to innovate where accuracy is critical. From farms to freight, users will be able to access free services that are accurate and timely. Todd McDonell, President, Viasat International Government said, Viasat is thrilled to expand its support for SouthPAN and enable improved positioning and navigation services across Australia and New Zealand. SouthPAN represents extraordinary potential for the region: It can save lives by enabling precision safety tracking, help farmers improve productivity through automated device tracking, and even support transport management systems of the future. We have a long history providing advanced PNT and safety services across the world, so we are of course excited to be expanding this work and collaboration with GA and LINZ.

China Launches New Group of Internet Satellites

China successfully launched a new group of low Earth orbit satellites from the Wenchang Space Launch Site in the southern island province of Hainan. This satellite group, the eighth of its kind that will constitute an internet constellation, was launched at 2:43 p.m. (Beijing Time) aboard a Long March-5B carrier rocket, featuring a Yuanzheng-2 (Expedition-2) upper stage at the top of the rocket. The satellites successfully entered their preset orbit, reports Xinhua. This launch marked the 588th mission of the Long March series carrier rockets.

Starlink Yet to Submit Application to Deploy Satellite Internet Service in Vietnam

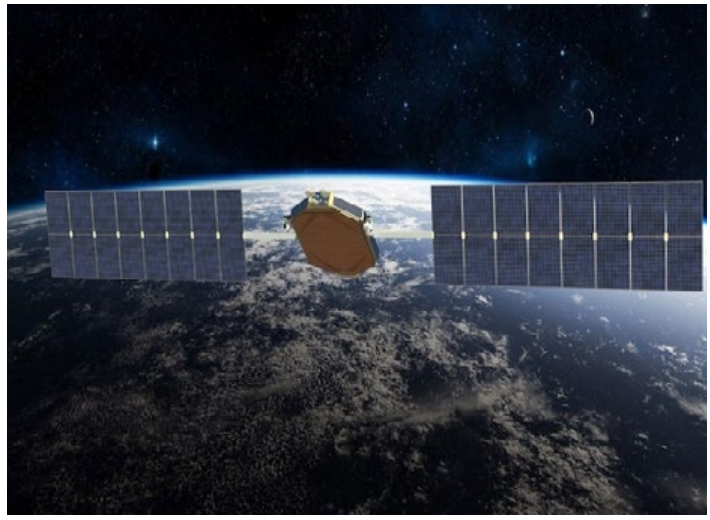
The Authority of Telecommunications under the Ministry of Information and Communications (MST) has yet to receive a license application for Starlink satellite internet services in Vietnam. Nguyen Phong Nha, deputy general director of the Authority of Telecommunications, made the statement at a press briefing on August 5. He added that Starlink has received approval from the government for testing in Vietnam. Currently, the authority is preparing the contents with related ministries to be able to approve the license soon when SpaceX, the company that owns Starlink, submits the application to deploy immediately. According to the MST, the Starlink service can be deployed three months after the license is issued. Starlink is a low-orbit satellite internet system with 6,750 satellites flying at an altitude of 550 km. The service is available in more than 125 countries and territories, with five million users. When the process is completed, Vietnam will be the fifth country in Southeast Asia to have Starlink satellite internet, after the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Timor Leste. According to Doan Quang Hoan, vice president of the Vietnam Radio and Electronics Association and former director of the Radio Frequency Department, satellite internet can quickly cover all the signal depressions in Vietnam, which the country is striving to do.

AST SpaceMobile Agrees to Acquire Global S-Band Spectrum Priority Rights Held Under the ITU

AST SpaceMobile, Inc. the company building the first and only space-based cellular broadband network accessible directly by everyday smartphones, designed for both commercial and government applications, announced an agreement to acquire global S-Band spectrum priority rights held under the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). “Our revolutionary satellites and proprietary ASICs were designed with S-Band capabilities in mind. With these new spectrum priority rights, we will be in a position to bring services in S-Band to targeted markets around the world,” said Abel Avellan, Chairman and CEO of AST SpaceMobile. “Alongside our existing global 3GPP spectrum strategy and planned L-Band spectrum strategy in the U.S. and Canada, we would be capable of expanding subscriber capacity by offering the vast majority of countries around the world the full AST SpaceMobile network capabilities, together with our mobile network operator partners, enabling a true broadband experience directly from space to everyday smartphones and with a goal of peak data transmission speeds of up to 120 Mbps.” On August 5, 2025, AST SpaceMobile (the “Company”) entered into an agreement to acquire an entity that holds certain S-Band ITU priority rights to MSS (Mobile Satellite Services) frequencies in the range of 1980-2010 MHz and 2170-2200 MHz, for use in low Earth orbit (the “Transaction”). These spectrum priority rights will provide AST SpaceMobile a path to offer services in these spectrum bands around the world, subject to country-level regulatory approvals, supplementing the Company’s core global 3GPP cellular spectrum strategy. The Transaction has a total consideration of $64.5 million, to be paid in stock or cash at the Company’s election, with $26 million paid at closing and deferred consideration of $38.5 million, a portion of which is subject to achievement of performance-based milestones. The Transaction is expected to close during the second half of 2025. The closing is contingent upon the satisfaction of customary closing conditions. UBS Securities LLC is acting as financial advisor to AST SpaceMobile and McGuireWoods LLP is acting as legal counsel to AST SpaceMobile.

Echostar Taps MDA Space to Build LEO Sats for New D2D Network

Satellite communications firm EchoStar is moving ahead with plans to join the global direct-to-device (D2D) satellite race via a new LEO satellite constellation, and has awarded an initial US$1.3 billion contract to MDA Space to help build it. EchoStar intends to launch a non-terrestrial network (NTN) LEO satellite constellation to provide global voice, text and broadband services directly to standard 5G NTN handheld devices. The initial constellation will comprise 200 satellites, which can be expanded as demand grows. The contract with MDA Space, has announced, covers the design, manufacturing and testing of the first tranche of over 100 software-defined MDA Aurora D2D satellites for the system. The MDA Aurora satellites support optical intersatellite links that enable a mesh network configuration. MDA Space said the satellites are also fitted with an onboard processor compliant with 3GPP 5G NTN standards and Open RAN for seamless integration with terrestrial networks. While the initial contract for the first batch of LEO satellites is valued at US$1.3 billion, the full contract for over 200 satellites is valued at US$2.5 billion. The LEO project is estimated to cost US$5 billion in total, including launch services and gateways. MDA Space is scheduled to deliver the first batch of LEO satellites in 2028, with commercial service starting in 2029. EchoStar is planning to offer its D2D constellation primarily as a wholesale option for mobile operators that want to add an NTN option for 5G customers, according to Via Satellite. EchoStar said all devices that support 3GPP NTN specs – to include sensor and mobile vehicles – can use the service. Unlike D2D players like Starlink, Lynk Global and AST Spacemobile that aim to use existing terrestrial mobile spectrum, EchoStar's constellation will utilize



2-GHz S-band frequencies usually reserved for mobile satellite services (MSS). Currently, EchoStar holds exclusive licences in the 2-GHz band in the US, as well as 30 MHz of 2-GHz licenses in Europe, 40 MHz in Canada through a long-term partnership, 20 MHz in Mexico, and 30 MHz in Brazil. "The market-leading technical innovation provided by MDA Space along with our global S-band/2-GHz spectrum rights with the highest ITU priority, and our strong service delivery capabilities will enable us to serve the consumer, enterprise, public safety and government sectors in the US, Europe and beyond," said EchoStar president and CEO Hamid Akhavan in a statement.

GovSat Orders Defence Telecom Satellite from Thales Alenia Space

GovSat, a public-private joint venture between the Luxembourg Government and satellite operator SES, together with Thales Alenia Space, a joint venture between Thales and Leonardo, have announced the signing of a contract for the supply of a new defence geostationary communications satellite, GovSat-2. Operating in X, Ka and UHF frequency bands, the satellite will provide secure and jam-resistant telecommunications services for the Luxembourg

defence as well as for its partners. The satellite will be built on Thales Alenia Space's Spacebus 4000B2 platform, according to a media release. As prime contractor, Thales Alenia Space will be responsible for the design, manufacturing, testing, and delivery of the satellite. GovSat-2 is expected to have an operational in-orbit service life exceeding 15 years. "I wish to express my gratitude to GovSat and its shareholders, SES and the Luxembourg Government, for placing their trust in our company," said Hervé Derrey, CEO of Thales Alenia Space. "GovSat-2 will enhance Luxembourg's sovereignty in the field of defence satellite telecommunications. The achievement is a new evidence of the rebound of the defence geostationary market. This new contract further underscores the success of our Spacebus 4000 product line, which has represented a total of 42 satellite programmes, including 16 based on the Spacebus 4000B2 platform." The satellite will be co-funded by SES and the Luxembourg Government (funding from the Luxembourg Directorate of Defence is subject to parliamentary approval of the corresponding draft law), the media release said. Thales Alenia Space posted consolidated revenues of €2.23 billion in 2024 and has more than 8,100 employees in 7 countries with 15 sites in Europe.

Starlink Finally Secures Indian Operating License

The Minister of Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia has revealed that SpaceX's low Earth orbit (LEO) satellite constellation, Starlink, has been granted an operating license, allowing it to legally provide connectivity services across the country. "Starlink has been granted a Unified License to launch satellite internet services in India," said Scindia, speaking on the 30th anniversary of India's first mobile phone call. The news will come as a huge relief to SpaceX, which has been pursuing regulatory approval for years. The company has long viewed India as a crucial market with high growth potential, highlighting the millions of people living in remote locations underserved by traditional connectivity infrastructure. But while the license has been a long time coming, Starlink's regulatory pains are not over yet. The regulator has yet to formally allocate satellite spectrum, leaving Starlink – as well as fellow licensees Eutelsat OneWeb and Jio Space Technology – in a holding pattern, unable to launch commercial services. An official timeline for spectrum allocation has not been revealed, but Scindia says that a framework for allocation has been agreed by the regulator. "Frameworks for spectrum allocation and gateway establishment are ready, ensuring smooth rollout," he said. Starlink's path into India has been a troubled one. The company was initially optimistic that its application would be granted with little delay, even going so far as to begin selling pre-orders of Starlink terminals to Indian customers in 2021. However, the regulatory process proved more arduous than anticipated. Satellite license applications are subject to intense scrutiny, including complying with strict security requirements, including mandatory interception and monitoring protocols, use of local data centers, and location tracking of user terminals. These factors, combined with objections from rival satellite operators and clashes with regulators, saw the application process progress at a glacial pace.

Low Orbit Satellite Internet Service Set to Launch in S. Korea Next Month

A low orbit satellite internet service is expected to be launched in South Korea next month, with global providers Eutelsat OneWeb and SpaceX preparing to introduce the next-generation internet access from space, industry sources said. Eutelsat OneWeb, a subsidiary of the French business group Eutelsat, has already completed the communication equipment conformity assessment for satellite internet service and has started establishing network connections with local access points, according to KT SAT Co., the satellite service arm of local telecom giant KT Corp. "OneWeb is installing equipment and is expected to launch the service in September," an official from KT SAT said. OneWeb plans to provide the low Earth orbit (LEO) internet service in partnership with Hanwha Systems Co. and KT SAT. SpaceX, which operates the Starlink service, has also received approval from the National Radio Research Agency for a key LEO service device, sources said. The agency oversees the mandatory conformity assessment system for broadcasting and communication equipment. The U.S. company is awaiting additional approvals for other equipment. "Once the process is completed, Starlink Korea is expected to launch the service after a short preparation period," said an official from SK Telink Corp., an authorized reseller of Starlink Korea. LEO satellites, orbiting between 300 and 1,500 kilometers above Earth, can provide high-speed, low-latency communication due to their proximity to the planet, compared with geostationary satellites.

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WHOLESALE NEWS

Government Moves to Secure AT Subscribers as Debt Crisis Threatens Service

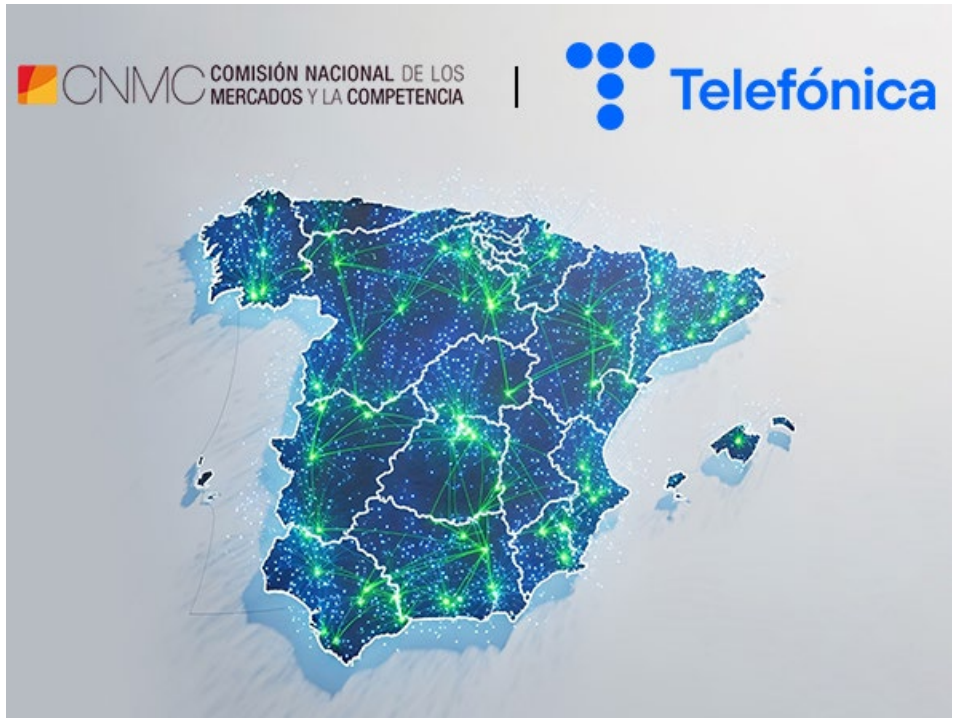
The Government has directed AT (formerly AirtelTigo) and Telecel Ghana to implement a national roaming arrangement, allowing AT's traffic to be migrated onto Telecel's network, the Ministry of Communications, Digital Technology, and Innovations announced on September 6. The measure is to safeguard more than three million AT subscribers after the operator's network came under threat from site disconnections by American Tower Corporation (ATC) Ghana over unpaid debts. According to the Ministry, on September 1, 2025, ATC began disconnecting power to AT's radio access sites, raising the risk of widespread service disruption. Over three million AT Ghana subscribers were at risk of losing access to voice, data, and mobile money services due to the debt crisis. In Ghana, where mobile services are critical for daily life, financial transactions, and small businesses, such a sudden blackout would have carried serious social and economic consequences. Just days later, on September 4, the government confirmed plans to merge AT Ghana, which it fully owns, with Telecel Ghana, in which it holds a 30% stake, in a bid to create a stronger and more financially sustainable competitor. The Ministry announced during a staff engagement session, where sector minister Samuel Nartey George reassured AT's 300 permanent employees that their jobs would be protected. He also stressed that customers would not experience service disruptions during the transition. The decision, he noted, is rooted in AT Ghana's difficult financial situation. The operator has posted losses of more than $10 million in the first eight months of 2025, financed largely through taxpayer funds. "We cannot continue to pump scarce public funds into an operation that is not sustainable," George said.

Robi Brings Roaming to Over 70 Countries

Robi has simplified international mobile communication for Bangladeshi travelers by launching local currency based roaming services. Customers can now purchase roaming packs across more than 70 countries directly from their main balance in Bangladeshi Taka via the 'My Robi' and 'My Airtel' apps-eliminating the need for credit cards or foreign payment methods. The service was officially unveiled at Robi's corporate office in Tejgaon, Dhaka. Customers can buy roaming packs before departure, with activation occurring automatically upon arrival at their destination. Shihab Ahmad, Chief Commercial Officer of Robi Axiata PLC stated, "Our new roaming packs provide greater data allowances, enhanced features, and competitive pricing. They offer travelers cost-effective data bundles, combo deals, and Asia-specific

packs. Activating the service through 'My Robi' and 'My Airtel' apps is quick and easy." Shahjahan Ali, Joint Director of the Foreign Exchange Policy Department at Bangladesh Bank, described the move as "a major milestone for Bangladesh's telecom sector. Allowing roaming purchases in Bangladeshi Taka sets a positive precedent for customer service and financial inclusion." "We commend Robi for making overseas transactions more accessible and transparent for Bangladeshi citizens. This service aligns with our goals and will ease travel while reducing reliance on international payment systems." Also present at the event were Bangladesh Bank's Joint Director Mohammad Moniruzzaman Moni, and Deputy Director Farzana Rahman. Representing Robi Axiata PLC were Chief Corporate and Regulatory Officer, Shahed Alam, Chief People Officer, Muhammad Shoaib Baig, and Head of Marketing Shaukat Kader Chowdhury, along with other officials. With valid passports, visas, and travel tickets (when applicable), customers can easily purchase roaming packs via the 'My Robi' and 'My Airtel' apps. The maximum spend per trip is Tk 6,000, with an annual cap of Tk 30,000. Full details are available within the apps.

CNMC Fully Deregulates Spain's Wholesale Fiber Market



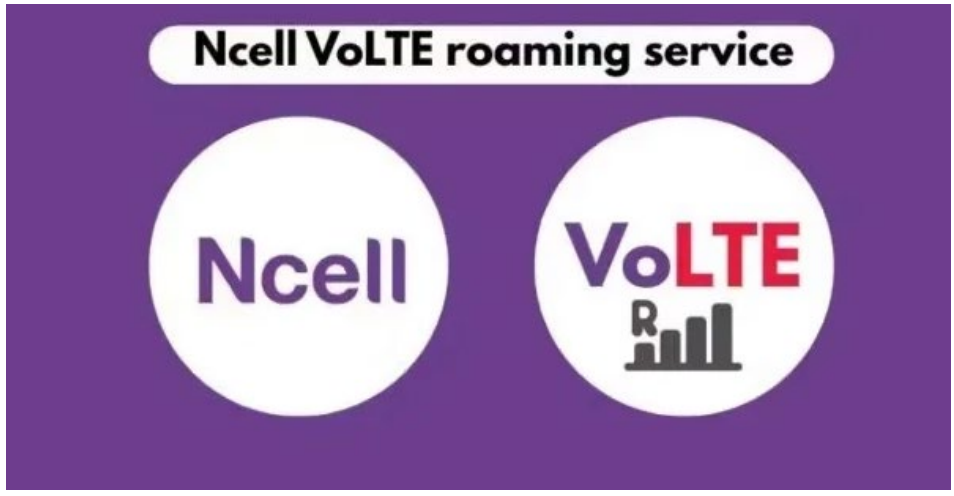
Spain's Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia (CNMC) has moved to completely deregulate the wholesale market for fixed-line broadband, formally ending the regulatory obligations on Telefónica for its NEBA Local and NEBA Fibra services. NEBA, or "Network Broadband Access," is the system that has let Spanish rivals use Telefónica's fiber network at regulated rates. NEBA Local connects at exchanges near end users, while NEBA Fibra links at larger provincial hubs. Designed to help operators without last-mile networks compete, it has been key to boosting broadband competition, especially in less commercial areas. With the CNMC's latest decision, the rules requiring Telefónica to offer NEBA access will be scrapped after a transition period. From October 2021 until now, these wholesale services were only regulated in areas serving about 30% of the population. Moving forward, they will be subject entirely to commercial competition and the sector's conflict-resolution framework. According to Cinco Días, the decision marks the culmination of a deregulation process first proposed in December 2024 and follows a public consultation that confirmed growing competitive conditions. The move had been flagged by strategy consultancy Nae. In that piece, Nae argued that deregulation was a logical next step in a market where "SuperNetco" joint ventures were already reshaping the competitive landscape. The CNMC justifies the move by pointing to substantial improvements in market competition. Telefónica's fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) coverage in previously regulated zones has reached approximately 90%, closely mirroring levels in more competitive areas. Its retail market share in those zones has fallen sharply from above 50%. At the same time, the emergence and consolidation of altnets have transformed the landscape: MásOrange, Vodafone under Zegona, the growth of Digi, and wholesale players like Onivia and Lyntia have significantly diversified services and bolstered competition throughout the country. To ensure an orderly transition, the CNMC has established a six-month phase-in period during which NEBA Local and NEBA Fibra obligations will remain in effect, with full deregulation taking effect in February 2026. Importantly, the regulation of Telefónica's physical infrastructure – conduits, ducts and poles – will remain in place under the MARCo (MArco de Referencia de conductos) framework. This ensures altnets retain access to essential civil infrastructure needed to deploy their own FTTH networks. Cinco Días pointed out CNMC recently approved hikes of between 11% and 14.6% in MARCo rates, prompting calls for legal challenge from operators such as MasOrange and Vodafone, which argue the increases are excessive despite being lower than the originally proposed 20% average. Despite deregulation of NEBA services, the existing MARCo offers remain fully in place throughout the transition period and until any new regulatory recalibrations are completed.

Liberia Moves Forward with Free Roaming Plans

The widely anticipated launch of free roaming between Liberia and Sierra Leone seems to have begun, with a Liberia-Cote d'Ivoire deal now much closer. Liberia and Sierra Leone announced the rollout of an Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)-inspired free roaming initiative, designed to ease cross-border mobile roaming costs. Under the ECOWAS initiative, citizens of both Liberia and Sierra Leone can now use mobile services in each other's countries without incurring international roaming charges. Liberia also signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Côte d'Ivoire towards the implementation of a similar initiative. This apparently followed a three-day conference from 4-6 August. The conference was hosted by the Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA) which was joined by Sierra Leone's National Communications Authority (NatCA) and officials from Côte d'Ivoire. As we reported at the time, Liberia signed roaming deals with Sierra Leone and The Gambia six months ago. It's not clear when the deal with The Gambia will be activated. It was due to start in early July. Commenting on the MoU, Clarence K Massaquoi, Chairman of the Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA), highlighted the deep-rooted ties between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, noting that their shared border, the longest Liberia has with any neighboring state. Of course, where people share not only land but culture, steep roaming fees have proved inconvenient, especially as farmers, traders, and transport operators often rely on phone calls and mobile money services to conduct cross-border business. This deal could therefore be a massive boost for trade – in border areas in particular. However, it's not yet clear when the Liberia-Côte d'Ivoire agreement will actually come into effect. Mobile operators in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire have already begun technical preparations to implement the new roaming framework, which covers voice calls, text messaging and data services. They will also have to agree revenue-sharing models, deal with service quality, and address consumer protection.

Ncell Becomes Nepal's First Mobile Operator to Offer Outbound VoLTE International Roaming

Nepalese telecom operator Ncell has announced it is the first mobile provider in the country to launch outbound Voice over Long-Term Evolution (VoLTE) international roaming services for its customers. This follows its existing inbound VoLTE roaming offerings for international visitors from operators such as Bharti Airtel, Reliance Jio, China Mobile, Ooredoo Kuwait, Mobily, AT&T, and Viettel. Ncell has begun providing outbound VoLTE roaming to its customers traveling to India through a partnership with Airtel, enabling high-definition voice calls and high-speed data services abroad. The company plans to extend outbound VoLTE roaming to India's other major operators, Jio and Vodafone Idea, with testing underway. Ncell is also conducting trials with global operators including AT&T, T-Mobile, Verizon, Softbank, NTT Docomo, China Mobile, China Unicom, Bell Canada, and Telus. In addition, Ncell is actively working to expand its inbound VoLTE roaming partnerships to enhance connectivity for international roamers visiting Nepal.



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TECHNOLOGY NEWS

SK Telecom's WiFi 7 to Board City Buses in South Korea

SK Telecom announced that it has confirmed improved communication quality by providing a pilot service to introduce 5G/LTE-based Wi-Fi 7 to city buses for the first time in Korea. This pilot service was implemented as part of the Bus Public Wi-Fi project led by the National Intelligence Service under the Ministry of Science and ICT. The key feature is the deployment of 5G/LTE backhaul-based Wi-Fi 7 equipment (AP) to improve service quality during the second and third phases of the existing bus public Wi-Fi rollout. SKT began the pilot in May, targeting 100 buses in Seoul and Gyeonggi Province, including trunk (blue), branch (green), and metropolitan (red) lines. The pilot will continue through the end of August. According to interim inspection results, download speeds improved by an average of 1.5 times compared to the initial installation of Wi-Fi 6 and 6E. While initial average download speeds were 429 Mbps with Wi-Fi 6/6E, speeds with Wi-Fi 7 equipment ranged from 715 to 1,003 Mbps depending on the route. Average usage per device also increased by 20–30%. In May, Wi-Fi 6/6E equipment recorded average usage of 272,979 MB per device, while Wi-Fi 7 devices reached 365,211 MB on the same bus routes. Wi-Fi 7 delivers faster transmission speeds and lower latency compared to its predecessors. It simultaneously supports 2.4 GHz, 5 GHz, and 6 GHz frequency bands, reducing interference and accommodating more devices. Its 320 MHz channel width doubles that of Wi-Fi 6/6E, increasing simultaneous data processing capacity. Additionally, Quadrature Amplitude Modulation (QAM) is improved. While Wi-Fi 6/6E supports 1,024QAM, Wi-Fi 7 supports up to 4,096QAM, allowing denser data transmission per signal. Stability is enhanced through Multi-Link Operation (MLO), enabling simultaneous uploads and downloads across multiple frequency bands.

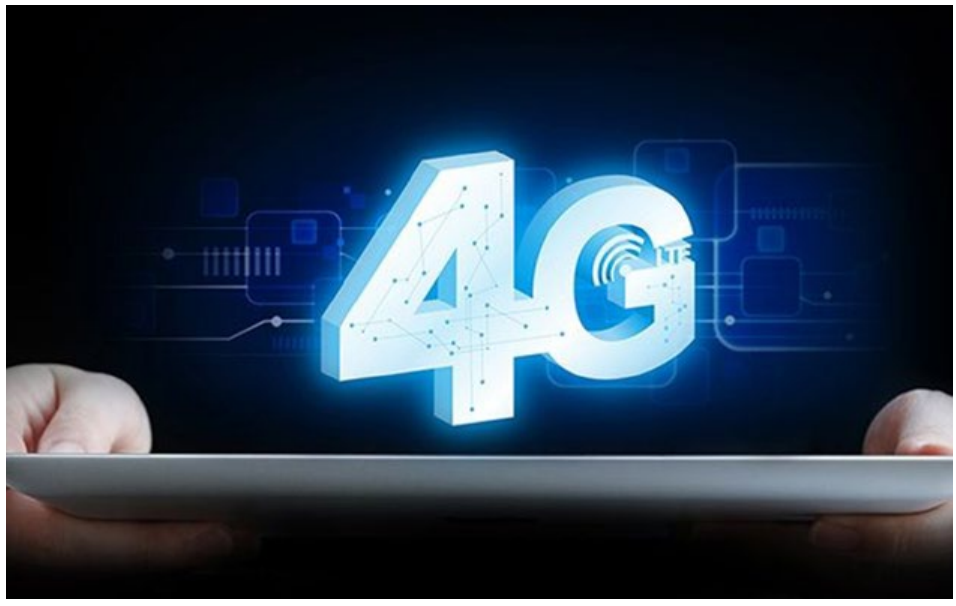
AWS Earmarks $4.4B for New Zealand Cloud Services

Amazon Web Services (AWS) committed to spend more than NZD7.5 billion ($4.4 billion) to introduce cloud services in New Zealand, establishing a new region in the country, with the data Centre investment expected to create about 1,000 new jobs annually. With the Asia Pacific (New Zealand) Region, AWS noted in a statement customer can run workloads and securely store data in the country, while serving end-users with even lower latency. Prasad Kalyanaraman, VP of infrastructure services at AWS, added the new region will help serve the growing demand for cloud services across the country and "empower organizations of all sizes to accelerate their digital transformation". The region, with three availability zones, will run on 100 per cent renewable energy from the start, sourcing power from Mercury New Zealand's Turitea South wind farm. The launch adds to AWS' global infrastructure of 120 availability zones across 38 geographic regions. AWS has plans for an additional ten availability zones and three new AWS regions in Saudi Arabia, Chile, and Europe.

TII, VentureOne, and e& Introduce QuantumConnect: Next-Generation Secure Connectivity Solution

Abu Dhabi's Technology Innovation Institute (TII) and VentureOne, ATRC's venture builder, in collaboration with e& has launched QuantumConnect in the UAE. This next-generation hardware-based encryption solution harnesses the power of quantum physics to revolutionize secure communications, embedding hardware directly on fiber infrastructure. Built on TII's proprietary Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) technology, this offering is designed to ensure future-proof protection of data as it moves across networks, addressing the growing complexities of security threats, including quantum computing's potential to break conventional encryption. QKD secures communications by transmitting encryption keys as quantum particles, which cannot be intercepted or duplicated without detection. This guarantees that key exchanges remain secure, even against future quantum attacks, providing businesses with a future-proof defence for their most sensitive data. Developed in UAE, TII's advanced quantum communication technology combines industry-leading expertise with local compliance, ensuring that organizations benefit from a solution tailored to their unique security needs. The solution aligns with national and industry regulations, including the UAE's new Cryptography Executive Regulation, which stipulates management and technical security controls to safeguard the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information. In addition, it strengthens compliance with federal laws governing the use of Information and Communications Technology in health fields. Dr. Najwa Aaraj, Chief Executive Officer, Technology Innovation Institute (TII), said: "QuantumConnect represents a significant milestone in the practical application of our Quantum Key Distribution technology—engineered to generate encryption keys using quantum safe channels. At TII, we are advancing quantum-secure communication protocols that offer provable security guarantees rooted in the laws of physics. This solution exemplifies our commitment to translating complex scientific breakthroughs into scalable, real-world systems that future-proof critical infrastructure and enable secure digital transformation across sectors." As organizations generate and transport more data across networks, and as quantum computing becomes a near-future reality, QuantumConnect ensures data security and resilience from the ground up. The solution enables networking with physically impenetrable encryption at the connectivity level, providing lasting protection for mission-critical communications. Reda Nidhakou, Acting CEO of VentureOne, said: "VentureOne is dedicated to scaling game-changing technologies, and QuantumConnect is a prime example. Given e&'s leadership in the region, they are the ideal partner for us – we look forward to working with them to make QuantumConnect an industry standard." Esam Mahmoud, Senior Vice President, SMB Sales & Marketing, e& UAE, said: "As technological innovation accelerates, the resilience of our networks has become the foundation on which trust is built in digital domains. Our partnership with TII and VentureOne to enhance connectivity security reflects a shared commitment to address global and regional challenges in secure communications with future-proof solutions. QuantumConnect marks a paradigm shift in the UAE's secure communications infrastructure and cyber innovation efforts, integrating quantum-backed encryption directly into the core of network connectivity. With this breakthrough solution, we will empower businesses and industries in the UAE to operate with complete confidence, safeguarding their mission-critical data against current and future threats as they navigate a complex digital landscape, and putting the UAE at the forefront of employing quantum technologies to protect its digital infrastructure." Designed for scalability, QuantumConnect seamlessly integrates into existing fibre-based infrastructure providing entities in highly regulated industries, like finance, healthcare, government, and other sectors a deeper layer of protection, adapting to specific security needs with ease. Its proven success is underscored by live deployments, where business clients have already experienced significant enhancements in data security and operational confidence.

4G Network Reaches 7.6 Billion People as 5G Penetration Hits 54%



Fourth-generation (4G) technology has emerged as the most dominant network across the globe, with about 7.6 billion people now enjoying the service. GSMA revealed this in its State of Mobile Internet Connectivity report, where it also disclosed that 5G now covers more than half of the world's population. In Nigeria, data from the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) showed that 4G network has reached 50.8 per cent of the population, followed by 2G, which covers 38.6 per cent; 3G, 7.38 per cent and 5G, 3.17 per cent in the country. GSMA further disclosed that while almost 150 million additional people were covered by 4G networks for the first time in 2024, the rate of deployment has been slowing over the past few years as operators face diminishing returns on investment. "Almost 7.6 billion people worldwide now have 4G coverage, equivalent to 93 per cent of the global population. The majority of network investment continues to be in 5G deployments. 5G coverage has now reached more than half the world's population (54 per cent or 4.4 billion people) with more than 700 million additional people covered in 2024." The telecom body observed that the sunsetting of legacy networks continues, but not in all countries. It noted that, given declining traffic on 2G and 3 G networks, combined with the financial burden of maintaining legacy infrastructure and the need to use spectrum efficiently, many operators have either shut down or are in the process of sunsetting 2G and 3 G networks. According to it, by the end of 2024, there were 169 2G and 3G sunsets in 75 countries, nearly three-quarters of which were shut down following the launch of 5G. It, however, said the speed of sunsetting differs by region. For example, in Sub-Saharan Africa, 3G is still the dominant technology, with only one country (South Africa) currently planning to sunset both its 2G and 3G networks. Sunsets are conditional on enabling spectrum policies and the ability of operators to migrate consumers and businesses to 4G or 5G devices. GSMA noted that LMICs continue to see increased data usage and improvements in network quality, but large gaps persist. It said that with more consumers migrating to 4G and especially 5G, average data traffic per user continues to increase, reaching almost 16 GB per connection per month in 2024. However, it noted that there remain significant differences by region and level of economic development. It revealed that traffic per connection reached more than 25 GB in high-income countries, compared to 14 GB in LMICs. In terms of network quality, GSMA said the consumer experience on mobile networks continued to see significant improvement in 2024, with global average download speeds increasing from 51 to 64 Mbps. While average download speeds in high-income countries reached more than 120 Mbps, they remain below 30 Mbps in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, and stand at 44 Mbps in other LMICs. The report further revealed that users drop off at each stage of the journey to mobile Internet use, with larger drop-offs seen in certain countries and among specific demographics. People tend to experience common milestones on the journey to adopting and using the mobile Internet. This journey typically starts with owning a handset (stage 1), progresses to being aware of mobile internet (stage 2) and then owning an Internet-enabled phone (stage 3). It was observed that phone ownership is typically followed by mobile Internet adoption (stage 4), and regular (stage 5) and diverse (stage 6) mobile Internet use. GSMA observed that in the majority of survey countries, the largest drop-off tends to take place between mobile Internet awareness (stage 2) and Internet-enabled phone ownership (stage 3), particularly for rural respondents and women. The telecom body said, for example, in Nigeria, 78 per cent of rural respondents are aware of mobile Internet (stage 2), but only 39 per cent own an Internet-enabled phone (stage 3) – a drop-off of 39 percentage points. This drop-off is also significant for urban respondents but smaller, at 24 percentage points. Similarly, women, who are aware of the mobile Internet, are less likely to own an Internet-enabled phone than their male counterparts. However, once people own an Internet-enabled phone (stage 3), most use mobile Internet (stage 4). Therefore, focusing efforts on improving Internet-enabled phone ownership among rural populations and women who are already aware of it (at stage 2) can help close the mobile Internet urban-rural and gender gaps in countries where there is a similar trend.

Sri Lanka to Roll Out 5G Nationwide by Year-End

Sri Lanka is preparing to launch 5G services nationwide by the end of 2025, with a spectrum auction set to take place within the coming months, Digital Economy Deputy Minister Eranga Weeraratne confirmed. The Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka (TRCSL) is finalizing tender procedures, with the auction expected 51 days after a final scheduled discussion. The auction will offer spectrum in the 3.5 GHz and 27 GHz bands, each for a 10-year license period—comprising four 50 MHz lots in the 3.5 GHz band and four 100 MHz lots in the 27 GHz band. This follows major telecom market consolidation, including the merger of Dialog Axiata PLC and Bharti Airtel Lanka, which now holds around 63% of the mobile subscriber base. Some spectrum in the 850, 900, and 2300 MHz bands has been redistributed for efficiency, while remaining 2.6 GHz spectrum has been assigned to Hutchison Telecommunications Lanka. TRCSL is considering three allocation options: a direct auction for all qualified bidders, an administrative assignment to a single wholesale network, or an auction for existing operators with sharing obligations. Auction participation will be restricted to licensed mobile operators running 4G networks with no outstanding license fees. Winners will face light rollout obligations—requiring commercial 5G service launches at a set number of base station sites in each district within three years. The government will retain its majority stake in Sri Lanka Telecom PLC and Mobitel. Authorities view the 5G rollout as a key driver of economic recovery, enabling faster connectivity, new digital services, and greater appeal for foreign investment.

Bangladesh Targets 500,000 Km of Fiber Optic Cable to Build Safer, Modern Network

Bangladesh currently has 150,000 kilometers of fiber optic cable, 75% of which is overhead and highly vulnerable to natural disasters, according to Faiz Ahmad Taiyeb, special assistant to the Chief Adviser for the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology. Speaking at Bangladesh Cable Shilpa Limited (Bakshi) in Khulna on August 21, he stressed the urgent need for underground networks to ensure safety and quality. Taiyeb highlighted that Bangladesh requires at least 500,000 kilometers of fiber optic cable to meet growing national communication needs and sectoral demand. He urged the merging of outdated public and private networks into a unified system, calling the fiber optic industry a sector with "immense potential." He added that Bakshi — which has been producing cables since 1972 and entered fiber optic production in 2010 — must modernize its operations, secure international green certification, and expand into new markets to remain competitive. The company, which also manufactures HDPE ducts, power cables, and overhead conductors, currently produces up to 25,000 kilometers of fiber annually and reported Tk28 crore profit in FY2024–25. Taiyeb reaffirmed the ministry's support for Bakshi's growth and noted the importance of adopting effective marketing and modern technology as traditional cables lose demand. He also visited Khulna divisional offices of Teletalk, BTCL, and the postal service to meet staff and service users.

Rakuten Mobile Selects Cisco, Nokia and F5 as Partners for 5G SA Network

Rakuten Mobile, a global leading cloud-native AI intelligent mobile network operator, announced the selection of Cisco, Nokia and F5 as partners for the deployment of its 5G Standalone (SA) mobile network. The strategic technology partnerships with Cisco, Nokia and F5 will significantly enhance Rakuten Mobile's network capabilities, simplify operations through AI-driven systems, and drive innovation for enhanced consumer and enterprises mobile services across Japan. Since its launch of full-scale commercial mobile carrier services in 2019, Rakuten Mobile has been transforming the global telecommunications landscape with affordable, high-quality mobile services powered through cloud-native technology and Open RAN standards. "Rakuten Mobile disrupted the industry in 2019 with the world's first end-to-end cloud-native, virtualized mobile network built on Open RAN. We're accelerating our evolution towards fully autonomous network operations," said Sharad Sriwastawa, co-CEO and CTO of Rakuten Mobile. "Through the power of 5G, AI, and strategic partnerships with leading innovators like Cisco, Nokia, and F5, we are empowering customers in Japan with state-of-the-art, secure, and sustainable mobile connectivity. We are setting a new global benchmark for intelligent, cloud-native mobile networks, meeting the dynamic needs of both consumers and enterprises and solidifying our position as a leading global innovator." As demand for faster, more reliable, and secure mobile connectivity grows, Rakuten Mobile is committed to providing unparalleled services through state-of-the-art connectivity services. To maintain its competitive edge and deliver seamless, modern digital experiences, Rakuten Mobile sought out best in class partners to deliver seamless 5G core network services for its mobile subscribers in Japan.

Cisco

Rakuten Mobile will deploy Cisco's mobile Packet Core Portfolio as the foundation for the next phase of its network services evolution in Japan. The Cisco mobile Packet Core will enable Rakuten Mobile to seamlessly deploy 5G services, streamline its operations with its AI-driven systems, improve network performance, and offer new, innovative services. This transformation is expected to significantly enhance user experience by providing faster speeds, greater reliability, and expanded coverage. Cisco's secure global connectivity enhances the Cisco mobile Packet Core technology by delivering networks that are resilient and secure, establishing a critical foundation for AI innovation, and enabling service providers to become key players in the AI value chain. "By combining Cisco's secure global connectivity technology and 5G mobile Packet Core software with Rakuten Mobile's revolutionary network, we aim to redefine the mobile landscape in Japan and set a new standard for connectivity, quality and innovation," said Masum Mir, Senior Vice President and General Manager, Provider Mobility at Cisco. "Together, we enhance operational efficiency and user experience, and position Rakuten Mobile to take the lead in the delivery of enhanced services with 5G Advanced and beyond in Japan."

Nokia

Nokia will provide Rakuten Mobile with cloud-native network functions (CNFs) for its 5G SA network — including authentication, user data management, signaling, analytics and IMS voice — strengthening the network's reliability and security. Enabled by multi-cloud capabilities, Nokia CNFs will be deployed on Rakuten Symphony's Cloud-Native Platform and Cloud-Native Storage (CNP, CNS), offering Rakuten Mobile the operational benefits of a cloud infrastructure shared with its other applications. Lifecycle operations are automated through Nokia's cloud operations management tools, designed for distributed, multi-tenant, multi-vendor cloud infrastructures to optimize and manage platform resource usage. "Nokia's expertise in 5G technology, coupled with our portfolio of industry-leading solutions, will enable Rakuten Mobile to deliver customized 5G services," said Henrique Vale, vice president, Cloud and Network Services APAC market leader, Nokia. "This groundbreaking deployment illustrates how Nokia makes it easy for customers to reliably and securely use our products on the cloud CaaS platform of their choice."

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REGULATORY NEWS

ITU Report Details US$2.6-2.8 Trillion Cost to Connect Everyone Meaningfully by 2030

Achieving universal, meaningful Internet connectivity by 2030 could require an investment of USD 2.6 trillion to USD 2.8 trillion at current prices, according to the Connecting Humanity Action Blueprint released by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) – the UN agency for digital technologies – and the Communications, Space & Technology Commission (CST) of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The report outlines the challenges, projected costs, and collaborative strategies needed to make sure everyone, everywhere, can use the Internet, including the estimated one-third of humanity currently offline. The largest investment component — USD 1.5 trillion to USD 1.7 trillion — is required for hard infrastructure, alongside substantial funding for human and institutional capacity, mainly in developing countries. “Digital connectivity means creating opportunities for education, jobs, and access to essential services that can transform lives and communities," said ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin. "While significant resources are needed to meaningfully connect everyone, these are investments that will contribute to a prosperous digital future for all." ITU estimates that 2.6 billion people are still excluded from the digital world, with connectivity closely linked to levels of socio-economic development. In 2024, an estimated 93 per cent of the population in high-income countries was using the Internet, compared to just 27 per cent in low-income countries. The new report on achieving universal meaningful connectivity builds on ITU's original 2020 Connecting Humanity study, published under the direction of the G20 during the presidency of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, by identifying critical gaps with the anticipated costs for addressing them. “The world needs between USD 2.6 trillion and USD 2.8 trillion to connect humanity by 2030. This figure is nearly five times higher than the last assessment conducted in 2020 in partnership with

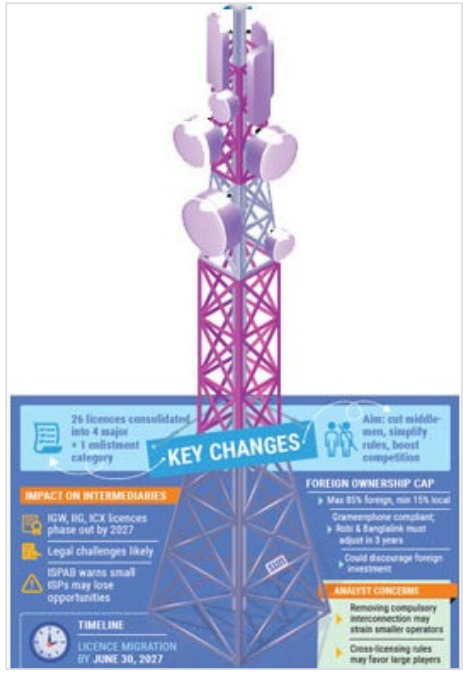
ITU during the Saudi chairmanship of the G20," said H.E. Eng. Haytham AlOhali, Acting Governor of CST. "Such a dramatic increase underscores the urgency for international cooperation, collective investment, and the sharing of expertise if we are to achieve the vision of universal, meaningful connectivity for all."

NCC To Launch Public Evaluation Map for Telecom Operators

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) said plans are underway to launch public evaluation map that will help network subscribers ascertain the quality of services being provided by telecom operators. Speaking at an interactive session with the media in Abuja, the Executive Vice Chairman of the commission, Aminu Maida said the initiative is aimed at strengthening digital services nationwide. He explained that the move is in line with the presidential order that designated telecommunications infrastructure as Critical National Information Infrastructure (CNII). Maida said the evaluation would pave way for improved service delivery and enforcing compliance among telecom operators. According to him, with over 171million mobile subscribers and a teledensity of 79.22% as of last June 2025, there was the need for continued service improvement by the operators. In addition, he advocated for corporate governance in the telecom sector which will bring about transparency and security. The NCC’s evolving regulatory approach leans heavily on transparency and the power of information disclosure. Maida revealed that recent data releases — including rebased telecom subscriber numbers and infrastructure incident reports — were part of a deliberate strategy to drive change. “We saw that just by putting out the truth, it triggered over a billion dollars in new investments this year,” he said. “That’s more than the previous two years combined.” Maida stressed that more capital injection is critical to the sector’s future. “What we actually need to take us to the next level is a fresh injection of capital into this industry,” he said, adding that good governance and trust are key to unlocking such investments.

Bangladesh Overhauls Telecom Licensing with New Unified Policy

The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) has begun drafting new guidelines under the Telecommunications Network and Licensing Policy, formally replacing the outdated International Long-Distance Telecommunication Service (ILDTS) Policy of 2010. The new framework simplifies licensing by reducing more than a dozen categories to four main types: access networks (such as mobile and broadband operators), national infrastructure (including towers and fiber networks), international connectivity (such as submarine cables), and non-terrestrial networks. A fifth category, telecom-enabled services, will only require registration. Existing license types like IGW, ICX, IIG, and NIX will be phased out by 2027. Designed to attract foreign investment and streamline governance, the policy adopts a technology-neutral approach, allowing operators to choose and innovate across emerging areas such as IoT, private 5G and 6G networks, blockchain, and quantum computing. Mobile virtual network operators (MVNOs) are officially recognized for the first time, potentially opening the market to new entrants. Foreign ownership caps vary: mobile operators may have up to 85% foreign investment (with at least 15% held locally), infrastructure firms up to 65%, and international connectivity providers up to 49%. Companies have three years to comply with these rules. The policy sets ambitious targets for fiber connectivity and service quality, mandating that half of all mobile towers be linked to fiber within 18 months and 80% within three years. It also requires disaster-prone areas to maintain backup power on at least a quarter of towers. BTRC plans to introduce a National Quality of Service Dashboard to monitor coverage, speed, and reliability in real time. To curb market dominance, the regulator gains new powers to identify operators with significant market power (SMP) and impose remedies such as tariff controls, infrastructure sharing, and stricter transparency requirements. Environmental measures are also included, mandating renewable energy adoption, e-waste management, and reduced carbon emissions. The policy further tightens surveillance oversight, clarifying that lawful interception of communications can only occur with valid legal authorization under judicial or quasi-judicial mandates.



Sri Lanka Launches National Cyber Protection Strategy to Safeguard Digital Future

Sri Lanka has officially rolled out its National Cyber Protection Strategy (2025–2029), a five-year plan designed to strengthen the country's cybersecurity framework and support its digital economic transformation. President Anura Kumara Dissanayake presided over the launch event, underscoring the government's commitment to securing national digital infrastructure. Developed by the Sri Lanka Computer Emergency Readiness Team (SLCERT) in collaboration with the Ministry of Digital Economy and with technical support from the World Bank, the strategy outlines key objectives including: Establishing a robust legal and administrative framework for cybersecurity. Developing a skilled cybersecurity workforce equipped with advanced knowledge and expertise. Enhancing public awareness around digital safety and cyber threats.As part of the initiative, the government also inaugurated the National Cybersecurity Operations Center, which will provide 24/7 monitoring of 37 institutions managing critical digital infrastructure to detect and respond to potential cyberattacks. President Dissanayake emphasized that cybersecurity is now central to national security, economic stability, and citizens' quality of life, noting that the new framework will help shield the nation from growing digital threats while enabling inclusive digital growth.

Italy Enacts AI Law Covering Privacy, Oversight and Child Access

Italy's parliament approved a new law covering artificial intelligence, making it the first European Union country with comprehensive AI regulations aligned with the EU's landmark AI Act. Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's government spearheaded the legislation saying it establishes human-centric, transparent and safe AI use as core principles while emphasizing innovation, cybersecurity and privacy protections. The law introduces cross-sector rules covering healthcare, work, public administration, justice, education and sport, requiring traceability and human oversight of AI decisions. It also limits AI access for under-14s to parental consent. "This (law) brings innovation back within the perimeter of the public interest, steering AI toward growth, rights and full protection of citizens," said Alessio Butti, the undersecretary for digital transformation. The government designated the Agency for Digital Italy and the National Cybersecurity Agency as national authorities on AI development, while watchdogs including the Bank of Italy and market regulator Consob retain their powers. New criminal provisions target unlawful dissemination of AI-generated content, such as deepfakes, punishable by between one to five years in prison if it causes harm. Illegal AI use will also lead to tougher penalties for offenses including identity theft and fraud. On copyright, works created with AI assistance are protected if they result from intellectual effort, while AI-driven text and data mining is allowed only for non-copyrighted content or scientific research by authorized institutions. The law authorizes up to 1 billion euros ($1.18 billion) from a state-backed venture capital fund for equity investments in small-to-medium enterprises and large companies active in AI, cybersecurity, quantum technologies and telecoms. Critics have said the resources being made available are puny compared with international initiatives. In healthcare, AI can assist diagnosis and care under conditions, with doctors retaining final decision-making and patients' maintaining the right to be informed. For workplaces, the law requires employers to inform workers when AI is being deployed.

UK Agrees £400M Defence Deal with Google Cloud

Google Cloud | Ministry of Defence

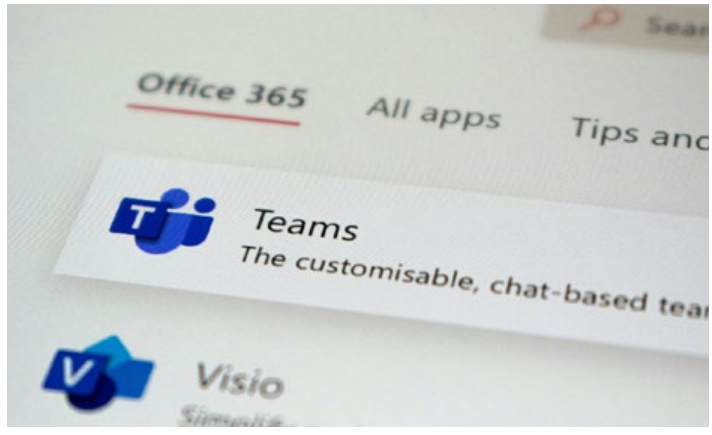
The UK government struck a deal worth £400 million with Google Cloud to provide the country's armed forces with AI, data analytics and cyber security technology, in a move that strengthens collaboration with the US ahead of a visit by President Donald Trump. The UK government stated defence intelligence and national security specialists will use Google Cloud's latest technology to "share secure information between our partners and outcompete our adversaries". UK's Ministry of Defence played a key role in securing the country, added a government statement, which will further strengthen secure communication links between the nation and US, in addition to an existing intelligence and security partnership. The tie-up with Google Cloud also delivers on a key recommendation from the Strategic Defence Review for a "digitally integrated service", providing resilient and secure networks. The Defence Review recommends the UK's armed forces make moves to modernize networks and embrace the latest technology to help "outmatch hostile actors". Google Cloud has pledged to recruit a specialist dedicated team in the UK to manage the technology, as the government pointed to advanced defence capabilities to create economic growth. Defence Secretary John Healey said the Google Cloud deal "shows how defence is an engine for growth, supporting highly skilled UK jobs and a vibrant British tech start-up ecosystem". Several media outlets have reported OpenAI and Nvidia are expected to announce a large AI investment in the UK, also coinciding with Trump's visit. The UK government struck a deal worth £400 million with Google Cloud to provide the country's armed forces with AI, data analytics and cyber security technology, in a move that strengthens collaboration with the US ahead of a visit by President Donald Trump. The UK government stated defence intelligence and national security specialists will use Google Cloud's latest technology to "share secure information between our partners and outcompete our adversaries". UK's Ministry of Defence played a key role in securing the country, added a government statement, which will further strengthen secure communication links between the nation and US, in addition to an existing intelligence and security partnership. The tie-up with Google Cloud also delivers on a key recommendation from the Strategic Defence Review for a "digitally integrated service", providing resilient and secure networks.

Ghana and Togo Regulators Begin Border Telecom Coordination Talks

The National Communications Authority (NCA) in collaboration with Togolese telecoms regulator, Autorité de Régulation des Communications Électroniques et des Postes (ARCEP), has commenced a three-day Border Coordination Meeting between Ghana and Togo. The meeting, being held at the NCA Tower in Accra from Tuesday, 9th September, 2025 to Thursday, 11th September, 2025, seeks to strengthen cross-border cooperation in the management of telecommunications services. In his opening remarks, the Deputy Director General in charge of Technical Operations at the NCA, Mr. Suleman Salifu, highlighted the long-standing spirit of cooperation between Ghana and Togo, describing spectrum management as a clear example of how cross-border collaboration could advance national interests and strengthen regional cooperation. He emphasized how effective coordination was crucial in preventing harmful interference in border areas and safeguarding the quality of service for Operators and consumers. He further noted that while both countries had made significant progress in expanding telecommunications coverage and deploying advanced technologies, emerging challenges such as signal spillage and uncoordinated frequency use made it necessary to review the existing bilateral agreement. He reaffirmed Ghana's commitment to working with Togo to establish a fair, transparent, and technically robust coordination framework that aligned with ITU recommendations and regional guidelines under ECOWAS and the African Telecommunications Union (ATU). Delivering remarks on behalf of ARCEP Togo, the Head of Delegation, Mr. Awutey Dodji Sylvanus, conveyed warm greetings from the Director General of ARCEP Togo. He noted that discussions on border coordination between the two regulators had been ongoing and expressed optimism that the current meeting would provide the foundation for amendments to the existing coordination agreement between the two countries. The meeting brings together the two regulators as well as Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) from both Ghana and Togo including MTN Ghana, AT Ghana, Telecel Ghana, Moov, Telecel Togo, and YAS Togo. Their participation underscores the collaborative effort to address cross-border frequency interference, enhance spectrum management, and ensure quality of service for consumers along the borders of both countries. Over the three-day period, delegates will engage in technical discussions, examine field monitoring outcomes, and propose revisions to the coordination framework that governs spectrum use along the common borders of Ghana and Togo.

Microsoft Escapes EU Antitrust Penalties with Teams Unbundling Deal

The US Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ended its investigation into EchoStar's use of its federal spectrum licenses after it agreed sales of the assets to AT&T and SpaceX. In May, the FCC called out EchoStar's lack of use of its AWS-4 spectrum licenses and 5G network build out following a complaint by SpaceX. SpaceX appeared to have an ally in FCC chair Brendan Carr, who pressed EchoStar to part with spectrum it wasn't using. EchoStar stated in a filing the same month the FCC probe effectively froze its ability to make decisions regarding the company's Boost Mobile business A meeting between EchoStar co-founder and chair Charlie Ergen, Carr and US President Donald Trump proved to be a tipping point for the satellite player selling spectrum which SpaceX maintained was underutilized. Carr wrote in a letter to Ergen which stated he directed FCC staff to bring the agency's investigation to a conclusion. He also noted EchoStar has met the agency's network buildout requirements, although EchoStar is now shutting down all but the core of its open RAN-based 5G network. The FCC chair also directed the staff to confirm EchoStar's exclusive terrestrial and MSS rights over the AWS-4 spectrum it is selling to SpaceX for $17 billion. EchoStar noted in a filing today (9 September) the deals with AT&T and SpaceX continue to remain subject to FCC approvals.



NBTC to Allocate 100MHz Free to Factories for 5G Networks

The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) plans to allocate 100 megahertz of bandwidth on the 4800MHz band free of charge to factories to help develop their 5G private networks. The 4800MHz band will be allocated for non-profit use with conditions to drive vertical industries to develop their 5G private networks for operations, said NBTC commissioner Somphop Purivigraipong, who is responsible for the telecom sector. He said in principle, the NBTC plans to allocate the 4800MHz band mainly to enterprises, factories and industrial estate operators that ask for the spectrum, regardless of whether they will collaborate with equipment vendors or telecom operators to deploy the spectrum to operate their 5G private networks. Participating factories must utilize the band to improve their operations and enhance capabilities, said Mr. Somphop. They cannot use the band for commercial purposes for outsiders, he said. Mr. Somphop said some businesses might want to be private network operators (PNOs). These firms will be directly awarded the right from the NBTC to use the 4800MHz band to offer services and related solutions to factories and industrial estates, he said. PNOs may be required to bid for the right to use the band to serve their factory customers, said Mr. Somphop. Major telecom operators can join these auctions if they want to be PNOs in this category, he said. However, if major mobile operators are awarded 4800MHz licenses for 5G private networks, they will be prohibited from providing mobile phone service to the mass market, said Mr. Somphop. They will also be prohibited from roaming the band with their existing 2600MHz mass market service as it does not align with the NBTC's objective of promoting 5G private networks, he said. "The purpose of the 4800MHz allocation is mainly for factories and enterprises requesting the spectrum for their operations. Factories can collaborate with equipment vendors or telecom companies to deploy solutions for 5G private network operations," said Mr. Somphop. Current 5G usage in the mass market does not fully utilize 5G capabilities as most consumer use consists of video streaming and complementing 4G service, he said. Few factories have adopted 5G solutions on telecom operators' 2600MHz band as there are limited real use cases for them, said Mr. Somphop. "Allocation of the 4800MHz band should promote real use cases for 5G private network adoption nationwide," he said. The NBTC previously considered allocating a portion of the 3500MHz band for 5G private network promotion. However, there are some technical problems in allocating 3500MHz, which is the most popular band globally for 5G adoption. A source on the NBTC board who requested anonymity said up to 700MHz of bandwidth on the 3500MHz spectrum could be allocated. The NBTC initially planned to auction 100MHz of bandwidth on the 3500MHz band by the end of 2027. However, the Association of Digital TV Broadcasting urged the NBTC to reconsider its plan to auction the 3500-3800MHz spectrum for telecom service as many satellite TV stations now use the range to air their programs.

UK Broadband Availability in Q2 2025: FTTP Approaching 80%

This is our regular update on fixed broadband availability in the UK, tracking the progress to the end of Q2 2025. The analysis is based on our broadband availability dataset which covers all 1.7m UK postcodes. More granular, postcode level broadband availability updates by operator and technology, are available to our UK Broadband Mapping customers.

Key headlines

At the end of Q2 2025, FTTP coverage was 77.8% of the UK premises, compared to 75.8% at the end of Q1 2025. The number of FTTP premises went up 15.3% y-o-y.

10.9 million premises had access to two or more FTTP networks (32.6% of all UK premises). Just over 1.75 million premises were covered by 3+ fiber networks.

Legacy networks operated by Openreach still covered 14.3 million premises, but this figure is now lower by 4.3 million than that of their FTTP premises.

Barnet and Barnsley local authorities added most FTTP premises in Q2 2025 (14.9K and 14.2K respectively).

Nationwide 2 million premises could choose between two or more fiber altnets, compared to 1.9 million in Q1 2025, with altnet overbuild slowing down.

PTA To Issue Satellite Internet Licenses Within Weeks

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) is in the final stages of launching satellite internet services in the country, with licenses expected to be issued within one to two weeks to companies meeting all registration requirements. To facilitate the rollout, a dedicated Satellite Directorate has been established at PTA headquarters in Islamabad. The directorate, operating under the Wireless Division, will handle licensing matters for satellite internet service providers and oversee regulatory compliance. According to PTA sources, the authority has already prepared a single license format for satellite internet providers, streamlining the application process. PTA has also submitted its recommendations on regulatory rules to the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission's (SUPARCO) regulatory body (PSARB). Once these rules are approved and company registrations are complete, licenses will be issued without delay. Officials confirmed that eligible companies could receive licenses within one to two weeks after fulfilling registration criteria. On Aug 8, the PTA introduced a major policy shift, announcing that companies providing satellite internet services will no longer be required to obtain multiple Local Loop (LL) licenses. Under the new framework, a single license will suffice for satellite internet operations across the country. Sources divulged that the move aligns with the Telecom Policy 2015 and is expected to streamline the regulatory process. The revised licensing model offers companies such as Starlink the option to replace fourteen individual Long Distance and International (LDI) licenses with a single national permit. Only satellite internet firms registered with the Pakistan Space Activities Regulatory Board (PSARB) will be eligible to receive the new license. Prior to this, it had been reported that following the entry of American tech giant Starlink, several Chinese companies had expressed interest in launching satellite internet services in Pakistan. In response, the government had accelerated efforts to finalize the regulatory framework required to facilitate such operations. It directed relevant agencies to finalize the rules, regulations, and license conditions soon. According to official sources, the Pakistan Space Activity Regulatory Board (PSARB) has submitted a detailed consultant report to relevant authorities and institutions, including the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA). The report outlines proposed rules, regulations, and licensing conditions for companies wishing to operate satellite-based internet services in the country.

Pakistan Waives ROW Charges to Boost Fiber Deployment and Digital Access

The Wireless and Internet Service Providers Association of Pakistan (WISPAP) has welcomed the government's decision to waive Right of Way (ROW) charges on IT and telecom infrastructure projects, including nationwide fibre deployment. The move, approved by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and implemented through the National Highway Authority (NHA) and Ministry of Railways, is seen as a major step toward expanding affordable digital connectivity. WISPAP Chairman Shahzad Arshad described the decision as a "visionary step" that will accelerate broadband rollout, especially in underserved and rural regions. He noted that high ROW costs had long been a barrier to connectivity, inflating operational expenses for service providers and limiting affordable internet access for consumers. The association praised the Ministry of IT and Telecommunication (MOITT) for aligning Pakistan's digital infrastructure policies with global best practices. "Countries such as India, Bangladesh, and several EU states have already removed excessive ROW charges to support nationwide fibrilization. Pakistan's move now brings us in line with international benchmarks," Arshad said. At the same time, WISPAP called for further reforms, including the removal of the 19.5% provincial sales tax on internet services in Punjab, Sindh, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Arshad stressed that eliminating this tax would provide direct relief to households, students, and businesses, helping unlock the full potential of e-learning, freelancing, and e-commerce. Reaffirming support for the government's Digital Pakistan initiative, WISPAP said that combining ROW waivers with broader tax reforms could significantly strengthen Pakistan's digital economy and global competitiveness.

Oman's TRA Introduces New Rules on Telecom Pricing and Promotions to Protect Consumers and Ensure Market Stability

Oman's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has rolled out a new regulatory framework governing telecom pricing and promotions, aimed at safeguarding consumers, preventing unsustainable competition, and ensuring continued investment in the sector. The rules, finalized after consultations with operators including Omantel, Ooredoo, Vodafone, Awaser, and Majan Telecom, empower the TRA to monitor market trends and intervene if aggressive price drops threaten market stability. For example, if service prices fall more than 10% within six months or if average revenue per user declines by over 5%, operators may be required to obtain prior approval before revising tariffs. The framework also allows the TRA to impose a three-month "cooling-off period" to halt potential price wars. Promotional offers are capped at four per service within six months, limited to 60 days in duration, and restricted to active subscribers. No offer can lock customers into contracts exceeding 12 months, and operators may only extend discounts to a maximum of 5% of their customer base at a time. Operators have voiced differing views: Omantel has proposed a minimum price per gigabyte to avoid a "race to the bottom," while Ooredoo and Vodafone stressed the importance of consistent enforcement. Awaser argued that restrictions should primarily apply to dominant operators. Concerns were also raised over SME access, prompting the TRA to adjust the framework by removing "commercial users" from restrictions while confirming that government entities remain eligible. The TRA emphasized that the framework will be subject to regular reviews to adapt to evolving market conditions and emerging technologies, reinforcing its role in balancing fair competition with consumer protection.

Kuwait MoD Outlines Cybersecurity Roadmap

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense (MoD) has detailed a comprehensive roadmap as part of its 2025–2030 strategic vision, placing strong emphasis on cybersecurity as a cornerstone of national defense. The plan underscores Kuwait's intent to modernize its digital infrastructure, forge international partnerships, and strengthen its military's cyber resilience. As part of the roadmap, the MoD is engaging with leading international defense and technology companies across the U.S., Europe, and Asia to explore collaborations in AI-driven cyber defense, secure cloud platforms, and threat intelligence systems. These partnerships are designed to bring advanced expertise into Kuwait while enabling long-term knowledge transfer and capacity building. The roadmap identifies key priorities, including protecting national defense infrastructure, deploying real-time threat detection and response systems, expanding secure encrypted communications, and embedding cybersecurity into all military domains—from air and land to naval and space. It also highlights workforce development as a critical objective, with specialized training programs to build a new generation of

Kuwaiti cyber defense professionals. Oversight of the cybersecurity projects rests with senior MoD leadership, including the Minister of Defense, the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, and the Head of the MoD's Cybersecurity Directorate, alongside technical advisors tasked with designing and deploying secure digital platforms. The initiative reflects Kuwait's determination to integrate advanced technologies into its defense systems while reinforcing its position as a digitally resilient state capable of addressing modern security challenges.

Jordan Grants First Commercial Drone Operator License to Elements TV Production

The Civil Aviation Regulatory Commission (CARC) has issued Jordan's first commercial drone operator license to Elements TV Production, marking a milestone in the country's aviation and technology sectors. The license was granted under the Civil Aviation Law No. 41 of 2007 and its amendments, in line with technical and safety standards. CARC Chairman Haitham Misto said the move reflects years of effort to establish a regulatory framework for drone licensing and operations, ensuring compliance with civil aviation safety and security requirements. He confirmed that more licenses will be issued as additional companies complete the necessary qualifications. Ibrahem Abusalma, General Manager of Elements TV Production, praised CARC's role, calling the license a testament to Jordan's maturing legislation and commitment to innovation. He noted that Elements plans to expand drone applications beyond media and marketing into sectors such as tourism, construction, and agriculture. Commercial drone services are expected to benefit areas like security monitoring, infrastructure inspection, crop management, mapping, surveying, parcel delivery, and smart city initiatives. The sector is seen as a driver of investment, job creation, and technological advancement, supporting Jordan's digital economy while improving efficiency and reducing costs.

NCC Outlines Research Findings on Customers' Data Depletion

Telecom sector regulator, the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has said from the outcome of the research it commissioned a consultant to carry out as a result of persistent complaints about data depletion by telecom subscribers, the mobile network operators (MNOs) are not responsible for customers' data depletion. CEO of NCC, Dr. Aminu Maida made the clarification during a meeting with reporters in Lagos, adding that some factors, including the technology deployed could be responsible for accelerated data use. A subscriber group, Association of Telephone, Cable TV, and Internet Subscribers of Nigeria (ATCIS), said it has been inundated with complaints from its members over data depletion. Its President, Sina Bilesanmi, said collaboration is key to enlightening members of the public to get the message down to the consumers. "Partnership and collaboration are required. The NCC should set aside cash to do radio enlightenment on this issue. Then the MNOs too should not get tired of sending SMS to their customers on the network. We acknowledge some of our members do some things on their mobile phones out of ignorance that ends up wiping out their data, we appeal for more sensitization in collaboration with ATCIS-Nigeria," he said. Shedding more light on how to stop data depletion, Director, Consumer Affairs at the NCC, Freda Bruce-Bunnet, in an email note shared with our reporter, titled Data Management Tips, said smartphone users must stop the use of auto play in social media platforms such as Instagram, Tok-Tok, Reddit, Facebook and X former Twitter. The other tips are: Block malwares which drain your data; Choose data usage prioritization and avoid binge watching; Disable background data usage; Eradicate annoying Ads with 3rd party Ad blockers; Favor low data versions of apps, eg Facebook Lite, YouTube Go, Opera Mini; Go to WiFi for iCloud Drive and backup, Android, IOS, and WhatsApp backup; Hide your location in settings; and Implement passwords protection. Restrict hotspot usage and know who is using your data. Others are jettisoning automatic downloads of status updates on Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp; Know your usage appetite. Track pattern. Use an App on your Providers website; Limit and delete unused Apps; Migrate to data saving mode: Android /iPhone. Setting. Mobile service. Choose the phone number. Choose lower data mode; NO to automatic app status updates; Observe use of Offline downloads to view music/video, google maps, and watch repeatedly; Promote the use of built-in phone data usage trackers. 1. Mobile service. Reset Statistics. Promote the use of usage alerts. 2. Apps. Settings. Internet. Carrier. Data warning and limit. And select the limit; Query data service terms. 30 days is only with responsible usage. Not a lifetime guarantee; Remove or reduce phone notifications; Stream affordably using SD not HD. Facebook, Instagram, Netflix, Reddit, Spotify etc. are data hogs; the technology you use (4G, 5G) affects your data consumption; and use WiFi for downloads, app updates; Options are off, mobile and wifi or WiFi. Other tips include data plans verification. Know MNO plans, promos, bundles and choose the best; Watch for unintentional overuse; x-ray, minimize use and roll over some of your data; yank off mobile data usage when not needed; and eschew the use of archaic phones.

Nepal Sets Timeline to Launch 5G In Kathmandu and Pokhara

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has directed the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology to ensure the rollout of fifth-generation (5G) mobile services in Kathmandu and Pokhara by Magh 2082. The directive was issued during a cabinet meeting held on Shrawan 29, 2082, at Singha Durbar, Kathmandu. The Prime Minister instructed Communication Minister Prithvi Subba Gurung to make the necessary arrangements for the long-awaited launch of 5G technology in Nepal. If successful, this will mark the country's first public access to 5G services. Nepal Telecom (Ntc) had previously received 60 MHz in the 2600 MHz (n41) band for 5G trials back in 2078. On its 19th anniversary in 2079, the company launched a limited 5G trial in select offices in Babarmahal, Sundhara, Pokhara, and Birgunj. However, the service was restricted due to limited device compatibility and lack of broader spectrum approvals. This time, with the government's directive, 5G services are expected to be publicly available by Magh 2082. Users will finally be able to connect their smartphones to 5G networks, enjoying higher speeds, improved consistency, and significantly

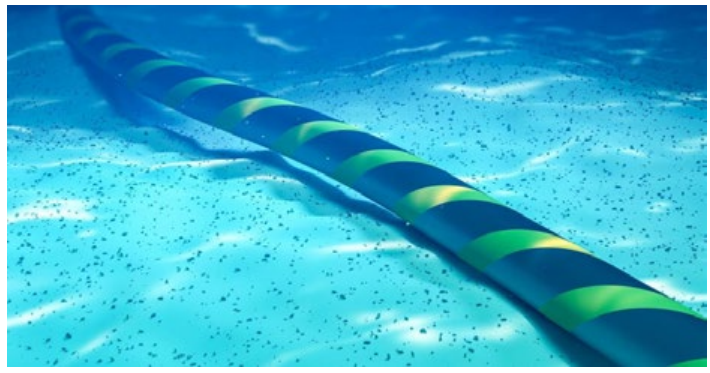
reduced latency compared to 4G. Ntc has claimed its trial speeds reached up to 1 Gbps, although real-world performance will likely be lower. Still, the commercial rollout would represent a major leap for Nepal's telecom industry. Minister Gurung has reiterated that 5G remains a top government priority for FY 2082/83, signaling renewed momentum for the long-delayed launch.

Ofcom to Expand Mobile Internet Frequency Bands

In a landmark announcement, the UK's Office of Communications (Ofcom) is set to expand the country's wireless internet capacity with the introduction of licenses for two new frequencies. The body has announced that it will begin the process of auctioning off licenses to launch services on 26GHz and 40GHz frequency bands. These frequencies, known as mmWave spectrum, are said to be key to unlocking the potential of mobile internet in both high-density city environments and rural parts of the UK, where broadband is yet to reach. It is likely to usher in the future of internet access in areas like the West Midlands, where there are both densely-populated settlements and more sparsely populated areas like Warwickshire. With such a significant change in the national mobile internet infrastructure, this project has the potential to be the single most transformative in the 2020s so far. It is unlikely that there is any industry that will be untouched by its effects. In the 2020s, it's safe to say that technology and how we use it are almost unrecognizable from even just ten years prior. Long gone are the days when the internet was a static medium. Instead, the majority of users are actually accessing the internet through mobile devices, foregoing the desktop computers and even laptops that dominated the early scene. This is true for almost every aspect of internet consumption. Streaming services like Netflix and Amazon Prime have developed mobile apps, allowing users to easily access their platforms. In the iGaming industry – commonly known as the online casino – players can access all the new slots in the UK on a mobile-first optimized site designed for use on smartphones. Since we are no longer using the internet mostly at home, it is crucial that the infrastructure in the country is ready to handle the increased bandwidth. Additionally, with the new frequencies more suitable for use in high-density environments, they can help alleviate the issues associated with increasing urbanization in internet connectivity and bandwidth. The early 2020s also saw a seismic shift in the workplace. The introduction of hybrid and remote working en masse meant that there was an entire generation that had never experienced office life as they entered the workforce. While there has been a natural trend back towards normality and a return to office work, a culture shift has also occurred, with many opting for remote working. Any economy that relies on a remote workforce of any significance requires infrastructure that can support it. With the increasing cost of living in the UK's major cities forcing many to look to leave for greener – and cheaper – pastures, a robust infrastructure could help encourage a new generation of first-time buyers who are able to work remotely and live elsewhere. According to recent data on remote working in the UK, of employees with a degree or equivalent, only 27% are solely commuting, while around 60% are home-only or hybrid workers. That means a significant number of people across the country will be in need of the infrastructure to ensure reliable connectivity. These new licenses will certainly help. One of the most significant developments from this announcement is that Ofcom will open the 26GHz band early to those who want to avail of it through their shared access licensing regime. This will be particularly helpful in more rural parts of the country, where there's a need for fixed wireless broadband while cables have yet to be laid. Ultimately, that will be the true use case for this technology and where success will be defined. The UK is one of the most modern and well-connected countries in Europe; however, there are still blind spots in certain areas that can be addressed by the introduction of these new frequency bands. Those most rural, remote areas will no longer be left behind the urban settlements that race ahead. As we continue to speed towards an entirely digital future – one in which universal connectivity is key to day-to-day living – these sorts of developments will continue to be welcome. What was once seen as a luxury has now become a necessity both for leisure and business, so Ofcom's announcement is particularly welcome.

FCC Tightens Rules on Foreign Firms Building Undersea Cables, Citing Security

The Federal Communications Commission has adopted new rules to make it more difficult for foreign firms to apply for licensing to build out submarine cables, citing the need to protect the continued construction of critical undersea cables that underpin the internet and transcontinental communications. The rules would require the FCC to presumptively deny "certain foreign adversary-controlled license applicants" from obtaining licenses needed to operate in U.S.-controlled waters. It would also restrict undersea capacity leasing agreements, ban the use of unspecified covered equipment and establish a range of physical and cybersecurity requirements on those same firms. The FCC said that as the U.S. seeks to become "the unrivaled world leader in critical and emerging technologies and secure AI dominance," the cables responsible for powering that data explosion must be protected from acts of foreign sabotage. According to figures provided by the FCC, there are 90 cable systems already licensed by the agency. The FCC expects those numbers to grow significantly in coming years as businesses and governments continue to build out additional infrastructure. In a statement, Chair Brendan Carr said the FCC's order was meant to "facilitate, not frustrate" this expansion of submarine cable infrastructure, while making it harder for foreign nations to potentially gain influence or access to that infrastructure through an affiliate third-party company. "We not only want to unleash the deployment of new undersea cables — we want to make sure those cables are secure. In recent years, we have seen submarine cable infrastructure threatened by foreign adversaries, like China," Carr said. An assessment by Recorded Future's Insikt Group in July found that the growing submarine cable industry is facing a threat landscape that has "very likely escalated" over the past 18 months. Accidents continue to be the primary means of damage in publicly



reported submarine cable incidents, but cybersecurity threats and cable-cutting techniques like anchor dragging are also rising. Commissioner Anna Gomez noted that the FCC had not updated its rules around submarine cables in decades, despite their evolution into the backbone of global internet communications. "As national security risks increased and our Government took steps large and small to protect our networks from foreign adversaries on multiple fronts, the Commission long coordinated with key federal agencies to protect submarine cables," Gomez said. One key challenge facing policymakers as this expansion continues will be putting hard security restrictions in place without slowing things down. "The hard work of this item really was in finding the balance between, on the one hand, necessary security measures to protect critical U.S. communications infrastructure against foreign adversary threats and, on the other hand, clarifying and streamlining processes to provide economic certainty that will facilitate investment and minimizing regulatory burdens by removing duplicative or unnecessary requirements where possible," Gomez said.

NCC Approves MTN Nigeria Spectrum Deal with T2 Mobile

There's been an interesting new development in the ongoing story of the repositioning of Nigerian operator 9mobile as T2 Mobile. It involves a spectrum deal with one of the country's leading operators, MTN Nigeria. Specifically, MTN Nigeria has received approval from regulator the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) to lease frequency spectrum from T2 Mobile Limited. Under the agreement, effective 1 October 2025, MTN Nigeria will lease 5MHz FDD in the 900MHz band and 15MHz FDD in the 1800MHz band from T2 Mobile for an initial period of three years. According to MTN, the lease arrangement is a key enabler of its recently announced national roaming agreement with T2, ensuring the operator can manage increased network traffic from T2's customer base on its infrastructure. The initiative is said to highlight a broader industry push towards collaboration, spectrum sharing, and expanding broadband access. It's also being described as aimed at boosting network capacity and advancing digital inclusion across the country. Of course, for MTN the extra capacity will support growth in demand for data and voice services, but it could also be good for the environment. MTN Nigeria has described the new lease and roaming agreement as aligned with its Ambition 2025 strategy, which focuses on expanding broadband access and improving cost-efficiency through partnerships, infrastructure sharing and environmentally sustainable practices. Indeed, Karl Toriola, CEO, MTN Nigeria is widely quoted as saying: "By leveraging additional spectrum resources, we are enhancing network capacity in a cost-efficient and environmentally sustainable way." He also argues that MTN is fostering a more collaborative telecom ecosystem, not just by its a national roaming agreement with T2 but also by onboarding mobile virtual network operators (MVNOs). News service Techpoint Africa says that as part of this spectrum realignment, MTN will not be renewing its ongoing one-year lease with service provider Natcom Development & Investment Limited (NTEL), which is set to expire on 29 November. That lease currently covers 5MHz in the 900MHz band and 10MHz in the 1800MHz band across 17 states. This seems to be yet another piece of positive news for T2 Mobile, whose overall market share, while small, seems to be stabilizing. However, as our recent overview indicates, the company may still have a long way to go after a turbulent few years.

FCC Floats Ground Control Changes

The US Federal Communications Commission (FCC) agreed fresh rules for the nation's space sector to encourage greater participation by start-ups and new businesses. Reforms were agreed to boost development of neutral-host ground infrastructure, an approach the Commission noted had been successful in the broader wireless industry. It stated boosting the "nascent ground-station-as-a-service" model would aid smaller space companies by enabling "multiple satellite systems to share the same ground station", removing "needless paperwork" and regulatory barriers, and commence services without building their own terrestrial receivers. The FCC's amendments mean ground station operators can be licensed without "first identifying a specific satellite" communication point. Offering operators, a simplified notification process when communication points are added "would eliminate approximately 49 per cent of earth station modification applications". Simplified application processes for space and earth stations were also passed, and the FCC broadened the list of license modifications which will not require previous approval, a move it stated would particularly benefit the Geostationary Earth Orbit satellite sector. FCC chair Brendan Carr said the space sector is "a key pillar" of moves to boost the US economy, with a value in excess of $600 billion. A correct regulatory framework should see US companies "lead the world" in the field, he said. Concurrently, the FCC detailed plans to overhaul processes for deploying high-speed infrastructure including 5G by reviewing its environmental protections with a view to simplifying planning permission processes.

T-Mobile US Wraps Up $4.4B Deal for UScellular Assets

T-Mobile US completed its acquisition of most of UScellular's wireless assets, significantly expanding its network and customer base through the $4.4 billion deal. The completion of the deal came after the mobile operator agreed in early July to end its diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) practices, which led to the US Department of Justice's antitrust division dropping its investigation. The agreement included T-Mobile acquiring customers, stores and 30 per cent of UScellular's spectrum. Former UScellular customers will be allowed to stay on their current mobile phone plans with most of their devices continuing to work on T-Mobile's network. Once the networks and systems are integrated, T-Mobile stated those subscribers can migrate to one of its premium plans which include benefits such as free international roaming, device upgrades, and access to Netflix or Apple+. Lastly, UScellular's former subscribers now have access to T-Mobile's fixed wireless access broadband service in their homes. T-Mobile CEO Mike Sievert stated on Q2 earnings call adding UScellular's spectrum will give it a 50 per cent increase in capacity and a larger presence in rural markets. Former UScellular CEO Laurent Therival stated the completion of the deal "is a win for customers and communities across the United States".

A SNAPSHOT OF REGULATORY ACTIVITIES IN THE SA-ME-NA REGION

Bahrain

Bahrain has unveiled a national policy promoting the responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence (AI), alongside the adoption of the GCC Guiding Manual on the Ethical Use of AI. The initiative aligns with directives from Interior Minister and ICT committee chairman General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa. The Information and eGovernment Authority (iGA) CEO Mohammed Al Qaed highlighted that the policy, available at www.iga.gov.bh, aims to harness AI for economic and social growth, enhance government efficiency, and ensure AI applications adhere to national and international ethical and legal standards. The framework supports Bahrain Economic Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals. The policy enforces compliance with key laws, including the Personal Data Protection Law, State Documents Protection Law, Open Data Policy, and the GCC ethical AI guidelines. It also emphasizes government efforts to train and empower public sector employees, particularly in critical sectors like health, education, and public services, to responsibly utilize AI technologies. The national framework focuses on increasing public trust, fostering a sustainable digital society, and systematically integrating AI into public services to improve performance and service delivery. It targets government officials, service developers, decision-makers, academics, researchers, and beneficiaries of smart government solutions. Key pillars include legal compliance, promoting AI adoption in government, workforce empowerment with AI skills, and strengthening partnerships to drive innovation. The GCC Guiding Manual complements the policy by emphasizing shared regional values such as respect for human dignity, Islamic principles, national identity, sustainability, cooperation, and human well-being. It is built upon four ethical principles: safeguarding human autonomy, ensuring safety and harm prevention, promoting fairness and equality, and protecting privacy and data integrity. Al Qaed noted that this combined policy and ethical charter forms a solid foundation for responsible AI governance, supporting digital transformation, public confidence, and sustainable innovation in Bahrain.

(August 4, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Bangladesh

Leaders of Bangladesh's telecommunications sector have warned that the government's proposed new telecom policy could undermine domestic entrepreneurs, create monopolies favoring large or foreign operators, and put local investors in harm's way. They urged immediate revision of several clauses of the draft policy, threatening legal action if their demands is not addressed. The concerns were raised at a discussion meeting titled "New Telecom Policy: Questioning the Existence of Domestic Entrepreneurs", organized by the Telecom Reporters Network Bangladesh (TRNB) at Mohakhali in Dhaka. The meeting was attended by leaders of the Internet Service Providers Association of Bangladesh (ISPAB), International Internet Gateway (IIG) Forum, Interconnection Exchange (ICX) operators, International Gateway (IGW) operators, and the NTTN Operators Forum (NOF), alongside representatives from the Association of IP Telephony Operators of Bangladesh (AIOB). Speaking at the meeting, ISPAB President Aminul Hakim congratulated the government on its initiative to update telecom regulations but insisted that five clauses in the policy needed urgent amendment to safeguard domestic investors. "We hope today's discussion will convey a clear message to the government. We are ready to engage constructively, but if our concerns are not resolved, we will be forced to take recourse to the law," he told journalists. IGW operators' leader Asif Rabbani echoed the warning, saying, "We will appeal directly to the Chief Adviser to accept our demands if they are found reasonable."

(September 15, 2025) www.thefinancialexpress.com.bd

The government has introduced a new Quality of Service (QoS) benchmark for Bangladesh's telecom sector, raising the minimum 4G download speed requirement to 10 Mbps from the 7 Mbps set in 2018. The new framework, approved by the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), takes effect on September 1 and aims to improve both mobile and internet services nationwide. While the revised speed requirement is lower than the 15 Mbps proposed earlier this year, it also sets a minimum upload speed of 2 Mbps. For the first time, the QoS framework will extend beyond mobile operators to cover National Telecommunication Transmission Network (NTTN) operators and internet service providers (ISPs). The guidelines also impose strict rules on call quality. Call setup success rates must stay at 99% nationwide, while call drop rates on 2G networks must not exceed 1% nationally. For 4G, connection success must reach

99% nationwide and 98.5% at district level. Drive tests will ensure compliance, with operators required to achieve 98% call setup success and keep automated drops below 2%. Customer care is also covered under the framework: at least 90% of calls to service centers must be answered within 40 seconds, and all calls within 90 seconds. Non-network complaints must be resolved within 28 days. Operators must submit monthly reports on accessibility, retainability, and network integrity, with breaches treated as offences under the 2001 Telecommunication Regulation Act. Officials say the new framework is intended to bring greater transparency and accountability, particularly in rural and suburban areas. (September 1, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

The Bangladesh Competition Commission (BCC) is investigating a complaint by Robi Axiata PLC against Grameenphone (GP), accusing the country's largest mobile operator of abusing its dominant market position through predatory pricing and excessive subsidies. The complaint, filed with the BCC on January 21 this year, alleges that Grameenphone's business practices violate the Competition Act 2012. According to documents seen by The Daily Star, the commission has formally taken up the matter, with hearings already underway. Despite being designated a significant market power (SMP) operator, Robi alleges Grameenphone "continues to disrupt the natural course of competition in the mobile telecom sector to maintain its dominant position." Robi's complaint states, "This conduct constitutes a clear violation of Sections 15 and 16 of the Competition Act. Such anti-competitive behavior is ongoing, as reflected in Grameenphone's pricing of SIM cards, distribution system, marketing strategies, retail price controls, and determination of retailer commissions." Robi claims that these activities make it difficult for new entrants to survive and for existing operators to sustain their business, ultimately narrowing consumer choices and limiting innovation in the telecom industry. "At the same time, Grameenphone continues to adopt various anti-competitive strategies to maintain its dominant market position. These practices hinder fair competition, disrupt market equilibrium, and negatively impact the introduction of new and innovative services," Robi alleges. However, Grameenphone has denied all allegations of anti-competitive behavior.

(August 7, 2025) www.thedailystar.net

Egypt

Egypt has announced its ambition to play a central role in advancing artificial intelligence (AI) for public good across the Middle East and Africa, backed by a comprehensive national strategy for AI-driven transformation. The announcement was made by Minister of Communications and Information Technology, ahead of the upcoming Ai Everything MEA event, set to take place in Egypt in February 2026. The event will be hosted by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), the Information Technology Industry Development Agency (ITIDA), and GITEX GLOBAL, underscoring Egypt's growing prominence in the global technology landscape. "AI is rapidly transforming the architecture of global competitiveness, and Egypt is determined not only to adapt but to shape this shift," Minister said. "Our National AI Strategy reflects a bold vision: to position Egypt as a leading force in responsible AI adoption, policy innovation, and inclusive development." In parallel with its AI strategy, MCIT has launched a major national technology contest called Digitopia, which has already attracted over 25,000 participants. Open to youth and entrepreneurs aged 10 to 35, the competition includes tracks in AI and software solutions, digital arts and gaming, and cybersecurity. The contest offers total prizes exceeding $205,000 (EGP 10 million), with the top award valued at $20,500 (EGP 1 million). More than 6,500 teams have registered, reflecting the strong appetite among Egyptian youth to innovate and contribute to the digital economy. (September 8, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi has reviewed a comprehensive report regarding plans to develop telecommunications networks, enhance their efficiency and expand their coverage to deliver high-quality services to citizens across Egypt. During a meeting with state officials, Sisi directed continued efforts to strengthen network capabilities, broaden coverage areas, and fully leverage modern technologies—particularly the potential of 5G. Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly, Minister of Interior Mahmoud Tawfik and Minister of Communications and Information Technology Amr Talaat attended the meeting. The meeting was followed by a smaller session during which the minister of communications presented the ministry's latest activities. He noted that between November 2022 and 2024, 74 outsourcing companies committed to hiring 60,000 specialists in Egypt. Talaat also highlighted that Egypt currently hosts over 260 outsourcing centers, including around 190 centers operated by international companies. He also emphasized Egypt's regional leadership in attracting investment toward tech startups in the communications and information technology sector. The president reaffirmed the state's full support for the communications and IT sector.

(August 17, 2025) www.egypttoday.com

Iraq

Iraq's Ministry of Communications has signed a contract with global telecom company Nokia to establish the country's first government-owned data centers in the capital. The project involves building two modern facilities, one at the Al Intisar site and another at the Al Rasheed exchange in Baghdad's Al Senak district. Designed to international standards, the centers will store data under Iraqi management and serve both government institutions and private sector clients. Officials said the initiative will help ensure that citizens' and companies' data remain secure inside Iraq. Communications Minister Hiyam Al Yasiri described the project as a cornerstone of Iraq's digital transformation, stressing that advanced data centers are essential to complement fiber optic expansion and faster internet services. Nokia has already worked in Iraq, including building a data center for the Ministry of Planning to support the national census. According to Nokia, the new facilities will support digitalization, governance, and e-government services while strengthening Iraq's ability to process and store information with cutting-edge global technologies.

(September 17, 2025) www.iraqinews.com

Iraq has taken a decisive step toward modernizing its telecom sector with the signing of a contract to establish a new national mobile phone services company. Sponsored by Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani on August 31, 2025, the initiative will introduce advanced 5G services across the country, aiming to improve connectivity and fuel economic growth. The new entity will operate as a public joint-stock company, with capital provided by three government institutions: the State Employees Pension Fund, the Trade Bank of Iraq, and the General Telecommunications and Informatics Company under the Ministry of Communications. Citizens will also be able to subscribe and contribute to the company's capital, making it the first mobile operator in Iraq to include public participation alongside state backing. Prime Minister Al-Sudani hailed the project as a "qualitative step" for the communications sector, stressing its importance in creating competition with existing providers. He underlined that the company's mission goes beyond telecommunications, supporting economic diversification, education, and social development. By combining government investment with citizen participation, the initiative is designed to strengthen Iraq's non-oil economy while delivering next-generation mobile services nationwide. The move also underscores the government's commitment to leveraging digital infrastructure as a foundation for growth in key sectors.

(September 1, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Hytera Communications, a provider of professional communications technologies and solutions, says it has successfully deployed its SmartOne Unified Communication Platform to support the Iraqi Ministry of Interior (MoI) in overhauling Baghdad's emergency services. The project, launched in 2024, introduces a centralized 911 emergency call Centre – marking what Hytera describes as a pivotal advancement in public safety communications for Iraq's capital city. The MoI was previously reliant on a fragmented network of 26 separate emergency numbers. It therefore sought to unify these under a single, cohesive emergency response system. Hytera's SmartOne solution integrates various communication technologies—ranging from Digital Mobile Radio (DMR) and TETRA radio systems to body camera feeds – into one platform, enabling seamless coordination between police, fire, and medical services across Baghdad. DMR is a digital radio standard for voice and data transmission in non-public radio networks. TETRA, a European standard for a trunked radio system, was specifically designed for use by government agencies, emergency services, transport services and the military. The Hytera solution includes a fully integrated 911 call Centre with over 300 operator seats. The platform supports emergency call intake, case creation, real-time situational tracking, and dispatch across multiple agencies. The implementation also features advanced modules such as computer-aided dispatch (CAD), visualized command and GIS mapping, duty and patrol management, incident analytics, and mobile police applications. Together, says Hytera, these tools significantly improve situational awareness, optimize resource allocation, and reduce emergency response times. The system's microservice-based architecture ensures high scalability and resilience, while its data-driven backend allows the MoI to continuously evaluate performance through call logs, incident trends and proactive alerts. These features enable informed decision-making and adaptive strategy development in response to the city's evolving safety needs. The platform handled approximately 100,000 calls on its first day of operation and has been shortlisted by the International Critical Communications Awards (ICCAs) 2025 as a finalist for the Best Use of Critical Communications in Public Safety award.

(August 13, 2025) www.developingtelecoms.com

Jordan

A delegation from Jordan's Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC), led by Chairperson Bassam Sarhan, took part in the 25th Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) held in Riyadh. The event, organized by Saudi Arabia's Communications and Space Technology Commission (CSTC) in cooperation with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), brought together representatives from over 190 countries under the theme "Regulation for Sustainable Digital Development." Sarhan participated in multilateral sessions where regulators exchanged expertise and best practices to strengthen telecom sector performance and sustainability. He also joined a dialogue titled "Building an Inclusive and Fair Digital Future," emphasizing the importance of ICT accessibility policies, inclusive standards, and innovative digital solutions to promote broader digital inclusion. On the sidelines, Sarhan held bilateral meetings with senior executives from leading international companies to explore cooperation opportunities, regional integration, and enhanced global partnerships. He reaffirmed TRC's commitment to aligning with global technological developments, representing Jordan in international forums, and embedding best practices in digital regulation to foster an inclusive and future-ready digital ecosystem.
(September 4, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

The Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC) has reiterated its commitment to protecting public health from any potential risks associated with electromagnetic fields generated by cellular towers. In a statement, the TRC stressed that telecom operators must obtain prior technical approval before installing any towers. This process ensures full compliance with international safety standards on electromagnetic emissions. To reinforce public safety and regulatory oversight, the Commission conducts regular on-site inspections to confirm that towers remain within safe emission levels and meet all licensing conditions. The TRC also urged citizens to report concerns about telecom services or tower installations through its complaint channels, including its dedicated online platform, toll-free hotline (117000), or its official social media accounts.
(August 22,2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Kuwait

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) ministerial committee for cybersecurity convened in Kuwait, bringing together national cybersecurity leaders from all member states to advance regional digital security efforts. The meeting centered on enhancing cooperation to safeguard the Gulf's digital infrastructure. Officials discussed joint action plans, new mechanisms for information sharing, and collective initiatives to secure critical online services against growing cyber risks. Delegates reviewed progress on previously adopted measures and assessed ongoing efforts to counter rising cyber threats. They also examined strategies to bolster critical infrastructure resilience and expand training programs aimed at building advanced regional expertise in cybersecurity. The committee further mapped out future strategies to ensure a coordinated GCC-wide response to emerging challenges in the digital domain. Officials stressed that the session represented a significant step toward deeper Gulf collaboration in protecting shared digital assets and ensuring the stability and safety of the region's online space.
(September 10, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Acting Interior Ministry Undersecretary Major General Ali Al-Adwani said the Information Systems General Department will soon offer more advanced security technology services to improve security work and to better serve the public. In a press statement after the inspection visit at the department that consists of several technical divisions, the ministry disclosed that Al-Adwani was briefed on the workflow at the department. During the visit, Al-Adwani praised the commitment and high efficiency in accomplishing tasks. He stressed the need for the department to continue improving its performance and ensuring accuracy and speed in providing services. Al-Adwani was also briefed on the electronic systems and smart services launched by the department. These systems aim to ease procedures and simplify security and administrative services for the public through the unified government application for electronic services (Sahel) or the website of the ministry. He also assessed the most vital current and future projects that aim to develop the technical infrastructure of the ministry, and enhance integration between its sectors to keep pace with the latest international standards in the field of security technology and electronic services. The statement added that Head of the Human Resources and Technical Support Sector Brigadier General Anwar Al-Yatama and Director General of the department Brigadier General Ahmed Al-Majid accompanied Al-Adwani throughout his visit. (August 28, 2025) www.arabtimesonline.com

Huawei and Kuwait Network Electronic Technology Company (Knetco) have completed the nationwide deployment of 5G Advanced (5G-A) technology in Kuwait, introducing higher speeds, lower latency, and expanded connectivity capacity. Knetco, an official contractor of Kuwait's Ministry of Communications, was

selected as the primary partner for the rollout of the technology. The company managed the process across all three mobile operators in the country, Ooredoo, Zain and stc, from infrastructure preparation to system integration, according to local press reports. The upgrade aligns with Kuwait Vision 2035, which emphasizes digital infrastructure as a pillar of economic diversification and modernization. 5G Advanced is designed to provide speeds up to ten times faster than current 5G networks, support ultra-low latency, and increase network capacity. These features will enable use cases such as smart cities, automated industries, and advanced digital services across Kuwait. The introduction of 5G Advanced is expected to support applications beyond telecom services, including drone operations, advanced security systems, Li-Fi communication, and smart mobility. The rollout is also seen as a step toward Kuwait's digital transformation goals and a foundation for potential future migration to 6G technologies.

(August 25, 2025) www.rcrwireless.com

Morocco

Morocco will roll out commercial 5G services in November, the National Telecommunications Regulatory Agency (ANRT) said, marking a major milestone in the country's digital transformation strategy. The regulator said all technical, regulatory and security conditions have been met, with spectrum in the 700 MHz and 3.4–3.8 GHz bands reallocated to support coverage. More than 80% of urban radio sites are already fiber-connected, a prerequisite for handling 5G traffic. The three national operators — Maroc Telecom, Orange Maroc and Inwi — are ready to activate services under a strict rollout plan. Coverage will begin in eight major cities and airports this year, reach 45% of the population by 2026 and 85% by 2030. Each operator is paying a minimum of 600 million dirhams ($66.4 million) for a 20-year license. With the launch, Morocco will join 21 African countries that already offer 5G, according to the African Telecommunications Union. (September 3, 2025) www.ecofinagency.com

Morocco has officially launched its new national digital strategy, "Digital Morocco 2030", aimed at positioning the country as a leading regional digital hub and accelerating social and economic development. The initiative reflects King Mohammed VI's vision of digital technology as a structural shift capable of creating jobs, attracting investment, and transforming governance. The strategy is structured around two pillars: Digitalization of Public Services (e-Gov) and Development of the Digital Economy. On the e-Gov side, Morocco aims to improve citizen and business services by establishing a single portal for all public services and generalizing the use of shared digital identity and e-signature platforms. A key target is to boost Morocco's ranking in the UN Online Services Index from 113th to 50th by 2030. The economic pillar seeks to stimulate local production of digital solutions, attract foreign investment, and generate 240,000 direct jobs, while contributing 100 billion MAD to GDP by 2030. Artificial intelligence and other high-value technology sectors are identified as priorities for growth. These efforts are supported by three accelerators: Digital Talents, to scale up digital professionals to 45,000 graduates annually; Inclusive Usage, to extend digital access to all citizens including rural and disabled populations; and Cloud & Connectivity, which focuses on strengthening national infrastructure and developing a sovereign cloud for public and private sector needs. Built through a participatory approach involving civil society, the private sector, and public institutions, Digital Morocco 2030 represents a national commitment to digital transformation as a driver of inclusive development and economic competitiveness.

(August 18, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Nepal

Nepal carried out electronic transactions worth over Rs 98.43 trillion in the last fiscal year (FY), which was 71 percent more than the amount recorded in the previous FY. The records with Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) show that digital transactions have been soaring heavily in the past few years. In FY 2023/24, the amount was recorded at Rs 57.47 trillion. Considering the figure of Rs 34.42 trillion in FY 2020/21, the amount grew almost three-fold in the past five years. According to the NRB officials, people have been switching to digital transactions from cash-based systems mainly due to an ease in trading mode along with safety concerns. In the FY 2024/25, people used the Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) platform to carry out transactions of Rs 74.9 trillion. Similarly, the electronic check clearing (ECC) system witnessed transactions of over Rs 6.2 trillion while payments of Rs 5.2 trillion were settled through faster payment systems. According to the NRB, more than Rs 5 trillion was settled via mobile banking, Rs 2.9 trillion through Connect IPS, Rs 2.9 trillion through debit cards and over Rs 1 trillion was settled through ATMs. Likewise, QR-based payments witnessed financial transactions of Rs 956 billion, while payments through e-commerce systems were recorded at Rs 266 billion. Meanwhile, large chunks of payments were settled mainly in the last month (between mid-June and mid-July) and first month (between mid-July and mid-August) of every fiscal year. In the first month of FY 2024/25, digital transactions were recorded at Rs 126 billion, while the figure was Rs 119 billion in the last month.

(August 27, 2025) www.myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com

Oman

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) hosted a forum on September 9, 2025, highlighting the need for dynamic regulations to protect users, drive innovation and support Oman Vision 2040. Titled, 'Electronic Applications and Legal Challenges in Muscat', various speakers underlined opportunities and legal issues in the digital ecosystem despite the achievement of 95 per cent internet penetration, mobile subscriptions outnumbering the national population and 61 per cent of Omanis on social media. In opening remarks, Dr. Ali bin Amer al Shaithani, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology for Communications and Information Technology, emphasized the country's drive to keep pace with the digital revolution. He noted that electronic applications have become "an inseparable part of everyday life", providing convenience and speed but also threatening imminent legal challenges. Taher bin Awadh al Ibrahim, Executive Director of the Legal Affairs Unit, stated: "With the fast pace of change in the modern world, electronic applications are now an integral part of life, creating more efficient services and propelling efficiency. These chances are prospective, but they represent legal challenges and require the establishment of a balanced and open regulatory system safeguarding people, developers and institutions while boosting innovation and investment". Latest national statistics underscore the significant levels of digitalization across Oman. There are well over 6.7 million active mobile subscriptions corresponding to 124 per cent of the total population (early 2025 figures). Internet penetration is almost 95 per cent with 5.14 million users. More than 3.29 million Omanis, representing 61 per cent of the population, are active on social media. Connectivity has also increased significantly. Mobile broadband speeds averaged 92 Mbps and fixed broadband speeds averaged 78 Mbps, enabling the use of complex applications. As of May 2025, Oman had more than 5.4 million mobile broadband subscriptions and nearly 588,000 fixed internet subscriptions. Among the emerging trends is the growth of the Internet of Things (IoT) with subscriptions growing by more than 1.3 million since 2020 to 1.55 million. Officials say this is an indication of the transformation of the country towards smart cities, digital logistics and new electronic applications supporting Oman's digital economy. The TRA re-affirmed that, aside from regulation, it also aims to facilitate innovation while safeguarding user security and market integrity. Adaptable instruments such as regulatory sandboxes, pilot schemes and compliance frameworks are being launched to facilitate start-ups and Omani developers to develop in a responsible manner. (September 10, 2025) www.zawya.com

Oman's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has confirmed that its decision to unify the royalty rate across mobile and fixed telecom services will be a game-changer for the sector—boosting competitiveness, attracting investment, and creating a level playing field for all licensed operators. "This decision will increase the competitiveness of the telecom sector and enhance Oman's investment appeal," the TRA said in an exclusive interview with the Observer. "It creates a level playing field for all telecom licensees, ensuring fair and equal treatment across the board." The move, which applies the revised royalty rate uniformly to all operator classes and license types, removes long-standing disparities between mobile and fixed service providers. By eliminating regulatory bias, it opens the door to balanced infrastructure investment, greater innovation, and higher service quality. The TRA said the unified rate will simplify regulatory procedures, reduce administrative complexity, and improve transparency—making Oman's telecom market more efficient and attractive to local and foreign investors. Lower financial burdens on companies are expected to free up capital for network expansion, advanced digital services, and customer-focused innovations. While the regulator noted that the reduction in royalty fees should, over time, enable providers to offer more competitive tariffs, it stressed that the actual impact on end-user prices will depend on market competition, pricing strategies, and operational costs. The reform is also closely tied to Oman's national ambitions. "This aligns directly with Oman Vision 2040 and our digital economy goals," the TRA said. "It strengthens the foundations for economic diversification, technological advancement, and positions Oman as a regional hub for digital transformation." Industry analysts say the move signals a pro-investment regulatory environment at a time when the telecommunications sector is pivotal to Oman's economic future. By levelling the playing field and boosting investor confidence, the change is expected to accelerate the rollout of next-generation networks, expand digital access, and reinforce Oman's standing in the Gulf's competitive telecom landscape. (August 12, 2025) www.omanobserver.om

Pakistan

The federal government has officially established the Pakistan Digital Authority (PDA), a new body tasked with spearheading the country's digital transformation agenda under the recently approved Digital Nation Bill. The Cabinet Division confirmed the appointments of Dr. Sohail Munir as chairperson and Dr. Muhammad J. Sear as one of its two members, with a third member yet to be named. The PDA, operating under the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication, will develop, implement, and monitor Pakistan's national digital master plan. It will also design a monitoring and evaluation framework for digital transformation projects nationwide. Both Dr. Munir and Dr. Sear have been appointed on five-year contracts. Dr. Munir, a digital futurist with expertise in government transformation, currently serves as an adviser to Abu Dhabi's Department of Government Enablement. Dr. Sear, CEO of UAE-based well-being startup Simpli Human, has also worked extensively with governments and the private sector on digital transformation projects. The PDA's mandate includes:

Coordinating between public and private stakeholders on digital initiatives.

Establishing a national data strategy and governance framework.

Reviewing and evaluating projects under the digital master plan.

Developing standards for cloud infrastructure governance within the public sector.

The Digital Nation Bill, approved by the federal cabinet in June, aims to create digital identities for citizens, centralize governance and socioeconomic data, and transition Pakistan toward a digital society, economy, and governance model. With the appointments, Pakistan takes a significant step toward institutionalizing its digital transformation journey, aligning with global trends of data-driven governance and smart government infrastructure.

(August 26, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Pakistan's federal cabinet has approved the National AI Policy 2025, setting ambitious goals to expand artificial intelligence across the country. The policy aims to train one million AI professionals by 2030, establish innovation funds to drive private sector growth, and implement thousands of AI projects to modernize public services and the economy. Emphasizing inclusivity, the plan also supports women and persons with disabilities, strengthens cybersecurity, and promotes international collaboration. Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif highlighted AI's transformative potential in agriculture, governance, and public services. An AI Council will oversee the policy's execution through a comprehensive master plan.

(August 1, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Palestine

On the sidelines of the Global Symposium for Regulators 2025 (GSR-25), Saudi Minister of Communications and Information Technology Abdullah Alswaha met with Palestinian Minister of Communications and Digital Economy Dr. Abdul Razzaq Al Natsheh to discuss strengthening cooperation in the digital economy. According to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA), the talks focused on building a strategic partnership in digital infrastructure, with participation from leaders in digital economy, space, and innovation. The ministers reviewed opportunities for collaboration in areas including digital infrastructure development, digital government, talent building, and best-practice exchange. The meeting reflects Saudi Arabia's commitment to supporting Palestine's digital transformation journey, enabling a future-oriented economy that fosters sustainable development and creates opportunities for young people.

(September 4, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Qatar

The Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) has announced the launch of the updated In-Building Telecommunications Infrastructure Standards, a set of mandatory guidelines designed to strengthen Qatar's digital foundations and ensure future-ready connectivity across all building types. The updated standards establish a detailed framework that covers in-building wiring systems and mobile solutions, applicable to both new developments and existing properties. By simplifying and standardizing procedures, the guidelines reduce administrative burdens and enable faster, more reliable deployment of in-building telecommunications infrastructure. This will benefit residential, commercial, and governmental facilities alike, supporting Qatar's growing demand for seamless connectivity. These standards include enhancing the quality of telecommunications services to

ensure a better consumer experience. This includes access to higher internet speeds, improved speed and quality for IPTV services, reliable mobile coverage, HD voice calls, as well as facilitating the adoption of smart building solutions in homes, workplaces, and public facilities. Service Providers will gain greater efficiency with streamlined processes and reduced challenges in deploying infrastructure. Similarly, real estate developers will benefit from clear, standardized requirements that ensure smoother approval processes. (September 16, 2025) www.cra.gov.qa

The Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) participated in the 33rd Meeting of the Arab Spectrum Management Group, held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, from 8 to 11 September 2025. The meeting was held as part of the Arab preparations for the International Telecommunication Union's World Radiocommunication Conference 2027 (WRC-27). The Qatari delegation played an active role in the technical and regional discussions, reflecting CRA's commitment to supporting joint Arab action. The delegation also contributed to the work of the Gulf and Arab spectrum management working groups. CRA chairs the fifth working group of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), responsible for discussing several items on WRC-27's agenda. During the meeting, CRA presented the GCC's unified positions to the Arab Spectrum Management Group. The meeting sessions covered key issues for the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector, such as the future of International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT), satellite communications, remote sensing technologies, and support for navigation and safety systems in aviation and maritime transport. These discussions were part of the preparations for WRC-27. The meeting was an important step for regional coordination, helping to shape common Arab positions that protect national and regional interests. It also supported the efficient use of spectrum resources to drive development and innovation, while showcasing CRA's leadership at regional and Arab levels.
(September 14, 2025) www.cra.gov.qa

Qatar CRA participated in the 31st Meeting of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) Committee for Under-Secretaries of Post and Telecommunications, held on August 18, 2025, in the State of Kuwait. The delegation was headed by Engineer Ahmad bin Abdulla AlMuslemani, President of CRA. The meeting aims to strengthen cooperation among GCC countries in the postal and telecommunications sectors, and to exchange ideas and expertise to keep pace with rapid developments in these vital fields, thereby supporting digital transformation and sustainable development across the Gulf region. The meeting included discussions on several issues related to the development of the postal and telecommunications sectors in GCC countries, as well as following up on a set of previous decisions. The discussions also highlighted the importance of continuing joint efforts to keep pace with digital transformation and to further advance sustainable development and innovation in the region. In this context, Engineer Ahmad bin Abdulla AlMuslemani, President of the Communications Regulatory Authority, stated: "Qatar's participation in this meeting reaffirms our firm commitment to the joint GCC cooperation in the postal and telecommunications sectors, which are fundamental to achieving regional development and integration. This also aligns with the efforts led by the Communications Regulatory Authority to implement its strategy in support of the goals of the Qatar National Vision 2030, contributing to enhancing the State of Qatar's regional and international standing in the postal and telecommunications sectors, and making GCC cooperation a shared platform for sustainable development and innovation."
(August 19, 2025) www.cra.gov.qa

Saudi Arabia

Speakers at a panel discussion titled "Digital Diplomacy", held on the sidelines of the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR25) exhibition, affirmed that Saudi Arabia is a pivotal partner in promoting international cooperation in digital policy, highlighting that the Kingdom's initiatives have strengthened regional and global collaboration through the exchange of expertise and the investment of shared capabilities. The speakers emphasized that digital transformation represents a cornerstone for building a more advanced and sustainable future. They noted that centralizing data and adopting modern technologies help improve efficiency and direct resources toward areas that deliver greater benefits to both society and the economy. They also underlined that the role of technology extends beyond economic development to include social and humanitarian dimensions. Modern technologies, they said, empower the elderly to remain active in the labor market and ensure that children can access information and the internet safely and effectively, thereby promoting inclusivity and equal opportunities. (September 2, 2025) www.spa.gov.sa

The Communications, Space and Technology Commission (CST) has released official guidelines to support organizations in Saudi Arabia transitioning to the national domain name (.sa). The framework provides technical instructions designed to strengthen the Kingdom's digital identity, improve the reliability of online services, and promote secure use of national digital resources. The guide outlines multiple adoption strategies, including full migration, partial activation, or parallel use of the Saudi domain alongside existing domains. It applies to all entities and institutions operating in the Kingdom, covering websites, email, and other digital services. CST noted that the initiative is part of its broader mission to empower Saudi Arabia's communications and technology ecosystem. By providing regulatory and advisory tools, CST aims to ensure national entities operate within a secure, trusted digital environment that reflects the Kingdom's identity while supporting its digital transformation goals.
(August 28, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

The National Regulatory Committee chaired by Acting Governor of the Commission held its regular meeting, The meeting was aimed to harmonize the regulation of digital issues shared by entities and ensure the highest level of coordination and cooperation between regulatory bodies in the Kingdom. This was achieved by conducting studies to evaluate best practices, submitting proposals, and launching initiatives to bridge regulatory gaps, enhance the exchange of expertise, and build capacity across various vital sectors. The meeting reviewed and followed up on the implementation of recommendations from previous meetings, in addition to discussing the results of a study on artificial intelligence regulations in digital markets. The meeting also included a discussion of coordination efforts to activate the participation of member agencies in the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR25).

(August 5, 2025) www.cst.gov.sa

Sri Lanka

Edotco Group became the first company to secure a Telecommunications Infrastructure Services License in Sri Lanka, marking a landmark regulatory shift as the country ramps up digital transformation efforts. The license was granted to the tower company's local subsidiary Edotco Services Lanka by the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka (TRCSL) during a ceremony on Tuesday (2 September). Edotco is permitted to offer a full range of passive and active infrastructure services, including towers, poles, fiber, in-building systems, small cells and other components integral to Sri Lanka's connectivity push. MD of Edotco Sri Lanka, described the license as a "vote of confidence" in the company's capabilities, adding more than 7,000 new towers will be required nationwide to meet 5G deployment targets, with data usage projected to quadruple by 2028. Sri Lanka's new licensing framework signals a major policy change as the country opens up its telecoms sector to independent, neutral-host tower companies for the first time. The move introduces a dedicated licensing regime aimed at boosting infrastructure sharing, accelerating network rollout and expanding digital access across the island. During the ceremony, TRCSL Director General explained until now the country's telecoms sector "has relied on fragmented models that limited the pace and efficiency of network rollout". (September 4, 2025) www.mobileworldlive.com

The Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka (TRCSL) has announced that the Number Portability (NP) service will be launched next year. This service will enable mobile users to switch their service provider while retaining their existing phone number. The TRCSL confirmed that significant progress has been made towards implementing number portability. Initial consultations with telephone operators led to the development of a comprehensive implementation plan. In 2021, a public consultation paper was published to gather feedback from all relevant stakeholders. Following further discussions, a suitable technical model was selected. To manage the service, Lanka Number Portability Services (Guarantee) Limited was established, involving all fixed and mobile operators. The company has been officially licensed by TRCSL to operate the number portability system. Additionally, the Attorney General's Department has approved the rules and guidelines for number portability, which were prepared in collaboration with telecom operators. The service will officially commence once the number portability system is fully set up and operator networks are upgraded. TRCSL will notify the public when the service is ready for use.

(August 5, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Syria

Syrian Minister of Communications and Technology Abdul Salam Haikal has returned from an official visit to Saudi Arabia, highlighting the Kingdom's digital transformation journey as an "exceptional experience" and a source of inspiration for Syria's own modernization efforts. Writing on the "X" platform, Haikal expressed gratitude for the warm Saudi reception, describing it as a reflection of the deep brotherly ties between the two nations. He emphasized that the Syrian delegation strongly felt the spirit of integration and joint work, noting: "We return to Damascus with a doubled conviction of the prospects for integration between Syria and Saudi Arabia in the telecommunications and digital development sector." Haikal confirmed that bilateral cooperation is rooted in a strategic vision set by Syrian President Ahmad al-Shara and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, with the next stage expected to translate this vision into tangible projects that benefit both nations and the wider region. The visit underscores Syria's growing interest in regional partnerships to accelerate its digital transformation, with Saudi Arabia positioned as a key partner in advancing ICT collaboration and integration.

(September 9, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Turkey

Turkey is preparing to usher in the 5G era with a national tender for frequency bands scheduled for October 16, 2025, paving the way for commercial service rollout in April 2026. The announcement was made by Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Abdulkadir Uraloğlu, signaling a landmark shift in the country's digital infrastructure. The tender will be open to licensed operators offering GSM and 4.5G services, including Turkcell, Türk Telekom, and Vodafone Turkey. A total of 11 frequency packages — across the 700 MHz and 3.5 GHz bands — will be auctioned, amounting to 400 MHz of spectrum with an estimated value exceeding $2.125 billion. Technical specifications have already been published in the official gazette. New licenses will be valid until December 31, 2044, and require operators to contribute 5% of annual revenues to the Information and Communication Technologies Authority (BTK) in addition to tender costs. The move coincides with the expiration of existing network licenses in 2029. The transition is expected to deliver faster data speeds, improved mobile connectivity, and support technologies such as autonomous vehicles, smart cities, and industrial automation. It also reinforces Turkey's national strategy to become a regional digital hub and attract international telecom investment. (September 1, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Turkey is gearing up for its most significant telecom milestone in a decade with the government's decision to launch a $2.13 billion 5G spectrum auction in October 2025. The move is expected to accelerate the country's transition to next-generation connectivity, with the first commercial 5G services projected for 2026, Reuters news report said. The tender will open up 11 frequency packages across the 700 MHz and 3.5 GHz bands, crucial for both nationwide coverage and high-capacity urban deployment. Package values range between $50 million and $425 million, ensuring participation flexibility for operators. In addition, the government will roll over mobile licenses, currently due to expire in 2029, by requiring operators to pay 5 percent of their annual revenues. The technology is expected to power smart manufacturing, logistics, healthcare, and connected city initiatives, aligning with the government's broader digital transformation agenda. By following European deployment models, Turkey aims to bridge the digital divide and strengthen its competitiveness in global technology markets. However, challenges remain. Operators will face high upfront spectrum and license renewal costs at a time when revenue growth from traditional services is slowing. To monetize 5G, they will need to create enterprise-focused solutions, edge computing partnerships, and new consumer applications beyond enhanced mobile broadband.

(August 19, 2025) www.telecomlead.com

United Arab Emirates

The Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA) has launched a new national system to monitor non-ionizing electromagnetic radiation across the UAE. This initiative, developed to protect public health and enhance monitoring capabilities, will track radiation levels from various communication systems, including mobile towers and broadcasting stations. The new system is built on an interactive digital platform where the TDRA will measure, analyze, and transparently share data with the public. By using a network of sensors across cities, the TDRA aims to provide a reliable way for citizens to monitor radiation levels in their surroundings and ensure compliance with national and international health standards. This project underscores the TDRA's commitment to transparency and innovation, ensuring the country's telecommunications infrastructure operates both safely and responsibly. (August 11, 2025) www.techafricanews.com

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REGULATORY ACTIVITIES BEYOND THE SA-ME-NA REGION

Argentina

Argentina has apparently made plans to start allocating spectrum for private mobile networks. Regulator Enacom has assigned the 2300-2400MHz frequency band for private mobile wireless broadband systems. The spectrum allocation will be for ten years and can be used for indoor or outdoor deployments, according to the published resolution. Rates vary depending on whether the deployment will be indoor, outdoor or both, albeit outdoor deployments will be restricted to operator property, premises or a defined area where the operator carries out its work. There may also be a bidding process if more than one applicant requests spectrum in the same operational area, However, it does seem that the available bandwidth of 50-60MHz (below standards body 3GPP's recommendation of at least 80MHz) may slightly restrict 5G speeds. Companies with the financial capacity to build and manage their own networks, in sectors such as mining, oil and gas, agribusiness, automaking, construction, ports and airports, and road and rail infrastructure are expected to apply. In fact some companies in these sectors already have private network infrastructure in place, but in partnership with mobile network operatorsMovistar and Telecom.

This model may be adequate for some companies. Indeed, the BNamericas new service, quoting José Otero, a consultant at ICT Development Consulting, suggests that the decision to build a fully private network or partner with an existing operator will depend on company size and financial strategy. Bigger companies are more likely to be able – and willing – to go it alone.

(August 28, 2025) www.developingtelecoms.com

Australia

The Australian regulator has sued Optus, alleging the Singapore Telecommunications-owned carrier breached privacy laws during a 2022 cyber-attack that compromised the personal data of millions of customers, both parties confirmed. Optus, one of Singtel's largest overseas investments, said in a statement that the Australian Information Commissioner (AIC) has accused the telecom operator of violating the Privacy Act 1988. The Privacy Act governs how personal information is handled by government agencies and private entities. The proceedings have been filed against Singtel Optus Pty Ltd and Optus Systems Pty Ltd, Australia's Optus said. The AIC is alleging one breach of the law for each of the 9.5 million customers affected by the data breach, with the court potentially able to impose fines of up to A$2.2 million per breach. However, the privacy watchdog did not provide details on the total amount it is seeking. Optus said it is reviewing the claims but has not assessed the potential financial impact. The September 2022 breach, one of the worst in Australia's history, exposed sensitive customer data including home addresses, passport details and phone numbers.

(August 8, 2025) www.reuters.com

Canada

The CRTC is acting to help make telecommunications and broadcasting services more reliable for Canadians. Service outages, even if they are short, are highly disruptive and can seriously impact Canadians' lives. Outages can have harmful effects on people, especially when they cannot connect to emergency services in times of need. To help lessen the impact of outages and further protect Canadians, the CRTC is announcing three key actions. First, following a robust public consultation, the CRTC is issuing a decision to establish final reporting requirements for Internet and cellphone service providers for major outages. This will ensure that public safety and government authorities are informed about major outages, so they can better support Canadians and help providers restore services more quickly. Second, the CRTC is launching a public consultation to consider new requirements and standards for how service providers design and operate their networks. These measures aim to help make Internet and cellphone networks more resilient, reduce outages, and support providers to manage them better. Third, the CRTC is launching a public consultation to look at additional consumer protections to help ensure Canadians have the information they need during an outage. These measures include ensuring customers receive meaningful and timely updates, as well as refunds or bill credits after an outage.

(September 4, 2025) www.canada.ca

China

China successfully sent a test satellite for satellite internet technology into space from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center, located in the country's northwest. The satellite was launched at 9:06 a.m. (Beijing Time) aboard a Long March-2C carrier rocket, with the Yuanzheng-1S (Expedition-1S) upper stage attached to the rocket. The satellite has successfully reached its preset orbit. This was the 595th flight mission of the Long March carrier rocket series.

(September 17, 2025) www.english.news.cn

China's four main mobile operators — China Mobile, China Telecom, China Unicom, and China Broadnet — added a combined 104 million 5G subscribers in the first half of 2025, pushing their total to over 1.1 billion, according to recent figures from the country's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology. China ended June with a total mobile base of 1.81 billion subscribers, after a net addition of 19.93 million users since the beginning of the year. The ministry noted that this figure represents almost 61% of all mobile connections in the country. In the first half of 2025, China Mobile, the world's largest operator in terms of subscribers, gained 47 million 5G network customers, raising its base to 599.3 million, an increase of 84.8 million year-on-year.

(August 15, 2025) www.rcrwireless.com

Costa Rica

Costa Rica's state power and telecom utility ICE announced that it will boost its current international capacity 23-fold through the integration of the Trans Americas Fiber Systems submarine cable TAM-1 . The subsea infrastructure, scheduled to enter operation in the final quarter of 2025, will feature 24 fiber optic pairs. According to ICE, this will allow the company to scale up to 18 terabits per second (Tbps) to meet demand from services such as streaming, artificial intelligence, virtual reality and 5G. "TAM-1 integrates cutting-edge technologies, allows for upgrades without physical intervention, improves operational efficiency, and diversifies international connectivity routes. We will reduce costs, improve service quality and performance, and offer more competitive prices," said Leda Acevedo, ICE's telecommunications manager, in a press release.

(August 28, 2025) www.bnamericas.com

Fiji

Ministry of Trade, Co-operatives, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Communications has officially issued 5G spectrum licenses to the country's three major mobile operators. Vodafone Fiji, Digicel Fiji, and Telecom Fiji received the licenses, which will take effect from 15 September 2025. However, the 5G rollout will take a bit longer to achieve, happening in three phases between 2025 and 2028. Phase 1 (2025) will be focus on four major centers of population, business or tourism – including Suva, the capital – that also offer good fiber, power, and network density. Expansion into other areas will take place in Phase two (2026) and Phase 3 (2027 onward). The government is also said to be upgrading rural and maritime networks to 4G. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Communications, Hon. Manoa Kamikamica, said the deployment is being carried out strategically and responsibly to support inclusive national development. The Fiji Times news resource quotes him as saying: "This rollout not only addresses local challenges but also positions Fiji as a regional leader in digital transformation."

(September 12, 2025) www.developingtelecoms.com

France

The regulator publishing its scorecard for the fixed broadband and superfast broadband market in France as of the end of June 2025. As of 30 June 2025, 93% of premises in Metropolitan France were eligible to subscribe to a fiber plan, with 3.3 million remaining to be passed. At the end of June 2025, optical fiber coverage stood at 93%. Of the 44.9 million premises in Metropolitan France inventoried by operators, 41.6 million were passed for FTTH, while 3.3 million still remained to be covered. The pace of rollouts held steady over the course of Q2 2025, with 520,000 additional premises passed for FTTH – or 20% fewer than in Q2 2024. 310,000 additional premises in lower density, public-initiative areas were rendered eligible for FTTH access, with 1.6 million premises remaining to be covered. 160,000 additional premises in lower density, private-initiative areas were rendered eligible for FTTH access, with 1.1 million premises remaining to be covered. 30,000 additional premises were passed for FTTH in those areas covered by calls for expressions of local interest, with 130,000 premises remaining to be covered. 20,000 additional premises in very high-density areas were passed for FTTH, with 480,000 premises remaining to be covered. As of 30 June 2025, 42.6 million premises were covered by fixed superfast broadband services. (September 11, 2025) www.en.arcep.fr

Ghana

The Ministry for Communication, Digital Technology and Innovations has reportedly revealed plans to merge telecoms players AT and Telecel in hopes of creating a sustainable competitor to market leader MTN. According to various media reports, the merger plan will be rolled out in three phases, starting with the migration of AT's roughly 3.2 million subscribers to Telecel's network under a national roaming arrangement that is already underway. The next phase will involve realigning human resources so that all 300 of AT's employees remain onboard under the newly merged entity. After that will be a commercial restructuring of the merged company's framework, which is expected to take 120 days. According to TechAfrica News, Minister for Communication, Digital Technology and Innovations, Samuel Nartey George said the merger will require an investment of US$600 million over the next four years to be sustainable. He said the Ghanaian government would contribute to that via avenues like proceeds from spectrum sales, but Telecel and other partners will have to invest in the venture as well. George said the merger was necessary because AT – by far the smallest of Ghana's three telecoms operators, which the government bought from Bharti Airtel and Millicom in 2021 – has lost US$10 million in the first eight months of this year alone, the report said.

(September 5, 2025) www.developingtelecoms.com

Ghana's government has directed satellite broadcaster DSTV to lower subscription prices or face a suspension of its broadcasting license, says communications minister Samuel Nartey George. He said he had instructed the National Communications Authority (NCA) to begin suspension proceedings against MultiChoice Ghana, the local operator of DSTV, if it fails to comply with regulatory expectations for a price cut by August 7. "I have directed the NCA to act swiftly. If by August 7 DSTV has not complied, their broadcasting license will be suspended," George said. The dispute arose after DSTV rejected a government proposal for a 30% reduction in subscription fees. George accused the company of using the cedi's depreciation — over 200% in eight years — as an excuse for high prices, calling the justification inadequate amid Ghana's economic challenges. "My fidelity lies with the Ghanaian people. They have been cheated for years, and it is time we put an end to that," George said. MultiChoice Ghana, a subsidiary of South Africa's MultiChoice Group, dismissed the government's demand as "not tenable" in a statement, citing economic conditions and the need to maintain service quality. MD Alex Okyere warned that forced price cuts could threaten jobs and reduce customer choice, adding that the company had submitted alternative proposals to the minister and the NCA. George, responding on X, rejected those proposals and questioned why MultiChoice had complied with a court order to suspend price hikes in Nigeria, but not in Ghana. DSTV had offered to maintain current pricing while halting revenue remittances to headquarters, an offer George described as illogical.

(August 5, 2025) www.timeslive.co.z

Hungary

Hungarian operator group 4iG through its subsidiary One Macedonia Telecommunications, is the only firm to submit a bid in the tender by the Agency for Electronic Communications (AEC) for granting licenses to a new network operator. During bid opening at the Agency for Electronic Communications, the tender committee confirmed that the bidder had provided all necessary documentation. "The procedure will continue in accordance with the law. The documentation will be evaluated, after which a report will be prepared," committee chairman Igor Bojadziev said. Since local elections have been scheduled, the decision, if everything is in order, will be made after the completion of the election process. Three companies have collected the tender documentation for a third mobile operator. According to the tender conditions, the potential new mobile operator in the country should begin operations by the end of 2026. (August 22, 2025) www.mia.mk

India

In a move that, unlike some regulatory initiatives, may actually prove popular with mobile operators and consumers, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has issued a manual to aid in the assessment of digital connectivity in properties. Described as the first standardized framework to assess properties for digital connectivity and guide digital infrastructure development and upgrades across India, the Manual for Rating of Properties for Digital Connectivity evaluates how effectively buildings are equipped for high-speed, reliable digital access. As TRAI explains, with more than 80% of mobile data consumed indoors, and high-frequency-band signals of 4G and 5G often weakened by modern-day building materials, robust in-building networks have become essential for work, education, healthcare, and daily digital services. In addition, weak indoor connectivity directly affects consumer experience and overall quality of service. This publication establishes a uniform assessment methodology for digital connectivity rating agencies. It also serves as a reference framework for property managers and service providers to plan, implement, and

maintain future-ready digital connectivity infrastructure. In addition, it defines transparent, standardized criteria for property ratings, including fiber readiness, in-building mobile coverage, Wi-Fi coverage, broadband speeds and overall user experience The publication also enables buyers, tenants and businesses to make informed decisions based on actual digital connectivity performance, and, importantly for operators, it encourages developers to integrate robust digital infrastructure from the design and construction stage. As for the history behind this publication, TRAI says it first notified the Rating of Properties for Digital Connectivity Regulations, 2024 in October of that year, establishing a standardized, collaborative framework for evaluating digital connectivity infrastructure.

(August 14, 2025) www.developingtelecoms.com

Indonesia

Indonesia's three major mobile players, Telkomsel, Indosat Ooredoo Hutchison and XLSmart formed an alliance to protect customers from hacking and fraud by jointly adopting open telco API protocols. In a statement, the three noted under the Joint Telco API Alliance Initiative they will use unified telco API protocol based on the open source CAMARA standard. The initiative will cover security measures including: checking the active status of a number and customer registration; validating devices via number and network verification; detecting suspicious SIM card activity; and verifying device location within a specific geographic range. CAMARA open APIs, supported by the GSMA Open Gateway initiative, define, develop and publish APIs for developers and is driven by the Linux Foundation. By early June, some 73 mobile operator groups representing almost 80 per cent of global connections joined the Open Gateway initiative, including all of the operators in China. Telkomsel, Indosat Ooredoo Hutchison and XLSmart joined in February.

(September 22, 2025) www.mobileworldlive.com

Indonesia's mobile network performance has improved significantly between Q2 2022 and Q2 2025, according to Ookla's latest report. Nationwide download speeds climbed from 17.54 Mbps to 30.5 Mbps, while upload speeds rose from 10.32 Mbps to 13.93 Mbps. Even the lower 10th percentile — representing the worst connections — saw download speeds more than double from 2.66 Mbps to 5.69 Mbps, reflecting network upgrades that are reaching rural and remote communities, which account for 41 percent of the population. Every region reported faster speeds, with Jakarta and Bali topping 41 Mbps. Lower-performing provinces like North Maluku, as well as remote areas such as Gorontalo and Bangka Belitung Islands, recorded notable gains, underscoring efforts to close the digital divide, Ookla report indicated. 4G availability has surpassed 90 percent across all major islands as of 1H 2025, led by Java at 96.4 percent and Bali & Nusa Tenggara at 95.2 percent. Regions that historically lagged, including Sulawesi, Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Maluku & North Maluku, have all crossed the 90 percent mark. This milestone stems from coordinated government action, particularly through the Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs' (KOMDIGI) Digital Indonesia Roadmap 2021–2024, and public-private partnerships, Affandy Johan, Industry Analyst at Ookla, said. The Universal Service Obligation fund, managed by BAKTI, has played a pivotal role in financing projects such as the Palapa Ring fiber network, the SATRIA-1 satellite, and the construction of 6,672 new Base Transceiver Stations to extend coverage in underserved "3T" regions. Major operators like Telkomsel have complemented these efforts with targeted network expansion in commercially challenging areas. In contrast, 5G deployment remains limited and highly urban-focused. Bali & Nusa Tenggara lead with availability jumping from 4.4 percent in 1H 2024 to 17 percent in 1H 2025, driven by rollouts in tourism and business hubs. Java and Sumatra have more modest coverage at 6.5 percent and 4.8 percent respectively, while Kalimantan, Maluku & North Maluku, and Papua & Western New Guinea remain in the low single digits. Progress is constrained by limited mid-band spectrum — currently confined to the 1.8 GHz, 2.1 GHz, and 2.3 GHz bands — high infrastructure costs, and the robustness of existing 4G networks. Operators are adopting a phased, demand-driven strategy, focusing on dense urban and industrial zones. Telkomsel leads with over 2,100 5G sites in 56 cities, while Indosat Ooredoo Hutchison is expanding through network sharing. This measured approach is laying the groundwork for broader adoption as more spectrum becomes available and demand grows.

(August 19, 2025) www.telecomlead.co

Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan has decided to nationalize access to international internet traffic for a year. A presidential decree said the government was "establishing a temporary 100% state monopoly on the supply and provision of international internet traffic on the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic". Given that the monopoly will be in place from 15 August 2025 to 14 August 2026, the term "temporary" may be open to dispute. In any case, as a number of news organizations have noted, it was not clear from the decree whether it can be extended – or indeed why it was deemed necessary in the first place No explanation or details were given

by officials, including Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov, whose decree only says the move was needed for "creating conditions for further improvement of digital transformation". A local news report expands on this slightly, saying the measure is intended to improve the management of the country's digital and telecommunications infrastructure, streamline internet traffic, and enhance communication quality. However, Reuters adds that Kyrgyzstan recently banned access to online pornography to "protect moral and ethical values", and notes that Kyrgyzstan has seen increasing pressure on opposition groups and independent media since Japarov's populist and nationalist party swept to power on a wave of protests in 2020. It adds that the government has made the protection of what are called traditional Kyrgyz values a centerpiece of his agenda. All telecommunications operators and internet service providers (ISPs) currently working with international traffic will be required to transfer their agreements and contracts for cooperation with state-owned telecoms company ElCat within two months. The government will transfer 100% of the shares of ISP Aknet to ElCat to strengthen its capabilities.

(August 1, 2025) www.developingtelecoms.com

Malaysia

Malaysia's 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP) is placing artificial intelligence (AI) at the core of the nation's digital transformation strategy, Digital Minister Gobind Singh Deo announced. Central to this effort is the upcoming AI Nation Framework, a priority initiative under Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, designed to harness Malaysia's 5G network for smart city solutions built on existing data infrastructure.

The plan also introduces the concept of a "data commission" and a national "data bank" to strengthen digital trust and support the vision of becoming an AI-driven nation. These initiatives will be showcased at the Smart City Expo Kuala Lumpur 2025 (SCEKL25) from September 17–19, highlighting Malaysia's progress in integrating AI into urban development. Digital Nasional Bhd (DNB) and the Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) will lead the AI Cities initiative, complementing the Ministry of Housing and Local Government's Smart Cities program. The goal is to translate strategic leadership into real-world innovation with tangible local benefits. As part of the 5G Enterprise and AI City Grant program, 14 recipients — including universities, companies, and local authorities — have been awarded funding for projects across agriculture, healthcare, logistics, manufacturing, and education. These solutions, ranging from autonomous drone corridors to AI-powered transport systems, are designed to be scalable and replicable nationwide. Minister Gobind emphasized that the initiatives will empower SMEs and public institutions, ensuring innovation benefits grassroots communities. The AI Nation Framework's five pillars focus on forward-looking AI policies, a digitally skilled workforce, secure infrastructure, digital trust, and strategic investments to position Malaysia as a regional AI hub. Ultimately, the government's strategy seeks to make AI an enabler for all Malaysians — enhancing public services, bridging development gaps, expanding access to healthcare and education, and supporting small businesses — while ensuring ethical, inclusive, and globally competitive AI adoption.

(August 15, 2025) www.meatechwatch.com

Namibia

Paratus Group has launched Namibia's first private mobile network, introducing LTE and 5G technologies as part of its 20th anniversary in the country. The move positions Paratus as a challenger to the state-owned operators that have long dominated the Namibian market. The launch also reflects two decades of investment by the company in building digital infrastructure to support connectivity and economic growth. Since 2018, Paratus has invested approximately $80.1 million (N$1.417 billion) in network infrastructure, including fiber networks, satellite services, data centers, and the landing of the Equiano subsea cable. In the past year, the group allocated an additional $33.9 million (N$600 million) to develop the mobile network, with one third of that funding used to build a new digital technology stack. This system, developed with Cerillion and Nokia, integrates all Paratus services into a single digital platform for customers. The mobile network will offer affordable voice and data packages, alongside services such as Voice over LTE (VoLTE), Wi-Fi calling, and digital activation. It forms part of a broader ecosystem of connectivity options, including fiber, wireless Sky-Fi, and integrated enterprise solutions.

(September 3, 2025) www.cioafrica.co

MTC Namibia has officially launched its 5G network, becoming the first operator in the country to roll out the next-generation mobile technology. The service is now live in Ongwediva, Swakopmund, Walvis Bay and Windhoek, with the company confirming that a broader rollout will follow in the coming months to extend coverage nationwide. MTC said the introduction of 5G marks a major step in advancing Namibia's digital transformation, enabling faster connectivity, improved reliability and supporting innovations across industries. "The connectivity power and seamlessness that come

with 5G is exactly what we need in propelling the digitization of enterprise solutions, Internet of Things (IoT), cybersecurity, cloud computing, and payments, thereby enhancing business operations, efficiency, and fostering innovation and scalability," the company stated. MTC reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring that all Namibians gain access to world-class technology, positioning 5G as a key driver of economic growth and digital inclusion.

(August 26, 2025) www.techafricanews.com

Netherlands

The Dutch government is taking a vital step towards accelerating digitalization with the launch of the NDS Council. This independent advisory body comprises 14 leading experts in digitalization, along with a chairperson. The council has been established to support the implementation of the Netherlands Digitalization Strategy (NDS). The NDS is a joint strategy involving municipalities, provinces, water boards, public service providers, and the central government. It aims to strengthen the Netherlands' digital infrastructure and address social challenges more effectively. The NDS Council provides both solicited and unsolicited advice on the progress and implementation of the Netherlands Digitalization Strategy (NDS). Its members include representatives from within government as well as external experts from academia, knowledge institutions, and the business community. These external members bring expertise in areas such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, data exchange, cloud technology, and digital government services.

(September 3, 2025) www.nldigitalgovernment.nl

New Zealand

The Commerce Commission has made its final recommendation to the Minister for Media and Communications that the rural copper network be deregulated. Telecommunications Commissioner Tristan Gilbertson says that technology has transformed rural connectivity over the past two decades and copper regulation is no longer necessary to promote competition. "Rural consumers continue to move off copper and onto cheaper and better performing alternatives in large numbers. We consider there's now enough competition in the market to warrant removing copper access regulation," Mr. Gilbertson says. Under the Telecommunications Act the Commerce Commission must consider whether copper regulation is still needed to promote competition. The decision to remove copper regulation sits with the Minister for Media and Communications. "Copper was first regulated 20 years ago when it was a natural monopoly and the only way of providing widespread phone and internet services. Today, less than a third of rural consumers use copper, and that number continues to decline as consumers move to better performing alternatives," Mr. Gilbertson says. "Most rural consumers can now access three alternative technologies that are often more affordable, better performing, and more reliable than copper," Mr. Gilbertson says. If agreed by the Minister, deregulation would enable Chorus to start the process of withdrawing copper infrastructure in rural areas. "We believe it's important to have a managed withdrawal process to protect rural consumers during any change – similar to the Copper Withdrawal Code that has worked well in urban areas," Mr. Gilbertson says. "We encourage Chorus to make clear commitments to support consumers through the switch to more reliable, effective, and affordable internet and phone options," Mr. Gilbertson says. (August 21, 2025) www.comcom.govt.nz

Nigeria

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has launched the 2025 Guidelines on Corporate Governance, signaling the start of a tougher enforcement era aimed at enhancing audit standards, risk management, and transparency within the country's telecommunications sector. The telecom industry in Nigeria is currently valued at $9.52 billion in 2025 and is projected to grow to $11.97 billion by 2030, according to a recent report by Mordor Intelligence. As one of the most critical drivers of Nigeria's digital economy, the sector's exponential growth has raised the stakes for ethical compliance and sound corporate governance. Dr. Aminu Maida, the executive vice chairman of the NCC, at the workshop/ formal launch of guidelines on corporate governance for the Nigerian telecommunications industry, in Lagos, said the new framework is not just about compliance but securing the long-term sustainability of telecom businesses, networks, and investor confidence. Maida stressed that corporate governance is no longer a soft requirement but a strategic necessity for telcos operating in an environment defined by cybersecurity threats, energy constraints, climate pressures, and rising customer expectations. He noted that under the new regime, telecom operators must now ensure balanced board structures, enhanced transparency, and tighter internal controls. "Board composition must reflect executive, non-executive, and independent directors with demonstrated expertise in ICT and

cybersecurity," he added. He also announced the formal recognition of regulatory officers within licensees' operations as key contacts for compliance reporting. A central focus of the guidelines is the strengthening of audit functions and risk control systems across telecom companies. The NCC now requires operators to systematically identify and mitigate material risks, with oversight provided by empowered internal audit teams. Licensees will be expected to submit mid-year and annual compliance reports certified by their boards. These measures, Maida said, aim to ensure that telecom boards and management teams are configured to deliver reliable services, ensure supply chain integrity, and reduce operational vulnerabilities.
(August 7, 2025) www.businessday.ng

Paraguay

The National Telecommunications Commission (Conatel) confirmed that Claro and Argentina's Nubicom will each receive 200 MHz in the 3.5 GHz band after submitting the only bids in the country's 5G auction. Claro will operate in the 3.5–3.7 GHz range, while Nubicom secured 3.3–3.5 GHz. Both allocations are split into four 50 MHz sub-bands. Claro bid $2.021 million and Nubicom $2 million, with both companies making a $1.4 million deposit. The full license fee must be paid within 60 days. Operators have six months to begin infrastructure deployment, with commercial 5G service expected to launch between March and April 2026. Nubicom, which currently provides fixed internet services in Argentina's Salta province but has no mobile infrastructure in either Argentina or Paraguay, will have to build a mobile network from scratch. Meanwhile, Millicom's Tigo and Telecom's Personal, the two largest mobile providers in Paraguay, did not take part in the auction process. Industry observers siad the final bidding rules undermined technological neutrality by excluding Chinese vendors, deterring broader participation despite one of the region's lowest base prices. The local government decided to adopt strict eligibility rules for the auction, which effectively barred Chinese vendors. One of the key requirements was a "commercial reciprocity" clause: Bidders had to provide a certificate from Paraguay's diplomatic mission in the country of origin of their proposed RAN equipment manufacturer, confirming equal access for Paraguayan companies to that market. (August 27, 2025) www.rcrwireless.com

Peru

Four of Peru's mobile operators – Bitel, Claro, Entel and Integratel - have obtained spectrum for 5G deployment. A fifth, Americatel, which had prequalified for the bidding process, reportedly did not participate in the auction. As reported in April, the call for bids involved frequencies in the 3300-3800MHz band. The auction was points-based – that is, awards were made based on how well the companies did in investment commitments, rather than how much they might be willing to pay for the spectrum itself. Vietnamese-owned Bitel achieved the highest score with its additional coverage offer and therefore gained priority to choose its location within the band offered. The company selected the 3400–3500MHz block. Bitel, the third-largest operator in the market has boosted its investments and managed to increase its user base from 8.75 million on 31 December 2024, to 10.1 million by the end of June. Market leader Claro was second in the auction. It chose the 3500-3600MHz block. Entel was awarded the 3300-3400MHz block and Integratel obtained the 3600-3700MHz block. The 3700-3800 MHz block apparently received no bids but the hope is that it will be used for private mining and port services. The investment commitment, defined by Peru's Ministry of Transport and Communications, includes bringing 4G services to 1,221 rural communities, in addition to deploying infrastructure on 1,699 kilometers of national highways – a reminder of the continuing relevance of 4G for much of the population of Peru.
(September 15, 2025) www.bnamericas.com

Portugal

ANACOM, the Portuguese Space Authority, awarded the first license to operate a launch Centre, the Malbusca Launch Centre on Santa Maria Island, Azores, on 12 August 2025 to the Atlantic Space Consortium. This 5-year license, which does not include in its scope future launch operations – these require specific licensing and evaluation – is awarded within the context of the Portugal Space 2030 Strategy, aiming to promote Portugal's capabilities and potential as a European platform for return missions and access to space and leveraging the strategic geographic position of the Azores. (August 15, 2025) www.lexology.com

Serbia

Serbia has formally launched its long-anticipated 5G spectrum auction. The Regulatory Authority for Electronic Communications and Postal Services (RATEL) has initiated bidding for licenses in six key frequency ranges: 700 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2600 MHz, and 3500 MHz.The auction follows the adoption of a rulebook earlier this year that set minimum conditions for license issuance, paving the way for the competitive tender. Licenses will run until March 2047, with no option for extension. Fees vary by band, ranging from about €7 million for 2100 MHz spectrum up to €35.5 million for the 3400–3800 MHz range, while the minimum cost of a package of frequencies is set at around €100 million. Payments will be made in two instalments: on award of the license and by mid-2026, according to SeeNews. Eligibility conditions are designed to ensure only financially robust operators can take part. Bidders must demonstrate at least 1.5 million mobile subscribers as of December 2024 and mobile revenues above €300 million last year. In terms of rollout obligations, successful bidders must install a minimum of 200 5G base stations in the first year – most of them in Belgrade and other major cities – and at least 1,000 across Serbia in the second year.

(September 3, 2025) www.mobileeurope.co.uk

South Africa

South Africa's Competition Commission has approved Cell C's proposed acquisition of Comm Equipment Company (CEC). In a statement, the Commission said it had cleared the deal without conditions, finding it unlikely to substantially impact competition in any market and noting that it does not raise significant public-interest concerns. Explaining its decision, the watchdog said Cell C is the primary acquiring firm, is not controlled by another company, and has a widely distributed shareholding with no single controlling shareholder. CEC is wholly owned by The Prepaid Company (TPC), a mobile virtual network aggregator (MVNA) that provisions airtime and data in South Africa. TPC's parent, Blue Label Telecoms, will acquire shares in Cell C as part of the transaction, according to Techpoint Africa. The approval follows rival Vodacom's move to bolster its portfolio via the acquisition of Maziv, the parent company of Vumatel and Dark Fiber Africa.

(August 15, 2025) www.developingtelecoms.com

South Korea

South Korea's privacy regulator has announced it will fine SK Telecom 134.8 billion won (~$97 million) in response to a data breach the company revealed in April. The fine is the largest in the PIPC's history to date. Prior to this, the committee's largest fines were those levied against Google and Meta in 2022 for collecting consumer data without consent. The tech giants were fined 69.2 billion won (~$50 million) and 30.8 billion won (~$22 million), respectively. The cyberattack in question took place on June 15, 2022, but was not reported to the Korea Internet & Security Agency (KISA) by SKT until April 22 this year, suggesting that installed malware remained undetected for three years. Reports suggest that 23 of SKT's servers were impacted, which collectively held four different types of USIM data, including International Mobile Subscriber Identity (IMSI) numbers. These unique numbers are used to identify individual customers. In total, 9.32 gigabytes of USIM-related data, including 26.9 million IMSI numbers, were compromised in the attack and may have been leaked. In response to the breach, SKT pledged to bolster its cybersecurity, as well as offering free USIM card replacements to all affected subscribers. The company also paused its acquisition of new subscribers, only restarting the process in June. In its announcement, the PIPC described SKT's internal cybersecurity system as having been in a "very weak condition", saying the company had failed to properly manage access rights to customer data and did not encrypt USIM authentication keys. It also accused the company of delaying notifying affected customers. As such, alongside the punitive fine, the PIPC has also approved corrective measures from SKT, which include a system audit, additional security measures, and a review of the company's data governance policies.

(August 28, 2025) www.totaltele.com

Thailand

Thailand is the latest country to announce plans to offer spectrum for private use by factories and businesses. The country's regulator, the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC), recently said that it will release 100MHz of bandwidth in the 4800MHz band under a private network operator (PNO) license. This system allows factories and enterprises to request the allocation at no cost for non-profit use, provided they apply it to improve internal operations. The government's wider aim when it comes to allocating free spectrum for factories and enterprises is to accelerate the country's Thailand 4.0 ambitions. Thailand 4.0 is a campaign to promote innovation. Factories can collaborate with equipment vendors or telecom

companies to deploy solutions for 5G private network operations. The NBTC expects the initiative to drive private 5G adoption across Thailand's manufacturing and enterprise sectors, enabling companies to boost automation, efficiency and digital transformation. However, there are restrictions. According to the Telecom Review Asia news service, enterprises that plan to use private 5G for commercial services will need to bid for the 4800MHz band at auction. Telecom operators may participate if they intend to operate as PNOs, but licensees cannot provide consumer mobile services or integrate the band with existing 2600MHz services. The NBTC said this restriction aligns with its objective of promoting dedicated private 5G networks.

(September 15, 2025) www.developingtelecoms.com

United Kingdom

U.K. communications services regulator Ofcom said it will open applications on September 16-17 September for licenses to use 26 GHz and 40 GHz mmWave spectrum, marking the country's largest-ever release of mobile spectrum. The move is designed to accelerate the rollout of 5G services, expand mobile capacity, and unlock faster speeds while encouraging new applications in the telecom sector. U.K. communications services regulator Ofcom said it will open applications on September 16-17 September for licenses to use 26 GHz and 40 GHz mmWave spectrum, marking the country's largest-ever release of mobile spectrum. The move is designed to accelerate the rollout of 5G services, expand mobile capacity, and unlock faster speeds while encouraging new applications in the telecom sector. 5G technology currently accounts for 28% of all mobile connections in the U.K., according to a previous report by the country's telecommunications regulator Ofcom.

(September 12, 2025) www.rcrwireless.com

Venezuela

Venezuelan operators Movilnet and Cantv jointly paid nearly US$200mn for spectrum to develop 4G and 5G telecommunications networks. Movilnet acquired two blocks in the 3.5GHz band (CC and DD) for a total of 100MHz. The bid reached US$86.9 million per block. The private operator Movistar had submitted a bid to compete for that band, but ultimately declined to offer. With this allocation, Movilnet will be able to continue expanding its 5G network, which already has nearly 50 sites. Cantv was awarded the FF block of the 2,500 MHz band with a bid of US$36.1 million. Television and broadband operator SimpleTV had also expressed interest in that band. In a first bid held in January, private operator Digitel acquired 50 MHz in the 3,500 MHz band (block BB), while Movistar obtained 40 MHz in the 2,500-2,600 MHz band (block HH). On that occasion, Cantv lost out to Movistar in the bidding for 2,500 MHz. The January tender raised nearly US$123 million. In this second process, the State also offered a 5MHz+5MHz block in the 1,700-2,100MHz band (GG), which received no bids. As in January, the bidding process took place on the Caracas Stock Exchange. Its president, José Grasso Vecchio, stated that the process "represents a great opportunity for the development of the country's telecommunications sector." According to the sector regulator Conatel, during the first half of the year the telecommunications sector contributed more than 7% of the country's gross domestic product.

(August 11, 2025) www.bnamericas.com

Zambia

Zambia has set an ambitious goal of extending 4G and 5G mobile network coverage to 90% of its population by the end of 2025, a move that underscores the country's commitment to accelerating digital transformation. To support this effort, the World Bank has approved a $120 million grant aimed at strengthening Zambia's public digital infrastructure. This funding aligns with the nation's Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) strategy and its long-term Vision 2030, both of which prioritize inclusive growth through technology. On the financial services front, the launch of the ABSA Mobi Tap app marks a significant step toward enhancing financial inclusion. By enabling seamless digital payments, particularly for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), women entrepreneurs, and young people, the app is expected to expand access to financial tools and foster greater participation in the digital economy. Together, these initiatives reflect Zambia's broader push to build a digitally empowered society that connects more citizens to opportunities for innovation, commerce, and development.

(September 24, 2025) africa-news-agency.com

Zimbabwe

Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe director-general Dr. Gift Machengete has urged regulators worldwide to embrace inclusive and forward-looking governance models as emerging technologies outpace traditional regulation. Speaking at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Global Symposium for Regulators in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Dr. Machengete said regulators faced the challenge of balancing innovation with public protection, particularly in the areas of artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain and the Internet of Things (IoT). "At POTRAZ, we see balancing innovation with public protection as a central challenge," he said. "That is why we have moved from passive oversight to proactive innovation stewardship, guided by adaptive policy experimentation, evidence-based regulation and multi-stakeholder engagement." He pointed to the creation of the National Innovation Acceleration Centre (NIAC), developed with ITU, as a platform for testing regulatory approaches in real-world settings. "Through foresight, sandboxing and co-creation, we can trial policies before they are formally enacted," he said. Dr. Machengete said that of paramount importance was the role of evidence-based regulation, supported by POTRAZ's Research and Development department, which funds ICT studies with universities, publishes the POTRAZ ICT Research Journal and tracks global technology trends. "This allows us to safeguard consumer rights, protect data privacy and promote trust in digital platforms, while also fostering entrepreneurship and innovation," he said. He also said that multi-stakeholder collaboration was important. The ITU Global Symposium for Regulators brings together policymakers, regulators and industry leaders from around the world to explore strategies for shaping digital economies.

(September 5, 2025) www.heraldonline.co.zw

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