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Telecom Review Leaders' Summit: Driving Global Influence, Empowering Regional Excellence

TELECOM Review Leaders' Summit

Telecom Review Excellence Awards

2024

Somalia's Vision to Accelerate
 Optical Fiber Deployment

 Djibouti's New Era of Global Connectivity Transforming Senegal's Urban Transport with Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)



GLOBAL FOOTPRINT REGIONAL INFLUENCE DIGITAL REACH













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Turning Down the Heat: New Discovery Fuels the Future of Electronics

UVA researchers have confirmed a nanoscale heat flow principle, enabling cooler, faster, and more energy-efficient chips. This breakthrough in thermal management, supported by Intel and the Semiconductor Research Corporation, advances next-gen CMOS technology for sustainable, high-performance electronic devices.

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Advancing AI Voice Technology for Emotional Connection

A USD 40 million-backed conceptual startup aims to transform human-computer interactions with Al voice systems that deliver natural, emotionally-engaging experiences, supported by advancements in real-time, interruption-management technology.



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Germany Advances Autonomous Driving with Innovative C-ITS Strategy

Germany's new autonomous driving strategy leverages C-ITS technology and public transport to lead innovation in connected mobility solutions.

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Study Proposes Radio-Frequency Localization to Improve Smartphone AR Accuracy

frequency-based localization as a solution to improving accuracy and stability in real-world environments.

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Holiday Season Attacks Powered by AI

This holiday season, the retail industry is anticipating a rise in cyberattacks beyond the usual spike.

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Investor Appetite for AI Ventures Grows

Leading investors worldwide are pouring funds into Al companies, captivated by their transformative vision of an intelligent and interconnected future.

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Telecom Review Leaders' Summit: Driving Global Influence, Empowering Regional Excellence

Building on its annual theme, 'Global. Regional. Digital,' the 18th edition of the Telecom Review Leaders' Summit concluded successfully after two dynamic days. The event brought together a diverse group of professionals, including telecom operators, vendors, industry regulators, government officials, content providers, cybersecurity experts, consultants, and more.



DAY 1

DIGITAL PARTNER Netcracker KNOWLEDGE PARTNER PLATINUM PLATINUM PLATINUM FEJRTIPLET FEJRTIPLET PLATINUM PLAT

WELCOME NOTE Toni Eid, Founder of Telecom Review, and CEO of Trace Media International TELECOM

OFFICIAL OPENING KEYNOTE: Eng. Tariq Al Awadhi, Executive Director, Spectrum Affairs Department, TDRA



OPENING FIRESIDE CHAT: Fahad Al Hassawi, CEO, du Toni Eid, Founder of Telecom Review, and CEO of Trace Media International

he Telecom Review Leaders' Summit once again solidified its reputation as one of the most anticipated and largest ICT events in the industry. This year's edition welcomed more than 600 distinguished guests from across the ICT sector, supported by industry partners and sponsors.

From December 10-11, 2024, the conference hall and demo exhibition area were packed with attendees, fulfilling the event's goal of providing informative sessions and delivering an extensive platform for brand promotion and networking.

Reflecting on the resounding success of the event, Toni Eid, Founder of Telecom Review, and CEO of Trace Media International, expressed his heartfelt gratitude to all participants, speakers, sponsors, and partners who contributed to making the 18th Telecom Review Leaders' Summit a landmark success. "These milestones reflect our unwavering commitment to recognizing and fostering leadership within the telecom and ICT industry," he remarked.

Eid emphasized the Summit's theme, Global. Regional. Digital., as

a reflection of the sector's evolving priorities, and praised Dubai as an ideal host city for fostering innovation and collaboration. He also shared exciting updates about Telecom Review's global expansion, including new coverage in the Americas and Europe, signaling its growing influence in the industry.

In closing, Eid expressed gratitude to participants, speakers, and partners for their contributions to the event's success. "This year's discussions have set the stage for transformative advancements, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back for the 19th edition next year," he concluded.





Vikram Sinha, CEO, Indosat Ooredoo Hutchison (IOH)



Alex Xu, President of Carrier Business, Huawei Middle East & Central Asia



Jeffrey Hulse, Senior Vice President and Group President, Verizon Partner Solutions



Karim Benkirane, CCO, du



Gordon Thomson, EMEA SP VP, Cisco





Kenji Takemura, Director, Service Provider Solution Department, Head of EMEA Transport Center of Excellence (COE), NEC Corporation, Japan



FIRESIDE CHAT: Sylvain Seignour, President, Netcracker Technology Issam Eid, CMO Africa, Levant, KSA & Qatar, Telecom Review Group



FIRESIDE CHAT: Enabling growth in the Middle East and African Telecom sector: AWS's role in regional cloud innovation Bernard Najm, Vice President Telco MEA, Amazon Web Services (AWS) Zakaria Chouaib, Managing Director, PMP Strategy MEA

Telecom Review Leaders' Summit: Day 1

This year's summit raised the bar higher with distinctive, top-notch speakers, all thanks to the participation of the most influential figures in the ICT industry from across the world, representing the Middle East, Europe, Africa, Americas, and Asia Pacific regions.

Opening the floor for the 18th edition of the Telecom Review Leaders' Summit, Toni Eid addressed the audience with a welcome note.

During the first day, Eng. Tariq Al Awadhi, Executive Director, Spectrum Affairs Department, TDRA, graced the attendees with his presence and delivered the official opening keynote. Fireside chats took place whereby the natural evolution of du was discussed between Fahad Al Hassawi, CEO, du, and Telecom Review Founder, Toni Eid; and Netcracker's vision for telecom's future was dissected by Issam Eid, CMO Africa, Levant, KSA, and Qatar, Telecom Review Group, and Sylvain Seignour, President of Netcracker Technology.

The 'Telecom Leaders' Panel' (session 1) included key figures such as Sylvain Seignour (Netcracker Technology), Seizo Onoe (ITU), Vikram Sinha (IOH), Bader Al Zidi (Vodafone Oman), and Mohamed Nasr (Telecom Egypt), who discussed leadership strategies in a rapidly evolving sector.

The 'AI Empowering Highly Autonomous Networks' panel, powered by Huawei, brought together AI experts Amaru Chavez-Pujol (Bayobab), Najla Alkaabi (du), and Fernando Camacho (Huawei), to explore the impact of AI on network autonomy. Chavez-Pujol emphasized the need for the thoughtful implementation of AI in telecom networks, noting the importance of feeding accurate information to AI systems for optimal results.

During the panel powered by AWS, 'Unlocking the Potential of Network





PANEL: THE TELECOM LEADERS' PANEL -Session 1-



PANEL: AI EMPOWERING HIGHLY AUTONOMOUS NETWORKS - Powered by Huawei



PANEL: UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL: NETWORK CLOUDIFICATION AT SCALE FOR CORE & IT TELECOM WORKLOADS - Powered by AWS





5G-A Launching Ceremony



PANEL: WHOLESALE INDUSTRY - SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE IN THE ERA OF MULTI-CONNECTIVITY



PANEL: WOMEN IN ICT





Cloudification,' panelists Dr. Ibrahim Gedeon (Guardian SafetyNet), Danial Mausoof (Nokia), Shadi Khuffash (Fortinet), and Ari Banerjee (Netcracker) discussed the potential of cloud-based network solutions. Mausoof touched on the role of GenAl in optimizing network performance, noting its dual role in enhancing predictive capabilities and introducing inherent risks.

The panel, 'Wholesale Industry's Significant Influence in the Era of Multi-Connectivity,' featured Anup Gupta (APTelecom), Mohammed Aliyu (Bayobab), Obaid Rahman (du), and Eng. Amjad Osama Arab (Salam), and focused on the influence of multi-connectivity in a rapidly interconnected world.

Moreover, the panel titled, 'World First 5G-Advanced Region Sets Sail,' featured notable industry leaders. including Fayez Abu Awad (GSMA), Dr. Khalid Al Awadi (TDRA UAE), Hicham Siblini (Ooredoo Qatar), Ramy Boctor (Vodafone Qatar) and Stelios Savvides (Vodafone Oman). Additionally, Dr. Ayman Elnashar (e&), Hasan Alshemeili (du), Allen Tang (Huawei MECA), Zoran Lazarevic (Ericsson MEA), and Mohamed Samir (Nokia), contributed to the rich dialogue, addressing the strategic advancements and challenges in deploying 5G at scale and how

it is shaping the future of digital infrastructure across the region.

Lastly, the 'Women in ICT' panel showcased thought leaders such as Chrystelle Briantais (PMP Strategy), Najla Al Kaabi (du), Jennifer Parkhill (Verizon), Gina Perini (Somos), and Dalia El Gezery (e& Egypt), all of whom highlighted the role women play in driving innovation and inclusion within the ICT sector.

As part of the 18th Telecom Review Leaders' Summit's closing agenda for the first day, Telecom Review Group expressed their appreciation to all sponsors through a special certificate of appreciation ceremony.



DAY 2 -----



OFFICIAL OPENING KEYNOTE: Eng. Mohammed Jadah, Director Wireless Networks and Services, TDRA



Osman Sultan, Founder & Chairman, Fikra Tech



Saleem Alblooshi, CTO, du



Mikko Lavanti, Senior Vice President, Mobile Networks, MEA, Nokia



Mounir Ladki, President and CTO, MYCOM OSI



Marco Lichtfous, Managing Director, PMP Strategy Luxembourg





FIRESIDE CHAT: The Role of AI & Advanced Technologies in Empowering the Youth by du Youth Council Maha Almarzooqi, Manager UI Design Lead, du Rashid Alsaadi, Engineer - Broadcasting Operations (Trainee), du Moderator: Elvi Correos, Senior Journalist, Telecom Review Group



PANEL: THE TELECOM LEADERS' PANEL -Session 2-



PANEL: DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CLOUD INDUSTRY AND THE ROLE OF HYPERSCALERS





PANEL: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: WHAT IT MEANS FOR TELCOS AND CONSUMERS



PANEL: THE "POTION" FOR THE RIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE DEPLOYMENT



PANEL: CYBERSECURITY UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT: DATA PRIVACY AND REGULATION





PANEL: FROM TELECOM TO TECHNOLOGY PLAYERS: ENTERING THE FINTECH FIELD

Telecom Review Leaders' Summit: Day 2

The second day featured a series of impactful panels, a compelling opening keynote, and an engaging fireside chat.

Eng. Mohammed Jadah, Director of Wireless Networks and Services at TDRA, delivered the opening keynote, highlighting the advancements being made in wireless networks and their critical role in driving digital transformation.

The Telecom Leaders' Panel (session 2) explored industry opportunities and challenges, featuring a notable opening keynote by Osman Sultan (Fikra Tech), who was then joined on stage by Dr. Bilel Jamoussi (ITU), Mikhail Gerchuk (Power International Holding), Johannes Hummer (Vodafone), and Rob Beswick (Virgin Mobile UAE). Sultan concluded by urging the industry to embrace greater collaboration, noting that the future of telecom requires more unity and innovation to thrive in an increasingly connected world.

The panel, 'The Expanding Role of Hyperscalers in the Cloud Market,' showcased insights from experts Rick Kapani (Apptium), Noman Waheed (Nokia), Mohamed Hamouda (NEC GCC), Maria Stebneva (Juniper Networks), Majid AlNaqbi (du), and Pavel Vishnyakov (Huawei Cloud ME&CA); while the 'What AI Means for Telcos and Consumers' panel dissected how artificial intelligence is transforming telecom and consumer experiences, featuring input from Ned Taleb (Reailize), Mounir Ladki (MYCOM OSI), Paweł Workiewicz (Comarch), Monty Hamilton (TELUS), Benedetto Spaziani (Netcracker Technology), Mohamed Bakry (Cisco), Samer Geissah (Nokia), and Dr. Mahmoud Sherif (du). Workiewicz also underscored the importance of data unification in enabling autonomous networks.

The fireside chat bolstered by du Youth Council representatives, Maha Almarzooqi (du) and Rashid Alsaadi (du), emphasized the role of Al and advanced technologies in empowering the youth.

Infrastructure experts, Maria Stebneva (Juniper Networks), Femi Oshiga (CommScope). Rashid Al Ahmadi (InfraX), Jérémie Mekaelian (Sofrecom), Tony Geheran (StrategiC Broadband Consulting), Hasan Alshemeili (du), and Emaad Ahmed (Huawei ME&CA Region) identified 'How Industry Leaders are Deploying Infrastructure Strategies' in a panel discussion that took a fascinating turn as speakers delved into the intricate interplay between standardization, innovation, and the evolving human factor within the telecom ecosystem.

Cybersecurity took center stage as Charbel Sarkis (Fortinet). Dr. Ibrahim Gedeon (Guardian SafetyNet), Ari Banerjee (Netcracker Technology), Dr. Lidia Stepińska-Ustasiak (Polistratos Institute), Issa Chini (One37), and Chief Nishan Duraiappah (Peel Regional Police) explored data privacy and regulation. Dr. Gedeon added that firewalls alone are not enough in today's threat landscape; with threats coming from all directions, collaboration between vendors and customers is essential. Finally, discussions concluded in the last panel of the summit, through which Nicolas Levi (du Pay), Edgard Tawk (Eurisko), Vivek Yadav (PMP strategy Dubai), and Abdulaziz Qambar (Fimpact Group), highlighted telecom's evolving role as a key technology player and explored the 'Future of Digital Financial Services.'







Telecom Review Excellence Awards: African Telcos and Leaders Excel

One of the highlights of the 18th Telecom Review Leaders' Summit was the annual Telecom Review Excellence Awards ceremony, which honored leading ICT brands and leaders for their achievements throughout the year and was followed by the annual gala dinner.

Commenting on the success of the event, Toni Eid, Founder of

Telecom Review Group and CEO of Trace Media International, said, "A heartfelt thank you to all participants, distinguished speakers, and partners for their unwavering support in the huge success of the 18th Telecom Review Leaders' Summit."

Jeff Seal, Chief of the Awards Committee, Managing Partner, and Editor-in-Chief, Telecom Review Americas, added, "In 2024, the Telecom Review Excellence Awards set a new benchmark, attracting significant industry interest with a record-breaking number of global nominations. To accommodate this, we introduced more distinct awards on a global and regional scale. These awards remain the industry standard for peer recognition, thanks to the thorough deliberation by our esteemed panel of global experts. Congratulations to all the winners, and we look forward to another celebration of excellence next year!







Shaping Egypt's Digital Future: A Conversation with Mohamed Nasr, CEO of Telecom Egypt

In an exclusive interview with Telecom Review at the 18th edition of the Telecom Review Leaders' Summit, Mohamed Nasr, CEO of Telecom Egypt, shared the company's ambitious efforts to transform Egypt into a global connectivity powerhouse.

ith nearcomplete Fiber-to-the-Curb (FTTC) coverage, strategic investments

in subsea cable infrastructure, and the rapid expansion of data centers, Telecom Egypt is at the forefront of driving digital innovation and growth. With Telecom Egypt nearing full Fiber-to-the-Curb (FTTC) coverage and making strides in subsea cable developments, how are these advancements shaping your vision for Egypt's role as a connectivity hub? We've had a long-standing relationship with fiber optics, starting early with subsea cables. Initially, these cables were coaxial, but eventually, fiber optics became the standard. Our journey with fiber began even before deploying it on the ground, dating back to 1997, when we started working with fiber-based submarine cables. Over time, the technology expanded, progressing from Fiber-to-the-Cabinet (FTTC) and eventually Fiber-tothe-Home (FTTH), marking a significant evolution in connectivity.

Telecom Egypt has been investing in subsea cables for many years and is a



key player in all major cable consortia crossing Egypt. These cables connect the Middle East, Asia, South Africa, and East Africa to Europe. To support this, we've developed robust and resilient infrastructure, with multiple submarine cables landing at various stations. We continue to invest in subsea cable stations at both the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, ensuring connectivity through resilient networks.

Domestically, as connectivity demands increase, the need for fiber grows as well. We've connected the national backbone with fiber to serve the Egyptian market, and with the advent of 5G, mobile sites also require fiber connectivity. We've partnered with mobile operators to deploy fiber to their sites. By the end of this year, Telecom Egypt will achieve 100% fiber coverage across its network, significantly enhancing fixed broadband connectivity.

For new developments, fiber to the home has been the standard, but we're now focusing on replacing legacy copper networks with fiber to ensure complete fiberization. Our goal is simple: to make everything fiber, because, as we say, 'Fiber is the new gold.'

Telecom Egypt is actively enhancing its data center capabilities and attracting global hyperscalers. What are your plans for expanding this infrastructure to further solidify Egypt's position in the global digital ecosystem?

Data centers are a critical component of the network, serving as the backbone for hosting and delivering the data that everyone demands. Networks need to connect to content, and this content is stored in data centers. Recognizing the importance of data centers early on, we began deploying multiple small data centers within our network to serve enterprises in Egypt and global carriers, as well as international content providers hosting their data with us.

As the demand for data grew rapidly, we shifted our focus to largerscale infrastructure. This led to the development of our Regional Data Hub (RDH) center, which is directly connected to all subsea cable stations. Phase one of the RDH became operational in 2021 and is now almost fully utilized. To meet the growing demand, we launched the construction of RDH phase two, marking the next stage of expansion. Additionally, there are plans for two more phases, ensuring continuous growth in our data center capabilities.

However, we cannot solely rely on our own investments in data centers. We are actively connecting our network to all data centers in Egypt, fostering an ecosystem that encourages investors to build more facilities. With the increasing demand for data center space—particularly as customers require larger capacities—we are accelerating our construction efforts while welcoming additional investments from other data center developers.

New technologies and applications, such as AI, are driving demand at an unprecedented pace. To keep up, we are encouraging a collaborative approach where everyone can contribute to building data center infrastructure. Our commitment is to connect our extensive fiber network to any new data center deployed in Egypt, supporting a thriving and scalable digital ecosystem.

As 5G adoption accelerates globally, how is Telecom Egypt preparing its networks and partnerships to meet the increased demand for bandwidth and advanced digital services?

In a way, we've been fortunate to experience a delay in the adoption of 5G in Egypt. This allowed us to observe and learn from the experiences of other markets. By analyzing what went right, what went wrong, and where the focus should be, we gained valuable insights, particularly in terms of the challenges of 5G monetization, which many carriers face. We studied similar markets to understand the quickest and most effective ways to monetize 5G by identifying the specific applications that truly require its capabilities.

As the last mobile operator to enter the market, we had the advantage of building the most 5G-ready network from the outset. Starting with 4G, we designed our infrastructure to be future-proof, ensuring readiness for 5G deployment. Now, with licenses obtained and site activation underway, we are strategically focusing on areas and applications where 5G is genuinely needed, rather than aiming for widespread deployment where it may not provide significant value.

One critical aspect of 5G is its dependency on fiber. The success of 5G services is intrinsically linked to robust fiber connectivity, which provides the necessary speed and low latency to fully unlock its potential. This partnership between 5G and fiber is especially vital for enterprise customers, who demand a resilient network capable of carrying critical business traffic.

Our approach involves offering a mix of emerging technologies, such as 5G and, in the future, 5G-Advanced, alongside a strong fiber backbone. This combination ensures we can meet the evolving needs of enterprises while delivering reliable, high-performance connectivity for diverse applications.



Our goal is simple: to make everything fiber, because, as we say, 'Fiber is the new gold'





Shaping the Future of Mobile Networks: Insights from Nokia MEA



In an exclusive interview with Telecom Review, Danial Mausoof, VP Technology and Solutions at Nokia MEA, explored MEA's evolving mobile network landscape. From the projected growth of 5G to the transformative power of network APIs and AI-driven solutions, Mausoof highlighted how Nokia is driving innovation and meeting the dynamic needs of telecom operators and industry verticals across the Middle East and Africa.



in this part of the world. In the UAE, operators are leading in terms of both performance and coverage and we see this adoption continuing as a result of Fixed Wireless Access.

Moving forward, our focus on 5G will encompass monetizing various elements of the network, with Fixed Wireless Access being just one aspect. We also foresee substantial growth, driven by advancements in artificial intelligence, immersive video, spatial computing, and other emerging technologies, which will similarly shape the region.

Nokia remains committed to investing in the region, not only through our portfolio but also through strengthening the necessary teams so that they can sufficiently deploy and support 5G infrastructure across the UAE and the broader region.

Nokia has been advocating for network APIs. How will this integration transform a telecom operator's business operations, particularly in the region?

Network APIs represent the next frontier for operators in terms of network monetization, providing exciting opportunities for new revenue streams. By leveraging these APIs, operators can explore verticals with enterprise businesses to discover how they can utilize Nokia's Digital Monetization solution, also known as Network as Code. This approach enables the development of innovative strategies that can be used to monetize networks collaboratively as an industry, fostering greater collaboration and maximizing the value of connected ecosystems.

What role will AI play in mobile networks moving forward? Can you give examples of AI-based solutions that Nokia is providing?

The use of AI and machine learning (ML) is not new to Nokia; we have been utilizing anomaly detection for both structured and unstructured data for some time. As AI has advanced over the past few years, we've expanded its application across various AI models. For example, we have integrated AI with radio networks to optimize key parameters, enhancing energy efficiency by shutting down cells based on traffic patterns, which can deliver up to 15-20% energy savings for operators—a critical factor in sustainable network management.

Additionally, AI plays a crucial role in managing queries through Nokia's AI Digital Assistant, providing predictive behavior analytics and streamlining network operations. Our MantaRay SON solution leverages AI to orchestrate network behavior, offering cognitive management of network performance through predictive analytics and actionable insights. A notable example demonstrating this is our success in Saudi Arabia during Hajj, where we handled 10,000 actions per hour—an achievement made possible through cognitive, AI-driven orchestration far beyond what is humanly achievable.

How will Nokia MEA's mobile network solutions cater to the demands of different industry verticals moving forward?

Nokia continues to be a global leader in the telecommunications industry, excelling both in performance and providing comprehensive solutions to MNOs. Our focus extends to orchestration, software, and transport, including microwave solutions. Additionally, we are dedicated to serving our non-CSP customers, specifically those within the enterprise verticals.

We believe we have the right portfolio to meet the unique needs of these verticals through a consultative selling approach. By offering customized, bespoke solutions that cater to diverse use cases, we ensure the right elements for connectivity, while delivering substantial end-user benefits in terms of cost, quality, and performance.

We actively collaborate not only with MNOs but also directly with enterprises in enabling these use cases across multiple verticals; primarily utilities, public safety, transport, and oil and gas. We are proud to be partners with some of the largest customers in the region and will continue to strengthen these relationships as part of our strategy for 2025 and 2026.





CommScope's Oshiga Elaborates on Balancing Connectivity Advancement with Sustainability

In an exclusive interview with Telecom Review at the 18th edition of the Telecom Review Leaders' Summit, Femi Oshiga, Vice President of Sales Service Provider for Middle East & Africa at CommScope, discussed the factors shaping the region's network infrastructure.



iming to balance immediate technological advancements with long-term sustainability, CommScope is

driving innovation through nextgeneration network solutions. From embracing Al-driven management to ensuring seamless multiconnectivity, Oshiga discussed how CommScope is future-proofing networks to support emerging applications like 5G, IoT, and autonomous technologies.

How does CommScope envision balancing immediate investments in next-generation technologies like 5G and fiber infrastructure with long-term sustainability goals in future network deployments?

Our principles remain steadfast. We are focusing on designing network infrastructure equipment that is user-friendly, scalable, future-ready and built with uncompromising quality to deliver optimal value to our customers. These core values guide us consistently, regardless of the evolving technologies that emerge.

Al is becoming increasingly critical in the management of complex network infrastructures. What role is CommScope playing in making Aldriven infrastructure management a reality?

Often, CommScope's equipment serves as the first point of interaction for consumers within a network. Consider our base station antennaswith this, combined with AI, we can increasingly pinpoint the exact location of a customer. This capability would allow us to customize the user experience, optimize network performance, and deliver targeted services. With the cell site as the point of origin, network providers play an integral role in gathering data that AI will then process to provide the necessary resources, computations, and intelligence, ensuring a seamless and personalized experience for the customer.

At data centers, CommScope's equipment once again plays a crucial

role, acting as the initial touchpoint where traffic is directed. From this point, data flows into AI-powered systems to handle computation and intelligence, which then feeds back into the network to improve performance and enhance the user experience. Therefore, CommScope's equipment remains essential, and integrating AI further enhances its role in shaping future networks as the technology becomes increasingly embedded in existing network infrastructures.

In the era of multi-connectivity, how is CommScope ensuring that future network infrastructure can support high-capacity, lowlatency applications such as IoT, autonomous vehicles, and augmented reality?

Let me provide an example which has been highlighted at the Telecom Review Leaders' Summit this week. We frequently encounter a scenario where 80% of the traffic is handled by just 40% or even less of the sites. Al plays a crucial role as it optimizes resources to focus on subscribers' needs, thus, delivering the highest value. This approach ensures both enhanced revenue generation and an improved customer experience.

Take, for instance, base station antennas. Today, these can support frequencies from 600 MHz to 3.5 GHz, intended to provide coverage in building environments, where radio frequency (RF) penetration is challenging, whilst also providing high-capacity in the outdoor macro environment. By integrating AI into these antennas, we maximize their potential, delivering greater value for our customers.

Another example is our in-building solutions, such as our one-cell mini base station. These solutions are selfoptimizing, self-planning, and require minimal touch to build and maintain a robust in-building network. By adding AI elements, we can analyze data specifically related to location and user behavior and tailor services for a personalized, optimized experience.

CommScope consistently serves as that central piece in network

interactions, acting as the user's first point of contact. While we've made strides in AI readiness, we're still evolving towards fully AI-enabled networks. Networks worldwide can't simply be retired; they must adapt and transform through differentiated approaches. This, in all likelihood, would involve starting with high revenue-generating sites and subscribers, enhancing them with AI elements, and gradually integrating this shift throughout the network, while preserving and upgrading legacy systems.



We are focusing on designing user-friendly, scalable, future-ready network equipment with uncompromising quality to deliver optimal value to customers





Samer Mehaidly Showcases how Telcovas is Empowering Customers with Tailored Solutions





In an exclusive interview with Telecom Review during the 18th edition of the Telecom Review Leaders' Summit, Samer Mehaidly, Vice President of Business Development at Telcovas Solutions, discussed how the company is delivering cutting-edge solutions to empower its customers.



ow is Telcovas putting customer innovation and centricity at the core of its business strategy?

Telcovas puts its customers at the center through extensive customization. Most of our products and services are 60% generic, and the other 40% is based on specific customer needs. We consult with the customer regarding the required customizations and changes needed before full deployment. We gather a lot of data to tailor our solutions to what the telecom industry and our MNOs require.

How do you think telcos will continue moving forward without substantial 5G revenue? How will Telcovas continue to support them in this journey?

Currently, there is a lot of hype in the telecom industry, with MNOs struggling to monetize 5G investments and not achieving the desired revenue. We have also made a lot of investments in artificial intelligence (AI) and 5G to assist our customers and MNOs with monetization. We came up with a lot of use cases for private networks, helping MNOs in the network slicing across different verticals, which has demonstrated positive revenue returns. Currently, 5G is directed towards the enterprise and vertical markets, which we are tapping into to help our clients across Africa and the Middle East monetize their investments.

Can you elaborate on the regional challenges the telecom industry is facing going into 2025? How will Telcovas contribute to overcoming such challenges?

There are a lot of challenges going on, including those associated with cutting costs, increasing revenue, utilizing spectrum, and appreciating investments. We are investing in and tailoring our 5G private networks, IT and Internet of Things (IoT) products, roaming and AI solutions.

We are developing a five-year strategy to counteract these challenges and

we are helping operators make more money by optimizing their operational costs and processes to get the most out of our products.



We are investing in and tailoring our 5G private networks, IT and Internet of Things (IoT) products, roaming and AI solutions





From Enablers to Solution Providers: The Telecom Industry's Next Frontier

The telecom industry has long been at the heart of technological innovation, driving progress with advancements such as 4G, 5G, and the Internet of Things (IoT). Yet, as the world continues to evolve at a rapid pace—shaped by digital transformation, sustainability goals, and the demands of a platform economy—the industry finds itself at a crossroads. For Marco Lichtfous, Managing Director of PMP Strategy Luxembourg, the answer is clear: it's time for telcos to go beyond networks and embrace a new role as solution providers.



raditionally, telecom companies have defined themselves as enablers, delivering infrastructure, data, and connectivity. This position, while critical, is no longer enough. Lichtfous believes

telcos must shift their mindset to actively deliver solutions tailored to the unique needs of industries, from healthcare and manufacturing to energy and agriculture.

"We have unique capabilities," he explains. "It's not just about building networks or enhancing internal operations anymore. Telecom companies have the expertise and tools to bring comprehensive solutions directly to industries, and it's time to seize that opportunity."

Fintech: A Proof of Concept

The fintech sector offers a clear example of how telcos can successfully expand beyond traditional roles. By entering the financial services market, some telecom companies have transformed into active solution providers, delivering mobile payments, digital wallets, and financial solutions to retail customers. This evolution didn't stop at providing connectivity; it addressed a specific market need and created a new revenue stream.

This success in fintech demonstrates what's possible when telecom companies take bold steps to deliver value beyond networks. If telcos can become solution providers in financial services, why not replicate this approach across other industries?

A World of Untapped Potential

Across sectors, the potential for telecom-driven innovation is immense. Take healthcare, for instance, where technologies enabled by telcos, such as remote surgery and connected care, are already revolutionizing patient outcomes. Or smart manufacturing, where predictive maintenance and enhanced connectivity are reshaping production processes. Energy management, agriculture, smart cities, and connected vehicles are further examples of industries where telecom solutions could drive real value.

Despite these possibilities, Lichtfous argues, telcos have been too focused on optimizing their existing operations rather than positioning themselves as strategic partners for industries. "We're still playing defense," he points out. "We see ourselves as infrastructure providers, not as innovators driving new solutions and revenue models. Isn't it time to play offense again?"

Building Ecosystems That Drive Value

For Lichtfous, the way forward lies in building ecosystems that integrate telecom capabilities with industry needs. Rather than simply offering the technological backbone, telcos should actively engage with businesses, understand their challenges, and deliver end-to-end solutions that create measurable value.

Imagine a car manufacturer, for example, working with a telecom provider to design smarter production lines, implement advanced maintenance systems, and enhance connected vehicle technology. Or a city partnering with a telecom company to build an integrated smart grid that optimizes energy usage and supports sustainability goals. These are not just theoretical opportunities—they are areas where telcos can lead, provided they embrace a solutionsoriented mindset.

"Telcos have the technology, the expertise, and the infrastructure," Lichtfous says. "What's missing is the willingness to step forward as solution providers, not just enablers."

Time for Bold Action

The path ahead requires a cultural and strategic shift within the telecom industry. Lichtfous challenges telecom leaders to adopt a more aggressive approach, one that positions them as advisors, innovators, and drivers of change across industries.

The question is no longer whether telcos have the tools to deliver these solutions. It's whether they are ready to claim their role as architects of the future. The time for bold action, as Lichtfous emphasizes, is now.

In a world where industries are increasingly interconnected, telcos have a unique opportunity to drive synergy, innovation, and growth. By moving beyond networks and building transformative ecosystems, the telecom industry can unlock new revenue streams and reaffirm its place at the forefront of global progress.

The telecom industry has the chance to redefine its role and shape the future. The question remains: **Who will lead the charge?**



By moving beyond networks and building transformative ecosystems, the telecom industry can unlock new revenue streams and reaffirm its place at the forefront of global progress



ITU and ICPC Collaborate to Safeguard Vital Submarine Cable Infrastructure



The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Agency for Digital Technologies, and the International Cable Protection Committee (ICPC), the leading industry organization promoting submarine cable protection, have established the International Advisory Body for Submarine Cable Resilience to strengthen the resilience of this vital telecommunication infrastructure.

Submarine telecommunication cables are the backbone of global communications, carrying most of the world's internet traffic and enabling critical services across the globe, including commerce, financial transactions, government activities, digital health and education.

The Advisory Body will address ways to improve cable resilience by promoting best practices for governments and industry players, ensuring the timely deployment and repair of submarine cables, reducing the risks of damage, and enhancing the continuity of communications over the cables.

"Submarine cables carry over 99 per cent of international data exchanges, making their resilience a global imperative. The Advisory Body will mobilize expertise from around the world to ensure this vital digital infrastructure remains resilient in the face of disasters, accidents, and other risks," said Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Secretary-General, ITU.

Recognizing the Vital Role of Subsea Infrastructure

Damage to submarine cables is not uncommon, with an average of 150 to

200 faults occurring globally each year, requiring about three cable repairs per week, according to the ICPC.

The primary causes of damage include accidental human activity, such as fishing and anchoring, as well as natural hazards, abrasion and equipment failure.

"The formation of this International Advisory Body with ITU marks another step toward safeguarding our global digital infrastructure. By working together, we can promote best practices, foster international collaboration, and create a consistent approach to protect the vital submarine cable networks that underpin global connectivity," commented Graham Evans, Chair, ICPC.

Supporting Digital Resilience Globally

The Advisory Body's 40 members include Ministers, Heads of Regulatory Authorities, industry executives, and senior experts on the operations of telecommunication cables.

NCC Enforces Simplified Tariff Guidelines to Safeguard Service Quality



The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has mandated telecom operators to simplify tariffs without compromising service quality. The directive, outlined in the amended Guidance on the Simplification of Tariffs in the Nigerian Communications Sector, requires strict compliance with Quality of Service (QoS) regulations and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Operators must immediately address any service degradation resulting from tariff changes or promotions.

Under the Nigerian Communications Act 2003, operators are required to report QoS metrics quarterly. The 11-page framework, developed after extensive consultations with stakeholders, limits each operator to seven tariff plans and 100 bundles, excluding device financing and fixed broadband or fiber plans.

To ensure transparency, operators must present tariffs in clear, userfriendly formats and disclose plans via Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD). Promotions must clearly state actual bonus values, and access or asymmetric fee structures are prohibited. Additionally, standalone data bundles must be offered at fair prices to avoid tying consumers to unwanted products.

The NCC has called for comprehensive consumer education before transitioning subscribers to simplified tariff plans, with a deadline of December 31, 2024, to maintain bonus-led plans. Executive Commissioner Dr. Aminu Maida emphasized that the guidelines aim to empower consumers, standardize tariffs, and promote fair competition.

Licensees are encouraged to address implementation issues directly with the Commission, ensuring the framework protects consumer interests and fosters a transparent, competitive telecom sector.



NTRA Introduces eSIM Technology to Egypt's Market



The National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (NTRA) has officially launched eSIM technology in the Egyptian market, following the successful completion of all required technical tests by the country's four major mobile operators. The launch marks a significant milestone in advancing Egypt's telecommunications sector.

The Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Amr Talaat, witnessed the signing ceremony where the four operators— Telecom Egypt (WE), Orange Egypt, Vodafone Egypt, and e& Egyptagreed on the new quality sanctions mechanisms approved by the NTRA. These mechanisms aim to enhance and elevate the quality of telecommunications services across the country.

Egyptians and foreign residents with permanent residency can now replace their traditional SIM cards with eSIMs at their operators' stores. The cost of the eSIM ranges between EGP 270 and EGP 350, depending on the fees set by each telecom operator.

Originally introduced by the GSM Association (GSMA) in 2010, eSIM technology represents a transformative development in Egypt's telecommunications industry. The digital integrated SIM operates directly on smart devices, storing network data on the device itself. This innovation prevents damage or loss of SIM cards and allows users to activate multiple numbers on the same eSIM.

Samer Murad, a director at e& Egypt, commented on the launch, stating: "The introduction of the eSIM service is not just an addition to our offerings but a reflection of our commitment to providing innovative and advanced technological services that drive transformation in the telecommunications world."

Murad emphasized that this launch is the beginning of a new phase of innovation in Egypt's telecommunications sector. "The company eagerly anticipates further advancements in this field, contributing to the country's digital transformation and strengthening e& Egypt's position as a leader shaping the future of telecommunications in the region," he concluded.

Bank of Namibia and CRAN Strengthen Regulation and Consumer Protection



The Bank of Namibia (BoN) and the Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Windhoek, formalizing their collaboration to enhance the regulation of Namibia's telecommunications and financial sectors.

BoN, established under the Bank of Namibia Act, focuses on monetary stability, financial system soundness, and economic growth. CRAN, created under the Communications Act, regulates Namibia's ICT, broadcasting and postal services, ensuring accessible, quality, and affordable ICT services while protecting consumer interests.

The MoU emphasizes consumer protection and the delivery of secure, efficient services. As Namibia embraces technological innovation, this partnership lays the groundwork for addressing emerging challenges and leveraging opportunities through coordinated regulatory efforts.





Somalia's Vision to Accelerate Optical Fiber Deployment

Somalia is embarking on an ambitious journey to bridge its digital divide by accelerating the deployment of optical fiber infrastructure. This initiative goes beyond merely improving connectivity, aiming for transformative changes across economic, social, and technological landscapes, with the potential to empower millions of Somalis.

uilding the Foundation for Progress At the heart of this initiative lies a commitment to creating a comprehensive regulatory framework.



The National Communications Authority (NCA) is leading the charge with plans to introduce new regulations for submarine cable landings and a unified fiber optic deployment policy. The policy aims to streamline fiber installation, reduce deployment costs, and foster a cohesive digital ecosystem across Somalia. The government has also launched public consultations, inviting input from various stakeholders. This collaborative approach underscores Somalia's intent to align regulatory efforts with the needs and insights of telecom operators, private sector players, and international partners. While the country benefits from connections to five international submarine cables—with a sixth on the way—domestic fiber networks remain fragmented. This lack of a unified backbone has hindered equitable broadband access, leading to inconsistent network quality and limited competition. Addressing these issues is crucial for Somalia to fully harness the potential of its international connectivity.

Strategic Goals Driving the Vision

Somalia's vision for fiber deployment is grounded in a comprehensive strategy that prioritizes:

• Expanding Fiber Nationwide: A

critical goal is to extend connectivity to underserved and rural areas, where internet access remains scarce. Currently, urban hubs like Mogadishu dominate Somalia's digital landscape. Expanding fiber networks to remote regions will bridge this gap, promoting greater inclusivity and access to digital opportunities.

- Catalyzing Economic Growth: Improved connectivity serves as a foundation for economic development. From enabling e-commerce to optimizing agricultural supply chains, optical fiber networks unlock new opportunities across various sectors. This infrastructure can also attract foreign investment, stimulating growth in Somalia's burgeoning digital economy.
- Strengthening E-Government
 Services: A reliable digital
 backbone will empower the
 Somali government to enhance
 public administration and deliver
 e-government services effectively.
 This includes streamlining
 processes, improving transparency,
 and boosting citizen engagement.
- Enhancing Network Resilience: Somalia is prioritizing the development of a resilient and secure digital infrastructure. Investments in redundancies, cybersecurity measures, and disaster recovery capabilities will help ensure the reliability and safety of its networks.

Navigating Obstacles on the Road to Fiber Deployment

While Somalia's vision is promising, achieving widespread fiber deployment is faces significant challenges:

- Security Concerns: Infrastructure projects face risks in regions affected by conflict. Protecting personnel and assets is an ongoing challenge.
- Funding Gaps: Deploying fiber networks is capital-intensive. Somalia must attract sustainable investments from international donors, development agencies, and private firms to support its goals.
- **Regulatory Barriers:** Establishing a supportive regulatory environment is essential for encouraging competition, ensuring affordability, and enabling innovation. The government is actively refining its telecommunications policies to align with global standards.
- Skills Shortages: Advanced network deployment and maintenance require skilled professionals. Somalia needs targeted training programs to build local technical expertise.

Early Milestones

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Despite these hurdles, Somalia has already achieved significant progress in its digital journey:

- 1. Submarine Cable Infrastructure: New international submarine cables have boosted Somalia's internet capacity, laying the groundwork for domestic fiber expansion.
- Public-Private Partnerships: Collaboration between the government and telecom operators has facilitated the rollout of fiber networks in major cities, providing a model for nationwide deployment.
- Digital Economy Growth: Increased connectivity has fueled growth in Somalia's digital economy, with innovations like mobile money services revolutionizing financial transactions.

Addressing Broader Challenges

Internet penetration in Somalia remains low, at just 27.6% as of early 2024. Limited access to affordable broadbandenabled devices, a shortage of localized digital content, and a lack of digital skills exacerbate the digital divide. These challenges must be addressed in tandem with infrastructure development to ensure that all Somalis benefit from enhanced connectivity.

Charting the Road Ahead

To realize its vision, Somalia must adopt a multi-faceted approach that combines strategic planning, innovation, and stakeholder collaboration. Key recommendations include:

- Innovative Financing Models: Leveraging public-private partnerships (PPPs) and concessional loans from international financial institutions can help address funding challenges.
- **Regulatory Reforms:** Updating telecommunications policies to encourage private sector investment and innovation is critical.
- **Capacity Building:** Partnering with universities and technical institutes to train skilled professionals will ensure the sustainability of Somalia's ICT sector.
- Focus on Inclusivity: Prioritizing rural and marginalized communities in fiber deployment efforts will create a more equitable digital landscape.

A Digital Future for Somalia

Somalia's ambitious push for optical fiber deployment marks a transformative step toward digital empowerment. By addressing infrastructure gaps, fostering collaboration, and implementing forwardthinking policies, the country is laying the foundation for sustained economic growth and technological advancement.

While challenges remain, the rewards of this initiative are immense—improved connectivity, enhanced public services, and a thriving digital economy. With determination and strategic action, Somalia is set to lead digital transformation within the Horn of Africa.



Safaricom Launches Enhanced 5G for Business to Empower SMEs



Safaricom has unveiled an enhanced 5G for Business service designed to offer SMEs faster and more reliable connectivity, catering to their expanding digital needs such as realtime collaboration, seamless online transactions, and remote operations. The announcement was made during the 'Grow with Safaricom Business' event in Western Kenya, part of the Sambaza Furaha Safaricom Caravan, a platform aimed at empowering SMEs with the tools and knowledge to scale their businesses through technology.

The upgraded 5G for Business service promises speeds five times faster than before, significantly enhancing customer experiences.

"The new 5G for Business ensures that SMEs can access enterprise-grade internet without exceeding their budgets. This will help boost productivity, improve customer interactions, and enable efficient scaling in today's connected market," said Mr. Peter Ndegwa, CEO of Safaricom PLC.

From November 29th to December 31st, 2024, businesses that subscribe to the 5G plan will receive a 25% discount on all 5G plans.

According to the Kenya Institute of Public Policy, Research, and Analysis, Kenya is home to over 7.4 million MSMEs, which employ approximately 14.9 million people and contribute 30% of the country's GDP.

Vodacom Invests R350 Million in Western Cape Infrastructure



The Western Cape is gearing up for yet another record-breaking festive season in 2024 as more domestic and international visitors flock to the province to enjoy its beautiful beaches, wine farms and nature reserves. Vodacom's Western Cape region has implemented significant network upgrades to meet the rising traffic demands, ensuring that visitors to the province remain connected during the busy festive season.

"We've pledged to invest R350 million this financial year to enhance the quality, capacity, and reach of our broadband network infrastructure across the Western Cape. As festive season approaches, we're confident that our improvements will help us manage congestion and keep our customers connected even in busy tourist hotspots," said Carol Hall, Managing Executive, Vodacom Western Cape region.

To maximize network reliability during the festive period, Vodacom Western Cape has ensured that their network maintenance operations will be fully operational throughout the season, prioritizing holiday hotspots. Network capacity has been significantly improved, with 5G added to 50 towers and additional 4G capacity added to 384 towers. These upgrades are supported by the deployment of six temporary base stations for holiday hotspots and ten new permanent base stations across the province. With continued focus on improving network reliability, 119 towers received battery upgrades, 37 towers received power infrastructure upgrades, and 29 new standby generators were installed at key network facilities.

Vandalism at base stations and battery theft remain major problems for the local telco industry as the criminal activity causes disruptions to network services, resulting in frequent downtime for customers. Vodacom has adopted a comprehensive approach to managing these issues.

"Unfortunately, theft and vandalism continue to challenge our goal of providing exceptional connectivity. We are actively seeking ways to minimize downtime due to power outages and have adopted a multi-layered approach to managing energy-related challenges," said Hall. "By upgrading our infrastructure and investing in high-end site security to mitigate theft of batteries and generators, we are excited to offer our customers superior connectivity wherever they travel. Tourism, both local and international, is a major contributor to the province's economy. We aim to provide our users with peace of mind and a world-class network experience as they explore everything our beautiful province has to offer."



MTN Group to Invest \$300 Million in Cameroon's Digital Future



MTN Group's business operations in Cameroon has received a boost with a major cash injection announced by the company's president and CEO, Ralph Mupita, during his visit to the country.

Mupita revealed plans to invest \$100 million in 2025 and \$300 million over the next three years to enhance network infrastructure, focusing on artificial intelligence and data center development. He and the MTN Cameroon team also held high-level meetings with government officials in Yaounde, including the prime minister and the minister of posts and telecommunications, as well as the South African high commissioner.

MTN emphasized its commitment to strengthening partnerships, driving digital transformation, and supporting economic growth in Cameroon. Earlier this year, Mupita highlighted Cameroon, Ghana, and Uganda as key markets for MTN, while outlining plans to improve performance in Côte d'Ivoire, Rwanda, and Zambia.

Telkom Secures ICASA Approval for Swiftnet Towers Sale to Actis-Led Consortium



Telkom SA SOC Limited has obtained approval from the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) for the disposal of its masts and towers business housed in Swiftnet SOC Limited.

This marks the final major regulatory requirement for the R6.75 billion transaction to a consortium led by Actis LLP, alongside Royal Bafokeng Holdings. ICASA's approval which results in a change of control of Swiftnet's licences comes after unanimous shareholder approval secured in May 2024, and Competition Tribunal approval obtained in September 2024.

The sale of Swiftnet's portfolio of approximately 4,000 towers and

masts marks a significant step in the implementation of Telkom's transformative strategic journey to focus on core operations while realising the value in non-core assets.

"This transaction is a pivotal moment in Telkom's implementation of our data-led strategy under OneTelkom. The sale will strengthen our balance sheet, reduce debt, and provide additional capital. This will enable us to focus our investment in next-generation technology infrastructure," said Serame Taukobong, CEO, Telkom Group. "We continue to make progress on the alignment of our asset portfolio and our disposal of non-core properties in support of our data-led growth," he added.

The Group's recently released interim results for the six months ended September 2024 further validate its strategic approach, showcasing impressive achievements across key areas. Mobile service revenue grew by 10.0%, while fibre data revenue saw a significant increase of 15.5%. Additionally, the Group maintained a sustained positive free cash flow of R768 million. With a mobile subscriber base surpassing 22.7 million and a market-leading fibre connectivity rate of 49.7%, the results reflect strong performance and continued leadership in the telecommunications sector.

"The strong performance of our core business, coupled with strategic initiatives like the Swiftnet transaction, demonstrates that our strategy is delivering the promised results to the market.

We are creating a focused and agile Telkom that can invest in growth areas while maintaining our position as South Africa's leading telecommunications infrastructure provider," added Serame Taukobong, CEO, Telkom Group.

The transaction is expected to close once all remaining administrative conditions are fulfilled.





Djibouti's New Era of Global Connectivity

Djibouti, a small but strategically located country on the Horn of Africa, is rapidly emerging as a critical player in global connectivity. Nestled at the crossroads of major international maritime routes, the nation leverages its geographic position to serve as a hub for telecommunications, linking Africa, the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. Through ambitious investments in infrastructure and partnerships, Djibouti is shaping a new era of connectivity, driving regional integration and global digital transformation.



he Strategic Gateway Djibouti's location near the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait—a key global shipping lane—has made it

a vital gateway for centuries. Today, this strategic advantage extends to telecommunications, as the country hosts over ten submarine cable systems converging at its shores. This unique position enables Djibouti to provide high-capacity internet bandwidth to Eastern Africa, connecting underserved regions to the global digital economy.

A flagship initiative in this regard is the Djibouti Africa Regional Express 1 (DARE1) cable system, which spans over 4,800 kilometers. This advanced cable infrastructure enhances connectivity between Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, and other key destinations, promoting cross-border collaboration and economic growth.

Djibouti Data Center: A Digital Anchor

At the heart of Djibouti's connectivity ambitions lies the Djibouti Data Center (DDC), the nation's first and only carrier-neutral data facility. Strategically located to interconnect submarine cables, the DDC provides a platform for seamless integration of telecom operators, content providers, and enterprises.

The data center's role extends beyond infrastructure; it is a vital enabler of digital services across Africa and the Middle East. By offering reliable, high-speed interconnectivity, the DDC supports emerging technologies such as cloud computing, e-commerce, and content delivery networks, attracting global technology players looking to establish a foothold in African markets.

Driving Economic and Social Transformation

The expansion of Djibouti's connectivity infrastructure is unlocking economic opportunities and enhancing social services. The government's Vision 2035 strategy emphasizes the ICT sector as a key pillar for economic diversification and growth.

Improved internet access has sparked innovation across industries. In education, digital platforms are bridging gaps in rural areas, offering students access to online learning resources. In healthcare, telemedicine is improving access to medical consultations and diagnostics. Meanwhile, digital tools in agriculture are helping farmers optimize yields and connect with broader markets.

Local businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), are also benefiting from enhanced connectivity. Entrepreneurs now have greater opportunities to participate in e-commerce and reach global customers, fostering economic resilience and growth.

A Broader Perspective: Djibouti as a Regional Anchor

Djibouti's connectivity advancements have implications far beyond its borders. Neighboring Ethiopia, for instance, depends heavily on Djibouti's ports and telecom infrastructure for access to international markets. This interdependence underscores Djibouti's role as a regional anchor, supporting the economic aspirations of landlocked countries.

Moreover, Djibouti's transformation is contributing to Africa's digital revolution. By providing reliable internet access to countries in the Horn of Africa and beyond, the nation is bridging the digital divide and encouraging regional integration. Such efforts align with continental initiatives like the African Union's Digital Transformation Strategy, which envisions a fully digitized Africa by 2030.

The Global Connectivity Perspective

Djibouti's rise as a global connectivity hub is not only an African success story but also a case study in international collaboration. Partnerships with global telecom giants, technology companies, and international development organizations have been instrumental in building the country's digital infrastructure. These alliances have introduced expertise, funding, and technological innovation, accelerating Djibouti's integration into the global digital economy.

A noteworthy aspect of Djibouti's strategy is its emphasis on sustainability and long-term growth. By prioritizing carrier-neutral infrastructure like the DDC and investing in scalable technologies, the country ensures it remains a competitive and attractive destination for global connectivity stakeholders.

A Visionary Future

As Djibouti continues to build on its connectivity strengths, the focus is now on emerging technologies and expanding its role in the global digital ecosystem. Plans to introduce 5G networks, enhance data center capacity, and explore applications of artificial intelligence (AI) signal a commitment to staying ahead of the curve in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

By positioning itself as a gateway to Africa, Djibouti is not only promoting economic growth within its borders but also facilitating access to global markets for the broader region. Its strategic investments are paving the way for a more connected and inclusive future, with ripple effects that will be felt across Africa and beyond.

Djibouti's transformation into a global connectivity hub is a testament to the power of strategic vision and international collaboration. By leveraging its geographic advantages and investing in cuttingedge infrastructure, the country has positioned itself as a cornerstone in the global digital economy. As Djibouti embraces this new era of connectivity, it is not just bridging divides but creating opportunities for innovation, growth, and integration on a regional and global scale.





Transforming Senegal's Urban Transport with Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

As urbanization accelerates across Africa, cities face mounting challenges in managing traffic, ensuring road safety, and reducing environmental impacts. Senegal, a West African nation known for its cultural vibrancy and economic ambition, has turned to Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) to revolutionize its urban mobility. These innovative solutions are setting the stage for smarter and safer transport, driving economic growth, sustainability, and improved quality of life.



ddressing Urban Transport Challenges Dakar, Senegal's

capital, exemplifies the pressures of rapid urbanization.

With a growing population exceeding 3 million, traffic congestion has become a daily struggle. Road accidents, pollution, and inefficient public transportation exacerbate these issues, hindering economic productivity and public wellbeing. ITS emerges as a strategic response, integrating technology and data analytics to address these multifaceted challenges.

Senegal's commitment to ITS reflects its broader goals under the Plan Sénégal Émergent (PSE), a development framework that prioritizes infrastructure, digitalization, and sustainability. By embedding ITS into urban transport systems, Senegal aims to modernize its infrastructure, enhance safety, and align with global trends toward smart cities.

Key Components of ITS in Senegal

The ITS ecosystem in Senegal integrates a variety of technologies and applications designed to address the country's specific urban challenges. Advanced traffic management systems powered by real-time data have been deployed in Dakar and other cities, dynamically adjusting traffic signals to ease congestion and improve vehicle flow.

Public transportation has seen significant upgrades through the implementation of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems equipped with GPS tracking, automated fare collection, and passenger information technologies, enhancing efficiency and encouraging the shift from private to sustainable transport options. Road safety is being reinforced by solutions such as speed cameras, automated enforcement systems, and incident detection mechanisms, which are complemented by datadriven public awareness campaigns to promote safer behaviors among drivers and pedestrians.

To address parking challenges, digital parking management systems now provide real-time availability updates and cashless payment options, reducing congestion caused by drivers searching for spaces. Environmental sustainability is also being prioritized with the integration of air quality sensors in transport networks to monitor pollution and support measures to reduce emissions, including the growing adoption of electric vehicles facilitated by ITS infrastructure. Together, these initiatives represent a comprehensive approach to transforming urban mobility in Senegal.

The Role of Partnerships

The success of ITS in Senegal depends on collaboration among government bodies, private sector partners, and international organizations. The Senegalese government works closely with global ITS solution providers, development banks, and regional stakeholders to secure funding, transfer knowledge, and ensure effective implementation.

For instance, the World Bank has supported Senegal's efforts to develop smart transport corridors, while companies specializing in ITS technologies have provided expertise in system design and deployment. This multi-stakeholder approach underscores the importance of partnerships in driving innovation in emerging markets.

Challenges and Opportunities

Despite its promise, the deployment of ITS in Senegal faces hurdles. These include:

- High Implementation Costs: Developing and maintaining ITS infrastructure requires significant investment, often challenging for developing nations with competing priorities.
- Data and Cybersecurity Concerns: As ITS relies heavily on data collection and analysis, ensuring data privacy and system resilience against cyber threats is critical.

Public Adoption: The effectiveness of ITS depends on public trust and adoption. Initiatives to educate citizens about the benefits of ITS are vital for sustained impact.

However, the opportunities are equally compelling. ITS can boost economic productivity by reducing time lost in traffic and lowering fuel consumption. Enhanced road safety measures save lives, while sustainable practices advance Senegal's climate goals.

A Blueprint for the Future

As Senegal continues its ITS journey, it sets an example for other African nations grappling with urban transport challenges. By leveraging technology and fostering partnerships, Senegal demonstrates that smart solutions are not just the domain of developed nations.

The path ahead involves scaling ITS beyond Dakar to secondary cities, integrating emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and autonomous vehicles, and fostering regional cooperation to build a cohesive transport network across West Africa.

Senegal's investment in ITS goes beyond a technological upgrade; it signifies a commitment to a future where urban transport is safe, efficient, and sustainable. Through ITS, Senegal is not only improving its cities but also inspiring a broader transformation across the continent.



TELECOM Review AFRICA

Gauteng Expands Free WiFi Access to Empower Communities



Gauteng residents will gain enhanced access to free internet as the provincial government rolls out 30 new WiFi hotspots. This expansion aims to bridge the digital divide by connecting public clinics, libraries, schools, hospitals, and community centers across the province. The initiative, led by the Gauteng Department of eGovernment, is part of the ongoing Provincial Network WiFi Project, which has connected over 1,200 sites since its launch in 2014. By the end of the 2024/2025 financial year, 353 sites will have Wide Area Network (WAN) access, with 250 converted into WiFi hotspots.

To ensure secure connectivity, the department has strengthened cybersecurity measures, investing in upgraded network security and implementing the Gauteng Provincial Government Cybersecurity Strategy to safeguard digital infrastructure and user data.

This rollout reflects the government's broader strategy to promote digital inclusion and empower communities through connectivity. As internet access improves, residents gain better opportunities for education, economic participation, and access to essential services, driving growth and reducing inequality across Gauteng.

Rwanda Launches Bold Fintech Strategy for Innovation and Inclusion



Rwanda is setting its sights on becoming a global fintech powerhouse with the launch of its National Fintech Strategy, announced by Paula Ingabire, Minister of ICT & Innovation. This ambitious roadmap aims to position the country as a leading fintech hub in Africa and beyond, with a target of attracting \$200 million in investments, nurturing 300 fintech companies, and securing a place among the top 30 global fintech nations by 2029.

"This strategy marks a transformative step forward, demonstrating Rwanda's unwavering commitment to becoming a fintech leader in Africa," said Ingabire. "In just a decade, we've grown from a handful of fintech startups to over 75 active players, serving more than 3 million users. This progress has been instrumental in advancing the country's financial inclusion."

Rwanda's fintech sector has seen remarkable growth, with the nation's

financial inclusion rate rising from 93% in 2020 to 96% today. The National Fintech Strategy envisions even greater strides by 2029, with plans to increase the number of fintech firms to 300, create 7,500 direct jobs in the sector, and achieve an 80% adoption rate of fintech solutions.

The strategy also aims to attract \$200 million in investments to strengthen local fintech ventures and boost Rwanda's global standing in the fintech industry. By 2029, Rwanda aspires to rank among the top 30 countries worldwide in fintech, while leading Africa in innovation and digital finance.



Zambia Unveils ZamFree Wi-Fi to Bridge the Digital Divide



Internet access is increasingly regarded as a fundamental necessity, and providing free Wi-Fi can significantly contribute to national development by addressing gaps in digital literacy and accessibility.

The Zambian government recently introduced a free public Wi-Fi program to promote digital inclusion and empower citizens socially and economically. This pilot project was launched at key locations, including Lusaka's Intercity Bus Terminus, Kapiri-Mposhi Bus Station, and Kitwe's Chisokone Market. Minister of Technology and Science Felix Mutati emphasized the program's potential to bridge the digital divide by targeting public spaces like markets, bus stations, borders, airports, schools, and hospitals.

The initiative is the result of a partnership between the government, the Smart Zambia Institute, and technology partner inq.Digital. SMART Zambia National Coordinator Percy Chinyama highlighted the program's ability to provide access to over 320 government services through Zamportal, enabling citizens to interact with these services directly from their devices, saving time and increasing productivity.

According to the Zambia Inclusive Digital Economy Status Report 2022, nearly half of the population (47%), including 56% of rural residents, remains digitally excluded. The program is a crucial step toward bridging this gap, empowering communities, fostering digital literacy, and promoting inclusivity. These efforts align with Zambia's target of achieving 80% internet penetration by 2026 under the Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP).

M-PESA's Users Mark a Milestone in Advancing Financial Inclusion in Kenya



Safaricom's mobile money platform M-PESA has reached 34 million subscribers, signifying the telco's commitment to enhancing the financial health and wellness of individuals and businesses across the continent.

Over the years, M-PESA has evolved beyond payments and transactions to a financial ecosystem offering credit, savings, investment solutions, wealth management, insurance solutions and a host of other financial services to meet the evolving needs of customers, enterprises, and the public sector.

With a vast network of over 300,000 agents nationwide, M-PESA ensures that even remote areas have access to financial services, significantly contributing to Kenya's economic growth.

Additionally, the platform supports over 1.5M micro, small, medium, and large enterprises through its merchant payment options. Most recently, Safaricom acquired an insurance intermediary license and partneredwith various insurance providers to offer comprehensive insurance solutions to its customers via M-PESA.

In October 2024, Safaricom celebrated its 24th anniversary, launching a yearlong celebration leading to its silver jubilee. Launched on the 9th November, the Sambaza Furaha [na] Safaricom Caravan is in its 4th regional tour in Nairobi following a successful run in Rift Valley, Mountain, and Greater Western regions. The Caravan not only brings Christmas cheer and rewards to customers but also solves customer issues contributing to its immense success.

Safaricom's CEO Dr. Peter Ndegwa expressed his excitement on this achievement, stating, "We are immensely proud to reach 34M M-PESA customers in Kenya. This accomplishment underscores our dedication to delivering frictionless, reliable and secure financial services to our customers. This milestone, a show of great trust by our customers, serves as motivation to keep innovating and delivering value to our customers."

Through strategic partnerships with other institutions, M-PESA has broadened its reach and enhanced its value proposition. The Daraja platform allows businesses to seamlessly secure integrations of their websites, mobile apps, and point-of-sale systems to M-PESA through Application Programming Interfaces (APIs). This has accelerated innovation, creating a thriving developer community of over 90k and supporting over 40k integrations.

Safaricom continues to innovate and expand its financial services offerings, advancing financial inclusion and transforming the lives of its customers and the community.

In October 2024, M-PESA launched M-PESA Ratiba, a first-of-its-kind mobile money standing order solution. The solution achieved over 1M opt-ins in just a month enabling over 260k transactions. M-PESA Ratiba is an innovative feature that is revolutionizing utility and bill payments, allowing customers to automatically transfer funds from their M-PESA wallets on a weekly, monthly, and yearly to other persons or settle recurring bills or subscriptions.

Safaricom remains committed to driving financial inclusion across the continent. As it advances towards becoming Africa's leading purpose-driven technology company by 2030, its financial services offerings and innovations will play a crucial role in achieving this vision.





Securing the Future with Advanced M2M Authentication

In an era where connectivity drives progress, Machineto-Machine (M2M) communication has emerged as the cornerstone of technological evolution. These autonomous device exchanges drive groundbreaking advancements across industries, from the seamless efficiency of smart cities and the precision of industrial automation to the life-saving applications in healthcare and the innovation in transportation systems.

> s M2M systems continue to transform the global landscape, they fuel unprecedented levels of

innovation and operational efficiency, shaping a future where machines communicate, collaborate, and solve challenges in real time. Yet, this remarkable reliance on M2M communication comes with an equally significant responsibility: safeguarding these networks against ever-evolving cybersecurity threats. In this interconnected web of devices, securing data integrity, privacy, and operational trust is not merely an option—it is an imperative. The implementation of powerful and advanced M2M authentication protocols are pivotal. These systems act as gatekeepers, ensuring that only trusted devices interact within the ecosystem, thereby fortifying the security and reliability of these critical infrastructures.

In this high-stakes technological revolution, addressing the cybersecurity challenges of M2M communication is not just about risk mitigation; it is about securing the very foundation of innovation, enabling a future that is not only hyperconnected but also resilient and trusted.

The Growth of M2M Communication

M2M communication involves the direct exchange of data between devices without human involvement, forming the backbone of the Internet of Things (IoT). By 2025, over 30 billion IoT devices are expected to be in use worldwide, many of which will depend on M2M technologies. These systems are integral to applications such as smart grids, autonomous vehicles, and telemedicine.

While the benefits of M2M communication are immense, the scale and complexity of these networks make them prime targets for cyberattacks. where unauthorized access, data breaches, and device manipulation are growing concerns.

The Importance of M2M Authentication

Unlike traditional human-tomachine (H2M) systems that rely on passwords, biometrics, or tokens for user validation, M2M communication requires specialized authentication approaches. M2M networks involve autonomous devices operating at scale, making conventional methods impractical. Advanced M2M authentication is essential to ensuring that only trusted devices communicate, protecting both data integrity and operational security. Key benefits include:

- 1. Blocking Unauthorized Access: Strong authentication mechanisms prevent malicious devices from infiltrating the network.
- 2. Maintaining Data Integrity: Ensuring only authenticated devices interact reduces the risk of data manipulation.
- 3. Enhancing Operational Reliability: Secure authentication minimizes disruptions caused by compromised devices.



4. Ensuring Compliance and Trust: Secure networks meet regulatory standards and inspire confidence among users.

M2M in Africa: Driving Innovation and Connectivity

Machine-to-Machine (M2M) communication is transforming Africa's digital landscape, driving innovation across sectors like agriculture, healthcare, and transportation. By enabling devices to interact autonomously, M2M technology is paving the way for smarter solutions and improved efficiency, particularly in areas with limited resources or infrastructure.

From monitoring crops and enhancing agricultural productivity to streamlining urban transportation systems and expanding access to telemedicine, M2M is playing a pivotal role in addressing Africa's unique development challenges. These systems also support crucial operations like disaster response and renewable energy management, empowering communities with reliable technology.

As Africa continues to adopt M2M technology, a collaborative approach involving governments, businesses, and tech innovators will be essential. By fostering partnerships and investing in tailored solutions, the region can maximize the benefits of M2M communication, bridging digital divides and unlocking new opportunities for economic growth and societal progress.

Innovative Solutions for Advanced M2M Authentication

To overcome these challenges, the industry is leveraging advanced technologies and strategies to improve M2M authentication. Some of the most promising solutions include:

1. Public Key Infrastructure (PKI)

PKI remains a cornerstone for securing M2M communication, assigning digital certificates to devices to authenticate their identities. Advances in lightweight cryptography enable its use in resource-constrained devices.

2. Device Fingerprinting

This approach uses unique attributes such as hardware specifications, network behavior, and operating system details to identify and authenticate devices. It is particularly effective in detecting anomalies and preventing spoofing attempts.

3. Blockchain Technology

Blockchain provides a decentralized and tamper-proof framework for authenticating devices. By storing device identities and transactions on a distributed ledger, it enhances transparency and security. Smart contracts simplify the authentication process.

4. Zero Trust Architecture

Adopting Zero Trust principles involves continuously verifying device identities and activity within the network. This approach reduces the risk of insider threats and lateral attacks by treating every interaction as potentially untrustworthy.

5.Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML)

Al and ML are increasingly being used to analyze behavioral patterns, detect anomalies, and adapt authentication protocols in real time. For example, Aldriven behavioral analytics can quickly identify suspicious device activities.

6.Quantum Cryptography

Still in its infancy, quantum cryptography holds the potential to revolutionize M2M authentication. Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) offers unmatched security by detecting eavesdropping attempts using quantum principles.

Real-World Applications of M2M Authentication

Advanced M2M authentication is already proving essential in various industries:

- Healthcare: Secure device authentication safegaurds the confidentiality and accuracy of data in telemedicine and remote patient monitoring systems.
- Transportation: Autonomous vehicles depend on secure communication with sensors, traffic systems, and other

vehicles to ensure safety and efficiency.

- Industrial IoT (IIoT): Manufacturing facilities utilize authenticated devices to monitor and control operations, mitigating risks of sabotage or data breaches.
- Smart Cities: Authentication mechanisms secure the devices that power urban utilities, surveillance, and public services.

Securing the Future of Connected Systems

As M2M communication continues to evolve, advanced authentication must remain a priority. Governments, industries, and technology providers must collaborate to establish frameworks and standards that secure these networks. Key initiatives include:

- Adopting Global Standards: Embracing international standards from organizations like the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) can promote interoperability and security.
- Investing in Innovation: Research into lightweight cryptography, AI, and quantum technologies is vital for advancing M2M authentication.
- **Raising Awareness:** Educating stakeholders—manufacturers, operators, and users—about authentication best practices fosters a culture of security.

Policy and Regulation:

Governments must enforce regulations mandating secure authentication protocols for M2M systems, particularly in critical sectors.

The future of interconnected systems relies heavily on the security of M2M communication. Advanced authentication is a critical enabler, ensuring trust, data integrity, and operational reliability across industries. By prioritizing innovation and collaboration, we can build a resilient foundation for a hyper-connected world, unlocking its potential while safeguarding against emerging cyber threats.



Ericsson's Report: Sub-Saharan Africa's Mobile Subscriptions to Reach 1.2B by 2030



The November 2024 edition of the Ericsson Mobility Report projects that total mobile subscriptions in Sub-Saharan Africa will grow at an annual rate of 4%, increasing from 950 million in 2023 to 1.2 billion by 2030.

The strongest growth will come from 5G subscriptions, which are forecast to rise from 11 million in 2023 to 420 million by the end of the decade at a rate of 59% annually, representing 33 percent of total subscriptions. Driving forces behind growth in the region include a young population, accessibility of affordable smartphones, and a rising demand for mobile data and advanced services.

By 2030, 4G subscriptions will account for 35% of total mobile subscriptions, with 2G and 3G subscriptions expected to decline as the shift to 4G and 5G networks continues. The telecom sector in Sub-Saharan Africa remains resilient, with communications service providers (CSPs) diversifying into financial technology such as mobile money services, and Fixed Wireless Access (FWA). In response to Africa's increasing broadband demands, Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) serves as a pivotal technology.

Ante Mihovilovic, Vice President and Head of Networks at Ericsson Middle East and Africa, says:

"Ericsson's November 2024 Mobility Report highlights the significant growth potential of mobile subscriptions in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2030, driven by a young and dynamic population, the increasing affordability of smartphones, and the growing demand for mobile data and advanced services. With 5G subscriptions forecast to rise by 59% annually by the end of the decade, the region will make notable strides in connectivity and digital transformation, continuing the diversification into financial technology, particularly mobile money services, and Fixed Wireless Access.

Aligning with our #AfricaInMotion vision to empower a sustainable and connected Africa, Ericsson continues its commitment to the continent's digitalization journey for enabling sustainable growth, economic development and creating opportunities for all."

The report highlights that mobile data traffic per active smartphone in Sub-Saharan Africa is projected to grow from 5.4 GB per month in 2024 to 17 GB per month in 2030, representing a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 21%.

Globally, mobile network data traffic is projected to grow almost 200% from 2024 and to 2030. Additionally, 6.3 billion global 5G subscriptions are forecast by the end of 2030, with 60% expected to be 5G Standalone (SA) subscriptions.

5G Standalone (5G SA) and 5G Advanced are expected to be key focuses for CSPs for the remainder of the decade as they deploy new capabilities to create offerings centered on value delivery rather than data volume.

Nokia and Aramco Achieve Breakthrough 2.4 Tbps Optical Transmission



Nokia and Aramco successfully demonstrated the first 2.4 Tbps optical transmission. The deployment tested Nokia's PSE-6s line cards, achieving full card capacity within Aramco's operational network. The initiative utilized Aramco's existing fiber network over a dispersionshifted fiber route, showcasing seamless evolution and enhancing capacity and sustainability.

Nokia's PSE-6s, enabling 2.4 Tbps line cards, demonstrated its potential by delivering 6 x 400GE client traffic over a 300 GHz WDM spectrum.

Nabil Nuaim, Senior Vice President of Digital and Information Technology, Aramco, said: "Our collaboration with Nokia has strengthened our optical network infrastructure. This successful demonstration shows that our fiber network is wellequipped to handle the growing demand for high-capacity traffic securely, as we look to future-proof our operations for next-generation technologies."

Carlo Corti, Head of Optical Networks, Middle East and Africa at Nokia, said: "This field trial reaffirms our commitment to innovation and delivering cutting-edge technology to our customers."



Cisco Advances Wireless Connectivity with Smart Wi-Fi 7 and Unified Licensing



Cisco introduces advanced intelligent and secure wireless solutions, including smart Wi-Fi 7 access points and unified subscription licensing, designed to create seamless smart spaces. These technologies address connectivity, security, and assurance requirements while providing a flexible foundation for future workplace evolution.

"Everything we do blends human behavior with sensors, cameras, or screens—navigating a digital world where Wi-Fi plays a central role," said Jeetu Patel, Cisco Chief Product Officer. "With Cisco Wi-Fi 7 access points and Cisco Spaces, we are empowering IT, real estate, and facilities teams to reimagine employee and customer experiences globally."

The new Cisco Wireless Wi-Fi 7 access points allow users worldwide to experience the latest wireless standard. Easily switchable between on-premises and cloud management, these access points are supported by a unified networking subscription—a single license covering Cisco's entire Wi-Fi 7 solution. This approach ensures clients can confidently invest in adaptable wireless networks tailored to their evolving needs. "Cisco's new global use of Wi-Fi 7 APs and unified licensing simplifies their solution, making it easier for clients to adopt," said Christine Fierro, Sr. Director, Edge & Core Solutions, World Wide Technology. "We are excited to support clients in understanding how these innovations streamline operations and enhance efficiency."

"Wi-Fi has become a critical foundation for everyday and missioncritical communications," said Brandon Butler, IDC Senior Research Manager for Enterprise Networks. "Cisco's wireless solutions and unified licensing approach provide flexibility, continued optimization, and innovation, aligning with the evolving needs of organizations."

CommScope Announces Refinancing to Strengthen Capital Structure



CommScope Holding Company, a global leader in network connectivity solutions, has announced today the closing of a comprehensive refinancing (the "Transaction") with its first-lien secured lenders. The Transaction will enable CommScope to address its upcoming 2025 and 2026 debt maturities and position the Company for future success.

As part of the Transaction, CommScope entered into new agreements with a group of its existing first-lien lenders, including funds managed by Apollo and Monarch Alternative Capital ("Monarch"), comprising a new \$3.15 billion firstlien term loan maturing in 2029 and \$1 billion in first-lien notes maturing in 2031 (collectively referred to as the "New First-Lien Debt"). Proceeds from the New First-Lien Debt will enable the Company to fully repay its senior unsecured notes due in 2025 and its existing senior secured term loan facility. Expected proceeds from the previously announced sale of the Company's Outdoor Wireless Networks ("OWN") segment as well as the Distributed Antenna Systems ("DAS") business units to Amphenol Corporation (NYSE: APH) for \$2.1 billion, which is expected to close in Q1 2025, will be used to fully repay the Company's senior secured notes due in 2026, and provide a ratable redemption or other repayment of a portion of the Company's senior secured notes due in 2029.

"This transaction is a pivotal step forward in positioning CommScope for long-term growth," said Chuck Treadway, President and Chief Executive Officer of CommScope. "By successfully addressing our nearterm maturities and greatly improving our pro forma leverage ratio, we now have the flexibility to focus on our core businesses and invest in the technology, products, and personnel to better deliver for our customers, and capitalize as the telecom industry recovers in the coming quarters. We will continue to explore opportunities to leverage the significant flexibility available under our credit agreements to further reinforce our capital structure as market conditions evolve."

"We are proud to support CommScope in this strategic transaction, working with the company and other lenders to provide a refinancing solution that improves CommScope's financial position and provides long-term capital to execute on its powerful business plans," said Apollo Partner Chris Lahoud and Monarch Portfolio Manager Adam Sklar. "The significant size of this transaction reflects our confidence in the CommScope leadership team and path forward."





Accelerating 5G Standalone with Network Slicing



ICT FEATURE

The introduction of 5G Standalone (5G SA) technology represents a paradigm shift in telecommunications, unlocking unprecedented possibilities that are reshaping industries and redefining interactions with technology. Unlike its predecessor, 5G non-standalone (5G NSA), which relies on 4G infrastructure, 5G SA operates as a fully independent network. This independence enables the seamless integration of advanced features such as ultra-reliable low-latency communication (URLLC), massive machine-type communication (mMTC), and enhanced mobile broadband (eMBB). Together, these features enable transformative applications such as smart cities, autonomous vehicles, next-generation healthcare, and entertainment.

t the heart of this transformation lies network slicingan innovative capability that revolutionizes how telecom networks are designed, managed, and utilized. This groundbreaking approach allows network operators to divide a single physical network into multiple virtual networks, or "slices," each customized for specific applications, services, or industries. Whether it's ensuring the ultra-low latency required for autonomous vehicles or providing high bandwidth for immersive virtual reality (VR) experiences, network slicing enables unparalleled customization and efficiency.

By leveraging the full potential of 5G SA, network slicing is poised to not only enhance operational performance but also open new avenues for business growth and innovation. This feature delves into the pivotal role of network slicing in shaping the 5G SA landscape, its far-reaching impact across various sectors, and the challenges that must be addressed to maximize its benefits in the digital age.

Revolutionizing Connectivity with Network Slicing

Network slicing introduces a paradigm shift in how networks are managed and deployed. Traditionally, a single network would cater to all users and applications, often resulting in inefficiencies. Network slicing, however, allows operators to divide a single physical network into multiple virtual slices, each optimized for specific applications, services, or industries.

Each slice operates independently, with tailored characteristics such as bandwidth, latency, and security to meet precise requirements. For example, a slice for remote healthcare services may prioritize reliability and data security, while one for gaming emphasizes ultra-low latency and high bandwidth.

This capability positions 5G SA as a solution for a wide range of use cases, fostering innovation and driving the global rollout of advanced connectivity.

The Role of 5G SA in Network Slicing

While non-standalone 5G relies on existing 4G infrastructure, 5G SA operates independently, harnessing its full technological potential. This independence is crucial for enabling network slicing, as it relies on the native features of 5G SA, including cloud-native architecture, softwaredefined networking (SDN), and network function virtualization (NFV).

These features allow operators to dynamically allocate resources to individual slices, ensuring each meets its intended performance metrics without interfering with others.

Industry Use Cases: The Impact of Network Slicing

Healthcare Transformation

In healthcare, network slicing supports

life-saving applications such as remote surgeries and telemedicine. Dedicated slices ensure secure, uninterrupted communication for critical applications, enabling real-time diagnostics and patient monitoring.

Smart Manufacturing Revolution

Smart factories rely on IoT devices, robotics, and AI to optimize operations. Network slicing provides seamless communication between these components, enabling predictive maintenance, enhanced automation, and reduced downtime.

Autonomous Transportation

Autonomous vehicles depend on ultra-low latency to function safely. A dedicated slice ensures vehicles can process data from sensors, traffic signals, and other vehicles in realtime, reducing delays and enhancing road safety.

Digital Entertainment Evolution

With surging demand for AR, VR, and cloud gaming, network slicing delivers the high performance needed to provide immersive experiences. By allocating resources to meet these specific requirements, operators can enhance user satisfaction and support growing digital ecosystems.

Energy and Utility Efficiency

In the energy sector, network slicing facilitates smart grids and predictive analytics. Secure, reliable communication allows for real-time monitoring and control of critical infrastructure, driving efficiency and sustainability.





The Business Case for Network Slicing

For telecom operators, network slicing offers a lucrative avenue to expand revenue streams. By offering tailored slices for enterprise customers or premium services for consumers, operators can differentiate their offerings and attract new customers.

For enterprises, network slicing eliminates the need for building private networks, allowing them to leverage telecom operators' expertise to meet their unique needs. This shared responsibility fosters collaboration and accelerates innovation.

Challenges and Solutions

While the benefits of network slicing are clear, deploying and managing these virtual networks involves several challenges:

1. **Operational Complexity:** Managing multiple slices in real time requires

advanced orchestration tools and specialized expertise. Solutions lie in investing in AI-driven automation and training skilled personnel.

- 2. Interoperability Concerns: Ensuring that network slicing works seamlessly across devices, applications, and networks requires adherence to industry standards. Collaborative efforts between telecom operators and standards bodies are essential.
- 3. High Implementation Costs: Securing initial investments in 5G SA infrastructure, orchestration platforms, and software tools are significant. To mitigate this, operators can explore partnerships and shared infrastructure models.
- 4. **Regulatory Barriers:** Implementing policy reforms that support

innovation and clarify spectrum usage are critical. In some markets, existing regulatory frameworks are not equipped to address network slicing's complexities.

The Future of Network Slicing in a 5G SA World

As 5G SA matures, network slicing will continue to evolve, driven by technological advancements and expanding industry needs. Key trends that are shaping its trajectory include:

- Al-Driven Network Management: Al tools will become indispensable for optimizing network slices, enabling operators to predict and respond to demand surges in real time.
 - Edge Computing Integration: By combining edge computing with network slicing, operators can deliver faster, more reliable services for latency-sensitive applications.
 - **6G Horizon:** While 5G SA and network slicing continue to develop, early discussions about 6G suggest even more sophisticated capabilities, promising hyper-personalized network experiences.

Network slicing represents a transformative opportunity for operators, enterprises, and consumers alike. By tailoring network capabilities to meet diverse demands, it empowers industries to innovate, enhances efficiency, and accelerates the global rollout of 5G SA.

However, realizing its full potential requires overcoming operational, technical, and regulatory hurdles. Through collaboration, innovation, and investment, network slicing can redefine connectivity in the 5G era, laying the groundwork for a future of limitless possibilities.

As industries continue to explore its capabilities, network slicing is set to become a cornerstone of digital transformation, creating a truly interconnected world.





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Protect Your Mobile and Prevent SIM Swap Scams

In today's hyperconnected world, mobile phones are indispensable tools for communication, banking, and managing sensitive personal information. However, with the growing use of mobile devices, cybercriminals have developed sophisticated techniques to exploit vulnerabilities, one of which is SIM swap scams. Such scams can lead to devastating financial losses and privacy breaches. This feature explores SIM swap scams, their impact, and essential steps users can take to protect their mobile accounts.



nderstanding SIM Swap Scams SIM swap scams occur when cybercriminals take control of a victim's mobile number by convincing a mobile service provider to transfer the victim's phone number to a new SIM card controlled by the scammer. Once the transfer is completed, the scammer gains full access to the victim's communications, including calls, text messages, and two-factor authentication (2FA) codes. This method is particularly dangerous because it provides the attacker with access to accounts linked to the victim's mobile number, such as banking apps, email accounts, and social media profiles.

The consequences of a successful SIM swap can be severe. Victims may face unauthorized transactions, identity theft, social media account breaches, and loss of access to critical services. Moreover, recovering a compromised mobile account can be a time-consuming and frustrating process, involving collaboration with mobile service providers, banks, and law enforcement agencies.

How SIM Swap Scams Work

- Phishing and Social Engineering: Cybercriminals use tactics such as phishing emails, fake customer service calls, or social engineering to gather personal information. This information includes security questions, account numbers, and other data that could help them impersonate the victim.
- 2. Impersonation: Once they have sufficient information, scammers contact the victim's mobile service provider, claiming to be the account holder and requesting a SIM swap. In some cases, scammers may manipulate phone calls or use false documentation to verify their identity.
- 3. SIM Activation: Once approved, the victim's mobile number is transferred to the attacker's SIM card, granting them complete

access to the victim's mobile communications and linked accounts.

Signs of a SIM Swap Attempt

Recognizing a SIM swap attempt early can mitigate potential damage. Here are some warning signs:

- Loss of Service: If your mobile service suddenly stops working or you notice a delay in receiving calls or texts.
- **Unexpected Activity:** Unauthorized transactions, login attempts, or alerts from your bank or service providers regarding suspicious activity.
- Account Access Issues: Difficulty logging into accounts that typically use 2FA for verification.
- **Notification Delays:** Delayed receipt of verification codes sent via SMS or other communications that require mobile verification.

Protecting Yourself from SIM Swap Scams

Preventing SIM swap scams requires a proactive approach. Here are key steps you can take:

- Secure Your Personal Information:
 Avoid sharing sensitive details
 such as account numbers, PINs, or
 security questions over the phone,
 email, or other insecure channels.
 Criminals often use this information
 to impersonate victims.
- Enable Two-Factor Authentication (2FA): Always use 2FA for all accounts wherever possible. This adds an extra layer of security, making it harder for scammers to gain access even if they have control of your mobile number.
- Monitor Mobile Usage: Regularly check for any unusual activity on your mobile account, including calls, texts, and app usage. Contact your provider immediately if you notice suspicious changes.
- Keep Your SIM Card Secure: Treat your SIM card like a debit or credit

card. Avoid sharing your SIM's PIN or removing it from your device unnecessarily. Also, report any lost or stolen SIM cards promptly.

- Verify Identity with Mobile Providers: When contacting your mobile service provider, ask for additional verification steps, such as alternate contact methods or confirming sensitive changes inperson.
- **Stay Informed:** Regularly check for updates on security measures provided by your mobile service provider. Some companies offer additional safeguards against SIM swaps and fraud.
- Use Secure Passwords: Ensure your online accounts have strong, unique passwords. Avoid reusing passwords across multiple accounts, especially for sensitive services such as banking and finance apps.

The Role of Service Providers

Mobile service providers play a crucial role in combating SIM swap fraud. Many are adopting advanced security measures such as:

- Verification Systems: Requiring more than basic personal information for SIM swap requests, such as biometric authentication or in-person identity verification.
 - **Alerts:** Offering proactive alerts for unusual activity, such as unexpected changes in account settings or SIM-related activities.
- **Education:** Educating customers on recognizing and preventing SIM swap scams through awareness campaigns and providing secure practices.

In conclusion, while SIM swap scams pose a significant risk, users can take proactive steps to protect their mobile accounts. By implementing strong security practices and staying vigilant, individuals can significantly reduce the chances of falling victim to these deceptive attacks.





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