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The latest in Telecom, ICT and SatCom sectors of the Middle East, Asia and Africa

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to hold
Public-Private
Policy Roundtables

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spending
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in 2020

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is home to some of
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smart cities

Ali Ahmed Al-Kuwari, President & CEO - Es'hailSat

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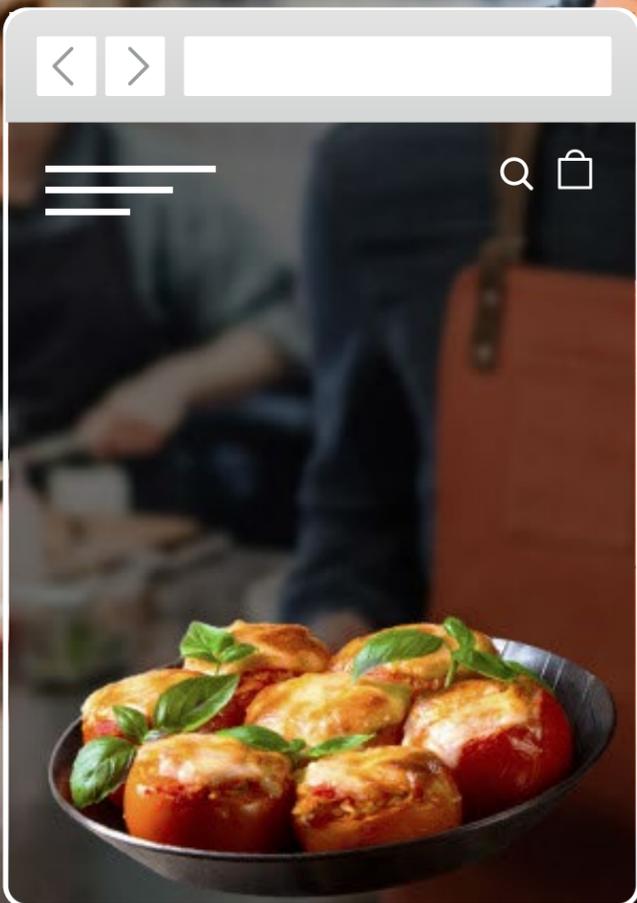
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- Payout
- Maritime & Land Mobility
- Corporate Networks
- Government Services

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Space to deliver your vision



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Editor's Note



Dear Reader,

Welcome to the latest edition of Teletimes International.

This edition focuses on the latest developments in the satellite industry and provides an excellent overview of the ongoing activities with key executive interviews and focused editorials/reports.

Featured in this edition is an interview with Ali Ahmed Al Kuwari, the President & CEO - Es'hailsat which sheds light on the current operations in the Middle East and Africa. You will also find an interview with David Geleman, President & CEO of SpaceBridge who talks about the SatCloud offering.

Moving on, I would like to congratulate Alvaro Sanchez, the CEO of Integrasys and his team on introducing Satmotion Pocket on the latest Apple smartphones. The solution really brings the VSAT commissioning process right into the hands of non-skilled operators - such solutions will surely drive more adoption in the long term.

Heading into the end of the year, we look forward to the GITEX Technology Week which is scheduled to take place live in Dubai. This will be the first mega event to take place (with the right precautions and safety measures) in almost the entire year of 2020. Teletimes is excited to be a part of the event and we look forward to meeting with our partners and contributors at the event.

As always, you will find the latest news and updates from all major players in this edition of Teletimes. Your feedback is welcome on info@teletimesinternational.com

Enjoy Reading!

Khalid Athar
Chief Editor



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Interview: Fakher Dawar



MENA is home to some of the most advanced smart cities
Ali Ahmed Al-Kuwari, President & CEO - Es'hailSat



Q: Ooredoo had partnered with Es'hailSat recently for provision of critical communication. How important do you think critical communication is in MENA?

Businesses, enterprises and consumers depend on reliable communications for mission critical and business critical services and for their livelihood. These are important

Es'hailSat's focus over the past few years and this year has been to support the media industry with satellite capacity for DTH services.

in any part of the world and in any market segments. And for MENA this is especially true given the nature of landscape and terrain, and the critical nature of the MENA oil and gas industry for the world. Vastness of the area, combined with the sparsely populated pockets, with harsh conditions makes communication in general extremely critical. Implementing and maintaining terrestrial

communications infrastructure can be challenging, hence satellite communications complements the terrestrial networks in enabling and managing the communications networks within the region.

MENA, especially the GCC, has always embraced and has been early adopters of the latest and most innovative technologies. The region has pioneered the use of advanced technologies for e-commerce and smart cities. And with cities growing at a rapid pace and population increasing rapidly, the need for reliable and secure communication becomes extremely important.

We also see a clear convergence taking place between the IT and communications sectors in this region, and with services like Internet of Things (IoT), Machine to Machine (M2M), machine learning and AI, people and things are becoming even more connected. Data and messaging services are becoming as important as voice services in the communications industry.

MENA is home to some of the most advanced smart cities, where having an integrated communication network is a requirement to connect people, machines, transportation, infrastructure, logistics, security, etc. All these requirements increase the demands for satellite bandwidth and communications infrastructure so that people and things always stay connected.

Working with Ooredoo is an example of how Es'hailSat is delivering integrated and

innovative solutions to our customers in the region.

Q: 2020 was difficult for all. How has Es'hailSat evolved to cope with the challenges this year have brought?

The impact of Covid-19 pandemic for businesses in 2020 has been felt across all industries and the satellite industry was no different. However, not all segments within the satellite industry has had similar impact, with the energy, aero IFC and maritime segments having the biggest impact.

With majority of the world doing business or interacting online, the demand for broadband has increased, which has increased the demand for satellite capacity for broadband and cellular backhaul to overcome terrestrial network congestion.

Broadcast segment is expected to increase in demand over the next few years as broadcasters consider transitioning from a traditional on-premise set-up to a virtual system such as satellite cloud-based service for content storage and distribution.

Es'hailSat's focus over the past few years and this year has been to support the media industry with satellite capacity for DTH services. This focus will continue in the mid to long term, as the DTH market in the Middle East and North Africa is still a vibrant and growing market. Having satellites in the MENA broadcast hotspot of 25.5°E/26°E is an added incentive for broadcasters to join the



Es'hailSat neighbourhood to distribute their channels, as they are instantly able to reach a wide viewership base.

To enhance our offering to the broadcast customers, we have been consolidating and incorporating a suite of services at our teleport in Doha such as turnaround service, playout service, colocation service, uplink service, hosting service, MCPC bouquet, etc. In addition to the core business of supporting broadcast customers, we have also been implementing services such as connectivity services, backhaul, VSAT and other services to support telecommunication service providers and enterprises.

Having the right infrastructure, providing end to end and value-added services and being responsive to our customers' needs enable us to provide the best in class service to our



In North Africa, we cover from Morocco in the West to Somalia in the East, and the regions in the Sahara belt.

customers.

Q: What regions are Es'hailSat covering? What can we expect in the future?

Our main area of coverage with our current two satellites are The Middle East and North Africa. In North Africa, we cover from Morocco in the West to Somalia in the East, and the regions in the Sahara belt. Although the coverage with our satellites is currently limited to Middle East and North Africa, we do cover other regions by extending our footprint working with our partners. Mainly in the Indian

Ocean region, Southern and Eastern Europe. We are also actively working to extend our own coverage with new satellite programs and partnerships.

We are evaluating other emerging markets where we believe there is still a lot potential and demands for satellite capacity and services. Africa, South Asia and South East Asia are markets where we believe we will see a lot of growth coming from. We also believe the MENA region still has a lot of potential and will continue to expand our services within this region.

Q: Besides broadcast, what other services is Es'hailSat providing?

DTH broadcasting has been the core business from Es'hailSat and will continue to be for the foreseeable future. We started with raw capacity lease on our satellites to DTH operators and channel operators to distribute their services and reach consumers. We have since expanded this to provide value added and end to end services to DTH and broadcast customers. These services include playout services, encryption, encoding, multiplexing, transmission, contribution, etc.

In addition, we provide a wide range of services in the telecommunications, mobility and VSAT segments. The advantages of satellites are that it offers cost effective, reliable, instantaneous and multi-point connectivity. For businesses and corporates with remote offices, it provides the best way for the HQ to connect, collaborate and share critical information with the remote personnel. Corporates use satellites for fast and reliable connection through a private network to remote and offshore facilities to monitor remote assets and share important information. The nature of the satellite network is such that, it provides secure connectivity, with high quality of service and with redundancies within a private network.

Backhauling telecommunication services via

We provide a wide range of services in the telecommunications, mobility and VSAT segments.

satellite can connect mobile base stations quickly and cost effectively, bringing bandwidth to remote areas reliably. It can provide flexible and scalable solutions and can seamlessly connect any region within our satellite's coverage area.

Leveraging on our teleport and working with key partners in the region and internationally, we provide customized solutions for the telecommunication sector. From small bandwidths for voice, data and internet services to large bandwidths for images, video and data backhaul. We provide capacity and customized managed services that cater to individual needs of the customer, with flexibility, speed and high quality of service. We also provide similar services for the mobility sector; be it land or maritime.

Q: Please tell us about the ambitions Es'hailSat have for the year 2021.

As a company, our aim is to be a global satellite

operator providing world class services to strategic stakeholders and customers, who value broadcast and telecommunications independence, high quality of service and wide geographical coverage. With an initial focus within our base in MENA, we have established ourselves as a reliable and innovative company supporting the key broadcast and telecommunications markets in the region.

Coming out of a difficult year for the industry in 2020, where we have been consolidating our business and services, and putting in place longer term plans, we see a lot more efforts coming in 2021 to bring to fruition these mid-term and long term plans. We aim to roll out new products and services over the next 12 months to enhance our offerings to our customers. From a strategic corporate perspective, we will also be engaging with partners in the industry for new satellite programs to expand our reach beyond the MENA region. **T**

New Satellite Technologies, Orbits, and Frequencies



Roscosmos State Corporation. Over 400 specialists from Russia, Great Britain, USA, Canada, Israel, Italy, France, Indonesia, Nigeria, India, and Azerbaijan took part in the digital conference.

Welcoming the participants of SATCOMRUS 2020, Deputy-Minister of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of the Russian Federation Oleg Ivanov stressed the need to develop satellite technologies and telecommunication services to eliminate the digital divide in the Russian Federation. In his report entitled the "Role and Place of Satellite Communications in the Digital Economy of the Russian Federation", Oleg Dukhovnitsky, Head of the Federal Communications Agency, indicated that the Express-RV project involving a multi-satellite communication system in highly elliptical orbits, which is



included in the Sfera subprogram of the national program "Digital Economy of the Russian Federation", will provide almost ubiquitous high-speed access to digital communication services, including the Internet, throughout the country, including sparsely populated areas with less than 250 residents and remote settlements of the Far North, Siberia, and the Far East.

Yuri Prokhorov, head of the Russian Satellite Communications Company (RSCC) spoke in detail about the main focal areas of company activities, which in the mid-term will impact the advancement of Russia's domestic satellite communications industry, including completed and planned satellite launches. Yuri Prokhorov emphasized that "RSCC closely follows global trends and duly addresses them in its portfolio of services. They include flexible payloads on geostationary satellites, projects of multi-satellite communication constellations in non-geostationary orbits, the Internet of Things, and provision of communication services to mobile objects. It is these solutions to move ahead with advancing the digital economy that are incorporated into the new RSCC satellites". Yuri Prokhorov also reported on the results of RSCC's development of its own value-added services in broadcasting and communications on moving objects, where, despite the pandemic and the global lockdown, the company has managed to maintain its leading position in the domestic and foreign markets. Another central theme of the

conference was 5G standardization and the role of satellite communications in the buildup of the 5G ecosystem. Key speakers from organizations developing new communication standards - Viktor Strelets (ITU), Sasha Sirotkin (3GPP) – described the current status of developing 5G communication network standards. Andrey Zheglov, Deputy Director of the Department of State Policy in the Field of Communications of the Ministry of Digital Industry of Russia, also presented his vision of the prospects for the 5G networks in Russia.

Participants of the third session of the conference, "Global Restart of the Broadcast and Media Industry", representing media and IT companies discussed the issues of the industry and changes in the media market, including the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic. In recent years, there has been a lot of talk about changes in the television and media market. On the one hand, experts and market players have in one way or another have recognized that the existing models for promoting content and services are dying out with the advent of new technologies and a change in the consumption patterns. On the other hand, large telecom operators and media holdings are refraining from serious revision of strategies, relying on familiar business models. The panelists also discussed how the global economic crisis associated with the Covid-19 pandemic has changed the balance of power in the media content market.

As part of the SATCOMRUS 2020 fourth session, Russian and international satellite operators and manufacturers presented their plans for business development in low-orbit satellite communication systems, and also talked about ready-made solutions and technological innovations in the segment of satellite user equipment.

At the end of the conference, the SATCOMRUS AWARDS 2020 industry award ceremony and wrap-up of the marketing campaign "In the Runup to the 75th anniversary of Victory" took place. The campaign was launched by RSCC together with partners in high-speed satellite system access and Ka-band. The SATCOMRUS AWARDS 2020 statuettes were awarded to Intersputnik, JSC SATIS-TL-94, Azercosmos, State Budgetary Institution RD RGVK Dagestan named after Garuna Kurbanova, National Association of Television and Radio Broadcasters (NAT), Phoenix Engineering Bureau LLC, Republican Center of Infocommunication Technologies - a State Budgetary Institution of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Kabelshchik Internet periodical, as well as Ms Yulia Shakhmanova - for her personal contribution to the advancement of satellite TV and radio broadcasting in Russia. According to the results of the special campaign "In the Runup to the 75th Anniversary of Victory", the 3rd place was taken by Raduga-Internet LLC, and the first place, with the largest number of new connections, went to operator Ka-Internet JSC. **IT**



SATCOMRUS 2020, the XXV anniversary international conference of operators and users of Russia's satellite communication networks, took place online in October 2020. The event was held with the support of the Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of the Russian Federation, the Federal Communications Agency and the

YAHSAT announces PMO for Thuraya 4-NGS Satellite Programme

Yahsat has established a Programme Management Office (PMO) for Thuraya 4-NGS, its new L-band satellite being built by Airbus. Thuraya 4-NGS, announced in August this year, is part of a US\$ 500 million programme that will transform Thuraya's space and ground systems and enable its next generation products and solutions portfolio.

Yahsat has picked six male and female Emirati engineers from its Technology Department to form the PMO, which will oversee the design, assembly, integration and testing phases of the satellite subsystems, while focusing on the timely delivery of the spacecraft for launch in late 2023. Rashed Al Hammadi, a seasoned member of Yahsat's Space Segment Engineering team, will be the Programme Manager, supported by Ali Hasan Banimalek, as Deputy Programme Manager and Platform Lead. They are joined by Abdulla Zakaria Alabri - Payload Lead, Nada Ali Mubarak Obaid - Payload Engineer, Ahmed Ali Mohammed Almenhali - Platform Engineer and Launch Vehicle (LV) Integration Lead and Ibrahim Ali Abdullah Al Hammadi - Product Assurance Lead. All of them have played key roles in delivering Yahsat's previous satellite programmes and bring solid, hands-on experience to the Thuraya 4-NGS PMO team.

Thuraya's Chief Executive Officer and General Manager of Yahsat Government Solutions, Ali Al Hashemi said: "Today, there is a strong sense of fulfillment; our faith in our people and their capabilities stands fully justified. The young engineers leading this ambitious programme have shown great promise in their roles and were chosen after a thorough analysis of their work history, knowledge and aptitudes. Yahsat's satellite programmes have afforded Emiratis opportunities to train with the very best in the industry, helping them build technical acumen and consummate know-how of spacecraft design and system architecture. Moreover, we have always ensured that the acquired knowledge is properly invested at home in order to drive the UAE's own space



Ali Al Hashemi - Thuraya



Adnan Al Muhairi - Yahsat



and satellite-related R&D and industry."

Yahsat's Deputy Chief Technical Officer, Adnan Al Muhairi said: "The Thuraya 4-NGS next generation programme is not only about deploying new technology and expanding our satellite fleet. It is also about developing Emiratis and positioning them for further growth. The selection process for the Thuraya 4-NGS PMO has helped us identify the right people and entrust them with bigger responsibilities. A majority of our technical experts have grown with Yahsat and Thuraya, and have honed their skills through assignments on top-tier projects for the UAE."

Besides managing different aspects of spacecraft development, the newly formed PMO will serve as the primary liaison between the satellite manufacturer, Airbus, and Yahsat's headquarters to ensure a smooth on-time delivery. In addition, there will be a separate team of engineers under the supervision of the PMO that will gain unprecedented insights into the workings of the state-of-the-art all-electric Airbus Eurostar Neo Platform through on-the-job training and knowledge transfer.

Thuraya 4-NGS is scheduled to be operational by 2024, and until the completion of the programme.



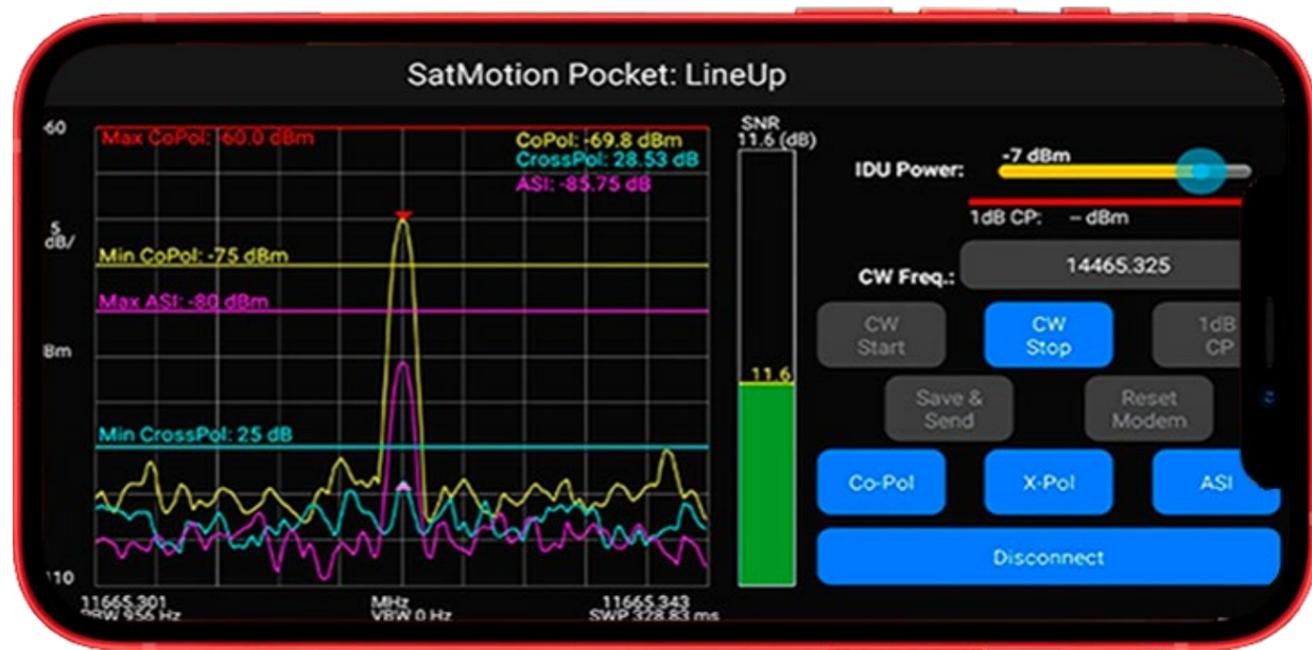
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Satmotion Pocket for Iphone 12



Satmotion Pocket, the best VSAT Auto-Commissioning tool, developed by Integrasys has been updated and it is now available for the new iPhone 12 Pro Max, iPhone 12 Pro, iPhone 12, iPhone Mini.

“After days of simulations and tests we can firmly confirm that Satmotion Pocket newest release works on the new Apple product range. Integrasys priority is to innovate making available its innovative technologies always ahead of the curve, taking advantages of the partners innovations and market trends. The hard work carried out by developers during the last weeks made it possible.”

Alvaro Sanchez - CEO of Integrasys

Satmotion Pocket is an essential tool for an easy, quick, and accurate VSAT deployment. Simplifying

the commissioning process and making possible the installation by non-skilled operators in VSAT installations. Also, the field installers do not need to coordinate or communicate with the NOC to finish the installation, which drives a significant time reduction, speed up time to market and save cost.” Alvaro added.

Integrasys philosophy, Building Success from Innovation, which sometimes is, taking advantage of new technologies before the market has adopted and be ready as soon as our customers demand it. For us customer satisfaction is the most important thing when we are doing business, also getting ahead in the new challenges of the industry, renewing our capabilities and improving the product portfolio, always to meet the needs of our customers, who are always right.



Interview: Khalid Athar

SatCloud™ offers a game-changing cloud-orchestrated solution for service providers

David Gelerman, President and CEO of SpaceBridge speaks to Teletimes International

Mr. Gelerman is a visionary engineer, innovator and businessman with over 40 years of experience. In 1988, Mr. Gelerman founded SpaceBridge Inc. (formerly Advantech Wireless Inc.), serving as President and CEO for the last 31 years. Steering the company from start-up to becoming a dominant global player in the satellite ground communication business, both in baseband products and networking, as well as radio frequency converters and amplifiers. In 2018, after the divestiture of radio frequency business, Mr. Gelerman carries on forward with the VSAT Networking business, keeping in tradition and with continued strengths as a best-in-class industry leader, leading the pace of innovation with one of the most advanced VSAT satellite network platforms, concentrating on VHTS, NGSO satellites and cost effective modems/routers for mass broadband consumer Internet market.

Prior to founding the company, Mr. Gelerman held various management and design engineering positions at Nortel Networks, in the Transmission Networks Division, where he led team that developed multibillion dollar microwave terrestrial radio business.

Mr. Gelerman holds a Master's of Science degree in Electrical Engineering (MSEE), specializing in Wireless Communications and Broadcasting.

Khalid Athar: How did the 2019 year play out for the satellite industry and for SpaceBridge in specific?

David Gelerman: 2019 was a pivotal year for the industry as a whole and for SpaceBridge in particular. The industry started a consolidation trend whereby competitors are buying each other to have a larger market share. I believe that soon we will see more accretive acquisitions that will involve

the satellite operators who instead of looking for very high EBITDA (and hence the ability of high leveraging) as they usually did will start following the traditional KPIs for doing business, such as ROI and profit margins. This trend will result in acquisitions around ground infrastructure equipment providers and ISPs to create fully integrated companies that can compete on equal footing with the companies that transformed from equipment providers to solution providers by launching their own satellites and also

running retail.

Industry focuses on the LEO/MEO satellite will increase the capacity per each satellite by manifold. For SpaceBridge in specific, in 2019, we launched the C7700 cost-effective modem/router for mass broadband access market that fully meets the current market requirements and price point. We sold it from \$250 in small quantities to \$200 in large quantities. We entirely redesigned its HTS Platform and introduced to the market the SatCloud™ offering which is our SCPC-DAMA high data rate managed services platform.

KA: Can you give us a quick overview of the solutions you are providing?

DG: Today, SpaceBridge provides complete ground infrastructure required for communication with LEO/MEO/GEO satellites. This covers complete end-to-end solutions, including construction of the teleports for VSAT platforms that provide networking solutions, unmanned gateways, maned HUBs Teleports and various types of application oriented remote terminals, as well as the SCPC modems, and a combination of both for variety of applications such as low cost/high performance broadband internet access, cellular backhaul, maritime, oil and gas, mining, telemedicine, critical infrastructures like homeland security, air traffic control (ATC) and military amongst others.

KA: Looking back at the change from Advantech to SpaceBridge as the main brand, how did it go from a marketing point of view?

DG: SpaceBridge is not exactly a brand-new name. For thirty years, we were known as the Advantech Wireless. This premium brand was highly sought for RF equipment but to a certain degree, it overshadowed our VSAT and broadcast business. Therefore, once we divested the RF business, we decided to use the name associated with the current business. In 2005 we purchased SpaceBridge Networks, the Ottawa based company specializing in development of the ASICs based on the DVB open standards two-way communication. As the current business closely represents the work done by SpaceBridge, it made a lot of sense to use this name. We had already maintained the spacebridge.com domain for all these years so it was easy to make that shift.

It is quite difficult to come up with the right and meaningful name that properly represents your marketplace and to have the domain available for such a name which was another reason for us to go ahead with this. During the last year,

SatCloud™ offers a cloud-orchestrated solution for service providers that want to provide occasional managed high-bit rate and on-demand end-to-end satellite solutions

we launched an extensive promotion campaign to explain our history to the satellite market detailing on who we are as a company. Most of the people now know that SpaceBridge is the combination of the former Advantech Satellite Networks (previously also known as EMS Satellite Networks), SpaceBridge Networks, ACT-Wireless and Signal Processors Limited (SPL). Basically a combination of the companies that were acquired and integrated by Advantech Wireless. Looking back, it was the best thing we could have done, as today our customers are not confused about who we are and what are we doing. We have received great feedback on our campaign, we have created a momentum and gained the trust of our customers.

KA: Many of our readers would be interested in details about SatCloud. How can businesses benefit from it?

DG: SatCloud™ is a cloud-based, dynamic SCPC Bandwidth-on-Demand solution. Satellite service providers struggle to raise a budget or major funds required for new operations, as they do with choosing the right technology to commit to, and investing in relevant human resources and training, due to lack of visibility of integration costs when starting a new operation. SpaceBridge has created SatCloud™, a new, first-of-its-kind service to help address and resolve these challenges.

Designed to address satellite network operators' challenges, SatCloud™ solution uses Cloud Teleport Services such as Scheduling and Orchestration. Ideal for starter hubs, new service providers, pay-as-you-grow, new and/or gradual deployments models, SatCloud™

was designed to scale from just a few Mbps to hundreds of Mbps, measured by remote terminal throughput.

SatCloud™ offers a cloud-orchestrated solution for service providers that want to provide occasional managed high-bit rate and on-demand end-to-end satellite solutions. This includes teleports, broadcasters, satellite operators, satellite network operators and ISPs as well as companies dealing in oil & gas, energy, and maritime satellite networks, satellite-delivered cloud applications providers and enterprise networks.

With SatCloud™, you avoid the need to invest capital expenses in deploying a new platform which is a significant reduction in risk. You also avoid the additional startup costs of training your engineering & support teams on new hardware systems maintenance and support. You pay only for what you need with pay-as-you-grow model, while gaining a complete Operation Suite for free. At the same time, you can enjoy managed services provided through our network operation centers managed by our highly-dedicated and experienced engineers. SatCloud comes with 24x7 network management services, based on a complete OpEx model for credit approved customers/partners.

KA: How are satellites contributing to the IoT space? Especially Industrial IoT?

DG: The proliferation of IP-enabled industrial things, or "objects," equipped with sensors, processors and network capabilities means that more and more remote device functions and operations can and will be reported, controlled and automated via the internet and IP networks. The business benefits from IIoT can be large across many industries. They range from cost and downtime reductions, to efficiency and productivity gains, to better asset tracking and resource management, to new revenue opportunities.

SpaceBridge products and technology can uniquely address Industrial IoT / Machine-to-Machine data networking requirements for a wide variety of Industrial IoT (IIoT) applications. These include smart infrastructure, logistics, healthcare, smart utilities, and other solutions for various use cases in energy, insurance, mining, agriculture, ATM networks, lottery networks, kiosk & signage and many more.

Satellite networking advantages of the two-way satellite VSAT networks can provide major benefits for large-scale Industrial IoT (Internet

of Things) data networks. VSAT has proven to be a very reliable and cost-effective technology for collecting and distributing data to/from large numbers of distributed elements from different geographically dispersed locations. As a wireless bypass technology, VSATs can deliver uniform QOS network availability and managed network performance standards — across multiple countries, or telecoms provider territories.

KA: Tell us a little bit more about your offerings in the IoT and IIoT space?

DG: SpaceBridge VSAT platform offers major advantages for powering Industrial IoT (IIoT/ M2M) systems that require large-scale IP data networks, particularly those with geographically dispersed networks of many sites: our VSAT solution cost-effectively scales from a handful of locations to hundreds of thousands remote locations. VSAT terminals can be rapidly set up to connect IoT traffic from remote locations that have no telecoms to provide either push to, or pull from the Hub.

ASAT System for IoT: The single SpaceBridge ASAT™ VSAT network can address industrial IoT data network requirements across many industries and cover hundreds of thousands subscribers. The solution typically includes SpaceBridge VSAT HUB and ASAT™ built-for IOT/M2M low cost VSAT C8000 all-outdoor Terminal.

Solution Overview

SpaceBridge provides a solution for connecting IP-enabled devices, located anywhere within a broad satellite footprint, to an organization's central IoT system. A VSAT terminal/router installed at any given remote location and connected to IoT "Objects" such as sensors, meters, digital displays, or other devices. IoT device data, such as telematics, controls, content, status, etc., is routed via this VSAT terminal to the main system via satellite. IoT devices can be directly connected to a remote VSAT router by a LAN, or traffic can be received from downstream source devices via wireless methods such as Wi-Fi, LTE, RFID, low-power radio, etc. A VSAT terminal can also aggregate traffic from local devices, routers, other "edge nodes" and downstream network spokes, for final long-distance connectivity to the central IoT system. Once connected over the VSAT data network, Edge Nodes become accessible to the central IoT management system.

SpaceBridge VSAT HUB: The HUB for IoT manages network parameters across the

network of remote VSAT terminals, and routes data to the customer's central IoT system. It can set up and run optimal satellite capacity use parameters based on the IoT data traffic requirements with as mentioned 384 bits granularity per terminal/per any pre-set period of time (like 1 sec, 1 min, 1 hour, etc.). It may be co-located with the customer's IoT system at corporate location, or connected to a data center, or the Cloud.

ASAT™ Built-for IOT/M2M VSAT Terminals: SpaceBridge's IoT/M2M terminals are ultra-compact, all-outdoor weatherized integrated (BUC/LNBF/modem) Ka and Ku-band satellite terminals for end-to-end satellite communications Internet of Things (IoT).

C8000 ASAT™ VSAT terminals connect to "IoT Objects" (e.g. sensors, meters, devices) at the remote site. The VSAT terminal routes data to the satellite and HUB for onward delivery to the customer's IoT platform or application.

The C8000 ASAT™ terminal is designed specifically to deliver the best value-to-cost mix in a miniature, lightweight weatherized outdoor installation, meeting IoT requirements for compact sizing, ultra-low power consumption, and highly reliable, maintenance-free operation. Reliable broadband duplex IP communication Forward / Return link at IP speeds, the C8000 adds blazing-fast link speeds up to 100 / 10 Mbps (down / up) and increased IP networking features. Single PoE cable greatly simplifies installation. Easy do-it-yourself (DIY)/Non-professional self-installation and commissioning makes site installation and setup easier and more affordable than ever.

SpaceBridge ASAT™ IoT/M2M Advantages:
Guaranteed polled access: From pipelines, to ATMs, from video surveillance to Smart Grids — provision network resources to meet varying traffic demand and priorities and optimize capacity. From bursty transactions to occasional polling, to video streaming, or daily bulk data uploads, our dynamically configurable space segment access method enables configuration to the exact polling needs of an IoT application.

The SpaceBridge's WaveSwitch™ seamlessly optimizes the system's satellite access method to suit varying customer application requirements in real time. This industry-first VSAT System with "on-the-fly" waveform switching, allocates bandwidth to sites or groups in real-time from a common pool of space segment. WaveSwitch™ dynamically selects from SpaceBridge's industry leading RCSX™ choice of waveforms – ASCPC™, MF-

TDMA or SCPC DVB-S2X access technologies.

From Low-Bit Rate to Broadband: Deliver a range of services – from multi-megabit data for Smart Grid or surveillance to low-bit-rates for machine-polling — and reduce or optimize satellite costs.

Flexible Architecture: Star, Mesh and SCPC Point-to-Point network typologies can all be supported on the same platform, which comes with IP satellite link acceleration, optimization, header and payload compression, Network Management and QOS tools, and industrial-grade end-to-end IP security.

KA: Which segments are displaying the highest signs of growth for SpaceBridge?

DG: The segments showing the highest growth signs for SpaceBridge would be the low cost mass market broadband Internet access, Cellular Backhaul (CBH), MNOs segment and the impact of 5G technologies that will revolutionize the market need of much higher bandwidth consumption for backhauling and integration into METRO Ethernet networks using innovative latest standards such as MEF and SD-WAN.

NGSO Constellations (MEO and LEO): Apart from all the great innovation that we have embarked upon with the adoption of the advanced NGSO networks, we will require to pay close attention to changes in the system architectures. It comes to managing every network resources and optimizing them, ensuring integration between the network components rules and the ground Internet network infrastructure and the Satellite Gateways and terminals that will allow a competitive business case to compete with terrestrial Fiber Optic networks.

Moving to managed services: Advanced cloud-based networks, just like the SatCloud™ we introduced to the market last year, will be penetrating and becoming more available to lower overall cost of ownership.

We expect several huge networks to use the innovative technologies of the advanced platforms that we have been working on for many years. And of course, other verticals we have been exposed to for many years, including IIoT, maritime, IFC, and of course consumer broadband. Last, but not least, Tactical Satellite Communications Infrastructure Market for the benefit of military forces in various tiers and topologies will also be an area of growth for us in the coming future. **T**



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Paradigm's Swarm950 - Faster, Higher, Stronger

Type Approved for use on Inmarsat
with ST Engineering iDirect 950mp

Paradigm's world-leading, rugged carry-on SWARM950 terminal is now Type Approved on Inmarsat's Global Xpress network, providing extreme flexibility for high throughput, secure data services around the world.

The SWARM950 is powered by the PIM® providing the user with higher throughputs as a result of its enhanced power offering. With its ST Engineering iDirect 950mp modem, it also offers military grade security over both the commercial and military satellite frequencies.

Jon Godfrey, Paradigm's General Manager stated: "our SWARM terminal has always outperformed other hand carry satcom terminals, now with the highly capable 950mp modem and type approval on GX it will be impossible to beat for high throughput and flexibility in every location around the world".

The PIM in the SWARM950 is the brains behind the terminal. It provides network flexibility and intelligent operation to the user and enables the terminal to achieve the highest possible throughput in any location, as well as having the ability to operate in TRANSEC mode and being FIPS 140-2 encryption compliant, as required.

Already recognised as a low SWaP terminal, the SWARM950 provides full Mil-Ka and Ka-Band operation and can also operate in either Ku or X-band as operational requirements demand. The PIM950 is lightweight, power-efficient and industrialised to MIL-STD in order to meet the most rigorous military and government demands for mobile, tactical terminals providing security and always-on broadband capabilities.

"Adding the 950mp modem alongside a



Mil-Ka capable, higher power BUC creates a highly flexible hand carry system which enables end users to use G2X Land services over Global Xpress anywhere in the world, whilst also accessing their own national MILSATCOM systems on the same device. With options to switch to other bands on the same easy to use system, this is an extremely versatile, low SWAP government user terminal" said James Marley, Sales Director, Land Sector, Inmarsat Global Government.

This flexibility of the SWARM950 is enhanced even further by the PIM terminal controller offering a simple to use interface for the modem, baseband switching, pointing and setup functions. The PIM has a built-in visual crosshair and audio pointing device so that any non-skilled user can easily operate the terminal reducing both training and operational costs. With only three parts to assemble, the SWARM950 can also be setup in under 90 secs. The PIM also

supports Power over Ethernet devices and provides a multitude of services to the end user - from VLAN setup and management to smart auto-selecting of AC and DC power interfaces.

The SWARM950 will give Military and Government users operating at multiple locations all over the world the capability to achieve data, voice and video connectivity at the level they require.

"It's essential that troops operating in harsh, challenging environments have the communications equipment that can withstand the conditions," commented Koen Willem, Head of International Government Satcom, ST Engineering iDirect. "SWaP, security and efficiency are built into both the 950mp board and the SWARM terminal so that users can be assured of maximum uptime and throughput wherever and whenever it's needed."



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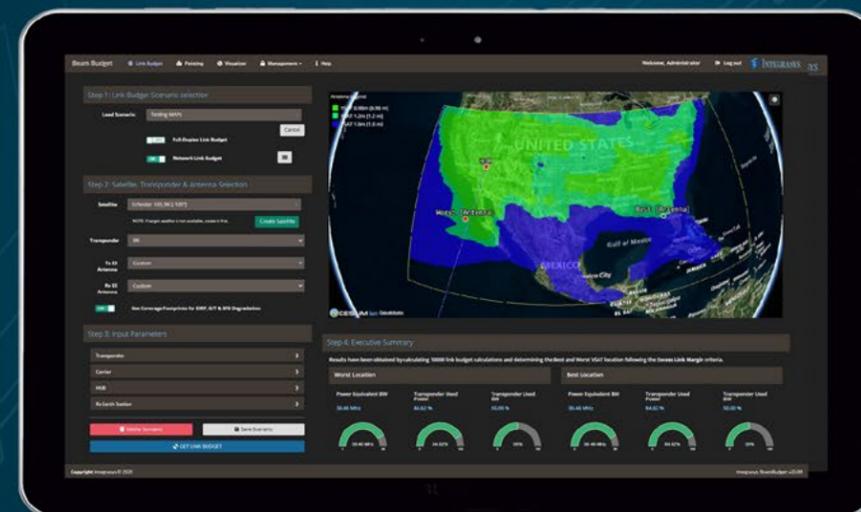


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Gilat Telecom enhances SD-WAN system to increase capacity across Africa

Gilat Telecom has announced significant new enhancements to its Software-Defined Wide Area Network (SD-WAN MAX).

This will benefit African operators with fiber and satellite networks that are aiming to markedly increase network availability and bandwidth.

Gilat Telecom is the first company in the world to have developed an SD-WAN solution for both satellite and fiber traffic.

The new SD-WAN enhancements center around the integration of technology from F5 that enables complex traffic management decisions based on client, server, or application status. Gilat Telecom is also leveraging F5's event-driven scripting language, which is key to addressing application delivery challenges across any environment. The integration of F5 makes it even easier for Gilat Telecom to intelligently manage network traffic, including building



"Our SD-WAN MAX solution enables MNOs, ISPs and enterprises across Africa to achieve more capacity from less hardware and software. The integration of F5's software is one of a number of improvements we have made in response to suggestions from our customers and partners. We are confident that our SD-WAN MAX is the best available on the market," said Amir Cohen, CTO of Gilat Telecom.

Meeting the needs of African MNOs, ISPs and Enterprises

By improving its SD-WAN MAX system, Gilat Telecom now has more scope than ever before to specifically address the needs of African MNOs, ISPs and enterprises. Most MNOs and ISPs in Africa use both satellite and fiber networks to maximise coverage creating asymmetric traffic routes with end-customers receiving traffic over satellite and sending over fiber. **T**

smart monitors that sample various network components. Depending on the samples, it is possible to change the traffic path, save bandwidth, improve performance, and perform bandwidth control. Additional traffic management and bandwidth optimisations are driven by AI and machine-learning algorithms.

Indosat posts yet another strong quarter, double digit growth in cellular revenue and EBITDA

Indosat Ooredoo has announced its nine-month performance report, ended 30 September 2020. Despite COVID-19 challenge and economic situation, the company delivered strong financial and operational performance. Indosat Ooredoo has managed to keep the growth momentum intact with double digit growth in cellular Revenue and EBITDA.

Indosat Ooredoo recorded a solid performance for the nine months of 2020 with total revenue increasing 9.2% YoY to IDR20.6 trillion, cellular revenue increasing 12.9% YoY to IDR17 trillion, EBITDA reaching IDR8.5 trillion or increasing 17% YoY and EBITDA margin recorded 41.1%, an increase of 2.7 ppt

YoY. Cellular subscribers reached 60.4 million at the end of September 2020, an increase of 2.8%YoY with an average monthly revenue per subscriber (ARPU) of IDR 31.7 thousand from previously IDR 27.8 thousand, and data traffic grew by 54.7%YoY.

Growth in subscribers as well as ARPU strongly suggests that Indosat Ooredoo's network investments, digital initiatives and consumer offerings are delivering favourable results. In a market where most operators are offering unlimited proposition, Indosat Ooredoo has managed to maintain growth momentum with improved network experience and value for money pricing.

President Director & CEO of Indosat Ooredoo, Ahmad Abdulaziz A. A. Al-Neama, said, "I am extremely happy to announce that Indosat Ooredoo has posted yet another quarter with strong financial and operational performance. Despite all the competitive and COVID challenges, we have maintained our growth momentum and are on track with our turnaround strategy. We stay committed to offer best in class telecommunication services to the people of Indonesia.

Amidst the current situation, we will continue to put employee health and safety as our top priority and all necessary measures have been put in place to support our employees." **T**

Indosat Ooredoo partners with Huawei to build APAC's first SRv6-based 5G-Ready transport network



To ensure the fulfilment of both Consumers and Enterprises future demands in the digital era, Indosat Ooredoo has announced its continued partnership with Huawei Indonesia as one of its strategic partners to build a state-of-the-art, programmable, 5G-ready transport network powered by Segment routing IPv6 (SRv6). Huawei will deploy the network in the key areas of Jabodetabek, Surabaya and the rest of East Java & Bali, which will be the first commercial deployment of its kind in Asia Pacific. This enables a simple, scalable, agile and reliable network available on demand to Enterprises and Consumers alike.

Indosat Ooredoo is an Indonesia's leading mobile operator, serving a growing subscriber base who rely on connectivity. With growing demand for mobile data consumption and with the emergence of newer technologies like Cloud Computing and Network slicing, this paradigm shift from Indosat Ooredoo ensures on-demand network services for its customers. This new technology along with Indosat Ooredoo wide fiber optic network expansions will enable cloud computing faster data connectivity with which Indosat Ooredoo looks to serve digital communities in much automated way.



In preparing for these future ready services in Indonesia, Indosat Ooredoo has undergone various steps of digital and the transport network transformation is a key element of this journey.

After an in-depth analysis of the existing network and long-term goals, Indosat Ooredoo chooses to deploy SRv6 IP solution. Huawei Indonesia provides the SRv6 intelligent routing function which allows for deterministic paths and committed latency.

Medhat Elhusseiny, Chief Technology and Information Officer of Indosat Ooredoo commented, "As part of Indosat Ooredoo's digital transformation journey, addressing our consumers and enterprise customers' increasing demands for cloud computing, IoT services, on-demand and scalable network requirements, we are excited to partner with Huawei to build Next-Generation Programmable Network Infrastructure by

delivering Asia Pacific's first SRv6-based 5G-ready transport network. With this we hope we can bring more value and enhance our customers experience for digital services especially for latency sensitive and real time applications"

Andy Ma, CEO of Huawei Indonesia Carrier Business remarks, "Huawei Indonesia has been supporting Indosat Ooredoo over many years, and is especially honor to be able to support Indosat Ooredoo to build 5G-oriented, intelligent SRv6-based IP transport network. Huawei has launched the industry's first committed SLA IP solution to provide premium transmission services for a wide variety of vertical industries in the 5G era. The solution has been widely deployed in multiple leading operators around the world. Huawei anticipates making IP transport networks even more intelligent through our continued cooperation with Indosat Ooredoo." **T**

Building Fiber-optic Connectivity Corridors for Digital Economy

"Lighting Up a Fiber Future"

November 19, 2020



SAMENA Council to hold Public-Private Policy Roundtables

"SAMENA Accelerator" Series of Stakeholder Meetings to Contribute Recommendations on Accelerating Fiber Deployment and Sustainable Digital Economy in the Region

Teletimes Report

SAMENA Telecommunications Council has announced that, with the collaboration of Huawei Technologies Middle East, a series of Public and Private sector policy-level roundtables will be held with industry stakeholders during the month of November, focused on addressing issues and requirements for increased fiber deployment in the region and to assist policymakers in accelerating a sustainable digital economy.

The first one-day, by-invitation-only SAMENA Accelerator roundtable on building "Fiber-optic Connectivity Corridors for Digital Economy", to be held on November 19, 2020, will bring together ICT policy and regulatory leadership from within the region and beyond, to discuss the SA-ME-NA region's Fiber deployment challenges, including a myriad of investment and deployment issues; to build the case for accelerating Fiber deployment as a future-



"Huawei Middle East's President, Charles Yang, has commented, "Huawei envisions an intelligent, fully connected digital world, where nations and citizens prosper."

Charles Yang - President, Huawei ME

proof conduit of digitization and economic growth; and to recommend policy initiatives in areas where expedited policy decisions and regulatory enablement can positively make a difference in the proliferation of Fiber-optic networks in the region. The Fiber-focused roundtable will build on recommendations already issued to UN Member States by the ITU, the private sector, and by the UN Broadband Commission, highlighting the positive economic impact and fulfillment of bandwidth demands posed by emerging digital communications technologies in countries with low Fiber penetration.

Similarly, the second SAMENA Accelerator roundtable, focused on "Accelerating a Sustainable Digital Economy", to be held later in November, will drive inspiration from and build on the key messages and decisions expressed in the Declaration of the G20 Digital Economy Ministers Meeting of July 2020; including the fact that digital technologies must be harnessed to realize opportunities of the 21st century for all and that it is highly important that the region's digital economy and policy-making sustain progress on the implementation and fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Recognizing the criticality of universal, secure, and affordable connectivity, for which expansion of ICT infrastructure is a pre-requisite and the fundamental enabler of development of the digital economy, the prevailing policy-level consensus among the region's policymakers underpins the need for developing frameworks that can help accelerate and measure the digital economy. To this effect, the SAMENA Council and Huawei collaborated roundtable on Digital Economy will help identify key initiatives that can be taken immediately to accelerate progress on digital development in a digitally inclusive manner, thus providing regional policymakers and regulatory authorities the confidence that the Private sector is fully ready to play its part in fulfilling the global goal of Universal Digital Access and in furthering the Connect 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda of the United Nations.

In the wake of accelerated 5G developments and given the anticipated role 5G may play in advancing other industries and new growth streams, thereby catalyzing new economic development opportunities across established and nascent market segments, both SAMENA Council, which serves as a unifying voice for Telecom Operators as well as a sector-development partner to governments, and Huawei, which is a leading Technology Provider as well as a Member of the Council, view Fiber

The region requires accelerated implementation of certain initiatives that can boost up the region's socio-economic transformation through digitization.

Bocar BA, CEO & Board Member of SAMENA Council



deployment as a guarantor of future digital communication advancements and reliability, and which will drive future digital economic growth, foster digital ecosystems, and support new opportunities for nations and their citizens in their personal and societal strides.

Bocar BA, CEO and Board Member of SAMENA Council, expressing his views on continuing to bring Public and Private sector decision-makers on the SAMENA Council's platform to participate in the subject-specific policy-level roundtables, has stated that "These SAMENA Digital Economy Policy Accelerator roundtables are the next step in SAMENA Council's advocacy efforts to conjoin knowledge-exchange with practical methods to accelerate the region's digital economy, and Fiber infrastructure is proving to be fundamental to this aspiration. Digital transformation, enabled by mobility, cloud and broadband technologies, including Fiber-optic, is taking place in almost every industry, reinforcing the need for us to re-think ICT infrastructure development and ICT policies, which should be aligned well with national economic visions as much as they should be with sustainability of investment within the Industry. The region requires accelerated implementation of certain initiatives that can boost up the region's socio-economic transformation through digitization. These roundtables are a product of visions and priorities that SAMENA Council's Membership shares with the region's Policymakers and Regulatory Authorities. We anticipate prolific, outcome-oriented roadmap for action between the Private and the Public sectors during the month of November. SAMENA Council will issue outcome statements, following these

roundtables, to assist in the region's policy-making efforts."

Huawei Middle East's President, Charles Yang, has commented, "Huawei envisions an intelligent, fully connected digital world, where nations and citizens prosper. We support strategic approaches and innovation-driven frameworks that can help develop the world's digital economies. Policy and regulatory transformation required to achieve progress on global digital fronts, aligned with internationally agreed digital development goals suited to each country's nation-building visions, must first focus on expediting the development of reliable and resilient communications infrastructure, which serve as the cornerstone of our connected and digital economy. The Middle East region inevitably requires fiber-based networks, which will not only boost its socio-economic development and build the knowledge based digital economy, but will also help make it sustainable."

The SAMENA Accelerator series of action-oriented stakeholder meetings are similar in their approach to the SAMENA Leaders' Roundtable (SALT). While the SALT follows the Chatham House rules of communication and information-sharing and is intended only for the leadership of Regulatory Authorities and Private Sector CEOs, the SAMENA Accelerator roundtables are open to all tiers of policy decision-making and the wider industry audience. Participation as speakers in the roundtables, however, is exclusive to invited speakers only. Senior industry executives may approach SAMENA Council to request participation details. **■**

RF Distribution products engineered for LEO Satellites

ETL Systems has recently introduced a range of rack mounted, RF distribution products for Low Earth Orbit (LEO) applications.

With low cost, ease of maintainability, small form factor and extended bandwidth all expected for LEO ground segment equipment, ETL's RF solutions have been specifically engineered to fit these needs depending on the antenna hub requirements.

Genus active splitters and combiners

The recently introduced Genus RF distribution chassis is a compact common chassis with a range of functions, broad frequency range and are scalable to fit into small and large teleports. The high resilience chassis provides a solution where single points of failure can be minimised and can

be configured with a mixture of RF modules including active splitters and combiners, with variable gain, slope, RF detection and RF power limiting.

Hawk 1U L-band RF Matrix

Our new Hawk 15, extended L-band, quad 4x4 RF Matrix is ideally suited for signal routing at smaller LEO gateways with a small number of modems, where modem redundancy is required. The Hawk has capacity for up to 4 field serviceable and replaceable 4x4 matrix modules - which can be combining or distributive - for uplink and downlink. The compact and configurable LEO Matrix can be fitted with any combination of modules, depending on the application.

Falcon Frequency Up and Down Converters

Our new Falcon Frequency Up and Down Converters, are ideally suited to LEO ground station applications with capacity for up to 5 agile or block, up and down converters with different operating frequencies in the same compact 1U chassis. Resilience is also provided from field serviceable RF modules, hot-swap dual redundant power supplies and a field serviceable CPU.

StingRay RF Over Fibre

StingRay RF Over Fibre products are engineered specifically for LEO Satellites for low loss and long distance RF to optical signal transmission. The compact form factor of rack systems and RF component fibre optic products are ideally suited to smaller teleports, with indoor and outdoor IP65 mounting options available. **IT**

Eutelsat launches Sat.tv

Eutelsat Communications has successfully launched Sat.tv, its enhanced Electronic Program Guide for FTA channels. The service is already operating at the 7/8° West position, serving over 56 million Arabic-speaking homes across the Middle East and North Africa and is being progressively deployed at other Eutelsat video neighborhoods.

Sat.tv gives TV audiences an unparalleled Free-to-Air user experience, with the broadest content visibility, while enabling broadcasters to maximize their reach and increase their ability to target specific viewers through the following features:

New free-to-air satellite receivers compatible with the Sat.tv service simplify the user experience and give visibility to the entire channel line-up. **IT**

Eutelsat appointment of Pascal Homsy as CTO

Eutelsat Communications has appointed Pascal Homsy as Chief Technical Officer.

Pascal joins Eutelsat from Thales Alenia Space where he was head of the Space Telecommunications Business Line. He brings with him some 30 years' experience of senior management positions within major international groups, notably the telecoms conglomerate, Alcatel/Lucent/Nokia and the IT Services leader, Atos.

A seasoned Chief Technical Officer, Pascal has headed teams specialised in IP Platforms, Voice and Services, Fixed

Networks, Broadband Wireless and Mobile Networks. In addition, he brings end-to-end knowledge of our value chain, having served in several Global Account Management and Sales Support roles at Alcatel, where he was notably in charge of the relationship with Orange.

Pascal also has considerable international experience, having spent the early part of his career in charge of Alcatel's activities in numerous APAC markets, and subsequently holding responsibility for EMEA in various technology and commercial roles.

Commenting on the appointment, Rodolphe Belmer said: "I am confident that Pascal's extensive skill-set will be a great asset to Eutelsat as we pursue the transformation of our group to capture the Connectivity opportunity".

Pascal will join Eutelsat in January and will sit on the Executive Committee. He replaces Johann Leroy who has decided to continue his professional career outside the Group. I take this opportunity to warmly thank Johann for his key contribution to Eutelsat's development and to wish him well in his future endeavors. **IT**

Digital Operation Support services will drive tomorrow's Data-Centric World

Alaa ElShimy, SVP & MD of Enterprise Business Group at Huawei Middle East



As we near the end of 2020, the year has clearly been an exceptional one, and it had left no uncertainty that 2021 will also be unlike any year we have seen before. **The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic – on human life, on businesses, and on economies – is absolutely unprecedented, and, while it does lay the foundations for our society to change in the future, it also presents opportunities, particularly in terms of industrial digital transformation.** If 2020 has taught us anything, it is that digitalization is more important than ever before, especially when it comes to business continuity and keeping societies running no matter what. There is no time like the present for enterprises to seize the opportunity to begin their digital transformation journey, and to reap the benefits of technologies such as cloud computing, artificial intelligence (AI), big data, and the Internet of Things (IoT).

Many of these technologies are currently in play across all industries – and those businesses that are already well along the pathway of their digital journey are the ones that have been able to experience minimal disruption as a result of pandemic conditions. Not only does digital transformation improve business value, it breaks down data and system silos, enabling greater accessibility, creating seamless ecosystems, and contributing towards business improvement.

Regardless of where an enterprise currently stands on the road to digitalization, there is always more that can be done. The digital transformation journey is an ongoing one; there are constant updates, new technologies, new networks and so on – and to overlook the value of creating an operating model that is scalable will result in reaching a plateau. Enterprise value and data-driven business decision-making must be at the core of this model, as this directs the journey and makes the jump from implementation to digital vision easier. A digital operation center can help to not only drive digital transformation, but optimize operation efficiency, too, making it one of the most important investments for enterprises today.

When building a digital operation center, there is a four-part digital operation support service framework that enterprises can refer to. These parts are:

- *Management system (foundation): Establish high-efficiency operational organizations, processes, and standards, form an organic collaborative operation mechanism, and support orderly and efficient execution of enterprises' digital transformation.*
- *Command center (nerve center): Offer monitoring, warning, and forecasting functions for operation status in domains, and support decision-making, coordination, and command of the management.*
- *Service center (driver): Establish a partner ecosystem, and take charge of design, development, construction, and routine operations of digital operation solutions for each domain with the help of support services provided by partners.*
- *Support platform (assistant): Facilitate online digital transformation of enterprises, further improve the operation efficiency, and reduce the costs.*

The digital operation center can benefit immensely from support services, and there

are numerous actions that can be taken in this respect. For example, an alliance from within the operation support service industry would prove highly beneficial, as it will encourage more service providers to come together to improve the value of enterprises' digital transformation. The creation of a digital operation standards system would also propel the sector by not only enhancing services, but optimizing digital operation centers in a way that will help enterprises to map out the best digital transformation journey for them.

And this, at the end of the day, must be a priority for all – to achieve digital transformation on an enterprise-wide scale, across all industry verticals. Digital technologies will enable industries to achieve automatic and intelligent operations, which will be powered by AI and intelligent sensing devices that can and will be integrated into all enterprise operations. This will provide immense quantities of historical and current data that can be processed in real time, which can be used to implement business decisions based on smart analysis and outcomes from actual enterprise activities. Whatever realities the post-pandemic world may hold, data will, ultimately, remain at the heart of it as one of the most valuable assets, especially for businesses. The digital operation center will be a driving force in this, making supporting services all the more essential. This year has seen growth in the use of ICT by organizations and individuals alike due to the spread of COVID-19 which has forced people to adjust quickly to e-learning and working from home. We believe the tremendous potential of digital transformation is to be unleashed on the basis of synergy across five tech domains, in which connectivity, cloud, AI, computing, and applications develop surrounding 5G in ways never seen before. This will empower industries to become more efficient as they progress in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, while also enabling governments to become more accessible and deploy more streamlined operations. **IT**

Accelerating the Region's Digital Economy to be the focus of the 2nd "SAMENA Accelerator"



In collaboration with Huawei Technologies Middle East, SAMENA Council's SAMENA Accelerator on Digital Economy will be held on November 25th, one week after the much-anticipated 1st Accelerator on Fiber deployment takes place on November 19th, with Policy-makers and Regulators taking active part in showcasing their respective administrations' preparedness for advancing digitization.

Given its advocacy messages that have consistently focused on enabling and incentivizing regional broadband development to help in "building digital economies", SAMENA Council deems it imperative to convene industry stakeholders once again to define implementable steps for driving digital-

led economic growth within the region, and to bring both predictability and sustainability to the expanding digital ecosystem.

The November 25th SAMENA Accelerator on "Accelerating a Sustainable Digital Economy" will drive inspiration from and build on the key messages and decisions expressed in the Declaration of the G20 Digital Economy Ministers Meeting of July 2020, and has the primary objective of focusing specifically on expediting the expansion of the necessary ICT infrastructure, which requires updating existing legal, technical systems, and making policies to suit the digital space; incentivizing investment and fostering innovative ecosystem growth; emphasizing on the need to align national ICT visions

with national economic visions as much as possible; defining steps to achieve strategic coordination of multiple stakeholders; making the Digital Economy measurable; integrating the region; and creating economies of scale for infrastructure investments.

As a result, key initiatives are expected to be defined on November 25th, which can be adopted to accelerate progress on digital development in a digitally-inclusive manner, thus providing regional Policymakers and Regulatory Authorities the confidence that the Private sector is fully ready to play its part in fulfilling the global goal of Universal Digital Access and in furthering the Connect 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda of the United Nations.

Bocar BA, CEO and Board Member of SAMENA Council, has stated that "We are thrilled to seek the involvement of the region's Policymakers, Regulators, and the Private Sector in the Digital Economy SAMENA Accelerator. I personally look forward to witnessing a very good, outcome-oriented discussion on November 25th, in what will be preceded by an equally productive discussion on November 19th concerning the proliferation of Fiber infrastructure, which is a necessary conduit for the Digital Economy."

Like the SAMENA Accelerator on Fiber Deployment on November 19th, the SAMENA Accelerator on November 25th carries a multifaceted aim of presenting a strong case for accelerating the SA-ME-NA region's Digital Economy in a sustainable manner, and which necessitates taking expedited and astute policy and regulatory enablement steps.

SAMENA Council believes, with proper policy and regulatory mechanisms in place, healthy competition in building ICT infrastructure can help drive investment and innovation; both of which are essential, among other factors, to ensuring a sustainable Digital Economy. **■**

Etisalat Group Reports a 6% increase in consolidated Net Profit for Q3 2020 to AED 2.4b

Q3 Financial Highlights and Key Developments

- Aggregate subscriber base reached 149 million; representing Year over Year increase of 1%.
- In Q3 2020, consolidated revenues reached AED 13.0 billion, while consolidated net profit after Federal Royalty amounted to AED 2.4 billion, an increase of 6% compared to same period last year.
- In the third quarter, Consolidated EBITDA amounted to AED 6.9 billion, representing an increase of 2% year over year and resulting in EBITDA margin of 53%
- Etisalat subscribers can now access 5G fixed networks for the first time from their homes in UAE
- Etisalat partnered with Ericsson to connect to its charging system and 5G Business Support Systems (BSS) supporting new use cases including IoT, network slicing, AR and VR
- Etisalat partnered with Smartworld to exclusively bring 'Shahada', a tamper proof digital certificate platform for all educational institutions in the region
- Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) collaborated with Etisalat to deploy innovative technologies for an advanced telecom infrastructure, high speed internet and superior mobile connectivity
- Etisalat partnered with Synamedia to launch Switch TV, a new direct-to-consumer (D2C) multi-screen service with both free and premium live TV channels, catch-up and on-demand
- Digital Financial Services, a joint venture between Etisalat and Noor Bank announced eWallet's utility bill payment services
- Etisalat launched e-store, a free website builder part of the Business Edge portfolio for SMB customers to transform their businesses online

Hatem Dowidar, Acting CEO, Etisalat Group & CEO, Etisalat International



"Etisalat's performance in the third quarter exemplifies resilience in these uncertain times and is a testament to the vital role the network played in our customers' lives, enabling businesses and the society to easily transition to the new normal.

"Thanks to the advanced capabilities of our infrastructure, Etisalat will continue to capture new growth opportunities while remaining focused on addressing the increasing customers' needs during the pandemic. We have sustained our efforts in realising our vision of 'Driving the digital future to empower societies' through these challenging times. The availability and access to the super-fast speeds on 5G fixed networks from homes is a testament to our efforts taken towards this direction.

"Etisalat will move ahead in its journey of transformation on an accelerated path showing agility by future-proofing its business against challenges and capitalising on opportunities. We will remain focused on our long-term goals while creating incremental business value. As a company, we will continue to digitally transform our business, focusing on innovation in our existing assets by building new capabilities that are digitally enabled and sustainable.

"I would like to thank the UAE leadership for their vision and support during this period, inspiring us to pursue our digital ambitions and face the new reality to meet the distinctive needs and expectations of the communities we serve. Etisalat also extends its appreciation to its loyal customers, partners and shareholders for their continued confidence during this period."

Q3 – Subscribers

In the UAE, the subscriber base reached to 12.1 million, while Etisalat Group aggregate subscribers reached 149 million representing a year over year increase of 1%.

Q3 – Revenue & Net profit

Etisalat Group's consolidated revenue for the third quarter of 2020 amounted to AED 13.0 billion, while Consolidated net profit after Federal Royalty amounted to AED 2.4 billion, representing an increase of 6% and resulting in a net profit margin of 18%.

Q3 - EBITDA

Consolidated EBITDA amounted to AED 6.9 billion, representing an increase of 2% year over year and resulting in EBITDA margin of 53%.

EITC announces Q3 2020 financial results

Emirates Integrated Telecommunications Company PJSC (du) has announced its financial results for the third quarter of 2020. It reported (a) a strong 41.6% quarter-over-quarter growth in its quarterly Adjusted Net Income and 116.2% year-over-year growth in its quarterly Net Income as a result of the improvement of its operational performance and the capital gains derived from the sale of its stake in Khazna, (b) a recovery of its quarterly revenue growth with a 0.7% quarter-over-quarter growth, and (c) an important capital deployment of AED 511 million reflecting the implementation of its ambitious investment plans.

Q3 2020 and 9M 2020 Financial Results Analysis

Q3 2020 Revenues increased by 0.7% to AED 2.69 billion, compared to the previous quarter reflecting the first signs of recovery in the economic activity and the re-opening of tourism in the UAE.

- Q3 2020 Mobile Revenues were up 2.0% reaching AED 1.33 billion compared to AED 1.31 billion in Q2 2020. This growth is the result of a combination of an increase in the mobile subscriber base by 2.8% to 6.59 million subscribers and an increase of the ARPU.
- Q3 2020 Fixed Revenues, at AED 637 million, reflected a slight stabilisation when compared to the previous quarter. Fixed subscriber base continued its gradual increase to reach 228 thousand at the end of Q3, driving fixed revenues for the first 9 months of 2020 up by almost 4% -when compared to the same period in 2019- to AED 1.92 billion. The performance of the fixed segment reflects a healthy increase in the subscriber base fuelled by the higher home connectivity needs in 2020.

Q3 2020 EBITDA improved by 9.8% to AED 1.16 billion, compared to AED 1.05 billion registered in Q2 2020. This growth resulted from the combination of several factors including a better revenue mix that led to an improvement of the gross margin, the reduction in bad debt provisions compared to Q2 2020 and the delivery of cost efficiency initiatives initiated in the beginning of Q2



2020.

Q3 2020 Net Income increased by 116.2% year-over-year to reach AED 824 million compared to AED 381 million in Q3 2019. This growth is mainly attributed to AED 519 million capital gains resulting from the sale of EITC's stake in Khazna data centre. Excluding the AED 519 million one-off benefit, the Q3 2020 Net Income amounted to AED 305 million, representing an increase of 41.6% compared to the previous quarter. This growth is attributed to the recovery in top line, a better revenue mix and the company's successful implementation of its cost efficiency program.

Q3 2020 Capital expenditures amounted to AED 511 million (or 19% of the quarterly revenues) taking the total Capital expenditures for the first 9 months to a total of AED 1.33 billion (or 15.9% of the first 9 month revenues). This level, almost double the level of Capital expenditures for the same period in 2019, reflects a sustained and consistent execution of the company's deployment plans to improve network quality under current technologies, increase the 5G coverage and continue its digital transformation.

Strategic Matters

At the end of Q3 2020, EITC announced the

departure of the CEO Johan Dannelind and the appointment of Fahad Al Hassawi as Acting CEO and Ahmad Julfar, Board Member, as a Managing Director reflecting the Board's active support and full collaboration for the implementation of EITC's new operational model and strategy, which is currently being deployed.

On 15 September 2020, EITC announced the sale of its 26% minority stake in Khazna data centre for AED 800 million, which resulted in a profit of AED 519 million, booked in Q3 2020. The sale of EITC indirect minority stake in Khazna reflects EITC's new focus on the data centre business through partnership and direct build-up. EITC will maintain its long term commercial agreements with Khazna, through which it will continue to acquire capacity needs for the company and its clients, as required. Commenting on the results, Fahad Al Hassawi, Acting CEO of EITC said: "With the start of the recovery in the UAE market, we are pleased to see green shoots of recovery across our business too, for the first time since the onset of the pandemic. Compared to Q2 2020, characterised by lockdowns and severe disruptions in business activity, our Q3 2020 results show good improvement. Our quarterly revenues are up 0.7% quarter-over-quarter to AED 2.69 billion and our Quarterly Net Income is up 116.2%, year-over-year to AED 824 million.

"As a telecom operator, we consider ourselves one of the digital backbones of the country. We are both blessed and humbled by the responsibility this honour comes with, which has been thoroughly tested during these unprecedented times. At EITC, we have been quick in adapting and responding to the market disruptions. We have launched a new operating model, underpinned by an acceleration in digital transformation. The new operating model is designed to deliver growth in a digital world, and with it, long-term returns for our shareholders. "For our customers, we have significantly increased our capex spend for network deployment and maintenance, including the rollout of 5G across the country. We aim to bring the best connectivity speeds and most innovative services to everyone in the UAE." ■

The Saudi G20 to rally for innovation in digital education and providing opportunities for women



The stc Group CEO Nasser Sulaiman Al Nasser expects that the desired core skills of some occupations are going to change in the perceived future as a result of digital transformations. He specified that 40% to 50% of jobs would require new skills in the next five years.

It's our priority to continue to collaborate with governments. The Saudi business team has worked closely with the International Business Community and the G20 leaders in order to develop recommendations for comprehensive digital transformation policies. The Kingdom, through partnership between the government and the private sector under the Digital Transformation Program, has made significant qualitative leaps in the digital infrastructure; fiber

optic cables were delivered to more than 2 million houses within 3 years, reaching 60% houses in the Kingdom compared to 23% in the past, announced Al Nasser in a press release during his participation as head of the Digital Transformation Working Group of the Saudi B20.

The Kingdom quadrupled the bandwidth available to the telecommunications sector; ranking the Kingdom among the top 5 countries with the fastest internet speed in the world after being in the 105th position. Therefore, it's important to work on fixing the existing digital gap, focus on building capabilities that are compatible with the digital transformation and provide more opportunities for women in this field. It's expected that 40% to 50% of jobs will

require new skills in the next five years, he added.

The Digital Transformation Working Group of the Saudi B20 urged to establish and support a flexible digital infrastructure by enhancing cybersecurity readiness for both individuals and companies and investing in human capital. It also called for supporting and approving proper development of AI, when possible, by providing a suitable, reliable organizational system, educating companies, government and society on technology, and enhancing AI benefits on all levels.

The Digital Transformation Working Group of the Saudi B20 has also recommended to lay grounds that ensure prosperity for smart cities by promoting its key pillars and social acceptance all over the world.

The Saudi Business Group hosted G20's virtual summit on the 26th and 27th of October, 2020. World leaders from various fields, academic circles, civil society and international organizations attended to discuss the most urgent economic questions that the Society is currently facing. Saudi Arabia is the first country in the Middle East to assume G20 presidency as a representative of the region and the developing countries.

Based on our mission of achieving business progress through cooperation, the B20 Summit represents a culmination of the efforts of more than 650 members who worked tirelessly during the whole past year in order to provide recommendations on the G20's major issues. The year 2020 was full of extraordinary challenges; societies all over the world had to deal with the impacts of the pandemic, while our leaders were keen to pick up the pace in order to fulfill the urgent needs and look forward to building a more inclusive and sustainable future, said Yousef Al-Benyani, chair of the B20. ■

Ooredoo Group announced 16% increase in Net Profit to QAR 1.5 billion at 9M 2020

Ashraf Siddiqui

Financial Highlights:

	Quarterly Analysis			9M Analysis		
	Q3 2020	Q3 2019	% Change	9M 2020	9M 2019	% Change
Consolidated Revenue (QAR m)	7,296	7,457	-2%	21,414	21,965	-3%
EBITDA (QAR m)	3,253	3,325	-2%	9,249	9,664	-4%
EBITDA Margin (%)	45%	45%	-	43%	44%	-
Net Profit Attributable to Ooredoo Shareholders (QAR m)	650	424	53%	1,468	1,265	16%
Customers in million (consolidated)	119	116	3%	119	116	3%

- Revenue declined by 3% year-on-year to QAR 21.4 billion at 9M 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic impact, with a reduction in handset sales and roaming business as well as macroeconomic weakness in some of our markets. This was partially offset by growth in Indonesia.
- EBITDA declined by 4% year-on-year to QAR 9.2 billion at 9M 2020, impacted by lower revenues and higher cost of sales as well as challenging market conditions in Algeria, Kuwait, Iraq and Oman. The company maintains its focus on digitalization and cost optimization, which is reflected in the strong EBITDA margin for the 9M and Q3 2020 periods.
- Group Net Profit attributable to Ooredoo shareholders increased by 16% year-on-year to QAR 1.5 billion at 9M 2020 due to a more favorable Foreign Exchange environment compared to the same period last year.
- Data revenues account for more than 50% of total Revenue driven by our data leadership and digital transformation initiatives across the countries we operate in.
- Ooredoo Group has healthy cash reserve and liquidity levels to be able to absorb the impact of COVID-19 pandemic

Operational highlights:

- Ooredoo Group expanded its customer base by 3% to 119 million customers, boosted by additions in Indonesia and Myanmar during 9M 2020.
- Ooredoo Group reinforced its leadership as a digital enabler with strong demand for its offerings including Ooredoo Oman's mobile wallet, Pay+, developed in conjunction with National Bank of Oman and Asiacell's new mobile app, which has become the most downloaded app by a telecom operator in Iraq.
- Ooredoo Group launched a number of initiatives to support the communities in most need of assistance during the pandemic public health crisis, with a focus on the medical and education sectors. Initiatives included donating ventilators, defibrillators, patient monitors and other emergency medical equipment to hospitals in Myanmar; donating laptops to students and providing access to online education portals and app-based learning solutions in Oman and Algeria; as well as targeted customer relief packages and support, featuring complimentary data and bill payment flexibility across several markets.



Sheikh Saud, Group CEO - Ooredoo



Sheikh Faisal Bin Thani Al Thani, Chairman - Ooredoo Group

Commenting on the results, Sheikh Faisal Bin Thani Al Thani, Chairman of Ooredoo, said:

"Ooredoo Group has been fortunate to have a well-diversified business - across geography and customer composition - in addition to a strong balance sheet, which has helped us maintain resilience during these challenging times. We reported a Group net profit of QAR 1.5 billion for the first nine months of 2020, an increase of 16% compared to the same period last year. We have seen a positive trend of Revenue growth in the vast majority of our markets when comparing the third quarter with the second quarter of 2020.

Digital transformation continues to be a key value driver for our business. Our leadership in this area enabled us to seamlessly respond to the new operating environment and serve our customers in a safe and convenient way, in spite of the movement restrictions. We expanded our customer base with the launch of new products such as Ooredoo Oman's mobile wallet, Pay+, and Asiacell's new mobile app which has become the most downloaded app by a telecom operator in Iraq.

For the communities we operate in, we launched a number of initiatives to provide support to medical centres through donation of medical equipment, and for students, we

provided free data and e-learning platforms to support remote learning."

Also commenting on the results, Sheikh Saud bin Nasser Al Thani, Group Chief Executive Officer of Ooredoo said:

"Ooredoo Group reported a healthy set of results, despite challenging circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Group revenues for the first nine months of 2020 were QAR 21 billion, down 3% compared to the same period last year, due to macroeconomic weaknesses in some of our markets that were partially offset by a robust performance in Indonesia.

Indosat Ooredoo reported revenue growth of 6% as it implemented its strategy of offering simple, relevant, and transparent products. Ooredoo Kuwait experienced Revenue growth in Q3 over Q2 2020, Ooredoo Algeria showed signs of an improved market situation in the recent months. Ooredoo Oman increased 5G coverage further, while Asiacell is preparing for the launch of LTE in 2021. Ooredoo Tunisia improved its mobile data leadership position and in our home market in Qatar, we improved revenue sequentially and year on year in Q3.

We continued to focus on optimising our cost base to absorb some of the pressure from the

decline in revenues. For the first nine months of 2020, Group EBITDA declined 4% to QAR 9.2 billion, compared to the same period last year, due to the decline in revenues. However, Group net profit increased 16% during the same period, benefitting from FX gains in certain markets.

Ooredoo Group continues to witness strong demand for its product and services, as demonstrated by the 3% increase in our customer base to 119 million during these challenging times, supported by strong customer growth in Indonesia and Myanmar."

Operational Review

Middle East

Ooredoo Qatar

Ooredoo Qatar focused on growth and strengthened its leadership position in the face of a range of challenges caused by COVID-19 pandemic. While roaming revenue continued to be impacted by global travel restrictions, the company saw positive returns from fixed and ICT services in particular. Reported revenue was QAR 5.3 billion (9M 2019: QAR 5.4 billion). EBITDA stood at 2.9 billion (9M 2019: 3.0 billion). Total customers reached 3.3 million, up 2.7% year-on-year, with the mobile customer base

growing by 3.2%, and the postpaid customer base up by 2.8%.

EBITDA margin sustained its positive trend at 55% (9M 2019: 56%).

EBITDA was strengthened by a range of cost optimisation measures, including franchising shops, re-negotiating major content deals, and an increased focus on digitisation and related programmes. The launch of Ooredoo ONE 'All-In-One' Home Service comprising TV, home broadband and landline triple play extended the range of home entertainment options for the community and contributed to customer growth for Ooredoo tv of 2% year-on-year.

Ooredoo Qatar's network enhancement programme ensured network and telecom support and readiness for quarantine centres and hubs as required. More than 463,000 homes across the country are now connected to Ooredoo Fibre.

Ooredoo Oman

Lockdowns and movement restrictions which took place during the first nine months of 2020 impacted Ooredoo Oman's results for the period. Revenues declined 5% to QAR 1.9 billion compared to the same period last year, due to a reduction in mobile revenues. Consequently, EBITDA for the period declined 9% to QAR 1.0 billion compared to the same period last year.

Ooredoo Oman served a customer base of 2.6 million (9M 2019: 3.0 million) during the first nine months of 2020 as it expanded the coverage of its 5G Supernet Home Internet across the country. The company's mobile wallet, Pay+, developed in conjunction with National Bank of Oman, has seen great take-up, enabling customers to make contactless deposits, bill payments, transfers, and pay at over 3,000 merchants, using just their mobile numbers.

Ooredoo Oman remains committed to supporting the local community through these uncertain times by donating laptops to students and providing access to an online education portal and app-based learning solution through its enhanced digital tutorial app.

Ooredoo Kuwait

Ooredoo Kuwait reported revenues of QAR

1.8 billion for the first nine months of 2020, down 9% compared to the same period last year, due to softening macroeconomic conditions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as intense market competition.

EBITDA for the period was QAR 482 million, down 24% compared to the same period in 2019, due to the reduction in revenues. The company made good progress with the implementation of its cost optimisation plans as it seeks to absorb some of the pressure on the top line.

Ooredoo Kuwait continues to develop and improve its offering for its customer base of 2.4 million at the end of the first nine months of 2020 (9M 2019: 2.6 million) and in September celebrated 1000 days of data center services with zero downtime.

Asiacell — Iraq

Asiacell's performance for the first nine months of 2020 was impacted by movement restrictions across Iraq due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The company reported revenues of QAR 3.0 billion for the period, down 10% compared to the same period last year.

As a result, EBITDA declined 11% to QAR 1.3 billion during the first nine months of 2020 compared to the same period last year. However, the company's cost optimisation initiatives helped contain the impact from revenues, reflected in the stable EBITDA margin for 9M 2020 of 45%.

Asiacell's customer base was stable at 14.2 million (9M 2019: 14.1 million) at the end of 9M 2020, supported by the company's digital offering. Asiacell launched its mobile app which became the most downloaded app by a telecom operator in Iraq, with more than 1.5 million downloads.

North Africa

Ooredoo Algeria

Ooredoo Algeria was impacted by challenging market conditions characterised by intense price competition, softening macroeconomic environment and the 5% year on year depreciation of the Algerian Dinar.

The company reported revenues of QAR 1.7 billion for the first nine months of 2020, down 11% compared to the same period last

year. Consequently, EBITDA for the nine-month period was down 13% to QAR 575 million. Ooredoo Algeria remains focused on optimising its cost base through a more efficient marketing spend.

Sequentially, revenues increased 10% in Q3 2020 compared to the previous quarter reflecting the initial stages of a recovery as movement restrictions ease and commercial activity resumes.

Ooredoo Algeria's customer base was 12.3 million at the end of the first nine months of 2020 compared to 13.4 million for the same period in 2019.

Ooredoo Tunisia

Ooredoo Tunisia reported revenue growth of 2% to QAR 1.1 billion, for the first nine months of 2020 compared to the same period last year, despite challenging macroeconomic conditions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Increased billing and collection cost reflecting a slowing economy contributed to a 6% decrease in EBITDA to QAR 494 million during 9M 2020 compared to the same period last year. Ooredoo Tunisia continues to implement its cost optimisation programme as well as enhance marketing spend through the use of digital channels.

Ooredoo Tunisia's customer base was 8.8 million (9M 2019: 9.1 million) in 9M 2020, reaffirming its position as the number one telecom player by customer market share. The company launched its updated "My Ooredoo App", in line with its strategy to boost its digital offering.

Asia

Indosat Ooredoo

Indosat Ooredoo's strategy to offer simple, relevant, and transparent products continues to yield results in a highly competitive environment. The company's revenues increased 6% to QAR 5.1 billion during the first nine months of 2020 compared to the same period last year, supported by strong mobile revenue.

Indosat Ooredoo's strong top line performance led to EBITDA growth of 11% for the nine-month period compared to the same period. 

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Smart Dubai to take part in 40th GITEX Technology Week 2020, highlight Dubai's leading role in building a smart city



prominent international platform that brings together leading global figures from the technology and smart city sectors to discuss and exchange ideas," asserted His Excellency Younus Al Nasser, Assistant Director General of Smart Dubai, and CEO of the Dubai Data Establishment. "It is an ideal opportunity for governments, companies, and individuals to get a closer look at international smart city trends and explore best practices and success stories in the sector."

"We take part in this year's edition of the event as we celebrate the five-year anniversary of the establishment of Smart Dubai," H.E. added. "This makes us more determined to position Dubai as a leader in terms of smart cities, and as a city that has developed its own unique approach to

providing innovative services and initiatives, employing advanced technologies to make people's lives easier and happier."

"These services have demonstrated their effectiveness in addressing global challenges such as the COVID-19 outbreak, where they offer solutions to curb the impact of such crises on various sectors," H.E. Al Nasser said. "This, ultimately, allowed Dubai to set the standard among smart cities, offering a successful model to be emulated around the world."

GITEX Technology Week 2020 lends its support to the international efforts to relaunch economic and investment activities around the world, as well as to reactivate vital communication channels. It brings influential stakeholders from technology and business sectors back together to set growth strategies that take these new developments into account and aim to achieve a set of ambitious objectives in the decade ahead. **■**

Smart Dubai has announced its plans to participate in the 40th GITEX Technology Week, taking place on December 6-10, 2020, at the Dubai World Trade Centre, where it intends to showcase the latest developments in terms of city-wide smart transformation and the positive impact digitization is making on people's lives.

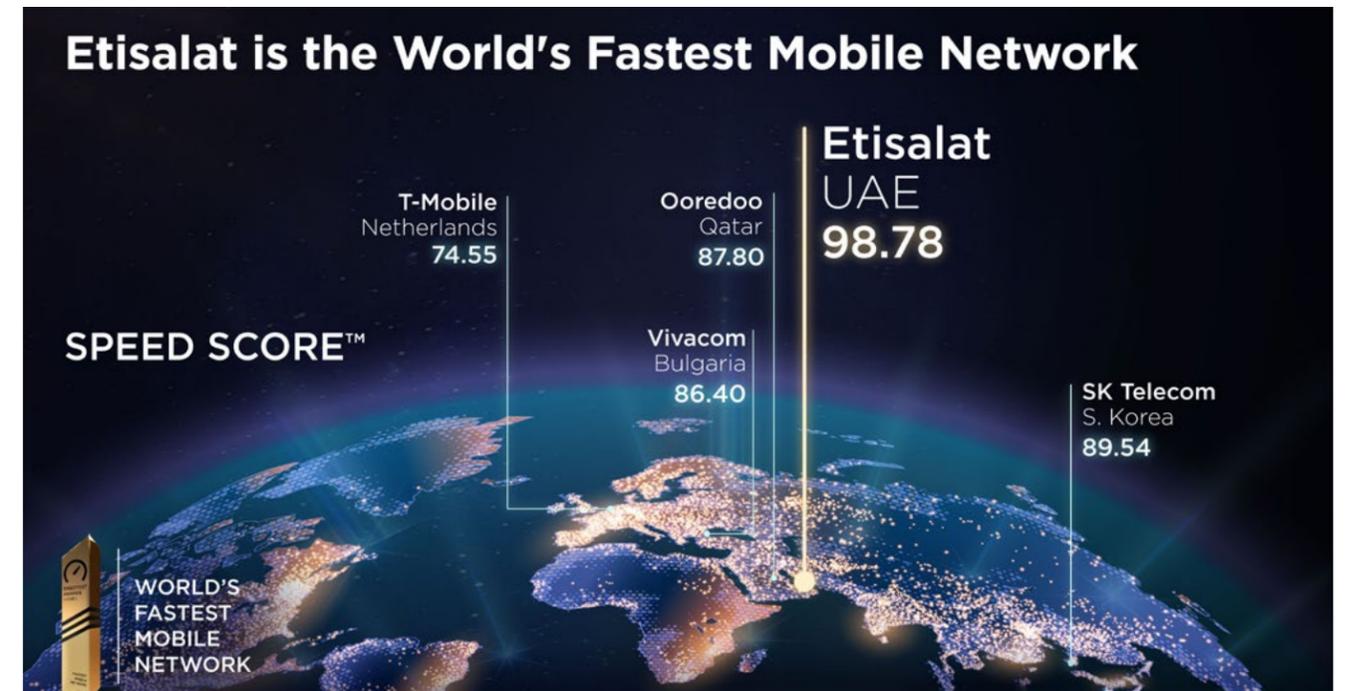
Furthermore, Smart Dubai will be highlighting collaborative efforts undertaken in partnership with government entities when faced with the current global crisis, as well as the solutions developed to overcome them and move forward with digital development plans.

This year's event coincides with Smart

Dubai's fifth anniversary, and the entity's participation is set to shed light on the progress it has made in its mission to transform Dubai into the world's smartest and happiest city, as well as the advancements recorded across various strategic digital transformation plans and projects.

Smart Dubai will also be looking to underline the importance and role of technology in facilitating people's lives and supporting various city sectors. Several government entities will be joining Smart Dubai's pavilion to showcase their existing and new services.

"GITEX Technology Week presents a



Etisalat UAE recognised as the fastest mobile network operator globally by Ookla Speedtest

Ookla, the global leader in fixed broadband and mobile network testing applications, data and analysis recognised Etisalat for being the fastest mobile network operator worldwide in 2020 providing its subscribers the most superior experience with the fastest mobile speeds from anywhere in the world. This major achievement is a testimony of UAE's leadership's vision to transform the country to a digital first and knowledge based economy.

The ranking is based on analysis by Ookla of millions of tests actively initiated by customers across every network to check internet speeds using various applications on web and mobile platforms. The Speedtest Awards™ for top network providers are determined using a 'Speed Score' that incorporates a measure of each provider's network speeds (download and upload) to rank network speed performance.

With a download speed of 115.89 mbps and an overall ranking in the 'Speed Score' at 98.78, Etisalat is the only operator globally to rank higher than 90 as per Ookla Speedtest data. Etisalat is also the winner of the Speedtest

Awards for both fastest mobile network worldwide in Q1-Q2 and Q2-Q3 in 2020 and fastest fixed broadband network in Q3-Q4 2019.

Hatem Dowidar, Acting CEO, Etisalat Group, said: "This is a milestone achievement and a testament to our relentless efforts towards our strategy and vision to 'Drive the digital future to empower societies'. Our corporate strategy has enabled us to consistently push boundaries, by responding swiftly to the global digital advancements and proactively deliver cutting-edge services and solutions to our customers. We will continue to focus on creating the world's best and leading networks across our markets to deliver long-term value to all our stakeholders.

"Thanks to the vision of our wise leadership in the UAE in positioning the country among the most digitally advanced globally and inspiring us to realise our efforts by delivering world-class networks, infrastructure and innovative services. We are also grateful to the leaders for their continuous support and want to express our gratitude to all our loyal customers for

their confidence in driving us to accomplish our goals of driving digital innovations for a better future."

Doug Suttles, CEO and co-founder of Ookla said: "Today, I am honoured to recognise Etisalat UAE with the fastest mobile network in the world. This is a truly momentous accolade, and one that Etisalat absolutely deserves. Etisalat is at the top of the world in terms of network speed and is officially the world's fastest mobile network. In addition to being awarded as the fastest mobile operator, Etisalat is also recognised with the fastest fixed broadband network in the GCC and Arab region. This is a truly historic and proud moment for the country and Etisalat.

"With everything going digital and online the fast network will help transform the lives of Etisalat subscribers. This is another incredible achievement showcasing the company's commitment to advancing the UAE and empowering its leadership with a strategic edge in taking one large step closer to realising the UAE Vision 2021 plan and national digital transformation strategy." **■**



Saudi Arabia's Most Influential ICT Leaders Gather Online for Virtual IDC CIO Summit

International Data Corporation (IDC) hosted more than 200 senior ICT leaders on its industry-leading virtual platform for the 10th annual edition of its IDC Saudi Arabia CIO Summit. Running under the theme 'The Race to Reinvent: Connecting Leaders to Empower Digital Transformation', the digital event took place on October 14 and offered an unrivaled immersive experience for all participants as they seamlessly engaged in content-rich presentations and panel discussions, connected with exhibitors via video chat, and interacted with IDC analysts and key industry players in designated networking zones.

With more than 30 pioneering ICT suppliers and organizations taking part, the event showcased exclusive insights from Eng. Ali Al Asiri, CEO of Yesser, Saudi Arabia's e-Government Program, which was the event's Strategic Partner, and Eng. Faisal Ahmed Bakhshwain, Deputy Minister of Digital Transformation within the Kingdom's Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development, which was the event's Government Partner.

"The IDC Saudi Arabia CIO Summit 2020 comes at a time when we are seeking

to achieve higher levels of digital maturity in both public and private sector organizations," said Al Asiri. "The use of emerging technologies such as AI, cloud computing, blockchain, and IoT will play a critical role as we strive to develop the digital capabilities and competencies required to optimize our performance and align ourselves with the wider vision of the Kingdom, especially as the world looks to Saudi Arabia's technological and digital capabilities in crisis management and their effective use by government entities in serving the Saudi community."

The IDC Saudi Arabia CIO Summit 2020 agenda incorporated individually themed sessions that offered expert guidance on the latest trends in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, digital leadership, the future of work, intelligent automation, next-generation resilience and continuity, big data analytics, and cloud, to name just a few.

"Digital leadership will be critical for Saudi organizations as they look to unleash the full potential of digital transformation," said Hamza Naqshbandi, IDC's Regional Director for Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. "With

the global COVID-19 pandemic adding yet more complexity to the digital decision-making process, today's event provided an ideal opportunity to advise the Kingdom's businesses and government organizations on enabling competitive business models and identifying opportunities for growth and sustainability in these unprecedented times."

The event culminated with the IDC Digital Excellence Awards 2020 as IDC recognized the efforts of Saudi Arabia's foremost IT leaders in conceptualizing and successfully delivering game-changing transformation initiatives for their organizations across four different categories. The winners were as follows:

- 'CIO of the Year' – Sultan Daifullah Abukoshaim (Saudi Standards, Metrology, and Quality Organization)
- 'CISO of the Year' – Khalid Suliman Al-Harbi (Saudi Aramco)
- 'Excellence in Digital Innovation' – Eng. Faisal Ahmed Bakhshwain (Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development)
- 'Excellence in Line-of-Business Transformation Excellence' – Sajan Nair (Herfy Food Services) 🏆

PTCL collaborates with DETASAD to bring Cloud Marketplace to Pakistan



Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) collaborates with DETASAD (DETECON Al Saudia Co. Ltd.) a Saudi-German joint venture and a leading contributor to the ICT sector of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), to establish digital Cloud Marketplace in Pakistan. This was announced at a special e-signing ceremony that was attended by Shoaib Ahmad Siddiqui, Secretary IT & Telecom and Chairman Board of Director, PTCL, Eng. Nawaf Alhoshan, Deputy Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Saudi Arabia, and Hisham Al Sheikh, Deputy CEO YESSER Saudi e-Govt. Program. Other dignitaries included Rashid Khan, President and CEO, PTCL, Zarrar Hasham Khan, Chief Business Services Officer, PTCL, Muhammad Omar Malik, Member Telecom, Ministry of IT & Telecom, Pakistan, Felix Thomas Wass, President and CEO, DETASAD, Nauman A. Vawda, Founder and CEO, iVolve Technologies, along with senior officials from all sides.

With a track record of 38 years, DETASAD (DETECON Al Saudia Co. Ltd.) is the first international player to take the lead in Pakistan and collaborate with PTCL to launch public Cloud platform. This will be the first of its kind international collaboration, where data is going to be hosted locally in Pakistan with PTCL rated-3 Certified Data Center.

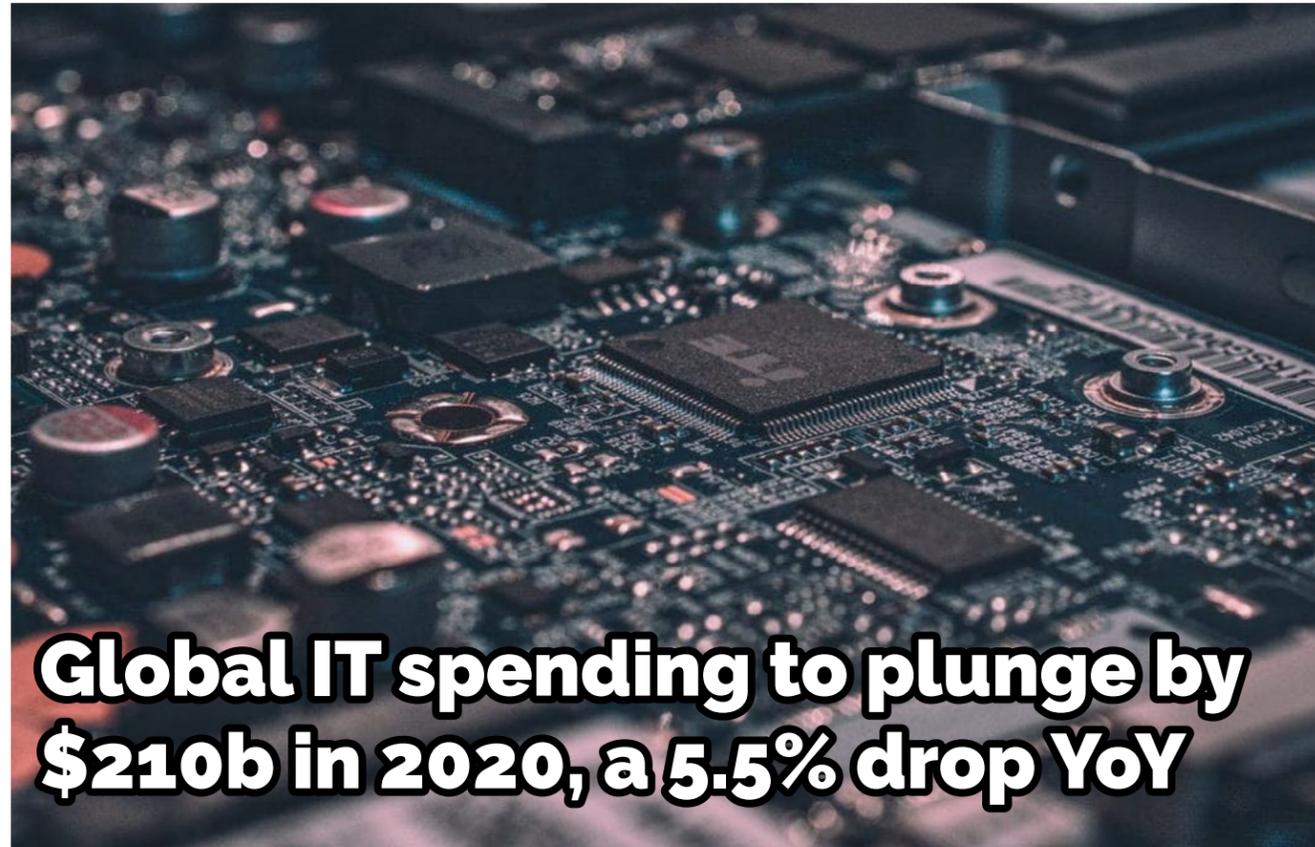
With its enterprise-grade & cost-effective services, Cloud Market Place will offer its

customers Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS), Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) and Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) on a highly scalable and secure public Cloud platform. The flexible Cloud will offer a rich catalogue, backed by a Service Level Agreement (SLA), making it an attractive offer for businesses. It will also provide a self-service portal and will bring Pakistan's first digital Cloud marketplace with a huge range of products and services. It has been designed to be performance optimized and affordable, therefore will provide the customer with the solution to transform their traditional IT infrastructure to a modern and scalable Cloud-based infrastructure. Speaking on the collaboration, Shoaib Ahmad Siddiqui, Secretary IT & Telecom and Chairman Board of Director, PTCL, said, "I would like to congratulate both the companies on this partnership to bring innovative business solutions to Pakistan that will make local businesses more agile and secure. In our journey to digitize the country under the Prime Minister's vision of a Digital Pakistan, PTCL is taking a leadership role in engaging with key international partners to make technology both accessible and affordable. Moreover, I am glad that this collaboration will further strengthen the friendly bond that exists from many years between Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia."

Speaking on the occasion, Eng. Nawaf

Alhoshan, Deputy Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Saudi Arabia, said, "This partnership is an example of the importance of collaboration and cooperation in the digital world between governments, between companies, and most critical, between public and private sector. Driven by Vision 2030, our blueprint for social transformation and economic diversification, the Kingdom today is reaching out to the world using digital as a language that transcends borders and cultures. A language common to anyone working to build a better world. Today, we reach out to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The partnership between the two companies is an extension of the synergies between our two countries, and the synergies between Digital Saudi with Vision 2030 and Digital Pakistan. The partnership is also a living example of how digital bridges between people and nations. Together, the two companies will participate and drive digital transformation across Pakistan as they rollout Cloud Marketplace."

PTCL, in line with the vision of Digital Pakistan, brings this key initiative to have a positive impact on the local businesses in Pakistan. Cloud Marketplace will enable organizations to equip themselves and conveniently opt for the innovative and secure Cloud solutions, with full compliance on data confidentiality and security regulations for both Pakistan and Internationally. 🏆



Global IT spending to plunge by \$210b in 2020, a 5.5% drop YoY

The economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic is forcing businesses and organizations across the world to prioritize their spending on technology and IT services. Many of them reset their budgets to finance only critical projects over initiatives aimed at transformation and growth, which triggered a significant drop in IT spending this year.

According to data presented by BuyShares.co.uk, global IT spending is expected to plunge by almost \$210bn in 2020, a 5.5% decrease year-over-year.

Spending on IT Devices to Plunge by 13.4%, the Biggest Drop in 2020

Before the COVID-19 outbreak, the global IT spending was growing for four years in a row, revealed the Gartner data. In 2015, companies and organizations worldwide spent over \$3.3trn on IT technology and services.

In the next twelve months, this figure rose to almost \$3.4trn and continued growing. In 2018, global IT spending jumped to over

\$3.7trn, nearly a 10% jump in three years.

The increasing trend continued in 2019, with global spending on IT technology and services rising by 2.7% year-over-year to over \$3.8trn. However, the COVID-19 crisis caused a significant cut, with the figure falling to around \$3.6trn in 2020.

Statistics show that global spending on devices like PCs, tablets, mobile phones, or printers is expected to witness the most significant drop in 2020, falling by 13.4% YoY to around \$616bn. IT services spending is forecast to hit \$992bn, a 4.6% drop in a year.

Businesses and organizations are expected to spend \$459bn on enterprise software, 3.7% less than in 2019. Data center systems follow with a 3.2% decrease in spending to \$208bn in 2020.

The Gartner survey also revealed that communication services, as the market's largest segment, are forecast to reach \$1.3trn in revenue, a 2.9% drop year-over-year.

Although the Gartner data indicate global IT spending will grow by 4% to over \$3.7trn in 2021, this value still represents a 1.6% drop compared to 2019 figures.

IT Spending in China to Grow 6.4% YoY, Japan to Witness the Biggest Drop

The IDC data revealed the COVID-19 pandemic is projected to have different impacts on IT spending by region in 2020. China is set to witness a 6.4% growth in IT spending, the most significant increase this year. Latin America ranked second with a 5.5% increase.

Statistics show that the United States' IT spending is projected to grow by merely 0.2% in 2020 compared to the pre-COVID-19 forecast of 6.6% growth.

On the other hand, Japanese businesses and organizations are forecast to witness the most significant drop in IT spending in 2020, falling by 6.7% year-over-year. The Middle East and Africa, and the Asia Pacific follow, with 3.6% and 1.4% drop, respectively. **T**

Airbus launches new multi-carrier base station for Tetrapol users



Airbus launches its new outdoor Multi-carrier Base Station compact (MBSc). It completes the Tetrapol base station portfolio with a highly mobile solution which provides various possibilities such as multi-standard compatibility, and benefits such as energy saving, and infrastructure cost saving without any installation work.

Airbus' MBSc is designed for outdoor use and can therefore withstand high environmental temperatures. It provides radio capacity to critical-communication users, even when located in remote or barely accessible areas. This space, power, and cost-saving network element is fully compliant with public safety requirements and compatible with the existing Tetrapol technology.

"Tetrapol technology is constantly evolving to answer arising customer requirements, not only in the public safety field such as for police and firefighters, but also health, and military users" explains Olivier Koczan, Head of Secure Land Communications at Airbus. "With this new solution, we are providing secure and resilient communication coverage with extended radio capabilities. All of which, while strengthening the mission-critical communications infrastructure, with no additional implementation constraints" He adds.

The state of Tlaxcala in Mexico is the first to use the new MBSc, and now benefits from additional Tetrapol coverage whenever it is needed. Furthermore, this multi-carrier base station offers the possibility of solution and application integration for public security and law enforcement.

"With the installation of the MBSc, the State of Tlaxcala shows its willpower to invest in strengthening the communication infrastructure of public security and emergency response institutions," says Fred Gallart, Head of Mexico and Latin America of Secure Land Communications at Airbus "By doing so, and relying on Airbus technology, the state's public security forces will gain in operational efficiency, coordination, and response capacity" Gallart continues. **T**

Nexign replaces the billing system in Ucell

Nexign (a part of ICS Holding LLC), a leading Business Support System (BSS) and Internet of Things (IoT) solutions provider, today has signed the deal with Ucell, the largest telco provider in Uzbekistan, to replace the company's billing system. The agreement includes consulting services and implementation and technical support of the Nexign Converged BSS solution.

Ucell is the largest mobile operator of GSM and UMTS standards in Uzbekistan. Currently it has about 8 million subscribers, and 2G, 3G and 4G networks provide coverage for 100%, 75% and 50% of Uzbekistan's localities respectively.

With existing BSS solution, the operator found it difficult to address new challenges. A large number of local improvements and temporary solutions, as well as the closed architecture of the billing system, made the

process of its development and support more complicated. As a result, LLC "COSCOM" (Ucell trademark) decided to change the existing BSS platform and has chosen Nexign as a new vendor.

"Nexign has already completed a number of successful projects in Uzbekistan, and we are glad to use our experience and knowledge of the local market for development of the BSS platform in Ucell," says Igor Gorkov, CEO of Nexign.

"I am confident that implementation of Nexign Converged BSS will help the operator to address challenges that the emerging market poses to telecommunications companies." The new platform will ensure harmonization and comprehensive support of all Ucell's key business processes. Nexign Converged BSS will enable Ucell to reduce operating costs and increase revenue by

quickly bringing competitive products and services to market. At the stage of preparation for product implementation, a pilot project was realized in a short time to demonstrate the capabilities of the new solution. The joined team of Nexign and Ucell deployed a test zone, connected it to the network core, ensured full functioning and launched 100 subscribers, for whom key business processes were successfully put into effect. Now the companies have started to implement a new BSS system. The project will be completed in the second half of 2021.

"Ucell is constantly working on the quality of its services to provide our subscribers with the highest level of customer experience. We found a reliable partner in Nexign. Despite the fact that the work on the project takes place during the pandemic, supplies are being carried out as planned," says Nodirkhon Zakhidov, Ucell CTO. ■

Nexign introduces Instant BSS solution to speed up the launch of new mobile businesses

Nexign has expanded its product portfolio with a new solution-driven business model - Nexign Instant BSS. It is a well-defined pre-integrated package incorporating a BSS stack covering mobile prepaid services and the best practices of project delivery and support. This solution enables CSPs to speed up decision-making process and start new business in four months.

Nexign Instant BSS solution is designed to respond to the rapidly changing market requirements with a light-weight, easily extendable billing solution enabling a quick start of mobile telecoms business and providing CSPs with an opportunity to grow with strong foundation for further expansion.

"Nexign Instant BSS allows mid-sized CSPs and MVNO to rapidly launch mobile

services without escalating complexity of BSS systems, enabling operators to add extra functionality for the evolving business. The solution is built on the basis of Nexign's 28 year-experience in transformation projects of different size and complexity. While CSPs often have to choose between full-scale transformation and quick start, we are ready to share our best practices with the customers to help them simplify project implementation and accelerate business growth," said Andrey Gulidin, Chief Commercial Officer of Nexign.

Nexign Instant BSS significantly reduces the decision-making process by providing CSPs with a clear understanding of the project scope and calendar. Apart from technological capabilities, Nexign customers get access to a comprehensive knowledge base, including the methodology for transparent project

management and the options for solution extension. This enables fast and efficient project execution, helping CSPs to achieve true ownership of the product, avoid vendor lock-in and enrich the solution according to their needs.

"Nexign's Instant BSS can help CSPs accelerate their deployment and go-to market which is key to improving competitiveness especially in emerging markets. The Nexign Instant BSS's open architecture and transparent implementation offer CSPs the flexibility to manage and maintain the solution in-house or externally. This adaptability, alongside the ability to adjust the solution in step with rapidly changing business environment will be an important consideration for CSPs and MVNOs," says John Abraham, Principal Analyst of Analysys Mason. ■

1010 and Microsoft Hong Kong join forces to empower enterprises under the new normal with 5G



Tom Chan, MD of Commercial Group, HKT, and Cally Chan, GM of Microsoft Hong Kong and Macau, announce collaboration to empower enterprises under the new normal with 5G

1010 and Microsoft Hong Kong have collaborated to uplift enterprise productivity with an exclusive offer of unlimited data usage for Microsoft 365 (M365) cloud applications upon subscriptions to designated 5G smartphone corporate plans and M365 licenses, starting from October 23, 2020.

Under the pandemic, enterprises and SMEs have adapted to a new work model. Working from home or working anywhere has become the new norm. Demand for remote collaboration including virtual meetings, document sharing and co-editing has increased significantly, and there is also a strong need for security on the go. M365 addresses these demands by

delivering cloud capabilities for improved productivity and efficiency, and offers seamless collaboration among PCs, tablets and mobile phones.

5G has accelerated digital transformation for enterprises and revolutionized how employees work. The advantages of uplifted productivity are maximized with the powerful 5G network from HKT, which offers ultra-high speeds for uploading and downloading shared files regardless of working location. HKT's 5G network covers more than 50 MTR stations along six major lines with dedicated 5G spectrum and equipment to ensure smooth collaboration and Internet surfing in concourses, on platforms and even inside train compartments.

1010 has witnessed a significant increase in mobile data consumption for cloud applications and in mobile collaboration during COVID-19 for many enterprises, and believes this trend will continue. To give enterprises peace of mind in using the collaboration tools, 1010 and Microsoft Hong Kong will jointly offer enterprises unlimited 5G data for M365 applications including Microsoft Outlook, OneDrive, Teams and Exchange for designated 1010 5G smartphones corporate plans with M365 licenses. The service plans will also include Office 365 Advanced Threat Protection (ATP), which helps protect against and provides visibility about spam, malware, viruses, phishing attempts, malicious links and other threats.

Tom Chan, Managing Director of Commercial Group, HKT, said, "When faced with a new normal amidst COVID-19, remote collaboration is crucial for enterprises. Aside from supporting enterprises with fast and reliable 5G communication with unlimited data for M365, HKT also empowers enterprises with onboarding service of the cloud applications. We are excited to collaborate with Microsoft Hong Kong to support our customers' operation with the greatest efficiency capitalizing on HKT's powerful 5G network and the long-awaited 5G smartphones."

Cally Chan, General Manager of Microsoft Hong Kong and Macau, said, "In the past few months, we have seen organizations in Hong Kong accelerate their digital transformation to empower employees to work anytime and anywhere. Now hybrid working is the new normal, enabling seamless and limitless collaboration is more important than ever for ensuring business success. We are pleased to collaborate with HKT to unlock the full potential of M365 with the support of 5G. Microsoft is committed to empowering organizations and individuals in Hong Kong with best-in-class modern workplace technologies that enable them to work seamlessly and securely." ■

GLOBAL ICT, TELECOM & SATCOM EVENTS

09-10 November 2020



Virtual

06-10 December 2020



Dubai, UAE

15-18 March 2021



USA

10 - 12 November 2020



Virtual

06-10 December 2020



Dubai, UAE

26-27 April 2021



Virtual

10 - 12 November 2020



Virtual

06 - 10 December 2020



Dubai, UAE

28 June - 01 July 2021



Barcelona, Spain

16-17 November 2020



Virtual

27 - 28 January 2021



Virtual

UK

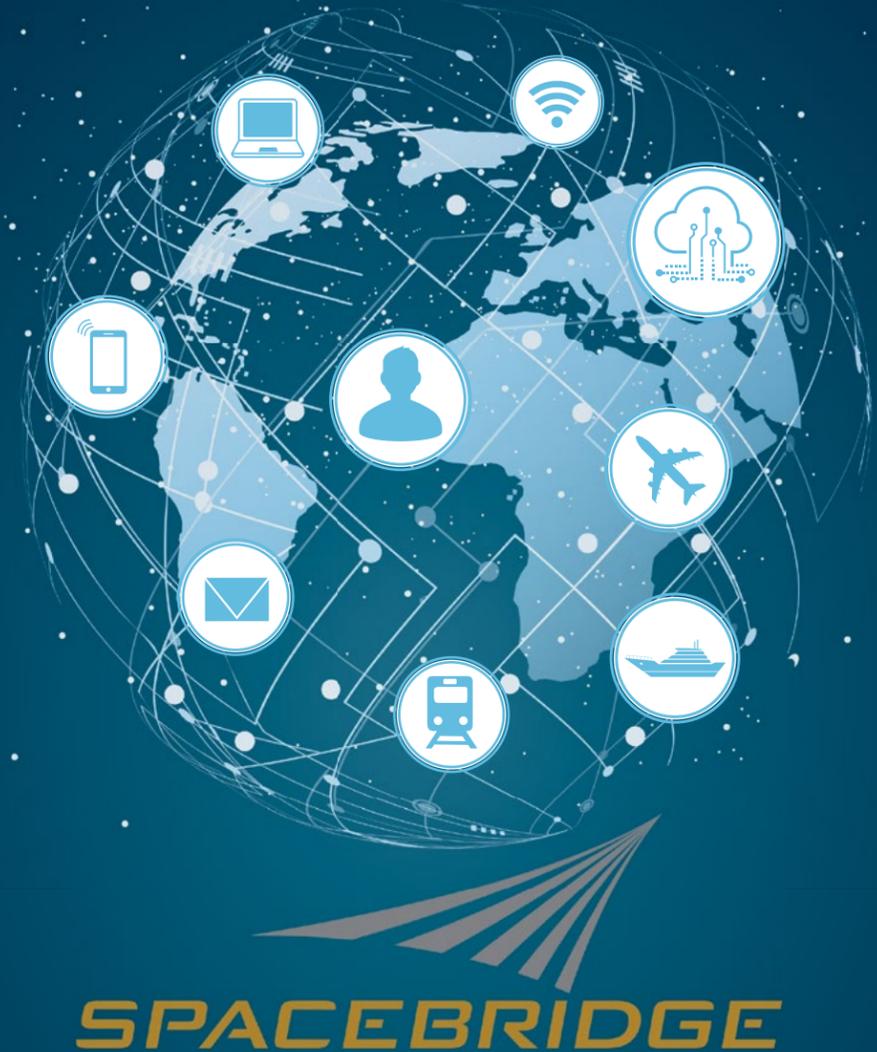
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