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

'Techco 1.0' Paving the Way for Telecom Operators' Digital Transformation

Allen Tang - *President of ICT
Marketing & Solution Sales,
Huawei ME & Central Asia*



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Founder Prof. Nasreen Khalid
Chairman Dr. Zafar Khan OBE
Publisher & Chief Editor Khalid Athar
Associate Editor Gulraiz Khalid
Assistant Editors Jassem Hariri
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Technology Writer Ken Herron
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Business Coordinator Usama Yousaf

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Doha Ashraf Siddiqui
Brunei Imran Ul Haq
 Farah Muhammad

Bureaux

U.K
 235A, Old Brompton Road, London SWFO OEA
 Ph: (+44) 0783 1418 072

Spain
 Todo Los Accesorios De Moviles
 C/Vidre 7, Local 2 CP: 08002, Barcelona.
 Ph: (034) 699 82 2090

KSA
 P.O. Box 100598, Jeddah, 21311
 Ph: (+966) 5098 35514

Canada
 126-1055B Forestwood Dr L5C 2T8 Mississauga
 Cell: +1 (647) 425-4111

APAC
 No. 09, Simpang 95 JLN Ban5, Kampong
 Kilanas, BF2780, Brunei Darussalam.
 Cell: (+673) 863 2798

Asia Office
Islamabad
 PPA Publications,
 # 6, Street 39, G-6/2, Islamabad, 44000
 Cell: (+92) 300 9559879
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Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

As we turn the page into another exciting edition of our magazine, we are reminded of how rapidly our world is advancing through innovation, collaboration, and an unyielding pursuit of digital transformation. This November issue is packed with insights, thought leadership, and stories that highlight the groundbreaking progress across the telecom and technology sectors.

We are excited to feature in-depth interviews with some of the most influential leaders in the industry. Allen Tang, President of ICT Marketing & Solution Sales at Huawei ME & Central Asia, shares his perspective on the launch of Techco 1.0, a strategic initiative aimed at helping telecom operators transition from traditional services to advanced digital platforms. His insights shed light on how AI and multi-cloud infrastructure can optimize operations, enhance customer engagement, and create new revenue streams.

Additionally, Bocar BA, CEO and Board Member of the SAMENA Council, discusses the evolution of 5G and the emergence of 5G-Advanced, which is poised to revolutionize connectivity and drive socio-economic growth across the region. His reflections on the ELITE FWA Club's efforts to accelerate Fixed Wireless Access deployment underscore the critical role of innovative solutions in bridging connectivity gaps and fostering digital inclusion.

We also hear from Dr. Alaa Jasim Mousa, President of the Fiber Connect Council MENA and CEO of Earthlink, who emphasizes the indispensable nature of fiber networks—not only in telecommunications but across various industries. His interview highlights the pressing need for robust infrastructure to support the future of digital transformation.

These discussions, coupled with insights from other industry experts featured in this issue, bring a comprehensive view of the challenges and opportunities facing the telecom and tech landscape today.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of Teletimes!

Khalid Athar
Chief Editor



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Africa Tech Festival 2024

Teletimes Report

Uniting Innovation, Connectivity, and Leadership to Shape Africa's Digital Future



Africa Tech Festival is one of Africa's most prominent technology and telecom conferences, uniting stakeholders to discuss digital transformation across the continent. It serves as a platform to exchange knowledge, celebrate milestones in tech, and strategize about Africa's future in the digital era. Key players from telecommunications, government, healthcare, financial services, and other industries will gather to share their vision of Africa's digital future. These sessions typically include discussions on the biggest challenges and opportunities for tech in Africa, from building robust digital infrastructure to nurturing home-grown innovations.

Africa Tech Festival is expected to draw over 15,000 attendees from across the continent and the world, who can look forward to insights from more than 300 exhibitors, and 400 speakers throughout the week.

The 2024 AfricaTech agenda is filled with sessions dedicated to exploring the role of emerging technologies in addressing Africa's socio-economic challenges. Key topics include the future of connectivity,

sustainable digital infrastructure, fintech's role in financial inclusion, and innovations in healthcare and agriculture.

AfricaCom

AfricaCom is the leading platform for discussions on telecommunications, connectivity, and ICT infrastructure in Africa. As the anchor event of the Africa Tech Festival, it is designed to foster digital transformation across the continent through robust infrastructure and telecommunications services.

AfricaCom discusses the benefits, challenges, and timeline for implementing 5G in Africa, particularly in areas lacking broadband access. The discussion includes topics such as network densification, spectrum allocation, and the potential impact on industries like media and entertainment.

AfricaCom emphasizes satellite technologies for remote connectivity solutions, especially in underserved rural communities. Satellite operators and network providers collaborate to discuss

how satellite infrastructure can complement terrestrial networks in driving universal internet access.

One of the biggest challenges Africa faces is developing the infrastructure needed for connectivity. Topics include building data centers, enhancing fiber-optic networks, and improving mobile broadband in growing urban areas.

AfricaCom also covers issues around regulatory frameworks, spectrum management, and government policies that support the deployment of telecommunications networks.

AfricaTech

AfricaTech is the arm of the festival that looks beyond telecommunications to explore how emerging technologies are transforming multiple industries in Africa. This event focuses on digital transformation, innovation, and the adoption of new technologies across various sectors.

AfricaTech showcases cutting-edge

solutions in mobile payments, blockchain, and digital banking. With mobile money already booming in Africa, the event looks at how fintech can be scaled further to include cross-border payments and offer more sophisticated services like insurance, loans, and investments.

Leveraging digital solutions to address the healthcare infrastructure gaps in Africa, HealthTech focuses on telemedicine, mobile health platforms, and the use of AI for diagnostics. The event showcases how digital health can be scaled to reach rural populations.

With agriculture being a backbone of many African economies, AfricaTech covers innovations that drive productivity, such as precision agriculture, smart farming tools, and IoT-enabled devices for better resource management.

The event also highlights government technology solutions, including e-governance, digital ID systems, and smart city initiatives aimed at improving public services.

AfricaIgnite

AfricaIgnite is a high-energy segment of the festival designed to inspire and engage participants through interactive content and live demonstrations. It is where startups, entrepreneurs, and innovators come together to showcase disruptive ideas and tech solutions.

AfricaIgnite will host live pitch competitions where entrepreneurs from across Africa present their innovative solutions. It provides a stage for African startups to gain exposure and attract funding from investors.

The event offers live product demonstrations, giving participants a hands-on look at new technologies in action. It is designed to show how tech solutions can solve real-world problems in areas like health, education, and agriculture.

AfricaIgnite offers various interactive



workshops, training sessions, and mentorship opportunities for budding entrepreneurs. Industry leaders provide insight into scaling businesses, accessing markets, and securing investments.

AI Summit Cape Town

The AI Summit Cape Town is the leading event focusing on how Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) can be leveraged for economic and social development in Africa.

The summit explores how AI can optimize critical infrastructure such as energy, transportation, and urban

planning. For example, AI can help improve traffic management in rapidly growing cities, optimize energy consumption, and aid in sustainable infrastructure development.

AI's role in improving healthcare access and diagnostics is a critical focus. Topics include AI-driven tools for diagnosing diseases, tracking pandemics, and optimizing healthcare delivery in resource-constrained environments.

The event also covers the ethical considerations around deploying AI in Africa. With issues like data privacy and algorithmic bias being global concerns, the summit



explores how Africa can adopt AI responsibly.

The summit features interactive workshops where participants can learn how to implement AI solutions in their businesses or industries. It also serves as a platform for policy makers, tech professionals, and AI enthusiasts to network, share knowledge, and collaborate.

2024 Features:

AfricaCom Awards: The AfricaCom Awards celebrate innovation and achievement in the telecoms and digital sectors across the continent. These awards recognize companies and individuals making significant contributions to Africa's connected future. Categories span across technology innovations, leadership, and social impact.

AFEST: AFEST is the social highlight of the festival, offering a relaxed, informal networking environment. It brings together festival attendees for live music, entertainment, and networking, creating a space for partnerships and collaborations outside the formal conference setting.

LeadersIn Africa Summit 2024: This summit is a closed-door event bringing together high-level executives and decision-makers to discuss Africa's digital future. It focuses on leadership and strategy, with a particular emphasis on fostering a regulatory environment that supports innovation and digital growth.

EQL: The EQL provides a space to promote diversity and inclusion in the African tech industry. It is dedicated to creating equal

opportunities for underrepresented groups, especially women, to thrive in the tech sector. Discussions here focus on leadership, mentorship, and the importance of inclusive policies.

InspiringFifty Africa 2024: The InspiringFifty initiative highlights the top 50 women in tech across Africa, celebrating their contributions to the continent's digital transformation. This segment is about recognizing and fostering the talents of female leaders in tech, and creating role models for the next generation of women in STEM fields.

Next Gen Talent: The Next Gen Talent Day focuses on nurturing young talent in Africa's tech industry. It includes workshops, career development sessions, and mentorship programs designed to equip young people with the skills they need to thrive in the digital economy. This initiative also connects them with potential employers and industry leaders.

2024 Official Partner Events: In collaboration with global and regional partners, AfricaTech 2024 features several partner events like InspiringFifty Africa 2024, Founder & Investor Day, Hamwe Networking Night 2024, Broadband and the Digital Transformation in Africa, and YALI Expo that will complement the main sessions. These events focus on specific verticals or regions and provide additional opportunities for networking, learning, and collaboration.

The Africa Tech Festival is an essential platform for discussing and showcasing how technology can drive Africa's digital transformation. From innovations in fintech, healthtech, and AI, to discussions around the future of telecom infrastructure and leadership in digital transformation, the event fosters collaboration between industry leaders, innovators, and policymakers. Whether it's startups pitching their ideas at Africagnite, networking at AFEST, or discussing AI's ethical implications at the AI Summit, the event serves as a comprehensive space for shaping Africa's tech future. **IT**



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GITEX DIGI_ HEALTH 5.0 Dubai displays the future of AI-driven innovations

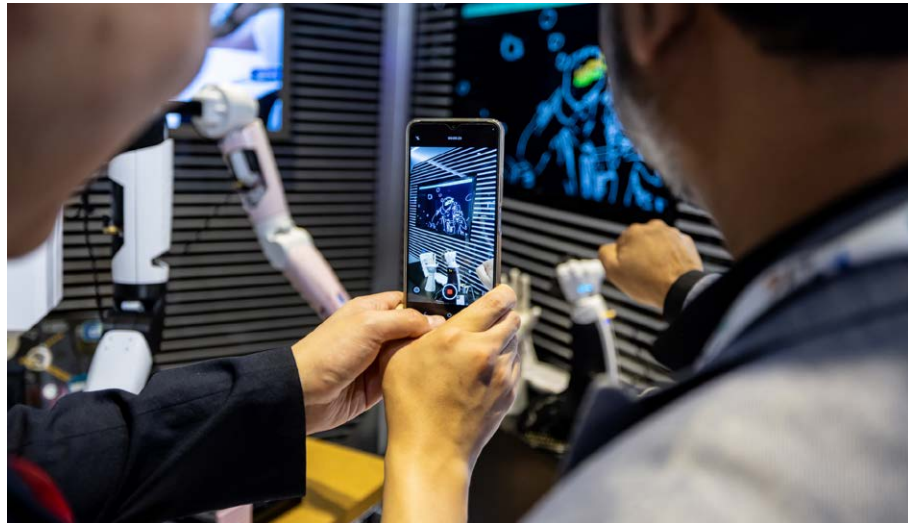
Transformative health tech solutions were at the heart of conversations at GITEX GLOBAL's GITEX DIGI_HEALTH 5.0 Dubai, where thousands of tech enthusiasts and healthcare pioneers converged at Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) for a day of future health discussions.

The world's largest tech event provided a platform to showcase the latest AI-driven digital health and health tech solutions, spotlighting innovations that are reshaping patient care on a global scale.

The event aligns with the UAE government's pioneering efforts to advance the digital health ecosystem, with the UAE's digital health market projected to reach US \$487.30 million by the end of this year. The show also supports Dubai's commitment to adopting digital practices that benefit medical professionals and patients alike.

With AI-powered healthcare investments projected to make up 20% of global healthcare spending by year's end, GITEX GLOBAL set the stage for industry leaders to explore how AI is revolutionising delivery and enhancing outcomes for millions of patients.

GITEX DIGI_HEALTH 5.0 Dubai brought together global professionals and leaders to build on that figure and discuss the impact the innovative tool is having on the day-to-day operations while also providing an outlook of what the future would hold. It attracted some of the biggest names in the global landscape including labs such as Biogen, Roche and Sanofi as well as tech giants Microsoft, M42, Lenovo. Also present were established medical



institutions including Samsung Medical Centre, Harvard Medical School, Roche and many more.

Pioneering Robotic and AI in Digital Health

The evolving role of robotics in health tech was a major focus of the showcase and conference programme. Denis Ledenkof, Founder of Robosculptor, showcased how AI-powered robotics is transforming patient care via an autonomous platform for body treatments developed by health industry experts, emphasising robotic technology is providing plenty of benefits.

Alex Aliper, Co-Founder and President of Insilico Medicine, a Hong Kong digital health unicorn - was part of another panel that delved into genomics. He discussed how precision medicine, powered by AI, is revolutionising genetic profiles – an approach set to transform treatments for diseases previously deemed incurable.

The future of AI in neurology

Meanwhile, following a study which showed that AI can reduce the risk of new vascular events by 25.6% in stroke patients, Aneesh Singhal, M.D, Director, Comprehensive Stroke Center & Vice-Chair of Neurology at Massachusetts General Hospital, gave an overview of what to expect in the field of neurology.

In his presentation, he discussed the Golden

Bridge II trial, which showed that the use of an AI-based clinical decision support system had a significantly greater impact on the number of vascular events and stroke care quality than standard care in patients with acute ischemic stroke (AIS).

Elsewhere, Jong-Soo Choi, Chief Technology Officer at Samsung Medical Centre, one of Korea's most renowned hospitals, shared insights into cutting-edge technologies such as Remote Patient Monitoring (RPM) and gene therapy and how they are setting the stage for the next wave of change.

Smart lens among innovations unveiled

Dubai's own deep tech company Xpanceo made waves with the unveiling of smart contact lens for 3D imaging, and another for data reading, demonstrating wireless data transmission capabilities integrated directly into the lens. These innovations are set to redefine the boundaries of how data in real time is perceived, pushing the digital health landscape into a new era of smart diagnostics.

Oracle Health also displayed its innovative Clinical Digital Assistant. Leveraging AI-powered driven voice recognition, the assistant autonomously documents physician-patient encounters, interprets the information, and accurately inputs a draft note into the Oracle Health EHR, allowing the physician to quickly review and approve the clinical documentation. ■

GITEX GLOBAL concludes, reinforcing its status as the world's largest and most dominant technology event



GITEX GLOBAL 2024 concluded on October 18, underscoring AI's pivotal role as a transformative tool that will continue to reshape industries and drive business and economic growth globally.

For the final time this week, 6,500 exhibitors, 1,800 startups, and 1,200 investors, alongside governments from more than 180 countries—marking the highest-ever international participation—gathered in Dubai, along with 200,000 visitors, solidifying the city's reputation as a premier global hub.

The unparalleled event brought together the most influential names in technology from every corner of the globe, further cementing its position as the world's largest and most impactful tech gathering.

This 44th edition of GITEX GLOBAL, held under the theme of 'Global Collaboration to Forge a Future AI Economy', not only set new benchmarks for innovation and

business opportunities but also reinforced the event's critical role in shaping a technology landscape increasingly defined by AI adoption.

Over the five days, numerous Memorandum of Understanding agreements were announced, with these strategic deals set to accelerate the growth of the global AI market, projected to reach US \$1,339.1 billion by 2030, according to Markets and Markets.

With the inclusion of over 40% new nations – including South Africa, Puerto Rico, Vietnam, alongside Europe's largest-ever presence – GITEX GLOBAL has paved the way to forge new cross-regional partnerships between leading and emerging tech nations that will accelerate the growth of the AI ecosystem even further.

Each day of the mega event focused on different themes – investment, cybersecurity, data centres, futuristic tech,

and AI, reflecting the central pillars of the digital economy.

With the UAE welcoming the global ecosystem, GITEX GLOBAL has enhanced its position of being at the forefront of redefining the world's digital landscape with many organisations praising the impact of the event and its focus on key trends.

Key Industry Impact and Strategic Outcomes at GITEX GLOBAL 2024

During week, top global players such as Oracle, Dell Technologies, and Microsoft, amongst several others, made significant strides in showcasing their latest innovations in AI, cloud, cybersecurity, edge computing, and other technologies. The event catalysed these industry giants to forge new partnerships, drive technological advancements, and contribute to the future of the global digital economy.

Nick Redshaw, Senior Vice President of

Tech Cloud, Middle East and Africa, and UAE Country Leader at Oracle, highlighted the company's commitment to supporting the UAE's AI vision and how GITEX GLOBAL 2024 was pivotal for Oracle's AI and cloud innovations. He said: "At GITEX, we celebrated 35 years of supporting the UAE's growth ambitions with state-of-the-art local cloud infrastructure, latest cloud technologies, developing top talent, and expanding our local presence. Industry-leading Artificial Intelligence (AI) and multi cloud innovation that is geared to solve complex business challenges in every industry, and help accelerate the UAE and wider Middle East's AI economy was Oracle's key focus at GITEX GLOBAL 2024."

At the event, Oracle announced significant collaborations, with the Mohammed Bin Rashid Housing Establishment to accelerate Dubai's housing strategy using Oracle Cloud Infrastructure, and with Mashreq Bank to support its global expansion. These partnerships highlight how GITEX GLOBAL serves as a premier platform for unveiling strategic innovations and driving digital transformation across the region.

Dell Technologies was another tech giant to have a presence and reap the benefits of participating at GITEX GLOBAL. Mohammed Amin, Senior Vice President, CEEMETA, Dell Technologies, said: "Over the last four decades, GITEX GLOBAL has been a catalyst for advancing technological innovation across the Middle East region. Dell Technologies has been a part of this growth for more than 30 years and being at GITEX allows us to connect with regional decision-makers and support them in navigating today's rapidly changing business environment."

"This week, we had many encouraging discussions around the Dell AI Factory offerings. Our conversations with our regional customers revealed a strong commitment to AI. They have a clear vision and a solid strategy and are actively implementing innovative AI solutions to drive their business forward. At Dell, we are at the epicenter of our customers' AI

innovations and take pride in helping them become future forward in their AI journeys."

Meanwhile, Microsoft capitalised on GITEX GLOBAL to highlight its impactful initiatives to enhance the global digital economy. Naim Yazbeck, General Manager of Microsoft UAE, stated: "We are proud to have shared the results of our latest Cloud Dividend Snapshot report for the UAE, which underscores the critical role our globally trusted cloud ecosystem plays in driving economic growth and job creation across the nation. Additionally, our announcement of the AI National Skilling Initiative, launched at the show in partnership with key government departments, demonstrates our commitment to empowering individuals and organizations with the skills needed to thrive in the new AI era. I'm confident we will continue to witness strong business impact from GITEX Global for months to come."

Catalysing Change Through Strategic Dialogues on Global Digital Transformation

This edition of GITEX GLOBAL served as a strategic platform to address pressing challenges and opportunities of AI, focusing on its application across critical sectors that shape the global digital future.

The event featured the first-ever World Future Economy Digital Leaders Summit and the debut of GITEX Editions, spotlighting innovation, connecting top global unicorns, and fostering dialogue on AI regulation, economic strategies, and digital finance.

Cybersecurity emerged as a key topic, emphasising the need to secure digital infrastructure amid evolving cyber threats. Future mobility took centre stage, showcasing next-generation innovations like autonomous vehicles, electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft, and AI advancements in the auto-tech industry.

AI's role in the development of hyperscale, modular, and edge data centers was a

significant focus, reflecting the burgeoning demand for scalable solutions and the region's rise as a hub for AI-powered data infrastructure. GITEX DIGI_HEALTH 5.0 also gathered industry leaders to explore how AI is revolutionizing patient care and reshaping the future of healthcare, highlighting the technology's transformative potential in delivering improved outcomes.

Other discussions revolved around 5G and intelligent connectivity, EdTech, digital cities, and energy transitions. Together, these conferences showcased critical dialogues shaping the future of digital transformation on a global scale, featuring insights from industry visionaries – such as Jong-Soo Choi, CTO of Samsung Medical Centre in South Korea; Stéphane Ouaki Head of Department at the European Innovation Council (EIC); Dr. Mark Sagar, Co-Founder of Soul Machines from New Zealand; Heman Bekele, TIME's 2024 Kid of the Year; Valentyn S. Volkov, PhD, co-founder of XPANCEO; and renowned cybersecurity figure, Dr. Diane Janosek, who served legal, policy & executive roles at the National Security Agency, White House & the Pentagon. Additionally, GITEX GLOBAL brought together ethical hacker, Inti De Ceukelaire, and Brett Johnson.

What's Next?

GITEX GLOBAL is seamlessly connecting the world's largest network of tech events. with upcoming GITEX AFRICA Morocco from April 14-16, 2025 and GITEX ASIA Singapore on April 23-25, 2025. Following these, GITEX EUROPE Berlin will take place from May 21-23, 2025, leading to the debut of GITEX NIGERIA in September 2025, all part of its expanding portfolio. Each of these events will foster collaboration and drive innovation, shaping the tech landscape of tomorrow.

Looking ahead, GITEX GLOBAL is set to take place from 13-17 October 2025, promising another year of heightened innovation and cross-collaboration within the tech industry. In 2026, GITEX GLOBAL will relocate to Expo City Dubai, further expanding its reach and impact. 📍

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Teletimes Report

The MEET ICT Conference and BITEX Exhibition will take place from December 3-5, 2024, at the Gulf Convention Centre in Bahrain. The event is organized by the Bahrain Technology Companies Society (BTECH) in collaboration with Worksmart for Events Management. Its aim is to foster advancements in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) while spotlighting the pivotal role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in driving digital transformation across various sectors.

The conference will begin with welcome remarks from BTECH representatives, followed by speeches under the patronage of Bahraini government officials, recognition of sponsors, and a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the BITEX Exhibition.

Tareq Fakhroo, Chairman of the Bahrain Technology Companies Society (BTECH), commented: "Since 2009, MEET ICT and BITEX have excelled in providing a platform that unites diverse communities under one roof. At Bahrain Technology Companies

Society (BTECH), we are committed to supporting the ICT sector and expanding its potential both within and beyond the Kingdom through our initiatives. I am, therefore, pleased to invite you to join us for the 12th Edition of MEET ICT and BITEX in 2024. This year, we highlight how Artificial Intelligence continues to drive the success of Digital Transformation. I encourage everyone to seize this invaluable opportunity for your business and to be part of such an incredible event."

BITEX showcases innovative solutions, products, and services in the ICT domain from industry-leading companies and startups. BITEX aims to serve as a catalyst for business growth by connecting participants with high-profile investors, government decision-makers, and fellow innovators.

From immersive panel discussions covering critical topics like AI's role in cybersecurity, healthcare, education, and sustainable smart cities, to hands-on workshops that equip participants with practical skills in AI ethics, professional development, and

generative AI tools, MEET ICT and BITEX 2024 is designed to empower attendees in today's rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Panel Discussions

AI's Role in Digital Transformation: This panel will address how AI technology is reshaping business operations by optimizing processes, increasing efficiencies, and creating new value. Key points include the roles of machine learning, predictive analytics, and intelligent automation in transforming traditional business models. By automating routine tasks and providing insights from large data sets, AI empowers organizations to make informed decisions, allocate resources effectively, and remain competitive in a fast-evolving market. This discussion aims to showcase practical examples of AI-driven transformation and provide insights on implementing these technologies within organizations.

Empowering Women in the AI Era: This focused panel will support women in tech by discussing the challenges and

opportunities for women in AI-related fields. It will emphasize strategies for inclusivity and the benefits of diverse perspectives within AI development and application. Increasing representation in AI ensures a more holistic approach to AI design and deployment, helping to mitigate biases and promote innovation. The goal is to inspire action toward gender inclusivity and create pathways for more women to enter and thrive in AI roles.

Securing the Future: Harnessing the Power of AI in Cybersecurity: This panel will explore how AI tools can enhance cybersecurity by detecting threats, analyzing risk patterns, and responding to incidents more rapidly. Topics may include anomaly detection, real-time threat intelligence, and predictive security measures. As cyber threats grow in complexity, AI offers sophisticated tools to defend against attacks, making it a critical area for organizations that handle sensitive data or provide essential services. Attendees will learn about AI applications that strengthen cybersecurity and improve resilience against digital threats.

Ethics in AI for Financial Services Applications: This discussion will tackle ethical concerns surrounding AI in finance, such as data privacy, transparency, and bias in decision-making algorithms. Given the sensitive nature of financial services, ethical AI practices are essential to maintaining consumer trust and ensuring regulatory compliance. The panel aims to guide financial organizations in adopting responsible AI practices that prioritize fairness, accountability, and transparency in their operations.

Generative AI and the Future of Work: This panel will delve into the transformative impact of generative AI on employment, examining how AI can both replace and create jobs, automate tasks, and redefine workplace roles. Generative AI holds potential for automation in fields like content creation, design, and coding, reshaping how work is performed and the skills required. Insights on workforce adaptation strategies will be provided,



along with a highlight of new roles and opportunities emerging from AI's capabilities.

AI in Telecoms: Unleashing the Power of AI: This session will discuss the integration of AI in telecommunications, focusing on applications like network optimization, customer service automation, and predictive maintenance. Telecom companies can use AI to enhance service quality, anticipate issues before they impact customers, and improve operational efficiency. The discussion will show how AI can elevate service standards, reduce costs, and drive innovation within telecoms.

AI and Smart Cities of Tomorrow: This panel explores AI's role in developing smarter urban infrastructure, such as traffic management, waste reduction, and public safety systems. Smart city initiatives powered by AI improve the quality of urban life, making cities more sustainable and efficient. The aim is to inspire urban planners and technology providers to incorporate AI solutions that address urban challenges.

AI for Energy: AI in the Oil and Gas Sector: This panel focuses on how AI can improve efficiency, safety, and sustainability in oil and gas operations through predictive maintenance, supply chain optimization, and real-time analytics. In an energy-

dependent world, AI helps companies minimize environmental impact and optimize production processes. The goal is to provide energy companies with actionable strategies for using AI to enhance operational resilience and efficiency.

AI and Industry 4.0: The Next Frontier in Organizations: This discussion will cover AI-driven technologies enabling Industry 4.0 transformations, such as automation, IoT, and digital twins in manufacturing. AI's impact on Industry 4.0 is vast, with applications that streamline production and enhance product quality. The aim is to equip manufacturing leaders with insights on adopting AI-driven Industry 4.0 strategies for competitive advantage.

AI's Impact on EdTech: This panel will explore how AI is reshaping education through personalized learning, intelligent tutoring systems, and data-driven insights into student performance. AI-enhanced EdTech provides more adaptive and inclusive educational experiences. The aim is to demonstrate EdTech solutions that make learning more effective, accessible, and engaging.

AI and Innovation in Healthcare: This discussion will address AI's potential in diagnostics, personalized medicine, and healthcare logistics, highlighting how AI improves patient outcomes. AI-powered

healthcare technologies streamline clinical workflows, reduce errors, and enable personalized treatment options. The goal is to offer healthcare providers insights into integrating AI solutions that enhance patient care and operational efficiency.

Ahmed Al Hujairy, Group CEO of Worksmart for Events Management, commented: "Artificial Intelligence is a key driver of digital transformation, increasingly becoming part of our everyday lives and equipping businesses with the tools to develop more effective digital strategies. For 15 consecutive years, we have organized the MEET ICT Conference and BITEX Exhibition to provide a space where tech enthusiasts gather annually to share knowledge, showcase innovations, and explore business opportunities in the Middle East."

"This year, industry leaders from the ICT sector will come together to discuss the latest advancements in technology. It's an exciting initiative, fully dedicated to delivering a top-tier experience and unparalleled opportunities for all participants," Al Hujairy added.

MEET ICT and BITEX offers a series of specialized sessions designed to provide deep insights and practical skills for navigating the transformative world of Artificial Intelligence. As AI continues to reshape industries and redefine how we work, learn, and connect, staying at the forefront of these advancements is essential. These workshops are crafted to empower participants, whether by guiding them through ethical AI frameworks, enhancing their professional development, or exploring cutting-edge AI tools like ChatGPT.

Each workshop will be led by industry experts and is structured to be interactive, equipping participants with both foundational knowledge and actionable techniques to apply AI solutions confidently and responsibly in their organizations. Embrace this opportunity to reskill, gain hands-on experience, and become a part of the growing AI-driven future.



Workshops

AI Ethics: This workshop offers practical guidance on ethical considerations for AI development and deployment, covering issues such as fairness, accountability, and transparency. Ethics is paramount in AI to ensure technologies are used responsibly and benefit society as a whole. The workshop equips participants with frameworks to create ethically sound AI applications and strategies.

AI Professional Development: Digital Learning & Innovation: Tailored to help professionals upskill for AI, this workshop emphasizes digital literacy, innovation techniques, and ongoing education in AI advancements. As AI technology evolves, continuous learning is essential for professionals to stay competitive. It will empower attendees with tools and resources to continually adapt to AI trends and demands in their fields.

ChatGPT: A Hands-on Guide to AI Challenges and Opportunities: This hands-on workshop provides practical training on ChatGPT and similar generative AI models, covering their applications, limitations, and best practices. Understanding how to work with AI language models like ChatGPT is valuable across industries that involve customer service, content creation, and data analysis. Attendees will gain

proficiency in leveraging generative AI for business and operational tasks.

Reskilling in the Age of AI: This session centers on the importance of reskilling, especially in industries where AI automation is likely to disrupt existing job roles. With AI transforming the nature of work, equipping workers with new skills is essential for maintaining workforce resilience. The reskilling workshop provides actionable insights on identifying skills gaps, developing training programs, and ensuring long-term career adaptability for AI-driven workplaces.

Attending MEET ICT and BITEX 2024 offers unparalleled opportunities to stay at the cutting edge of digital transformation and artificial intelligence advancements. This event brings together top industry leaders, government officials, and influential innovators, providing a unique platform for networking, collaboration, and knowledge exchange.

This year's emphasis on Bahrain's Vision 2030 highlights the event's commitment to establishing Bahrain as a regional AI hub, aligning with national goals to drive forward-thinking innovation and economic resilience. By attending, visitors will gain insight into transformative tech solutions, connect with key decision-makers, and explore Bahrain's growing market for digital innovation. **IT**

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Organizers



Huawei introduces 5G-A^A solutions for the Mobile AI era

At the Global Mobile Broadband Forum 2024 (MBBF 2024), Cao Ming, Vice President of Huawei and President of Huawei's Wireless Solution, launched 5G-A^A solutions.

Cao said: "Mobile AI is changing our lives. The arising new connections and services pose increasingly higher requirements on networks. Huawei's 5G-A^A 10 solutions build multidimensional ultimate network capabilities through the full-series Advanced Radio, enable full-domain site digitalization through Ambient Site, and achieve L4 network autonomy through the Agent-based digital engineers team. With such excellent performance, these solutions will help operators meet the ever-diversifying demand for services in the Mobile AI era."

Huawei's 5G-A^A solutions will deepen the convergence of 5.5G and AI through 'Networks for AI' and 'AI for Networks'. 'Networks for AI' will enable networks to possess the sufficient capabilities that are required to address differentiated service requirements and improve both network performance and user experiences. 'AI for Networks' will equip networks with L4 autonomy through digital sites and RAN Agents. Operators can use these solutions in a wide range of scenarios to sustain their leading positions.

1. Sub-1 GHz Massive MIMO builds a ubiquitous foundation layer for Mobile AI. Sub-1 GHz Massive MIMO provides an innovative solution to many technical challenges to meet the general deployment requirements of site engineering, bringing Massive MIMO to low bands. While providing extensive coverage, low-band Massive MIMO improves downlink, uplink, and low-latency experiences. It supports full access from all RATs, full IoT connectivity, and full real-time service guarantee.



2. Unique sub-6 GHz all-band integration in one box enables simplified single-antenna Massive MIMO deployment. Blade AAU X is the industry's first product that uses a single antenna to support Massive MIMO deployment across all sub-6 GHz bands. Unlike other Massive MIMO modules, this product can be deployed on a single pole, and requires 50% less site space and 70% lower OPEX. It supports GHz-level bandwidth with one pole, maximizing spectral efficiency.

3. The industry's first unique U6GHz AAU ensures continuous 10 Gbps. The U6GHz AAU integrates more than 1,500 antenna elements and uses leading MU-MIMO algorithms. With the collaboration of such leading hardware and software, it supports a capacity of up to 100 Gbps and speeds of up to 10 Gbps. It enables coverage to be aligned with C-band to ensure uninterrupted

Gbps experiences indoors.

4. LampSite introduces Passive IoT (P-IoT) for the first time to upgrade digital intelligence indoors. LampSite X supports both indoor 10 Gbps and P-IoT access. It can be deployed in half the time and allows asset stocktaking to be done daily, instead of monthly, compared with other solutions.

5. The industry's lightest AAU enables simplified mid-band deployment with a huge bandwidth. EasyAAU is the industry's lightest AAU product, weighing half of an 8T RRU model. This enables it to be deployed on walls in urban areas and poles in rural areas to quickly provide 5G coverage. The delivery time is 40% shorter and the capacity can also be doubled.

6. The industry's first microwave-

antenna integration overcomes antenna installation challenges. Integrated antenna and microwave (IAM) houses antennas and E-band microwave units in one box, which reduces single-box weight by 30% and the space needed for installation by 50%. The antenna also supports all-beam auto-seeking, which helps reduce maintenance costs.

7. The industry's first full-duplex microwave upgrades transmission capacity. The industry's first full-duplex microwave, MAGICSwave, uses super-isolated antennas and interference cancellation algorithms to double spectral efficiency. It has a capacity of up to 50 Gbps, allowing operators to navigate the huge demand for data transmission in the Mobile AI era.

8. The industry's first one-box rural network solution helps narrow down the connection gap in rural areas. RuralCOW represents an

upgrade from RuralStar and RuralLink. By integrating fronthaul units and radio units into one box, it can be deployed without needing backhaul, BBU, and main power supplies. This significantly reduces the site costs of multi-RAT deployments in remote areas and suburbs.

9. Agent-based digital engineers team enables higher-level network autonomy. Based on the intelligent RAN Agent, the Agent-based digital engineers team has been incubated, which includes four digital experts that perform unattended maintenance, real-time network optimization, 24/7 energy saving, and accurate service provisioning evaluation.

10. Unique full-domain digital sites enable visualized site-level sensing and control. Ambient Site links a site's main equipment with its antennas, power supplies, and transmission devices, helping realize full

site digitalization. This enables networks to improve energy saving and user experiences.

"Mobile AI is on the horizon. We will continue to work with all industry partners and innovate to promote the integration of 5.5G and AI," concluded Cao. The 15th Global Mobile Broadband Forum, with a tagline of '5.5G Leads Mobile AI Era', took place from October 30 to 31 in Istanbul, Türkiye. It was hosted by Huawei with support from its industry partners GSMA and GTI. Together with operators, vertical industry leaders, and ecosystem partners, Huawei shared the industry's latest advancements and explore new opportunities. Industry stakeholders discussed how to achieve 5.5G business success in the Mobile AI era, and leverage the success of 5G to attain even greater achievements with 5.5G. ■

Huawei's David Wang: UBB Advanced Paves the Way to All Intelligence

At the 10th Ultra-Broadband Forum (UBBF 2024), David Wang, Huawei's Executive Director of the Board and Chairman of the ICT Infrastructure Managing Board, delivered a keynote speech titled "UBB Advanced Paves the Way to All Intelligence". When opening the event, he shared his latest insights into the AI industry and elaborated on Huawei's All Intelligence strategy. He also proposed a new direction for the synergistic development of UBB and AI to help the industry reach the intelligent world faster – technological innovation and business incubation.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution has been progressing rapidly thanks to AI, with AI becoming a major driver of global economic growth. Widespread commercial use of AI is accelerating, and new applications for personal use, enterprise efficiency, and smart homes are disrupting multiple

markets. It is also driving communications network upgrades, in terms of capacity, latency, and architecture.

In his speech, Wang noted, "Huawei has continued innovating by focusing on two areas: UBB for AI and AI for UBB. The innovation we are doing under UBB for AI is based on ultra-large bandwidth, deterministic low latency, and network architecture. The network capability improvements we've achieved support higher quality AI development which will help carriers achieve business growth. This innovation also focuses on AI for UBB. We are applying AI to networks to improve network experience, to speed up service provisioning, and to streamline network O&M. This helps carriers build highly autonomous networks."

Last year, Huawei released its All

Intelligence Strategy to, "show how to connect all things, model all applications, and compute all decisions." Huawei offers leading digital and intelligent infrastructure that provides computing, storage, and transmission power for industry. Huawei is also using its Pangu Models to create advanced industry-specific models, with the aim of supporting a vast range of models and applications, and helping customers from different industries pursue intelligent transformation.

Within the telecom industry, Huawei offers leading AI solutions, which must be supported by transmission power. As critical infrastructure, UBB networks provide this kind of power to help other industries go digital and intelligent more easily. To this end, Huawei advocates two development paths for UBB networks: "UBB for AI" and "AI for UBB".



David Wang, Huawei's Executive Director of the Board and Chairman of the ICT Infrastructure Managing Board, delivering a keynote at UBBF 2024

UBB for AI: high-quality AI development

UBB 5.5G incorporates technological innovation at multiple network layers to support AI requirements.

For data center networks (DCNs), Huawei offers a Dragonfly+ Topology architecture and new DC-OXC technologies that help build large-scale computing centers.

For data center interconnect (DCI) networks, Huawei uses a number of innovative technologies like 800G IP + Optical networking, flexible IP service-flow level scheduling, and lossless transmission to realize more efficient use of computing power across data centers.

For data center access (DCA) networks, Huawei's OXC Mesh networking is capable of greatly reducing network latency. Its Wi-Fi 7 and 50G PON technologies can provide the ubiquitous 10 gigabit access that is necessary for widespread AI adoption by end users. In addition, Huawei's FTTR is already being used to create "intelligent hubs" and enable intelligent applications for many homes.

Huawei's Xinghe security gateway and hybrid ASON also guarantee resilience over

end-to-end networks for AI application connections.

These innovations significantly improve bandwidth, latency, availability, and large-scale networking capabilities and will help carriers differentiate themselves in the intelligent era.

AI for UBB: highly-autonomous networks

UBB networks are also becoming larger and handling more complex scenarios, driving carriers to seek new ways to improve O&M efficiency and network autonomy. A promising method being explored is embedding AI directly into networks.

Huawei has built an AI-enabled O&M architecture for UBB networks that uses digital twins and its own Telecom Foundation Model. This architecture enables the creation of intelligent role-oriented "copilots" and scenario-specific "agents" that automate onsite operations and remote maintenance and optimization, which is necessary for the evolution to level 4 autonomous driving networks (ADNs).

Multiple leading carriers have successfully improved their network O&M efficiency by working with Huawei to apply this

architecture commercially.

For home broadband, ADNs can support network self-optimization to ensure user experiences, reducing the churn rate by 57%.

For transmission networks, network planning and service deployment efficiency is crucial. ADNs can support service self-planning and deployment based on service level agreements, rather than manual planning. This can cut service provisioning times from one month to one day.

For IP network maintenance, fault location has always been a challenge. ADNs can enable virtual employees to support troubleshooting, reducing network troubleshooting times by 50%.

At the end of his speech, Wang called for the entire UBB industry to actively embrace the intelligent era by pursuing innovation in UBB 5.5G network technologies for long-term competitiveness. He also advocated for industry-wide incubation of new intelligent services in addition to new network capabilities, saying that new partnerships and business opportunities in AI applications will drive intelligent service transformation and new business growth. ■

Huawei Unveils 'Techco 1.0' at GITEK 2024

Paving the Way for Telecom Operators' Digital Transformation in the ME and Central Asia

Teletimes interview with Allen Tang, President of ICT Marketing & Solution Sales Dept, Huawei ME & Central Asia



Teletimes: Mr. Tang, during GITEK 2024, Huawei announced the Techco 1.0 initiatives for the Middle East and Central Asia, witnessed by several key carriers and the SAMENA Council. As the driving force behind Techco 1.0, could you explain its core features and the problems it aims to solve for operators? How does it fit into your broader strategy for supporting digital transformation in the telecom sector?

Allen Tang: Techco 1.0 is one of Huawei's strategic initiatives to drive telecom operators' digital transformation through three key paths: business servitization, service platformization, and platform intelligitization.

Servitization enables operators to shift from product-based offerings to service-oriented models, monetizing solutions for consumers (2C), households (2H), and businesses (2B) while offering full digital services. This includes FTTR and smart home solutions for 2C and 2H, MSP-based services for SME and AICC for efficient customer experience management, and Mobile Money drive supper app-based digital services.

Platformization focuses on creating an ecosystem that monetizes data through customer experiences, operational improvements, and cross-industry collaborations. Finally, intelligitization

leverages AI and multi-cloud infrastructure to automate operations, personalize services, and offer scalable computing power, driving innovation and new revenue streams.

This transformation equips operators to diversify beyond traditional connectivity, reduce operational costs through AI-driven efficiency, and deliver more personalized and data-driven services. Techco 1.0 positions operators to thrive in the intelligent digital era by aligning with trends like 5G-A, IoT, and AI, enabling them to monetize data and computing infrastructure while improving customer experiences and operational agility.

TT: What market trends or challenges have you identified that prompted this launch? Could you share your insights on why this solution is particularly relevant today, especially for operators undergoing digital transformation?

AT: The initiatives are driven by the rapid technological changes we've witnessed across industry sectors and the growing demands from carriers to transform from traditional telco to 'techco'. This aims to become the main driving force behind national intelligent digital transformation services and a critical digital service provider. It captures opportunities in the fast-growing digital economy while pursuing industry leadership. To achieve this vision, operators must overcome many challenges, including expanding their depth and breadth in transforming from product to digital service providers, venturing into industry sectors, adapting operating models, demanding operational efficiency, and attracting higher calibers of digital talent.

These trends and challenges require a more systematic approach and a series of modern solutions that can support intelligent digital transformation, improve operational efficiency, manage data effectively, and enhance customer engagement.

Our solution is particularly relevant today as it helps operators modernize their

operations, streamline processes, and make data-driven decisions. By leveraging AI and advanced technologies, it ensures operators can meet evolving customer needs, reduce costs, and stay ahead in a competitive market while being adaptable and scalable for future trends and challenges.

TT: With operators facing increasing pressure to modernize their operations, how does Techco 1.0 support these efforts? What specific areas of their transformation will benefit most from this engagement approach, and how does it integrate with their existing infrastructure?

AT: Techco 1.0 aids operators' modernization by offering a strategic framework that transforms business operations through business servitization, service platformization, and platform intelligentization. This approach ensures resources are agile and services scalable, making operators better equipped to meet market demands and improve operational efficiency. The use of AI within Techco 1.0 further enhances decision-making, optimizes network management, and boosts overall business performance.

Key benefits include fast service design, deployment, delivery, precise customer engagement, and efficient data management, enabling monetization of products, data, and AI technology. Techco 1.0 builds a robust data foundation that integrates seamlessly with existing infrastructure, supporting ongoing business development. It aligns with operators' current systems while adding layers of intelligence and agility, ensuring smooth transitions and minimizing disruptions.

TT: From your perspective, what are the unique challenges faced by operators in the B2B market? How does Techco 1.0 address these challenges, and where do you see it providing the most value, particularly in terms of accelerating business outcomes and improving customer engagement?

AT: Operators in the B2B market face a distinct set of challenges, including complex customer requirements, intense



competition, and the need for rapid innovation. They also deal with integrating diverse systems and ensuring seamless connectivity and scalability. The pressure to deliver customized, high-quality services while managing costs and maintaining profitability adds to these challenges.

Techco 1.0 provides a strategic framework that supports the transformation of operators' businesses. By offering business servitization, it allows operators to convert resources into agile, on-demand services, enhancing flexibility and speed to market. Services platformization helps build robust, scalable infrastructure, facilitating efficient data management and integration across systems. Platform intelligentization leverages AI to optimize operations, improve decision-making, and provide and offer customized experiences for enterprise and industry needs.

Techco 1.0 accelerates business outcomes by enhancing operational efficiency and reducing time to market for new services. It improves customer engagement by enabling operators to deliver more targeted, responsive, high-quality services. The strategic framework also supports continuous innovation, ensuring operators remain competitive and can quickly adapt to market changes. ■

Poor network service is UK's biggest gripe with mobile phone companies, says the Guardian; "Britain's 5G connection really is decidedly crap"



A story by Chris Stokel-Walker, recently published in the Guardian, asserts that "poor network service is the UK's biggest gripe with mobile phone companies". The author criticized the UK 5G telecom network based on actual experiences he had; "The 5G mobile internet I had tethered to my laptop kept cutting out with every languorous corner the car took, rendering my work impossible. The truth is that every city, town, village and hamlet is affected – albeit to differing degrees – by the same problem: Britain's 5G connection is decidedly crap".

The article mentions that a study conducted by the research firm Opensignal in 2023 found that UK mobile users had the worst average 5G download speeds of all G7 countries. And Japan and the UK are the only countries in that group to have seen performance drop year on year. In the UK, 17% of mobile users report issues with network connections and signal. A recent report by the Social

Market Foundation found that British users get access to 5G about 10% of the time, compared with more than 40% in India.

The writer then raises the question, "Why are we so data-poor?" The obvious answer is a decision made by Boris Johnson's government in July 2020 to uninstall all products made by Huawei, one of the world's largest telecoms companies, from the country's 5G network by 2027. At the same time, the government barred the purchase of any new Huawei connectivity kit from the end of 2020.

Cutting out the world's best-known provider of 5G connectivity hardware was a bold decision – and arguably justified. Its banning did have an impact on Britain's connectivity by slowing the rollout of reliably fast 5G connections. Other providers, such as Ericsson and Samsung, have been forced to take up the slack, but it hasn't been enough to plug

the gap and build for the future.

"But that isn't the only explanation for a situation where buying your morning espresso in cities is touch and go because patchy 5G coverage is disrupting card transactions. Experts also say there is a lack of long-term investment: turning down Huawei made things worse, but government inaction had already left us struggling".

Investment has also been lacking. Advisers to the government estimated in 2022 that getting full 5G across the country by 2030 would require £37bn. Industry could foot about one-third of that bill, but would require the government to step in and pay the rest. They didn't. And we're left with the consequences. ■

Reference: The Guardian <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2024/oct/24/uk-5g-connection-really-is-crap-mobile-phones>

Huawei Digital Transformation Innovation Contest supports telcos transition to “Techcos”



Allen Tang, President of ICT Marketing and Solution Sales Department, Huawei Middle East and Central Asia giving keynote at Huawei's second Digital Transformation Innovation Contest (DTIC) at the Operations Transformation Forum (OTF 2024)

Building on the success of its inaugural event, Huawei hosted the second edition of the Digital Transformation Innovation Contest (DTIC) at the Operations Transformation Forum (OTF 2024) in Istanbul, Turkey. The initiative aims to facilitate knowledge and experience sharing among telecom carriers (Telcos) to successfully inspire and accelerate their anticipated transition to “Techcos”.

In today's evolving digital era, carriers are actively working to transform from traditional telecommunications companies (Telcos) into technology companies (Techcos) to address the competitive challenges and rapidly changing landscape of the industry. This transformation is essential for driving sustainable business growth and ensuring

long-term viability.

To successfully navigate this transition, carriers must implement significant operational changes that leverage advanced operational intelligence. By adopting intelligent systems, they can enhance operational efficiency, streamline processes, and reduce costs. Moreover, improved operational capabilities will lead to better customer experiences, fostering loyalty and satisfaction in an increasingly competitive market.

An agile business model is also crucial in this transformation, enabling carriers to quickly adapt to market demands and seize new revenue opportunities. Achieving this level of agility requires

carriers to invest in a unified digital platform that integrates and analyzes multi-domain and cross-domain data. By harnessing the power of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), carriers can generate valuable insights and use cases that align with their strategic objectives. These investments will empower carriers to innovate, optimize service delivery, and ultimately create a more responsive organization capable of thriving in the digital age.

“Building on the success of the first DTIC in 2023, we believe that the second edition will continue to play an active role in inspiring telecom carriers to share their insights, practices, and strategies. This collaborative environment will empower them to enhance their digital



Key partner carriers at Huawei's second DTIC

transformation programs through innovative use cases, enabling them to achieve multiple objectives, improve customer satisfaction, and drive successful business models,” said Allen Tang, President of ICT Marketing and Solution Sales Department, Huawei Middle East and Central Asia.

With a broadened set of strategic objectives focused on five key competitive targets under the “RACING” framework (Revenue = ARPU Increase + Customer Development + Innovative Services + Net. Loss Reduction + Go/Churn Reduction), the contest initiative aims to support carriers in accelerating their transformation from Telco to Techco. The “RACING” framework highlights five key benefits of technological transformation:

- **ARPU Increase:** By monetizing service quality, enhancing customer experience, and utilizing precise marketing, carriers can improve their Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) and drive business growth.
- **Customer Development:** Intelligent customer segmentation enables carriers to promote advanced technology and

superior service quality, resulting in higher user penetration within their networks and contributing to overall business growth.

- **Innovative Services:** Leveraging AI, machine learning, and big data allows carriers to deliver innovative services and products that facilitate their transformation journey.
- **Net Loss Reduction:** Advanced digital capabilities can reconstruct the operations and maintenance (O&M) process, using risk prediction for service assurance to help carriers minimize traffic or service losses.

- **Go/Churn Reduction:** By analyzing business, operational, and social data, carriers can better understand user behavior, enabling prompt actions that enhance customer experience and improve user retention.

Huawei's second DTIC received more than 50 applications from various Telcom carriers in the Middle East and Central Asia (ME&CA) region, with the top 26 advancing to the final stage. The applications have been divided

into five main groups: ARPU increase (2 cases), Customer Development (4 cases), Innovative Services (5 cases), Net Loss Reduction (9 cases), and Go/Churn Reduction (6 cases). All applications demonstrate the significant benefits of intelligent digital transformation.

Huawei's second edition of DTIC exemplifies our strategic vision, mission, and objectives in collaboration with our key partner carriers. It aims to explore advanced digital techniques that address complex challenges in the telecom industry, enhancing operational efficiency and service quality.

While it may not encompass all the benefits of digital transformation, DTIC aims to empower telecom operators to explore enhanced digital capabilities and strategies that facilitate their transition to Techco. By providing a platform for knowledge sharing and innovation, DTIC enables carriers to improve customer satisfaction, optimize operations, and unlock new revenue opportunities. Huawei invited award-winning teams, industry analysts, and experts to share insights and inspire the next generation of digital transformation. ■

Telcos & ecosystem partners to power regional socio-economic growth through 5G-A Fixed Wireless Access; Future collaboration roadmap set during Istanbul industry meeting



Roundtable discussions underscore how 5G-Advanced will be crucial in driving digital transformation and fostering regional economic growth

ICT Industry leaders and experts convened for the global Mobile Broadband Forum (MBBF) in Istanbul for the third ELITE FWA Club roundtable, to discuss the future of Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) and, in particular, 5G-Advanced FWA; its transformative impact in the development of regional digital economies, and its significance in meeting meaningful connectivity goals. The roundtable discussions underscored how 5G-Advanced will be crucial in driving digital transformation and fostering regional economic growth by enabling new use cases across the digital services landscape as well as in IoT, AI, cybersecurity, and automation.

The high-level roundtable, with ELITE FWA Club rotating chairpersons of the FWA Working Group's sub-groups on

Experience Management and Service Innovation, stc Kuwait and Omantel, respectively, alongside the leadership of SAMENA Telecommunications Council and Huawei, highlighted the GCC region's global leadership in 5G FWA implementation, assessed prospects of growth, and sketched a roadmap for 5G-Advanced technology adoption.

Building on the momentum from its inaugural meeting, held in Dubai in December 2023, the ELITE FWA Club, created to assist in accelerating FWA adoption across the Middle East and other markets where 5G deployment is in progress, has emerged as a crucial platform for knowledge sharing and strategic collaboration in advancing FWA technologies across the region.

Bocar BA, CEO and Board Member of the SAMENA Telecommunications Council, highlighted how 5G-Advanced adds greater intelligence and security capabilities. Alongside enhanced machine learning capabilities, the technology supports applications such as extended reality, industrial IoT, and smart agriculture, which play direct roles in achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs).

"FWA is instrumental in augmenting our efforts toward ensuring digital inclusion, connecting the unconnected more cost-effectively. In support of the ITU's initiatives and the UN Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development recommendations, the SAMENA Council is supporting broadband infrastructure development through innovative funding

approaches that it helped create. FWA presents a compelling option in this regard", BA stated.

BA also highlighted various initiatives and platforms created to support the work of the ELITE FWA Club. These include the SAMENA ELITE, an FWA dedicated e-publication, and the FWA Info Series, comprising both video and written content, curated to empower professionals with the latest insights, survey findings, best practices, and innovation updates within the FWA market segment.

Abdulaziz Al Deweesh from stc Kuwait, explored how 5G-Advanced helps address the unique climatic conditions in Kuwait and the Middle East, where homes and buildings are constructed to accommodate extreme

communication," Abdulaziz Al Deweesh added.

Omantel has implemented a comprehensive 5G FWA strategy, focusing on advanced network optimization through C BAND and 2.6 GHz technology and carrier aggregation. Additionally, the operator has established strategic partnerships with device manufacturers to ensure device availability and compatibility across its network. Through market-specific pricing plans and customized service bundles, Omantel addresses the unique demands of the Omani market while investing significantly in customer education and support programs to enhance the overall user experience.

Hani Al Mukhaini, Senior Manager of

networks while maintaining superior user experience. This technological leadership is complemented by strategic consulting and implementation support, helping regional operators achieve their business objectives through a deep understanding of local market dynamics.

Edwin Wang, Vice President, Global 5G Marketing and Solution Sales at Huawei, said: "As we enter the 5G-Advanced and AI era, FWA is positioned to experience unprecedented growth by addressing traditional connectivity challenges. With the introduction of 5G-A CPE, we're upgrading the FWA experience from Fiber like to Fiber same and enabling multi-service like 4K TV and Cloud Gaming Bundled to enhance the offer attractiveness; meanwhile, RedCap CPE/MiFi brings a significant reduction of device costs, targeting entry-level user and 4G Cat 4 CPE migration, effectively offloading 4G. Looking forward, CPE will be the Smart Home Hub portal, not only a device for connectivity but also with multimodal and AI function integration, providing camera/voice control/edge computing power."

Participants at the FWA roundtable explored how the technology is enabling critical use cases across various sectors. In healthcare, this includes connected ambulances and remote patient monitoring. In education, virtual classrooms bring learning opportunities to impoverished areas with insufficient infrastructure. The technology also advances transportation systems and supports environmental sustainability initiatives through energy-efficient solutions and smart city development.

The discussion brought to the fore how regional operators are aligning their 5G-Advanced initiatives with national visions, such as Kuwait Vision 2035 and Oman Vision 2040, particularly in areas of sustainability and digital transformation. Both stc Kuwait and Omantel shared their comprehensive approaches to sustainable practices, including energy-efficient infrastructure deployment and carbon footprint reduction initiatives. ■

"The enhanced capabilities of 5G-Advanced FWA, such as higher data rates, lower latency, and improved network capacity of the new spectrum, will have a significant impact on the end users when it comes to their daily usage and productivity"

Edwin Wang, Vice President, Global 5G Marketing and Solution Sales at Huawei

weather conditions. Outdoor Unit (ODU)-based FWA services help overcome signal penetration challenges, resulting in notably higher customer satisfaction, retention, and utilization rates than traditional 5G router users.

"The enhanced capabilities of 5G-Advanced FWA, such as higher data rates, lower latency, and improved network capacity of the new spectrum, will have a significant impact on the end users when it comes to their daily usage and productivity. It will also open doors to new and emerging use cases such as AR, VR, cloud computing, and much more. Additionally, it will enable us to support critical IoT use cases that require ultra-reliable and low-latency

Network Design at Omantel, stated: "Our commitment to extensive network coverage and capacity optimization has enabled us to deliver best-in-class experiences. We are now gearing up for 5G-Advanced to enhance network capabilities further and maintain our position at the forefront of technology development."

Through comprehensive technological and strategic initiatives, Huawei has established itself as a key enabler of the 5G FWA ecosystem in the Middle East region. Through advanced network optimization tools and zero-touch provisioning solutions, Huawei enables telecom operators to efficiently manage their 5G FWA

5G-Advanced is already here and we will see this evolved version of the 5G around the region very soon

Bocar BA
CEO & Board Member,
SAMENA Council



Teletimes Interview

5G evolution is underway and 5G-Advanced (or "5.5G") networks are on the verge of emerging. This is significant, as it opens new doors for new technology deployment scenarios, new socio-economic use-cases, and for enhancing the digital connectivity profile of this region. In efforts to uncover what is ahead in 5G, 5G-Advanced, and how 5G investments can be monetized better, especially through Fixed Wireless Access, some exclusive insights are shared by SAMENA Council with Teletimes International, a key media collaborator for the Council. Bocar BA, CEO & Board Member, during a recent media roundtable held in Istanbul, provides an account of what is ahead in 5G and how fixed networks, particularly gigabit optical networks, need to become a priority for the region.

TT: How do you view success of 5G and the emergence of 5G-Advanced, in light of the ELITE FWA Club that SAMENA Council is supporting to foster knowledge- and experience-sharing in 5G FWA deployment around the region?

Bocar: 5G is a reality, and it is only becoming clearer by the day that it serves as a critical, strong foundation for an inclusive digital future, and a biome for an incredibly large digital ecosystem. 5G has demonstrated its potential to create new social and business value, materialize advanced digital experiences, and unearth a myriad of opportunities across Healthcare, Education, eGovernment, and other sectors. It helps to note that the Middle East ranks among the world's very first regions to adopt 5G and, incidentally, the same region is home to some of the most well-defined ICT and economic diversification visions in the world. To support these visions, 5G-Advanced is already here, and we will see this evolved version of the 5G networks launched very soon around the region. 5G-Advanced speed of 62 Gbps has already been announced in the UAE.

However, one of the biggest challenges with 5G has been timely monetization of infrastructure investments. To help address this, SAMENA Council, in collaboration with key Members of the Council, especially Huawei, launched the ELITE FWA Club. SAMENA Council's support to the Club's

creation also originates from a need everyone is well-aware of; connecting the unconnected.

Our Industry, today, is facing a huge challenge, and that is to smartly invest CAPEX for deploying high-speed broadband across the developing countries. One of the technological solutions that make it easier to meet this challenge, and particularly in underserved areas, is Fixed Wireless Access (FWA). FWA cannot only mitigate the challenge of fiber deployment in several deployment scenarios, but can successfully complement fiber presence, while also providing quality-of-service comparable to fiber. So, essentially, these were the main reasons for creating the ELITE FWA Club. By establishing the Club, what we are looking for is to share best practices within the Industry, with the technology front runners and starters, telecom operators that have deployed FWA or have plans to do so, and how we can advance digital development and, of course, reach the objective of connecting the unconnected.

TT: In light of your collaboration with Saudi Government and the Private Sector, how do you see the progress of 5.5G in Saudi Arabia

and what are the support and partnership areas that SAMENA Council is currently working on?

Bocar: Saudi Arabia is an important market for SAMENA Council and its Members. It is the region's largest digital economy. Therefore, the Council is actively involved in Saudi Arabia at both Government and Private levels. The Saudi Government is executing the Vision 2030 on a very speedy mode, and one of the key contributions of SAMENA Council is to bring around the table and convene different stakeholders from the Private domain, which includes Telecom Operators, particularly our Members, stc, Mobily, Zain, Salam, to build collaboration bridges with the Government and internationally. The objectives of this facilitation are to assess where regulatory impediments exist in accelerating digital development, and how they can be overcome, while ensuring we are moving forward with sustainability in mind, toward sustainable digital transformation and sustainable development as our main goals. SAMENA Council very closely engages with CST in terms of discussing requirements of the Private Sector, including ways to materialize agile and flexible regulatory approaches. We also engage objectively and closely with the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) on policy issues to help incentivize investment, promote innovation, and preserve independence and ICT leadership.

Cybersecurity is among the key areas of the Council's involvement in Saudi Arabia. We work with the NCA, National Cybersecurity Authority through the Global Cybersecurity Forum (GCF), where we are addressing cybersecurity issues and contributing the global dialogue on securing the cyberspace, ensuring overall cyber safety for both digital systems as well as children. Cybersecurity measures are not only critical for 5G deployment, but for the upcoming 6G technology as well. Last month, the successful meeting of the GCF witnessed great openness among industry stakeholders on cybersecurity issues, and how widely this dialogue needs to be maintained. In addition to GCF, SAMENA Council is also engaging with competition authorities in Saudi Arabia.

Collectively, all of these collaboration examples signify the importance that SAMENA Council gives to the Saudi market and to Saudi digital development plans. Of course, we fundamentally support our Members' requirements, but as a sector-development partner to regulatory authorities and government entities around the region, the Council's involvement in Saudi is driven by the aspiration to inspire similar policy and regulatory advancements around the region, across developing countries. Saudi Arabia, given its large footprint, is among the world's advanced countries in term of ICT policy, G5



regulatory classification, digital infrastructure presence, digital innovation, job-creation, uptake of AI, and steps being taken toward digital transformation, in general.

TT: Are you collaborating with key technology providers, such as Huawei, in this domain or others?

Bocar: The role of technology providers, and especially of those having long-term investments made in terms of people, systems, resources, infrastructure, and technologies, is absolutely critical. Equally so, Technology Providers such as Huawei, are an integral part of the community of SAMENA Council. Huawei has made massive investments in the region's ICT Industry, and SAMENA Council fully supports this level of engagement in the interest of the

Industry, and also because doing so supports the Council's own motto of building digital economies.

From an industry perspective, for Telecom Operators' frame of mind, it is important to have an idea about where a Technology Provider will be taking them. Huge CAPEX and OPEX investment planning is at stake. Moreover, it is important in terms of research and development to understand the strategic direction undertaken by a Tech Provider, especially Huawei. With the region fine-tuning its policy focus and action plans on being driven by sustainability, predictability in business, digital integration, digital inclusion, and host of other underlying goals, close collaboration with Technology Providers is an imperative for both Operators and Governments. Achieving ICT maturity is essential for the region and for ICT markets that are either adopters or are frontrunners in digital transformation – to borrow terms lately used by Huawei in its Global Digitalization Index 2024, announced last month during GITEK 2024, and which is fully supported by SAMENA Council as a part of our own digital transformation maturity assessment exercise. This Index developed by Huawei is not just a tool for assessing digitalization progress, but, more importantly, it is a roadmap that helps countries see where they are currently positioned, and where they need to be in alignment with their own unique national dynamics and ICT visions. This Index is a great contribution by a Technology Provider, and I urge all industry stakeholders to look into the findings and recommendations made by the Index.

TT: It seems that there is an industry-wide consensus on 10 Gbps. How can regulatory authorities around the region support this objective in advanced network development and user experience?

Bocar: With the massive adoption of connected devices, with the proliferation of high-bandwidth consuming applications, with the arrival of massive IoT, with AI catching momentum, and the ICT Industry and other industries and adjacent sectors collaborating ever more closely together, which generates even higher data traffic, it is inevitable that

we'd need gigabit network capabilities to support our highly interconnected ways of living and doing business. Therefore, SAMENA Council, since 2023, is actively advocating and promoting the need for creating the 10 Gigabit Society. Earlier, in October this year, we convened policy and regulatory leaders, Telecom Operators, Technology Providers, broadband-focused industry bodies, as well as ecosystem partners for a deep-dive into accelerating 10 Gigabit infrastructure development in the Middle East and in Central Asia.

The concept of 10Gigabit is important in view of the dire need for digital innovation, digital inclusion, and digital sustainability. Gigabit networks, especially optical and fixed

over a decade-long legacy. MBBF is serving the Industry by sharing best practices, experiences, ideas, use-cases, and showing development path of 5G, 5G-Advanced, Fixed Wireless Access, Artificial Intelligence, Gigabit networks, etc.

Take for example, Fixed Wireless Access. Reaching remote areas is a mandatory task that every government is trying to fulfill. Through cross-sharing of deployment experiences, challenges, methodologies, and other useful information, new approaches can be adopted in deploying this technology more speedily, and more efficiently. This year's MBBF forum made a strong point that it is important for the governments and for the Private Sector to make the right and timely

and can be a game-changer in digital transformation efforts, nationwide. Omantel, as a key FWA player, is very experienced in FWA. They are also chairing one of our working groups. Therefore, FWA has a high feasibility in Oman to provide connectivity, to create new benefits for the Sultanate in terms of socio-economic advancement, job-creation, and uplifting the youth and also becoming the Middle East's center of innovation.

TT: SAMENA Council, by now, must have started its planning for the next year's Leaders' Summit. Could you shed light on the key topics you will include in the agenda about 5G and AI?

Bocar: Well, you are right, as you mentioned. We are planning the Leaders' Summit 2025. Of course, the heart of the talk is going to be centered around 5G-Advanced. We may include 6G into the discussion or at least in the roadmap, depending on the appetite for this topic within the Industry, as we are at a very early stage in terms of standardization on this front. Right now, the focus is 5G-Advanced. Cybersecurity will surely be among the key topics, and then monetization of the infrastructure, AI especially in terms of telecom network fraud management and revenue growth opportunities with AI, some cross-industry applications of 5G-Advanced, involvement of the healthcare industry, mobility industry, and convergence of terrestrial and non-terrestrial networks are keenly anticipated focus areas for the next Leaders' Summit.

There are various other diversified subjects that we will try to bring to the table and demo. Regardless, the objective of the Leaders' Summit remains: to provide an ambience for the leaders to interact, inspire, empower, and exchange knowledge in a world-class setting. We are in a complex world; interconnected, interrelated. There is a need to harmonize efforts from the private sector and governments to create a sustainable way forward, to be able to reach our objectives in fulfilling Sustainable Development Goals and connecting everyone.

We will have more clarity on Leaders' Summit 2025 by early next year. ■

Interview: Gulraiz Khalid



Saudi Arabia is an important market for SAMENA Council and its Members. It is the region's largest digital economy



networks, are the backbone of any digital economy. Thus, it is important for policy and regulatory approaches to take this into urgent consideration, and create the right enabling environment to accelerate fixed network development in the region. We still have a lot to do. We are working proactively. We are having a multi-stakeholder dialogue. And of course, we welcome any requirements from the regulators to help frame proper regulation for the benefit of the consumer, the business customer, and the citizen.

TT: How do you see the significance of holding the Global Mobile Broadband Forum (MBBF), especially in light of the developments within the 5.5G features?

Bocar: There are some very successful legacy knowledge-sharing platforms that are of great value to the Industry. The MBBF forum is among these key platforms with

decisions when it comes to cost-effectively deploying useful technologies. In short, MBBF is a highly important platform and adds value to the mobile broadband market.

TT: How do you view feasibility of FWA within the GCC countries like Oman, especially in light of Oman Vision 2030?

Bocar: I'm glad you asked me this question about Oman. Oman is getting more aggressive with its national Vision, and more proactive in overall transformation. This is very good news, because a key, ultimate objectives of Oman is job-creation. Notably, Oman, in the Arab region, is a center of innovation, and we are not mentioning it enough. We need to do more for and with Oman, to promote Oman's readiness for and achievements in digital advancements. Keeping in view Oman's geography, with mountains, islands, deserts, and coastal plains, FWA is an ideal technology



“Fiber networks have become indispensable, not only in the telecommunications field, but also in various industries”

Dr. Alaa Jasim Mousa
President of Fiber Connect Council MENA
& CEO of Earthlink

In an exclusive interview with Teletimes, Dr. Alaa J. Mousa, CEO of Earthlink and president of the Fiber Connect Council MENA, shared insights on the critical role of ICT trade events in the Middle East, Earthlink's vision, and the future of fiber technology in the region. His comments illuminate the transformative power of fiber and ICT infrastructure, underscoring the rapid pace of digital growth in the Middle East.

The Role of ICT Industry Events in the Middle East

Dr. Mousa emphasized the importance of events like the SAMENA ACCELERATOR, particularly for the Middle East's evolving ICT landscape. These events bring together vendors, policymakers, and operators to forge the future of digital technology. "SAMENA events are always rich and informative," he noted. "They bring together key players to shape the future of this sector." Huawei's significant presence at such events further solidifies the company's commitment to the region's ICT advancement, including its backing of the Fiber Connect Council

MENA, which Dr. Mousa chairs.

The Middle East stands as a critical hub for global internet traffic, with a strategic location connecting Asia, Europe, and Africa. As Dr. Mousa explained, this positioning places the region at the heart of digital transformation, making high-speed connectivity vital for supporting new digital initiatives in e-health, e-school, e-government and smart hotel. Events like SAMENA provide a platform for industry leaders to address the demand for advanced 10 Gbps fiber infrastructures, which are becoming essential as economies shift from oil dependence to knowledge-based development.

The Vision Behind Earthlink

Earthlink, Iraq's leading ISP, was founded in 2005 with an ambitious goal to elevate Iraq's connectivity and digital infrastructure. Over the past two decades, Earthlink has transformed the country's telecom landscape through

innovative solutions and rapid expansion. Dr. Mousa elaborated, "Earthlink is the leading ISP in Iraq. We started with satellite services, then moved quickly to wireless, and invested in creating Iraq's largest fiber infrastructure."

This vision is grounded in providing Iraq with a robust fiber network infrastructure that can support the country's digital transformation. Earthlink has been recognized globally for its rapid fiber network deployment, having laid over 5,000 kilometers of fiber in just 14 months. Now with more than 1 million homes connected, the company is expanding its reach even further. Dr. Mousa highlighted their impressive progress in Iraq and their ambition to expand across the Middle East, making Earthlink a regional leader in fiber network deployment.

Alignment of Fiber Connect Council MENA and Earthlink's Vision

The alignment between Earthlink and the Fiber Connect Council MENA is no coincidence; both entities strive for widespread access to high-speed fiber networks. As Dr. Mousa pointed out, "Due to these achievements, Earthlink was appointed President of the Fiber Connect Council MENA, and recently, we received the role of President of the FTTH Council Global Alliance."

This collaboration enhances Earthlink's role as a trailblazer in fiber technology, not only for Iraq but also as a model for neighboring countries. The Council's mission is accelerating fiber adoption by all broadband stakeholders through information and promotion, and accelerating the availability of fiber-based, ultra-high-speed access networks to consumers and businesses. This aligns seamlessly with Earthlink's mission to deliver high-speed, reliable, and future-ready internet. This alignment has bolstered Earthlink's position to lead Iraq's digital transformation and set the standard for fiber connectivity in the region.

Huawei's Role as a Partner

Huawei has been a longstanding partner of Earthlink, a relationship that dates back to the early 2000s. Dr. Mousa shared, "Huawei was one of the first international companies to establish a strong presence in Iraq, and their commitment has been instrumental to our success." Huawei's investment in local R&D and its presence in Iraq allowed it to support Earthlink with on-ground technical expertise, making Huawei a critical partner in Earthlink's infrastructure deployment.

Huawei's focus on R&D has been a driving factor in its success, especially in Iraq. Dr. Mousa appreciated Huawei's versatility, noting that Earthlink's multi-vendor strategy enables them to deploy best-in-class solutions. Beyond Earthlink, Huawei collaborates with other governments and industry councils across the Middle East, contributing to the region's ICT

advancements.

The Growing Role of Fiber to the Home (FTTH)

In recent years, the importance of FTTH has risen, especially as digital applications require more bandwidth. While wireless solutions offer flexibility, Dr. Mousa acknowledged the growing need for fiber to support digital transformation of various industries such as healthcare, education and hospitality, and high-demand applications like AI, big data, and augmented reality. He described the "data tsunami" faced by telecom providers, where demand has surged exponentially.

Fiber networks have thus become indispensable, not only in the telecommunications field, but also in various industries. Earthlink has responded to this demand by rapidly expanding its FTTH network, aiming to cover 5 million homes across Iraq within the next two years. This rapid deployment is a testament to Earthlink's commitment to providing Iraq with cutting-edge connectivity solutions.

Earthlink has been recognized globally for its rapid fiber network deployment, having laid over 5,000 kilometers of fiber in just 14 months. Now with more than 1 million homes connected, the company is expanding its reach even further.

The Future of the Telecom Market

Looking ahead, Dr. Mousa foresees a continued demand for high-speed fiber networks, especially as data-heavy applications continue to proliferate. "With the rise of big data, AI, and video streaming, operators are investing more in fiber networks," he explained. For Earthlink, this demand means ongoing expansion and a dedication to providing quality services to all Iraqi users.

The Middle Eastern telecom market is on a path of significant transformation, driven by digital and intelligent transformation, technological innovation, and regional cooperation. With a robust foundation in fiber networks and strategic partnerships, Earthlink is well-positioned to lead Iraq—and the Middle East—into the future of digital connectivity. ■

Global MBBF 2024: Accelerating 5.5G and AI convergence to lead Mobile AI era

The Global Mobile Broadband Forum 2024 (MBBF 2024) has kicked off in Istanbul, Türkiye with the theme "5.5G Leads Mobile AI Era". More than 1,000 guests from mobile network carriers, ecosystem players, and leaders from vertical industries have gathered to discuss a wide range of topics, from business model innovation to industry development and key technological directions in the Mobile AI era.

This forum was set up to further promote the convergence of 5.5G and intelligent applications to create greater value for the mobile industry. It began with the opening remarks from Ken Hu, Huawei's Rotating Chairman. "In the future, AI will change everything. Everyone will be able to use it, anytime and anywhere. Mobile networks and devices will play an important role to make that happen, just like what we have done to enable telephones and mobile Internet as a universal service," said Hu.

2024 has brought both the commercial launch of 5.5G and the unprecedented expansion of artificial intelligence (AI) into our everyday life and work. Globally, more than 3 million AI-capable applications have been developed, more than the total number of non-AI apps available in the app store. That early commercial 5.5G rollout coincides with the first year of AI adoption in various devices is tremendously significant — it heralds the dawn of the Mobile AI era.

Li Peng, Huawei's Senior Vice President and President of ICT Sales & Service delivered a keynote on how to maximize new growth opportunities in the mobile AI era. "The mobile AI era is here," said Li. "We will see new forms of interaction with devices, new intelligent services, and structural changes in traffic models. This will bring huge new opportunities for the mobile industry."

Li then detailed how carriers can make the most of these new opportunities and drive



new growth by reshaping services, network infrastructure, O&M, and business models. He shared how leading carriers around the world have already verified AI service capabilities on live 5.5G networks across a wide range of scenarios for individuals, homes, travel, and business.

"Moving forward, there are two things we can do to capitalize on new opportunities in the mobile AI era," said Li. "First, we should prepare our networks to support AI. That means boosting network capabilities, especially uplink, latency, and capacity. Second, we can use AI to support our networks. With more complex networks, we can use AI to help automate O&M, optimize network efficiency, and guarantee a solid user experience."

This forum features boutique exhibitions of new intelligent connectivity for people, homes, things, industries, and vehicles. Across the indoor booths and outdoor fields, multimodal AI devices and diverse Mobile AI applications are presented,

including AI phones, AI glasses, intelligent cockpits, humanoid intelligence, AI-generated content (AIGC), digital human interaction, and AI-powered real-time call translation, thanks to the joint efforts of Huawei, operators, and industry players. Another highlight is the continuous 5.5G coverage across the indoor and outdoor areas of the venues, showcasing the multidimensional capabilities of 5.5G networks and the cutting-edge products and solutions that power them.

The 15th Global Mobile Broadband Forum, with a tagline of "5.5G Leads Mobile AI Era", runs from October 30 to 31 in Istanbul, Türkiye. It is hosted by Huawei with support from our industry partners GSMA and GTI. Together with operators, vertical industry leaders, and ecosystem partners, we will share the industry's latest advancements and explore new opportunities. Industry stakeholders will discuss how to achieve 5.5G business success in the Mobile AI era, and leverage the success of 5G to attain even greater achievements with 5.5G. ■

stc Group named Best Middle Eastern Connectivity Provider at Capacity Europe 2024



stc Group has concluded its participation as a Digital Enabler at Capacity Europe 2024, held in London from October 15-17. The Group's participation emphasized its commitment to pioneering global connectivity and in telecommunications innovation.

During the event, stc Group was recognized with two prestigious Global Carrier Awards: Best Sales Team Globally and Best Middle Eastern Connectivity Provider. These accolades reflect the Group's excellence in delivering cutting-edge solutions and reaffirm its position as a leader in the telecom industry.

These awards are a testament to stc Group's commitment to excellence in global connectivity and innovation, further highlighting its role as a key digital enabler across the region.

At the event, and in line with its commitment to drive digital transformation, stc Group forged a number of new agreements which included an agreement with Cubic Telecom, aiming to enhance connectivity through stc's IoT



platforms, APIs, and GSM services. Another Memorandum of Understanding was forged with China Unicom, aimed at bolstering regional connectivity and driving IoT innovation.

Furthermore, stc Group earned the GLF Code of Conduct anti-fraud certification for 2024. This achievement underscores stc Group's standards of transparency and

integrity in the international carrier industry.

Throughout the event, stc Group showcased its wide array of digital services, including IoT, as well as its international voice service capabilities. The Group highlighted its role as a gateway for international data traffic, leveraging Saudi Arabia's strategic position at the crossroads of Asia, Africa, and Europe. ■

stc Group achieves highest 9-month revenues and net profit of SAR 56,627 million

stc Group announced its financial results for the nine month period of 2024, reporting a revenue increase of SAR 2,138 million reaching SAR 56,627 million, an increase of 3.92% compared to the same period last year. Net profit for the period reached to 11,233 million. This reflects an increase of 11.9% vs same period after excluding the non-recurring gain from the sale of Al Khobar land of SAR 1,296 million that was recorded in the third quarter of the previous year.

Additionally, stc subsidiaries' revenue grew by 11%, contributing to the Group's record-breaking performance that exceeded market analysts' estimates.

It's worth noting that based on the approval of stc Group's General Assembly to sell 51% stake in Telecommunication Towers Company (TAWAL) to the Public Investment Fund, the comparative figures for the previous periods were reclassified as discontinued operations in the interim condensed consolidated financial statements as of 30th of September 2024. Furthermore, the material capital gain will be recognized after obtaining the necessary regulatory approvals and completing the transaction procedures.

Olayan Alwetaid, stc Group's CEO, said: "stc Group is well positioned to continue its growth journey and maintain its leadership as the top digital enabler in the region. These outstanding results are a testament to the effective execution of the Group's strategy, which focuses on enhancing investment in infrastructure, growth in new technology sectors, and the activation of its efficiency program."

stc Group has continued its commitment to enabling digital transformation in various vital sectors in Saudi Arabia by



Olayan Alwetaid, CEO of stc Group

investing in digital infrastructure such as 5G, fiber optics, and data centers. The Group continued its investment in advanced technologies like cloud computing, IoT, and fintech, while enhancing its cybersecurity capabilities.

stc also continued to strengthen its national strategic partnerships with mega projects in the Kingdom such as NEOM, Diriyah, New Murabba and Red Sea. This reinforces the Group's commitment to enabling the realization of national objectives and continues to solidify its position as a key player in the global

digital economy.

It's worth noting that the group continues its focus to maximize total shareholders returns as stc's Board of Directors endorsed in 24th of Aug an increase in the annual dividend by 37.5%, from SAR 1.6 to SAR 2.2 per share, starting from Q4 2024. This raises the total annual dividend from SAR 8 billion to SAR 11 billion over the next three years, reflecting the Group's strong financial position and confidence in sustainable operating cash flows, with the ability to continue expanding, growing, and diversifying investments. ■

HUAWEI eKit unveils 30+ new products and enhances solutions at GITEX GLOBAL 2024

At GITEX GLOBAL 2024, Huawei successfully hosted the HUAWEI eKit Forum under the theme "Together for Growth, Digitalization for Success." The event served as a platform to launch over 30 new HUAWEI eKit products and showcase upgraded scenario-based solutions designed to bolster the competitiveness of Huawei's distribution partners and accelerate digital transformation for SMEs across various industries.

Huawei underscored its commitment to partner success by highlighting its end-to-end strategic investment in its distribution business, spanning R&D, marketing, sales, supply, and services. This commitment is further reinforced through joint marketing initiatives, comprehensive training programs like the HCSX-distribution professional certification and Golden Seed Plan, and robust after-sales support.

Zhang Lin, President of Partner Development and Commercial & Distribution Business Department, Enterprise Sales Department, Huawei, stated, "Distribution is a key strategy for Huawei's enterprise business growth. Through continuous end-to-end investment, we aim to cultivate a thriving distribution partner ecosystem that empowers SMEs to embrace digital and intelligent transformation."

Echoing this sentiment, Wei Xianbin, Director of Distribution Business Department, Enterprise Sales Department, Huawei, added, "HUAWEI eKit leverages innovative products, joint marketing efforts, and dedicated partner enablement to unlock new opportunities in the SME market. We are committed to working closely with our partners to shape the future of distribution."

The new HUAWEI eKit product lineup includes the Datacom SOHO S220S and



Zhang Lin, President of Partner Development, Commercial & Distribution Business Department, Enterprise Sales Department, Huawei

S310S series GE & 2.5G converged access switches, the flagship triple-radio Wi-Fi 7 product AP 673, the IdeaHub Board 2 Pro for intelligent collaboration in offices and classrooms, the MiniFTTO large-capacity five-in-one optical gateway F1002-AC-H1, and the Wi-Fi 7 optical AP F700C-36-1GH. These offerings cater specifically to the SME market, elevating small businesses' path to success in the digital era.

Recognizing the diverse needs of SMEs,



Wei Xianbin, Director of Distribution Business Department, Enterprise Sales Department, Huawei

Huawei also showcased enhanced solutions tailored for micro, small, and medium-sized businesses. These solutions address specific requirements in sectors like hospitality, office environments, and education. For instance, budget hotels can leverage the all-in-one wall plate AP, GE & 2.5G converged access switch, and all-optical core switch for large-scale network upgrades. Similarly, SMEs can opt for the Wi-Fi 7 AP, 2.5GE switch, and 10G core switch to enhance office bandwidth.

The forum also provided a platform for successful HUAWEI eKit partners to share their experiences. Ansar KV, co-founder of Green Zone, a UAE-based SME network distribution partner, and Tahir Kiziltas, CEO of Frontline Solutions, an intelligent collaboration distribution partner from Saudi Arabia, both shared their positive experiences collaborating with HUAWEI eKit.

HUAWEI eKit remains dedicated to empowering distribution partners and SMEs with original products and solutions that drive digital transformation across industries. ■

e& announces Q3 2024 earnings with consolidated revenue growth of 10% to AED 14.4 billion

e& completes acquisition of controlling stake in PPF Telecom and 100% acquisition of GlassHouse, expanding its footprint to 38 countries

e& has announced its Q3 2024 consolidated financial results, reporting consolidated revenue of AED 14.4 billion, growing 10 per cent year-over-year in constant currency, while consolidated revenues for the first nine months of year 2024 recorded AED 42.7 billion, growing 9 per cent YoY, reflecting continued growth across most verticals.

e& completed an important milestone by closing the transaction of PPF Telecom that will enhance the group portfolio diversification while it continues to grow its digital services across enterprise solutions, fintech, and media and entertainment sectors. This diversification will allow it to pursue its strategic ambition of transitioning to a global technology player.

e&'s total subscriber base witnessed a YoY increase of 6 per cent, reaching 177.3 million. The total number of e& UAE subscribers reached 14.7 million, representing a YoY growth of 5 per cent.

Hatem Dowidar, Group Chief Executive Officer, e&, said: "e& continued its strong momentum in the first nine months, with consolidated revenue growing 9 per cent in constant currency to AED 42.7 billion.

We scaled up e&'s telecom footprint to 20 countries, bringing our overall reach to 38 markets. This growth, coupled with our solid performance in both local and international markets, drove our consolidated net profit to reach AED 8.5 billion growing 10 per cent during the first nine months. Furthermore, consolidated EBITDA reached AED 19.4 billion, resulting in EBITDA margin of 45 per cent, while our telecom EBITDA margin remained resilient at 49%".

"Now that we have completed the acquisition of a controlling stake in PPF Telecom Group, we look forward to the opportunities that will arise as we expand our global horizon, impacting the lives of over 1 billion people across the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and now Central and Eastern Europe—marking our first operational foothold in Europe. By combining our expertise with PPF Telecom's strong local presence, we're well-positioned to drive digital transformation and empower societies across this region," added Dowidar.

He concluded, "e& remains dedicated to championing the UAE's leadership vision as the country continues to advance its digital agenda as a role model of digitalisation. Our investment in cutting-

Financial Results
Q3 | 2024

<p>Consolidated Revenue Q3 - 2024</p> <p>AED 14.4 Billion</p> <p>Nine months 2024 AED 42.7 Billion</p>	<p>Consolidated Net Profit Q3 - 2024</p> <p>AED 3 Billion</p> <p>Nine months 2024 AED 8.5 Billion</p>	<p>Consolidated EBITDA Q3 - 2024</p> <p>AED 6.5 Billion</p> <p>Nine months 2024 AED 19.4 Billion</p>	<p>Global Subscribers</p> <p>177.3 Million</p> <p>UAE Subscribers</p> <p>14.7 Million</p>
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38 Countries
across Middle East, Asia, Africa, Central and Eastern Europe

are now **together** in
Central and Eastern Europe

e& and AWS enter a new strategic alliance of
\$1 billion

e& and UNDP join forces to promote **digital transformation** for **sustainable development** in the Arab States

e& and ADNOC to Build the **Energy Industry's Largest Private 5G Wireless Network**

e& UAE continues to transform retail, opening the second **AI-powered EASE store** in Dubai Mall

e& enterprise successfully completes **\$60m** acquisition of **GlassHouse**

edge infrastructure and strategic partnerships will ensure that we continue to deliver futuristic solutions and digital services that drive sustainable progress and transformation.”

Key Operational Highlights

e&

e& successfully completed its landmark partnership with PPF Group, acquiring a controlling stake (50 per cent plus one economic share) in the service and infrastructure companies of PPF Telecom Group (“PPF Telecom”) across Bulgaria, Hungary, Serbia and Slovakia. This acquisition marks a significant step in e&'s ongoing global expansion ambitions, diversifying and growing its geographical presence to 38 countries. This milestone is poised to transform the telecom landscape in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) region and deliver enhanced value to over 10 million customers across the four markets.

e& signed a US\$ 1 billion-plus (AED 3.7 billion) agreement with Amazon Web Services (AWS) over the next six years to accelerate the impact of cloud-driven innovation and digital transformation across the Middle East region. The alliance will focus on delivering core cloud services like storage, computing, networking, cybersecurity, and AI and machine learning (ML). Part of this investment will be dedicated to training and certifying up to 60,000 individuals—including 6,000 UAE nationals—in cloud technologies and AI.

e& and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have partnered to promote digital inclusion and sustainable development in the Arab States region. The collaboration will focus on bridging digital divides, supporting MSMEs, using AI for climate resilience, and fostering public-private partnerships for digital cooperation.

e& has become one of the first telecom operators to the GSMA's Responsible AI (RAI) Maturity Roadmap. The roadmap enables telcos to assess where they currently stand in terms of their existing maturity in using AI responsibly against where they want to go. It then provides clear guidance and measurement tools to help fulfil those ambitions while ensuring industry-wide best practice in the responsible use of the technology.

A new year-long partnership between e& and Nokia's research arm, Nokia Bell Labs, will see both parties collaborating on research and development to create AI-based use cases for strategic industrial sectors. The goal is to develop responsible AI solutions for sustainable enterprise and industrial automation applications and accelerate innovation concepts toward real world deployments.

e& UAE

The opening of the second AI-powered autonomous store,

EASE (e& Autonomous Store Experience), at Dubai Mall set new standards in customer experience. The store powered by state-of-the-art AI technology, offers a unique and seamless shopping experience with more advanced features, such as FastPass and visitor line activation via biometrics or the e& UAE app.

e& UAE launched the Fibre-To-The-Room (FTTR) service, which enhances the performance of Wi-Fi networks. This innovative service is ideal for smart homes, gamers, and other tech-dependent users who require high-speed internet connections with minimal latency to ensure optimal performance.

The introduction of the self-activated instant eSIM with 10GB of complimentary data for visitors gave them a Free Visitor Line eSIM immediately upon passing through immigration by scanning a QR code and completing a quick facial recognition step, thereby eliminating queues and streamlining the process.

e& UAE achieved Platinum status in TM Forum's Open API certification, making it the first telecommunications operator in the MENA region to receive this level of accreditation for 20 unique APIs.

Building on Smiles' position as the UAE's leading everyday rewards SuperApp, a new subscription model was introduced. Called "Smiles Unlimited," it is the only super subscription that unifies all the benefits of unlimited free food and grocery delivery, service fee waiver for home services, and unlimited Buy-One-Get-One on thousands of brands into one subscription package.

e& UAE unveiled 'Care Plus,' a support service designed specifically for business customers, a pioneering offering that empowers businesses to tailor their support levels precisely to their unique requirements and critical priorities.

e& enterprise

e& enterprise successfully completed its 100 per cent acquisition of GlassHouse, a leading Türkiye-based provider of managed cloud, business continuity and SAP Infrastructure services. The acquisition strengthens e& enterprise's capabilities in private cloud and managed services, bolstering its overall value proposition with the addition of SAP capabilities and vertical expertise within the banking and financial services sector. It also marks a significant milestone in e& enterprise's international growth strategy, following successful market entries into Saudi Arabia in 2019, Egypt in 2023, and now Türkiye, Qatar and South Africa.

e& enterprise launched its Utility Co-Pilot, an innovative utility virtual assistant, available in the Microsoft Marketplace. This cutting-edge solution leverages Generative AI (GenAI) and advanced data management techniques to revolutionise utility management, offering unprecedented efficiency, transparency, and customer satisfaction.



Hatem Dowidar, Group Chief Executive Officer, e&

e& enterprise's "end to end (E2E)" digital transformation team successfully completed Emirates Transport's consulting engagement, helping define their digital transformation roadmap and positioning it as a preferred tech partner for its implementation. This involved providing consulting services to define technical requirements through its "3+1" transition model, bridging the gap between digital strategy and execution.

Help AG, the cybersecurity arm of e& enterprise, has achieved significant recognition by winning the 'Best Managed Security Provider Award' at the Future Security Awards 2024, solidifying its position as a leader in the cybersecurity space. Additionally, Help AG has received Managed Security Service Provider (MSSP) authorisation for Zscaler, further enhancing its ability to deliver cutting-edge security solutions to clients and ensuring they remain protected in an ever-evolving digital landscape.

Beehive has achieved a significant milestone, surpassing AED 3 billion in total SME funding across the GCC. This achievement highlights the company's success in supporting small and medium-sized enterprises in the region. Additionally, Beehive's partnership with ADCB as its first key account banking partner further solidifies its position as a trusted partner in the financial services industry.

e& life

e& life delivered robust growth, driving the group's expansion across all consumer digital verticals. e& money achieved substantial progress, tripling its Total Gross Transaction Volume (GTV) and

increasing remittance GTV by 2.4x year-over-year. The platform has issued 703,000 cards to date and attracted 1.29 million registered users, further strengthening its position in the digital financial services market and aligning with e&'s strategic vision for fintech.

Careem demonstrated exceptional growth in Q3 2024, with GTV surging 177 per cent year-over-year and GTV per user rising by 122 per cent, underscoring a strong and engaged user base. Additionally, Careem Plus, its monthly subscription programme's monthly active users now surpassed 50 per cent of the total active user base, reflecting all-time high user engagement and platform traction.

STARZ ON has quickly gained momentum in the GCC streaming market. Since its launch in January 2024, it has amassed over 4.1 million installs, becoming the most downloaded SVOD/AVOD app in the region. With over 1,000 hours of new content and an increase of 103,000 monthly active users compared to Q2 2024, STARZ ON has solidified its position as a leading OTT platform with 1.44 million active users. Through its partnership with evision, the group acquired premium new content, including The History Channel, History 2, and Crime+Investigation, and broadcasted the Cricket World Cup (ICC) exclusively across in MENA.

e& international

In Pakistan, Upaisa, the digital financial services platform of Ubank and Ufone, launched a new debit card in conjunction with Mastercard. The innovative offering is a step forward in advancing Pakistan's digital economy, offering consumers a secure, convenient, and seamless way to conduct digital transactions both locally and globally.

PTCL announced the launch of Pakistan's first-ever AI-enabled Customer Services platform, developed in collaboration with STech.ai, which sets a new benchmark in digital innovation and customer experience excellence. In addition, PTCL Flash Fibre (FTTH) crossed the milestone of 600,000 subscribers in September.

Transforming Egypt's Mediterranean coast, e& Egypt has signed a landmark agreement with Modon Holding to spearhead the development of cutting-edge smart city infrastructure for the Ras El Hekma project. e& Egypt has also been awarded the "Best Workplace Environment in Diversity and Inclusion" by Global Business Outlook.

e& capital

e& capital and AT&T Ventures announced a strategic investment in Derq, the leading provider of real-time AI-powered intelligent transportation system (ITS) solutions. The investments will be used to expand Derq's activities in the US, GCC, and beyond, and accelerate the company's investments in product development and growing its intellectual property (IP) portfolio. ■

SAMENA's Leadership & Excellence Awards in Digital-development concludes with 34 recognitions given across four regions

SAMENA Telecommunications Council successfully held its second edition of the SAMENA Leadership and Excellence Awards in Digital-development ("SAMENA LEADs") on October 15th. SAMENA LEADs recognized telecom operators and regulators across South Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia in the categories of Innovation Excellence, Business Leadership, User Experience Delivery, Fixed Wireless Access Success, and Regulatory Enablement.

The 2024 edition of the SAMENA LEAD awards highlighted and recognized advanced ICT success in the region, including but not limited to 5G&5G-Advanced development, optical fiber broadband, datacom, cloud-based transformation, and mobile finance. LEADs also recognized and promoted development and success achieved in monetizing 5G&5G-Advanced investments through the adoption of Fixed Wireless Access technology. Various technologies, including cloud transformation, IPv6-Enhanced implementation; regulatory enablement, as regards, for example, networks for industries and child online protection; and business milestones, such as business acquisition strategies and mobile finance solutions were identified with accolades.

SAMENA LEADs serve as a platform to recognize regulatory achievements, actions and approaches that are supporting the private sector and enabling sustainable investment avenues. Moreover, SAMENA LEAD awards help foster and propagate new best practices and inspire similar successes in neighboring regions while enabling both businesses and regulators to create new cross-border synergies and opportunities for growth. In the words of Bocar BA, CEO & Board Member of SAMENA Council, "SAMENA Leadership & Excellence Awards in Digital-development are designed to identify key strengths,



and how every company-level greatness can be harnessed to achieve equally great milestones at the ecosystem level".

Since 2018, there has been much progress made on fifth-generation mobile network deployment in the region, with Operators having achieved significant milestones and Regulatory Authorities having supported market and technology development as well as customer-centric service offerings through impressive new initiatives that support the market and the end-user.

The following entities were awarded SAMENA LEAD awards in 34 unique strength areas, carefully assessed by SAMENA Council across the LEAD award categories:

TDRA UAE
TRA Bahrain
CMC Iraq
TRA Oman
CRA Qatar
NTRA Egypt
PTA Pakistan

CST Saudi Arabia
Zain Group e& UAE
Kazakhtelecom JSC
Mobily stc KSA
Zain Kuwait
Beeline Uzbekistan
Vodafone Qatar
PTCL du Pay
Omantel stc Bahrain
du stc Kuwait
stc Group
Mobily Omantel e& UAE
Uztelecom JSC
Ooredoo Kuwait
stc KSA
CMPak (Zong)
Zain Group
PMCL (Jazz)
Zain Jordan
Zain KSA 🇸🇦

SAMENA ACCELERATOR on F5G-A demonstrates technology readiness to help accelerate 10Gigabit society into reality across Middle East and Central Asia

SAMENA (South Asia-Middle East-North Africa) Telecommunications Council held its SAMENA ACCELERATOR on 10 Gigabit digital infrastructure on October 17 in Dubai. Held in collaboration with Huawei Technologies, the Council organized the 2024 edition of its SAMENA ACCELERATOR to continue the dialogue initialized in the 2023 edition of the 10 Gigabit ACCELERATOR, which established a compelling case for ultra-broadband or "10Giga" network development by utilizing advancements in Fiber and IPv6 innovations. The 2024 edition delved into deepening consensus on accelerating 10 Giga network development and exploring future-oriented broadband infrastructure upgrades, enhancing user experiences, enabling digitalization of various industries, and, as an ultimate goal, accelerating the development of the digital economy in the Middle East and Central Asia.

The SAMENA ACCELERATOR 2024 was organized into four sub-segments: In the Regional Visions segment, the audience was briefed about ICT visions and national ICT development plans from the UAE, Bahrain, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan. Experience-Sharing from du and Omantel provided perspectives on how optical networks serve at the core of digital foundation as seen from Operators' eyes. Technology Readiness segment provided perspectives from the World WLAN Applications Alliance (WAA) - China, ETSI Industry Specification Group (ISG) for Fixed 5G, and Huawei Technologies, demonstrated advancements in F5G-A to achieve new service delivery and user experience milestones, technologically speaking. In the last half, a discussion, focusing on key drivers of advanced infrastructure development, enablers and impediments in network implementation, and new approaches required on the policy,



regulatory, and sustainability fronts, were discussed.

Bocar BA, CEO & Board Member of SAMENA Telecommunications Council, in his opening keynote stated that "Observations and advancements necessitate that both Government sector and the Private sector work closely together and exchange priorities and capabilities on the fixed network fronts, more closely, and be empowered by each other."

BA, in the opening of the SAMENA ACCELERATOR, also received recognition from Director General of TDRA, HE Engr. Majed Al Mesmar, for his contributions to the Industry and for his relentless efforts in bringing industry leaders together, fostering impactful cooperation, and for catalysing industry initiatives locally, regionally, and internationally.

In his closing remarks, BA emphasized on policy requirements: "We need to advance the necessary fixed-line infrastructure, unlock new capital, and new ways of sharing responsibilities to develop that infrastructure, and develop human capital

for the digital age, and make broadband connectivity and quality-of-service affordable, with bare minimum speeds set as benchmarks." BA further remarked that "I would like to congratulate Huawei for drawing attention to various aspects of digital transformation as assessed through the Huawei Global Digitalization Index (GDI) – which is an excellent way forward to measure and help accelerate ICT maturity in and across our region."

"SAMENA Council's partnership with Huawei is a strategic step towards fostering digital innovation in the region", BA added.

SAMENA Council observes that the region, particularly, and neighbouring regions, generally, need to come at par with more digitally advanced economies. However, to achieve this, drastic steps are necessary to further broadband development, in particular, through optical networks, using latest technologies, such as F5G-A. Moving towards "gigabit" infrastructure is an essential element in such steps, and it is critical that regional economies achieve ICT maturity in order to thrive in the age of gigabit connectivity. 🇸🇦



Huawei Cloud Summit UAE 2024: Leap to Intelligence with a Better Cloud across MENA region

During the GITEX GLOBAL 2024, Huawei Cloud Summit UAE 2024 was held where Huawei Cloud demonstrated how its industry-leading AI-native cloud drives digitalization and intelligence across various industries in line with the visions of regional governments. Senior Huawei executives also revealed Huawei Cloud's significant progress in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, with its public cloud revenue growing 10-fold in the past year.

Under the theme "Leap to Intelligence with a Better Cloud", the summit underscored Huawei Cloud's commitment to boosting digital economy in the region by introducing open, equal, and accessible technologies and cultivating talent. During the event, Huawei Cloud launched its latest products and technical enhancements, and released joint solutions with ecosystem partners. These initiatives aim to introduce proven success in China to the region, turbocharging the development of local industries. The company's efforts have yielded significant results, with Huawei Cloud providing innovative services to

over 900 local customers and building a comprehensive ecosystem with more than 300 local partners.

In his keynote, Steven Yi, President of Huawei Middle East and Central Asia, emphasized, "Achieving a nation's digital strategy requires vision, partnerships, and long-term commitment. Huawei believes in



Joy Huang, Vice President of Huawei Cloud and President of Huawei Cloud Strategy Industry Development

action, focusing on AI, big data, and cloud to drive innovation and help the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa progress toward a smarter future."

Jacqueline Shi, President of Huawei Cloud Global Marketing and Sales Service, delivered a keynote speech virtually using Huawei Cloud's virtual avatar technology. She stated, "Tech innovations built on industry know-how and ecosystems are crucial to digital transformation. On the digital journey, ecosystems matter."

During the event, Joy Huang, Vice President of Huawei Cloud and President of Huawei Cloud Strategy Industry Development, said, "Huawei Cloud has progressed rapidly over the past year. We couldn't have done it without your support. Our job is to keep innovating to better serve you, with better infrastructure, better technology, and better experience. We aim to become your trusted partner for your digital and intelligent journey." He detailed on the ecosystem services offered by Huawei Cloud to enable digital transformation

in various regional industries such as e-government, finance, carrier, media & entertainment, e-commerce & retail, and Web3. Joy also launched the Huawei Cloud Industry Solutions Joint Announcement, an initiative that brings global experience and ecosystem knowledge to the Middle East to support intelligent growth.

During his speech, Hu Yuhai, Vice President of Huawei Hybrid Cloud, highlighted that hybrid cloud has become the go-to foundation for digital transformation in government organizations and large enterprises today. He announced the release of Huawei Cloud Stack 8.5 for the Middle East and Central Asia, including a new Mainframe-to-Cloud Solution and more use cases of Hybrid Cloud for Large AI Models. He shared, "Huawei Cloud Stack provides a top-notch hybrid cloud for government and enterprise customers in the Middle East and Central Asia through more powerful cloud infrastructure, more diverse cloud services, and more extensive industry solutions. Currently, Huawei Cloud Stack provides more than 120 on-premises cloud services and 50 industry scenario-specific solutions. In the future, we will continue to invest in the hybrid cloud market and work with customers and partners to leap to new horizons and accelerate industrial intelligence."

According to the latest survey conducted by Omdia, a world-renowned consultancy firm, Huawei Cloud has become a key player in the hybrid cloud market of the Middle East. The survey showed that Huawei Cloud Stack was rated in the leadership group in categories, such as infrastructure, cloud architecture, and AI capability, for proactive cloud service experience optimization, for suitability in training AI workloads, and for higher cloud service reliability. Huawei Cloud Stack is highly recognized by many customers. Omdia predicts that government organizations and enterprises across the Middle East will be eager for rapid private cloud and hybrid cloud adoption. Huawei Cloud Stack's leading solutions and compliance with local regulations will further drive this process.



Jacqueline Shi, President of Huawei Cloud Global Marketing and Sales Service

Sebastian Shi, Managing Director of Huawei Cloud UAE, discussed in his keynote the competitiveness of Huawei Cloud in the Middle East and Central Asia region. He stated, "Huawei Cloud is dedicated to delivering innovative solutions, ultimate performance, and reliable customer-centric services to build a better MECA region together with our partners and customers." Together with guests from client companies such as STARZPLAY and Omantel, he shared the proven success of Huawei and customers in various fields. Another highlight in this section was the signing of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with multiple sales partners, demonstrating strong confidence in future partnerships with Huawei Cloud. Sebastian

reiterated that these partnerships are crucial in building a holistic ecosystem that supports the digital transformation journey of businesses and organizations across the region.

The summit also featured industry-specific forums and roundtables, exploring how Huawei Cloud's solutions can address unique challenges and opportunities across different sectors. These sessions provided valuable insights into the practical applications of Huawei Cloud's technologies in various industries, showcasing the company's commitment to fostering innovation and growth across the region. In addition, Cloud Native Elite Club (CNEC), a community initiated by CNCF, CAICT, Huawei Cloud, and industry leaders to advance cloud native and AI technologies, was introduced by William Dong, President of Huawei Cloud Marketing, to Middle East and Central Asia.



Hu Yuhai, Vice President, Huawei Hybrid Cloud

As digital transformation continues to accelerate across the Middle East and Central Asia, Huawei continues to provide innovative, secure, and efficient cloud solutions that empower businesses and organizations to thrive in the intelligence era. The company is focused on sharing industry know-how and ecosystem resources to enable digital transformation in industries such as e-government, finance, carrier, media & entertainment, e-commerce & retail, and Web3. ■

Huawei introduces intelligent security solutions at Security Next Congress at GITEX GLOBAL 2024

Huawei has reinforced its position as a frontrunner in end-to-end cybersecurity solutions at the Security Next Congress held during GITEX GLOBAL. The event, themed "Safeguarding Cyberspace Ascension in the Age of AI," showcased Huawei's comprehensive cybersecurity capabilities and offerings, highlighting the company's commitment to securing the digital landscape across cloud, network, device, and storage domains.

As enterprises navigate the challenges and opportunities of the rapidly evolving digital ecosystem, Huawei demonstrated its ability to provide robust, intelligent security solutions that safeguard digital assets in the AI era. The company's end-to-end approach to cybersecurity was evident in the range of solutions presented, from network security to cloud protection and ransomware defense.

Eng. Zabri Adil, representing the Permanent Secretariat of the OIC-CERT, the Computer Emergency Response Teams under the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), kicked off the event with a plenary address. He presented the overall perspective of how Islamic countries globally can unite together to build norms to address future cybersecurity threats in the face of de-globalization today.

A highlight of the Security Next Congress was a panel discussion on "The Role of Cybersecurity in the Age of AI, Blockchain and Web3," moderated by Mohammed Moteb Alosaimi, Chief Security Officer of Huawei Saudi Arabia. Other panelists included Dr. Abdullah Alharbi, CEO, Hemaya Information Security Association, Saudi Arabia; Eng. Adel Al Mehairi, Director aeCERT, Telecommunications & Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA) UAE; and Dr. Elvin Balajanov, Chairman of Board, Azerbaijan Cybersecurity Organization Association. The panel discussion underscored Huawei's thought leadership



in addressing emerging cybersecurity challenges across various sectors.

Aloysius Cheang, Chief Security Officer at Huawei Middle East & Central Asia, emphasized the company's unique position: "As a global ICT leader, Huawei has developed intelligent security solutions that enable industries worldwide to embrace the intelligence era securely and efficiently. Our end-to-end offerings provide robust protection across the entire digital infrastructure, reinforcing Huawei's status as a comprehensive cybersecurity solutions provider."

At the Congress, Huawei introduced its Xinghe Intelligent Network Security, an integrated intelligent defense system for enterprises. John Cai, VP of Security Product Domain of Huawei's Data Communication Product Line, highlighted a pressing issue: over four million enterprise branches around the globe are in urgent need of secure interconnections, prompting a shift towards SASE architecture in branch security transformation. To address this challenge, Huawei's Xinghe Intelligent SASE Solution offers cutting-edge integrated protection capabilities across the cloud, network, edge, and endpoints. By leveraging AI-driven intelligence, it significantly enhances security performance and delivers converged network-security solutions

tailored to meet the needs of enterprise branches worldwide.

Huawei Middle East and Central Asia officially launched the Discover Huawei SASE Program, inviting pioneering customers in the security field to become Huawei SASE Experience Officers. Accompanied by Huawei experts, these officers will have the opportunity to personally explore real-world security use cases and experience the robust security protection offered by Huawei's Xinghe Intelligent SASE solution. Each Experience Officer will receive generous IP Club points and may be invited to participate in the 2025 Huawei Tech Carnival.

Huawei Cloud also demonstrated its commitment to providing a secure digital space for customers. Based on a zero-trust approach, Huawei Cloud has built seven layers of defense covering physical security, identity verification, networks, applications, hosts, data, and O&M. This robust security posture enables Huawei Cloud to successfully defend against 1.2 billion attacks daily, ensuring zero service interruption, zero data loss, and regulatory compliance. It also offers an end-to-end, full-stack data security protection solution managing the entire data lifecycle across hardware, software, and app layers.

(Contd on Page 47)

Artificial intelligence and cybersecurity: An escalating battle in an accelerating digital world

Belal Khaled Al-Hafnawi, Technology and Digital Transformation Leader, Jordan

The world is witnessing an unprecedented technological revolution led by artificial intelligence, which is rapidly permeating all aspects of our lives. However, this tremendous progress raises serious questions about our readiness to face the security challenges that accompany it. Research indicates that the speed of development of artificial intelligence significantly exceeds the pace of development of cybersecurity measures, creating a worrying gap that malicious parties may exploit.

Artificial intelligence: A double-edged sword in cybersecurity

The impact of artificial intelligence is not limited to increasing security threats; It can also be used as an effective tool in combating these threats. As artificial intelligence can analyze huge amounts of data at high speed, which enables it to detect patterns and threats that are difficult for humans to identify, it can also predict potential attacks and take proactive measures to counter them.

The gap between awareness and action: A real challenge

Despite companies' awareness of the importance of cybersecurity, there is a large

gap between this awareness and actual investment in security. Studies indicate that many companies do not allocate sufficient resources to cybersecurity, and they also ignore basic security practices such as conducting penetration tests regularly and updating their systems continuously.

AI Governance: The Cornerstone of Security

There is a pivotal and important role for company boards of directors in ensuring the responsible use of artificial intelligence, and Boards of directors should be sufficiently aware of artificial intelligence technologies and their potential impact on business, and set clear policies to regulate their use and manage risks associated with them.

Responsible Investing: Towards a Secure Future for Artificial Intelligence

The Norwegian Sovereign Wealth Fund represents a role model in responsible investing, as it pays great attention to environmental, social and corporate governance issues, including artificial intelligence governance. The Fund focuses on encouraging the companies in which it invests to adopt responsible practices in the use of artificial intelligence, thus contributing to enhancing confidence in this



technology and ensuring its use to achieve the public good.

Conclusion

In a rapidly evolving world, cybersecurity represents a real challenge in the era of artificial intelligence. Addressing this challenge requires concerted efforts from all stakeholders, including companies, governments, and academic institutions. We must invest in developing advanced cybersecurity technologies, adopt best practices, and enhance international cooperation to counter growing threats. More importantly, we must ensure that progress in the field of artificial intelligence is in the interest of all humanity, and that it is used responsibly and ethically. ■

(Contd from Page 46) Addressing the growing threat of ransomware, Huawei presented its world-class protection solutions. The company emphasized the importance of data resilience and security in an era where data is the backbone of the economy. Huawei's OceanProtect Backup Storage delivers three to five times higher backup and recovery performance, featuring the industry's only six-layer Network

and Storage Ransomware Protection capabilities. This solution ensures the security and availability of backup copies, allowing businesses to say "No" to ransom demands and proactively defend against evolving threats.

The Security Next Congress underscored Huawei's position as a leading global ICT company with industry-leading end-to-end

cybersecurity capabilities and offerings, showcasing its ability to help industries worldwide approach the intelligence era with enhanced cybersecurity measures. As digital transformation continues to accelerate across sectors, Huawei remains committed to providing innovative security solutions that safeguard enterprises in the face of evolving cyber threats. ■

Oracle and Tamkeen sign MoU to open Oracle Engineering Center in Bahrain

Oracle has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Labour Fund "Tamkeen" to open a dedicated Oracle Engineering Center in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The MoU was signed at the Gateway Gulf Forum 2024, hosted by the Kingdom of Bahrain with international participation from senior government officials, business leaders, and executives.

Through this collaboration, Oracle will offer technical training and certification to Bahrainis with the aim to strengthen Bahrain's ICT talent pool and employ local talent in this field to drive digital innovation and growth. This initiative will also help meet the growing demand for Oracle Cloud solutions in the Gulf region.

The MoU with Oracle aligns with Tamkeen's 2024 strategic priorities: to increase economic participation through employment opportunities for new market entrants, to expand career development opportunities available to the Bahraini workforce, and to further develop the private sector by supporting enterprises to drive impact and sustainable development in the economy. On this occasion, Her Excellency Maha Abdulhameed Mofeez, Chief Executive of the Labour fund Tamkeen commented: "We are committed to



equipping national talent with the necessary skills to meet the demands of the growing Information Technology sector in the job market, ensuring their competitiveness both locally and globally."

"Our training programs will support the growth of the Oracle partner ecosystem in Bahrain and provide an industry leading learning platform for local students," said Nick Redshaw, Senior Vice President, Tech Cloud, Middle East and Africa, Oracle.

As part of the agreement, Oracle and Tamkeen will also collaborate to launch Oracle certification programs, supported by Tamkeen, to help develop and qualify Bahraini talent needed for the Oracle Engineering Hub. This initiative will also help supply local tech talent to Oracle partners establishing engineering and services hubs in Bahrain, further strengthening Bahrain's position as a leading destination for technology innovation and investment. ■

Ooredoo Group and stc Group collaborate to elevate ICT digital ecosystem

In a significant step towards advancing the region's digital landscape, Ooredoo Group and stc Group have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance the ICT ecosystem and expand digital services and connectivity across the broader MENA region. By combining the strengths of both companies, this collaboration is well positioned to meet the growing global demand and support the region's rapidly

evolving digital landscape.

Najib Khan, Chief Business Services Officer at Ooredoo Group, commented: "We are excited to join forces with stc Group on this visionary strategic collaboration. Together, we are committed to leading the way in driving innovation and accelerating digital transformation, laying a strong foundation for sustained economic growth and

fostering regional development."

Mohamed Alabbadi, Group Chief Carrier and Wholesale Officer at stc Group, said: "In continuation to stc group journey in elevating the ICT digital ecosystem, we are proud to announce this strategic regional collaboration, spotlighting our commitment to elevate and expand such journey across the MENA region. ■

Es'hailSat displays GOVMIL satellite services at 15th Milipol Qatar 2024

Es'hailSat recently concluded its participation at the 15th Milipol Qatar 2024, the global event for homeland security and safety. During the event, Es'hailSat highlighted its government and military (GOVMIL) capabilities through its Es'hail-1 and Es'hail-2 satellites, as well as its state-of-the-art 50,000 sqm teleport facility in Doha.

As a trusted partner for the government and defense sectors, Es'hailSat provides secure, encrypted satellite communications vital for national security, military operations, and emergency response. Its satellites enable mission-critical communications for government users, supporting secure and rapid deployments. Es'hail-2, positioned at 26° East, features advanced anti-jamming capabilities and delivers high-quality Direct-To-Home (DTH) television content across the MENA region.

Dedicated to enhancing telecommunications for government users, Es'hailSat's satellites feature multi-transponder Ka-band missions, covering the entire MENA region. This enables secure broadband internet access, corporate networks, and other critical services, even using compact fixed or mobile antennas.

Es'hailSat's Doha teleport facility offers secure satellite transmission, supporting satellite tracking, telemetry, and control (TT&C), along with services like uplink, downlink, multiplexing, encoding, playout, VSAT, and more.

Leveraging its extensive experience in the satellite industry, Es'hailSat plays a key role in promoting self-reliance and sustainability, contributing to Qatar's satellite technology capabilities. Embracing cutting-edge advancements, Es'hailSat aims to become a global leader in satellite services, meeting the needs of broadcasters, businesses, and governments across the Middle East, North Africa, and beyond. ■



SpaceBridge trains Chilean Army on ESTELLA Platform



SpaceBridge Inc., a global leader in satellite networking solutions, has successfully concluded a high-level training program in collaboration with its growing partnership with Telcoven and the Chilean Army.

This in-depth training, held at SpaceBridge's facilities in Canada, focused on the deployment and implementation of SpaceBridge's new ESTELLA platform, representing a significant milestone in enhancing Chile's defense communication capabilities and disaster management systems.

The comprehensive five-day program provided detailed insights into the ESTELLA platform, which is designed to meet Chile's diverse geographical and operational needs. This partnership reaffirms SpaceBridge's commitment to providing cutting-edge, reliable, and customized satellite solutions to the defense and government sectors worldwide.

"At SpaceBridge, we go beyond delivering advanced technology. Our aim is to empower our clients with the knowledge and support they need to fully leverage the capabilities of our systems," said David Gelerman, CEO of SpaceBridge. "Our partnership with Telcoven and the Chilean Army exemplifies the collaborative approach that drives innovation and excellence in satellite communications."

A Strategic Alliance for Defense and Emergency Communication

Carlos Cabrera, CEO of Telcoven, underscored the value of the partnership and the quality of the training.

The ESTELLA platform will support the Chilean Army's command and control communication systems across a variety of challenging landscapes, from arid deserts to mountainous regions. This system will not only enhance defense operations but also play an essential role in Chile's national emergency management efforts, including disaster risk mitigation.

Maximiliano Espinosa, Project Leader for the Chilean Army, praised SpaceBridge for its forward-thinking technology: "During this course, we were thrilled to see firsthand how SpaceBridge has developed some of the most advanced technology in the market. Although SpaceBridge may be smaller compared to some competitors, the intelligence behind its development is remarkable, putting them ahead of the competition in many ways."

The program offered more than technical training—it provided an opportunity for direct interaction between the Chilean Army and SpaceBridge's engineering team.

Looking Ahead

This training marks the successful completion of the first phase in a multi-stage collaboration between SpaceBridge, Telcoven, and the Chilean Army. Future phases will include additional hands-on training, system customization, and the further expansion of satellite communication systems across Chile, empowering the Army to enhance its national communication infrastructure.

Rafael Guerra, another key member of the Chilean Army team, also shared his perspective: "The training not only provided us with a robust understanding of the ESTELLA platform, it also addressed key technological gaps in our communications infrastructure. Our collaboration with SpaceBridge has significantly advanced our ability to maintain secure and reliable communications, enhancing both defense operations and emergency response efforts."

Through this dynamic partnership, SpaceBridge is further cementing its position as a global leader in satellite networking solutions. By delivering groundbreaking technologies like ESTELLA, SpaceBridge empowers governments and Defense sectors to enhance their operational efficiency and reliability, keeping them at the forefront of innovation in our increasingly connected world. ■



The UAE Space Agency concluded its highly successful participation in GITEX GLOBAL 2024. The participation aimed to highlight the UAE Space Agency's range of innovative digital services, showcased its latest initiatives and research projects, and emphasized its dedicated efforts to facilitate private sector engagement and support startups and SMEs in the space sector.

"Our participation in GITEX GLOBAL 2024 reflects our commitment to advancing digital transformation and fostering innovation in the space sector. We aim to empower the private sector and startups with innovative digital solutions that enable them to easily engage in space activities. We continuously strive to develop and provide advanced solutions that align with our strategic goals of promoting sustainability and future-proofing this vital sector," said HE Salem Butti Al Qubaisi, Director General of the UAE Space Agency.

"At the UAE Space Agency, we prioritize taking part in these events to spotlight our latest initiatives that empower public and private sector organizations, while enhancing the role of startups in achieving sustainable development for the national space sector," added His Excellency.

The UAE Space Agency's participation showcased the latest advancements in the

sector, focusing on key projects, initiatives, and services designed to drive advanced space technology and provide solutions for sustainability and future needs.

The platform offered stakeholders the opportunity to submit requests for space-related government services, including a streamlined space activity licensing service for the private sector, and granting permits in under one working day. This approach aligns with the UAE Space Agency's vision to eliminate bureaucratic barriers by designing user-friendly digital services for startups to access space-related activities efficiently.

The team at the UAE Space Agency stand offered visitors a detailed explanation about the Space Data Center, a leading digital platform providing scientists, researchers, public and private entities, start-ups and community members with access to space data, to help develop software and solutions to face national and global challenges. This project is a part of the transformational projects launched by the UAE government as a part of the efforts to realize the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to create the world's best and most active economy.

Additionally, the UAE Space Agency presented the Geospatial Analytics

Platform, a specialized digital platform focusing on Earth observation and remote sensing applications, as well as the Space Analytics and Solutions (SAS) Program, which aims to address climate change challenges through three key initiatives: Air Quality, Infrastructure, and Loss and Damage.

In support of national companies, the team highlighted the Space Economic Zones Program, which aims to enhance the establishment, growth, and sustainability of space-related companies across the UAE, contributing to economic growth and boosting the GDP.

On the sidelines of the exhibition, the UAE Space Agency signed an MoU with Moro Hub, a subsidiary of Digital DEWA, the digital arm of Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA), to enhance the UAE Space Agency's digital transformation and artificial intelligence initiatives.

In collaboration with the Technology Innovation Institute (TII), the UAE Space Agency also delivered a presentation on the deployment of quantum key distribution technologies. The presentation highlighted the importance of these technologies in positioning the UAE among leading nations investing in secure quantum communications, while also promoting national security and strengthening the UAE's defense capabilities. ■

TII and UAE Space Agency unveils pioneering unhackable Quantum Tech at GITEX 2024

The Technology Innovation Institute (TII), the applied research pillar of Abu Dhabi's Advanced Technology Research Council (ATRC), has recently signed a strategic partnership with the UAE Space Agency (UAE SA), at GITEX, to establish a comprehensive quantum communication infrastructure, deploying UAE-built Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) technologies.

This groundbreaking initiative positions the UAE among a select group of nations worldwide that have invested in this unhackable quantum communication technology. The envisaged QKD infrastructure has the potential to strengthen national security through a defense-in-depth approach, leveraging both fiber-based and space-based quantum networks.

TII's state-of-the-art Abu Dhabi Quantum Optical Ground Station (ADQOGS) — the first in the Arab world and the largest in the MENA region—plays a pivotal role in this effort, advancing secure free-space optical communications and linking the UAE to the global quantum-secure network. This agreement includes the construction of a dedicated fiber link between ADQOGS and TII's Quantum Communications facility in Masdar City, Abu Dhabi.

A live demonstration of fiber-based quantum-secured communications using TII's QKD solutions is on display at GITEX GLOBAL 2024 in Dubai.

What is QKD?

Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) is an advanced technology that allows encryption keys—the digital codes that secure communications—to be transferred using particles of light (photons). This method leverages the principles of quantum physics, ensuring that encryption keys cannot be intercepted or altered, making QKD



networks virtually unhackable.

For short distances, fiber-optic cables are ideal for secure transmission. However, for long-distance and cross-border links, satellite-based QKD solutions are needed. Receiving stations such as ADQOGS will facilitate these space-based connections, enabling the UAE to join a global quantum-secure communication network.

H.E. Salem Butti Salem Al Qubaisi, Director General of the UAE Space Agency, said: "At the UAE Space Agency, we recognize the critical importance of developing secure communication technologies and harnessing cutting-edge advancements, such as quantum communications. This technology is pivotal in safeguarding data transfer between satellites and terrestrial command centers. Our strategic partnership with the Technology Innovation Institute (TII) reflects our commitment to driving innovation in this vital sector, ensuring a more sustainable, secure, and future-proof space communication system."

"This collaboration will not only enhance our capabilities in quantum space communications but also support our broader efforts to build a knowledge-driven,

innovation-based economy. It strengthens the UAE's position as a global hub for advanced space technology, research, and development, in line with the leadership's vision for comprehensive development over the next fifty years," added H.E. Al Qubaisi.

Dr. Najwa Aaraj, CEO of TII, said: "I am immensely proud that TII is at the forefront of a transformative partnership with the UAE Space Agency, driving the strategic vision of the UAE's Space Science and Technology Policy. By integrating both ground-based and satellite QKD solutions, we are not just advancing quantum communications—we are cementing the UAE's position as one of the few nations globally pioneering a holistic, unhackable quantum communication infrastructure."

Dr. James Grieve, Senior Director at the Quantum Research Center at TII, stated: "The integration of fiber-based and satellite Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) solutions marks a critical advancement in secure communications. At TII, we are focused on pushing the boundaries of quantum technology, ensuring that the UAE remains at the cutting edge of encryption techniques that are impervious to hacking or interception." ■

Gilat receives over \$4 million order from US Department of Defense

Gilat has announced that the US Department of Defense awarded another contract for more than \$4 million to Gilat's US-based subsidiary, DataPath, for DKET 3421 terminals, portable satcom hubs that provide the flexibility, capacity, connectivity, and control needed to ensure mission success anywhere in the world. The orders are expected to be delivered during the first half of 2025.

The DKET 3421 is an innovative solution to customers' needs for a high-quality, reliable terminal for mission-critical communications. The field-proven DKET 3421 terminal supports multi-carrier operations with a scalable modem architecture (up to 32 modems). Weighing under 5000 lbs. with a reduced footprint, the DKET 3421 can be easily moved by a forklift. Deploying in less than three hours, the DKET 3421 provides a satellite network hub in the form of a single-skid with the



flexibility to leverage available satellite assets.

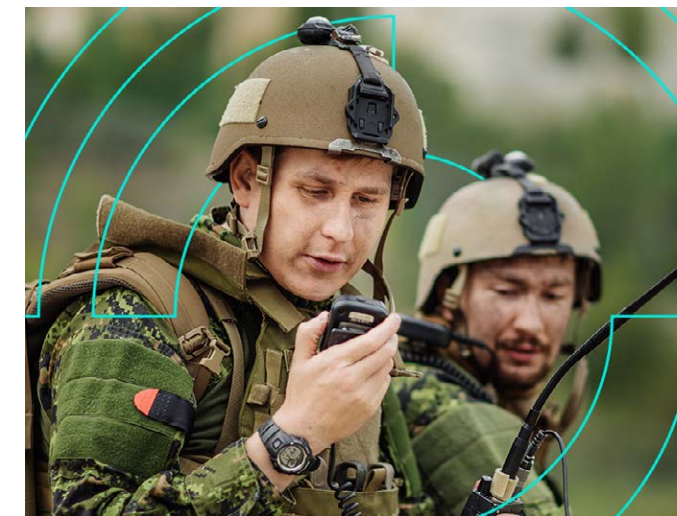
"We're excited to receive another order for our innovative DKET 3421 from our valued military customer. This order highlights the strong trust in our company and our proven

ability to deliver mission-critical solutions that meet demanding requirements," said Nicole Robinson, President of DataPath. "It also demonstrates once again our ability to provide reliable, highly portable, and high-performance network hubs to address our customers' evolving needs." ■

Gilat receives approximately \$5 million in orders from US defense customers

Gilat has announced that it has been awarded contracts valued at approximately \$5 million from multiple U.S. based defense organizations. These orders are for Gilat's cutting-edge satellite

communications (SATCOM) technologies and comprehensive services, set to enhance mission-critical connectivity and operational capabilities for defense applications worldwide. The orders are expected to be delivered within the coming months.



The equipment and services provided will ensure reliable, high-performance communication in a variety of challenging environments. Gilat will supply X, Ku, and Ka-band Block Upconverters (BUCs) for Communications-on-the-Move (COTM) systems, along with test and evaluation, repair, upgrades and engineering services, and field service.

"We are honored to support U.S. defense organizations with our cutting-edge SATCOM technology and full suite of essential services that meet the stringent requirements of mission-critical defense operations," said Nicole Robinson, President of DataPath. "These orders reflect the confidence our defense customers place in our comprehensive approach to SATCOM connectivity, ensuring they remain connected in even the most challenging environments." ■



New global agreements on AI, metaverse and sustainability at key ITU standards conference

Digital public infrastructure, automated driving and emergency communications also feature among priorities for the next four years

Members of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) have agreed on priorities for standards and capacity development in areas from artificial intelligence (AI) and the metaverse to sustainable digital transformation at the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTS-24) which concluded on October 24, in New Delhi, India, according to a press release issued by ITU.

The conference reviewed and modified existing guidance and agreed eight new resolutions reinforcing the organization's standards work to meet fast-evolving global needs.

"The outcomes of WTS-24 remind us that humanity has one Earth, one human family and one shared digital future," said ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin. "Together with the global standards community, ITU is committed to ensuring that our digital future is technically strong, with innovation, inclusion and sustainability at its core."

"What was seen as a form of communication has today become the highway on which the future of not only our countries, but

the future of humanity in the next decades will be building," said India's Minister of Communications, Jyotiraditya Scindia. "Over the past 10 days we have embarked on an extraordinary odyssey. One that has not only allowed us to envision a radiant digital future but also empower us in order to be able to sculpt for the future, for rich dialogues, audacious ideas, and transformation partnerships."

Accelerated support for high-priority standards work

The new WTS Resolutions all emphasize support for developing countries.

The decisions direct ITU to prioritize:

- **Responsible, safe, and inclusive AI, including collaboration via the AI for Good platform;**

- **Trusted, inclusive and interoperable metaverse applications;**

- **Sustainable digital transformation across multiple industries and technologies;**

- **Technical requirements for digital public infrastructure;**

- **Communication technologies for vehicle-to-everything, intelligent transport systems, and automated driving;**

- **Caller-location information from mobile phones to support emergency communications;**

- **Preparing students and young professionals as the next generation of ITU standards experts;**

- **Continual improvement and evolution to meet new policy objectives and market demand.**

"ITU standards and capacity development must create the foundation for the digital future we want," said Seizo Onoe, Director of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Bureau. "My top priorities are impactful standards and the strong industry engagement and support to developing countries that create this impact. The decisions of WTS highlight ITU membership's commitment to these goals." **(Contd on Page 55)**

Sultan Mahmood Malik, Chief Security Officer of Huawei Technologies at Gulf North Office, speaks with Teletimes during 15th Milipol Qatar

Report: Ashraf Siddiqui

Sultan Mahmood Malik, Chief Security Officer of Huawei Technologies at Gulf North Office, while speaking with Teletimes during 15th Milipol Qatar announced the launch of Huawei's new 'Idea Presence' solution, featuring a 138-inch 4K immersive screen showcasing at 15th Milipol Qatar.

He said that this innovation builds on the successful Idea Hub series and is designed to enhance workspaces through smart technology. Displayed at Milipol, the product is set to serve markets in both Qatar and globally. Malik also introduced other cybersecurity advancements, such as Huawei's multi-rail ransomware protection, which integrates network and storage features to proactively defend against ransomware.

Malik emphasized Huawei's extensive expertise in the industry, pointing out that its networks currently support over 3 billion users worldwide, all without a single major



cybersecurity incident. Huawei's solutions, deployed in more than 170 countries, have earned the confidence of 1,500 carriers and 10,000 enterprise networks. Utilizing its technological strengths, Huawei is now focusing on enhancing resilience for its clients, he said.

He said that Huawei is also advancing AI-driven security models, including a large-scale model with over 10 billion parameters designed to help security agencies identify and respond to threats. Malik explained that Huawei's Pangu AI model, a cloud-based solution, will aid in national security decision-making by interpreting the vast data generated in today's digitalized environments. While Huawei's global research facilities range from privacy labs in Canada to cryptography centers in Singapore, Malik noted that although the Middle East is a strategic focus for digitalization, it currently lacks dedicated R&D centers, he added.

Talking about Huawei's outlook in Milipol in addition to showcasing of high-tech and most latest innovative 'Idea Presence' solution, he said that Huawei aims to deepen partnerships and showcase its ability to integrate device- and solution-based security into ICT systems for homeland and public safety agencies across the region. ■

(Contd from Page 54) "As we look ahead to the future, I am confident that the resolutions that we have developed will pave the way for groundbreaking innovations, sustainable growth and greater connectivity worldwide," said Ritu Ranjan Mittar, Chair of WTS-24. "It is said that the march of technology will always continue, and it is the collective responsibility of all of us that standards and standardizations keep pace with it."

Planning the way forward, together

WTS is the governing conference for ITU's standardization work.

The conference set out the strategy, structure and working methods of ITU's standardization arm (ITU-T). The conference also appointed the new leadership teams of standardization expert groups and

established their mandates and scope of work for the next four years.

Two expert groups were consolidated to create the new ITU-T Study Group 21 on technologies for multimedia, content delivery, and cable TV.

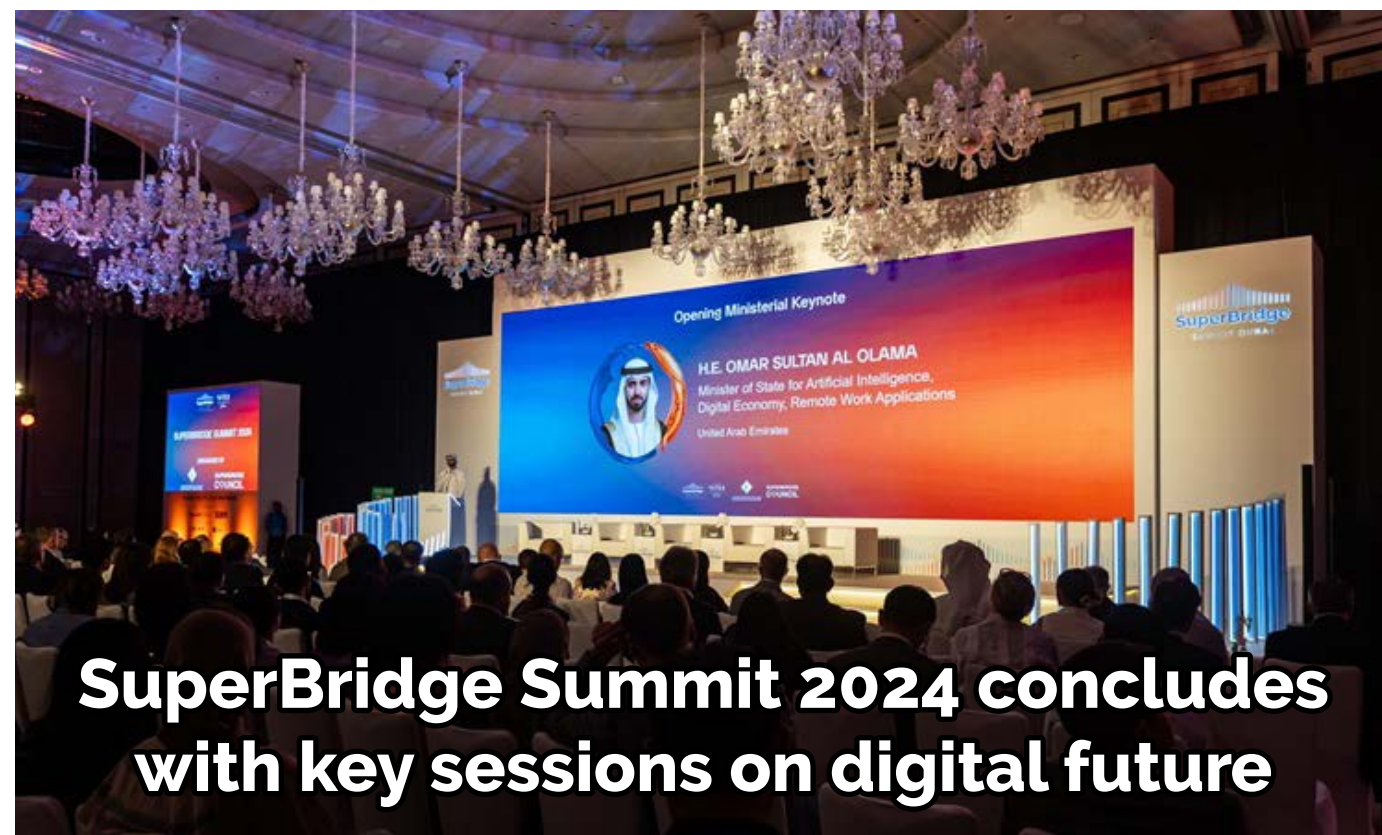
ITU's standardization work is driven by the contributions and consensus decisions of ITU's membership, including 194 Member States and over 1000 member companies, universities, and international and regional organizations.

India's Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, inaugurated WTS-24 on 15 October with an emphasis on the importance of universal connectivity, ethical AI, consensus decisions, and meaningful digital inclusion.

Prior to the main conference, ITU's Global Standards Symposium (GSS-24) and celebrations with partners of World Standards Day on 14 October explored innovation and standards to propel sustainable AI, smart cities, virtual worlds, and more.

The opening week also featured the first International AI Standards Summit, organized by the leading developers of international standards, ITU, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC). The new summit finished with AI for Good Impact India, kicking off a new series of regional AI for Good events.

Other high-profile special events during WTS-24 raised awareness in India and globally about how ITU standards can ensure new technologies are a force for good. ■



SuperBridge Summit 2024 concludes with key sessions on digital future

Second edition of the summit united industry leaders, innovators, and policymakers to address trends that will shape the future of finance and global economies

The SuperBridge Summit 2024, hosted by the Dubai World Trade Centre and SuperBridge Council and held in conjunction with GITEX GLOBAL, concluded its second and final day featuring insightful sessions and discussions on the future of investments, sustainable technology and the trends shaping the global economy. The opening remarks were given by Sarah Cocker, emcee of the event.

H.E. Omar Sultan Al Olama, Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy, and Remote Work Applications in the UAE, delivered the ministerial keynote, which was followed by an opening keynote address from Shane Tedjarati, Co-Founder of SuperBridge Council and Chairman of VS Partners.

The event continued with a series of

impactful panel discussions that explored the evolving landscape of ASEAN, impact of technology and green energy on global economies.

The final day of the summit began with a discussion about ASEAN's economic potential, titled 'What's Next for ASEAN' with experts pointing out how the region is on track to become the world's fourth-largest economy by 2030, owing to its abundant natural resources, large population, and improving business and governance conditions.

The session, which was moderated by Yan Duan, Founding Partner, Simple Steps, featured speakers namely Ashish Panjabi, COO of Jacky's Group of Companies, Hong Kong S.A.R./UAE; Dee Poon, President, Brands and Retailing, Tessellation, Hong

Kong S.A.R.; Poonam Balan, Founding Partner at TACT INVEST Group and DiversityisPOWER, Germany; and Tony Á. Verb, Founding Partner, Carbonless Asia, Singapore. The group emphasised the serious risks posed by climate change and underscored the need for significant collaborations to manage the region's energy transition.

This was followed by another informative session, titled 'Banks of 2050: Enabling the Digital Future,' which discussed how financial institutions can take the lead in digital transformation. The session featured panellists from UAE namely Ronit Ghose, Head of Future Finance, Citi, UAE; Miguel Rio Tinto, CIO, Emirates NBD, UAE; and Prateek Vahie, Chief Commercial Officer, Wio Bank, UAE, and was moderated by Suvo Sarkar, Founder and CEO, 3D Advisory, UAE.

The discussion focused on the dual challenges of disruption and innovation, urging banks to keep up with digital demands.

The summit continued with a session titled 'Fintech 3.0: Architecting the Future of Global Finance,' which discussed fintech's critical role in driving Web 3.0 infrastructure. Experts discussed ways to overcome regulatory obstacles and promote inclusive growth, while also emphasising the value of cooperation between banks, regulators, and investors in paving the way for global leadership in the evolving digital economy. The panel was moderated by Joshin Raghubar, Chairperson, iKineo Ventures, UVU Africa, and Inves Group, South Africa, and featured speakers Mohammad Alblooshi, CEO, DIFC Innovation Hub, UAE; Faisal Al Hammadi, Managing Partner, Further Ventures, UAE; Gaurav Dhar, CEO, Marshal Fintech Partners; and Board Member of the MENA FinTech Association.

Another key session, titled 'The Digital Future Is Powered by Green Energy' presented how renewable asset-backed cryptocurrencies are transforming the financial sector. The session highlighted how the green energy market is booming, with investments expected to total USD 11 trillion by 2050. Speakers of the session included Nathalie Capati, Co-Founder and CEO, Jasmine Energy, United States; Dr. Noshin Omar, Chairman and Founder, Avesta Holding, Belgium; Leon Gerard Vandenberg, CEO and CTO, Sunified Group BV, The Netherlands; and Michael Levesque, President and Chief Technical Officer, AstralENERGY Renewables Ltd., Canada/UAE. The session was moderated by Marcel Kasumovich, Deputy CIO, Coinbase Asset Management, UAE/USA.

The next session, 'Disrupt or Be Disrupted: The New Paradigm of Financial Intermediation' looked at how blockchain-enabled services are transforming traditional banking models. Industry leaders discussed the use of alternative data sources, advanced analytics, and innovative risk assessment models to democratise access to capital. Marcel Kasumovich,



Deputy CIO, Coinbase Asset Management, UAE/USA, moderated this enlightening session, which had Sean Kiernan, CEO and Founder, Greengage, UK; Lina Hediah, CEO and Co-Founder, CXDA, UAE; Jose J. Perez Aguinaga, CTO and Co-Founder, Tungsten, UAE; and Tin Pei Ling, Co-President, MetaComp, Singapore, as speakers.

Tin Pei Ling commented, "Being a part of the SuperBridge Summit 2024, was truly exciting, as it paved the way for us to actively contribute to the development of a future in which finance is accessible to everyone. Eliminating long-standing obstacles, democratising capital access, and creating a more inclusive financial ecosystem are all being made possible by the integration of alternative data sources, advanced analytics, and innovative risk assessment methods. It is essential to stimulate strategic dialogue to advance

these efforts and support the digital future."

The final session, titled 'India: The Promised Land,' focused on India's potential to reclaim its title as the fastest-growing large economy, as well as its emergence as a 'G3' member alongside the United States and China. The session focused on the structural challenges that India needs to overcome to maintain strong growth and maintain its status as a global economic powerhouse. The speakers included Abid Junaid, Chairman and Managing Director, Radiant Star Group; and Vish Narain, Managing Partner, Pulsar Group (ex-TPG Growth), India. The session was expertly moderated by Vanessa Xu, Executive Chairman and CIO of VS Partners and Co-founder, SuperBridge Council, Hong Kong S.A.R.

The event concluded with a closing ceremony and keynote address led by Sarah Cocker, event emcee, that summarised the summit's key takeaways and inspired attendees to apply their newly gained insights in future endeavours. The SuperBridge Summit 2024 successfully convened industry leaders, innovators, and policymakers to discuss the trends that will shape the future of finance and global economies, as well as groundbreaking initiatives to guide the new generation. More importantly, the event laid the groundwork for future collaborations and offered invaluable networking opportunities for all participants. ■

UAE Ministry of Economy presents report on navigating global talent competition



In a bid to strengthen the UAE's position as a global hub for top tech talent, the Ministry of Economy, in collaboration with Integra Seven, have launched the 2024 edition of the UAE Future Tech Talent Report.

Building on the foundation laid by last year's "State of Tech Talent in Dubai 2023" report, this year's edition maps the evolving tech talent landscape across the nation with support from du, from Emirates Integrated Telecommunications Company (EITC), and Fragomen, a global immigration services firm. The goal is to further solidify the UAE's position as a global hub for specialized technology expertise and transformative innovation.

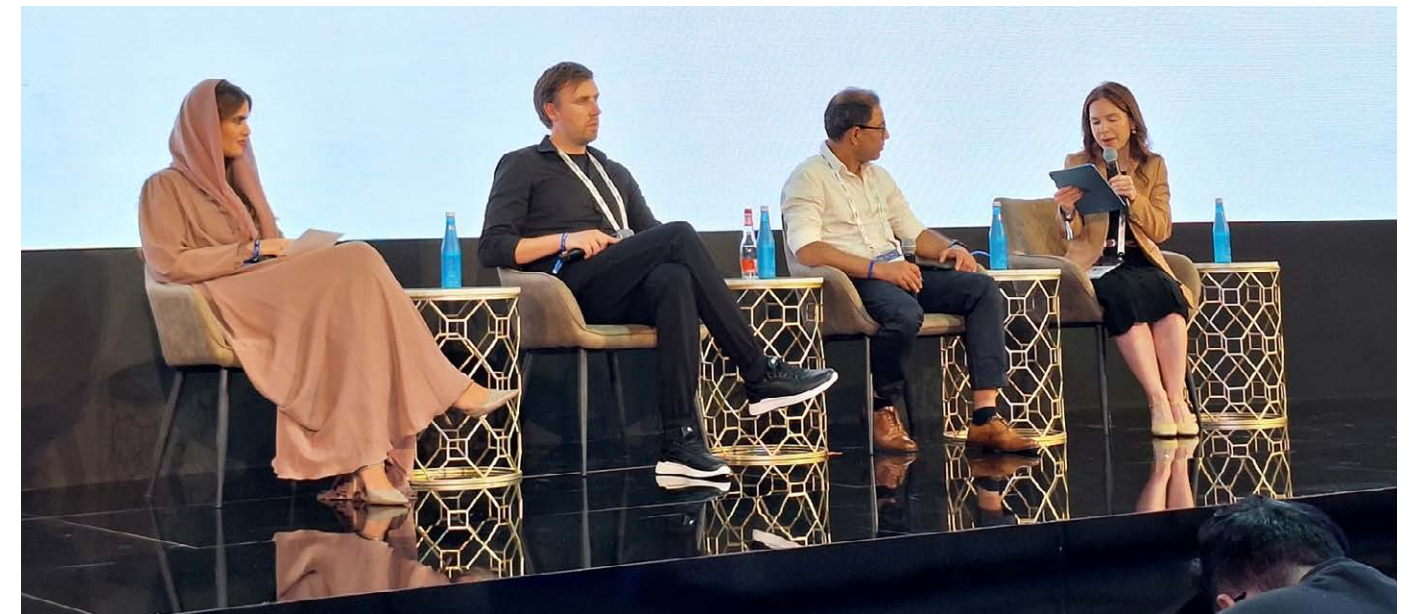
The report explores the strategies employed by both established

corporations and emerging startups across nine economic sectors, including healthcare, financial services, and logistics, as they build their technology capabilities, recruit talent locally and offshore, while adjusting to the new realities.

Juma Mohammed Al Kait, Assistant Undersecretary for International Trade Affairs at the Ministry of Economy, remarked, "The findings of the latest UAE Future Tech Talent Report affirm that the UAE continues to be a powerful magnet for the world's best and brightest minds. As we advance towards a knowledge-based economy, this will be a cornerstone of our mission to establish new industries, foster new capabilities, and develop new forms of value creation. The report also validates

our efforts to create an environment in which these talents can thrive, offering not just outstanding career progression but high living standards, safe and secure communities and exceptional educational opportunities. In today's rapidly evolving global economy, tech talent is proving to be a key source of competitive advantage, and we are determined to stay top-of-mind when they seek opportunities that match their ambition."

One of the report's revelations is the growing strength of the UAE's national brand as a recruitment magnet for top-tier talent. Approximately 80% of employers believe that the country's reputation is a significant asset in attracting elite technology professionals. Notably, less than 20% of stakeholders



view the UAE solely as a technology reseller, further underscoring its evolution as a global leader in innovation.

Another prominent theme in the report is the global reach of the UAE's talent pool. While nearly half (48%) of employers acknowledge that local talent is available in abundance, more than 95% still actively seek professionals from outside the region. Two-thirds of employers agree that securing specialized, senior-level professionals, particularly in niche roles like blockchain, AI, and machine learning, is still posing a significant challenge. The report also reveals that, many of these international tech professionals initially encounter a degree of "misinformation" about working in the UAE, but this negative perception tends to dissipate once they begin their professional journey within the country.

Natalia Sycheva, Managing Director of Integra Seven, commented, "The UAE continues to attract companies with its access to global and regional markets, secure and stable environment, and business-friendly regulations. While access to tech talent is critical, it hasn't yet emerged as the primary factor drawing businesses to the region. We can't but ask an important question: How many more global enterprises

would establish their operations in the UAE if access to skilled talent locally and offshore were further streamlined?"

The report also reveals a significant rise in the use of AI-driven recruitment tools, with adoption rates soaring by 90% since 2022, as both major tech firms and startups increasingly turn to these advanced technologies. Additionally, discussions around Emiratization have gained momentum, with a 110% increase in references by over 50,000 companies across social media, job portals, and industry forums—highlighting the growing prominence of nationalization efforts.

Fahad Al Hassawi, CEO of du, emphasized the importance of the UAE's evolving innovation landscape, stating, "The findings of the UAE Future Tech Talent Report 2024 illuminate the remarkable journey the UAE is on, transforming into a nucleus for innovation and specialized technology expertise. At du, we are proud to contribute to this national evolution, supporting the attraction of world-class talent and fostering an environment where technology and innovation flourish. This report not only celebrates our achievements but also charts the course for our next great leap forward - solidifying the UAE's status as

a global powerhouse in tech talent and innovation."

Interestingly, the report challenges conventional assumptions about talent attraction. While government incentives are often seen as essential, many UAE businesses rank them lower in importance. Nearly 30% of employers, however, express support for a targeted program offering incentives directly to top talent, rather than to companies as a whole.

Offshoring talent has also emerged as a vital strategy for growth and sustainability, with 83% of employers indicating that it is a key part of their business model. This trend underscores the UAE's global approach to securing the talent required to support its ambitions in advanced technologies.

The UAE Future of Tech Talent 2024 report was officially unveiled during a dedicated session at GITEX x Expand North Star 2024, where industry leaders from du, Coffee, and Signum AI shared their expert perspectives. These thought leaders highlighted the UAE's innovative strategies for enabling the private sector to access top talent, positioning the nation as a frontrunner in the global race for tech talent in the coming years. ■

DESC showcases three innovative initiatives at GITEX GLOBAL 2024

The Dubai Electronic Security Center (DESC) showcased three special initiatives during its participation in the Dubai Government Pavilion organized by Digital Dubai Authority at GITEX GLOBAL 2024. The DESC highlighted its commitment to enhancing cybersecurity and addressing digital challenges by presenting three initiatives. By launching such innovative solutions and services, DESC actively protects information systems and the government communications network across the emirate. This proactive approach aligns with Dubai's vision for a digitized future and supports the directives of our wise leadership, as well as the implementation of the Dubai Economic Agenda D33 and the Dubai Electronic Security Strategy.

DESC introduced three key initiatives: the Active Directory Analyzer, the latest addition to its suite of digital services and platforms; Dubai Cyber Index; and Al Maha system. This event witnessed the attendance of several DESC officials and a group of prominent government figures.

The Active Directory Analyzer is a powerful tool designed to monitor security alerts and audit user access permissions. It organizes user information and resources, tracks network activities, flags unusual or unauthorized access and highlights potential threats. Additionally, it monitors login locations and usage patterns, reducing the need for manual intervention and ensuring compliance with government regulations and policies. To date, 30 government agencies across Dubai have already deployed this system.

The Dubai Cyber Index serves as a comprehensive assessment tool aimed at enhancing cybersecurity levels within government institutions. It provides detailed reports on performance and allows for comparisons with other institutions, fostering improvements in digital protection procedures. This index includes a range of services including TARESH, AL KASHIF, TIRS and



CSCOC systems. These were all designed by Emirati talent to support government entities in their cyber security strength and resilience.

In the same vein, the Al Maha system is engineered to oversee government assets on the internet and detect potential security vulnerabilities, regardless of whether these assets are hosted in the UAE or abroad. It accurately classifies the severity of vulnerabilities and offers customized solutions to address them, significantly enhancing the security of Dubai's digital assets.

His Excellency Yousuf Hamad Al Shaibani, Chief Executive of Dubai Electronic Security Center emphasized the Center's commitment to participating annually in GITEX GLOBAL. He stated: "The Center is keen to participate on an annual basis in GITEX GLOBAL, as it is an ideal national and global platform to showcase our latest innovations in the field of cybersecurity. It is also an opportunity to interact with international experts and strategic partners, exchange knowledge, and learn about the latest innovations and best practices in the digital world and cybersecurity."

"These three initiatives that the Center showcased at this year's GITEX, and many other initiatives launched by the Center,

reflect its firm commitment to developing and innovating solutions that contribute to enhancing digital protection for Dubai government institutions. This effort aligns with our strategy to secure the digital environment in Dubai and strengthen its ability to address the increasing cyber challenges. Our mission focuses on protecting Dubai's cybersecurity, preserving its information, confronting surrounding risks, and enabling its smart transformation. All these aspects contribute to the emirate's overall growth and prosperity," Al Shaibani added.

Through its multiple initiatives, DESC is committed to achieving the objectives outlined in the second edition of the Dubai Cyber Security Strategy. This strategy aims to keep up with the rapid developments in the digital world, and to support Dubai's efforts in building on the successes achieved since its first strategy launched in 2017. DESC seeks to create a safe and reliable digital environment that boosts the city's infrastructure and accelerates digital transformation and smart city initiatives. Additionally, it aims to strengthen the digital economy and meet future needs while improving Dubai's digital defense capabilities through national talent and global partnerships. ■

ADCMC displays a range of innovative digital initiatives at GITEX GLOBAL 2024

The Emergency, Crises and Disaster Management Centre - Abu Dhabi (ADCMC) participated in the 44th edition of the prominent GITEX GLOBAL 2024. ADCMC's participation as part of the Abu Dhabi Government Pavilion, under the theme 'Towards a Leading AI-Driven Government,' aligned with the Centre's efforts to promote innovation and technology in the field of emergency and crisis management.

The centre showcased a wide array of digital initiatives, including the 'Crisis Management Platform,' which was designed to improve operational efficiency by leveraging data analysis and enabled effective decision-making. It further highlighted its state-of-the-art crises management strategies and plans that aimed at empowering Abu Dhabi to mitigate future challenges effectively. Furthermore, the 'Crisis Management Platform' served as an innovative tool to enhance and coordinate response during times of emergencies. It helped in prevention, preparation, response, and recovery by utilizing real-time data analysis technology. It further enhanced cooperation between stakeholders and enabled expedited decision-making in times of crisis.

His Excellency Matar Saeed Al Nuaimi, Director General of the Emergencies, Crises, and Disasters Management Centre Abu Dhabi, highlighted the significance of the centre's participation in local and global events, which was a testament to its commitment to strengthening cooperation with stakeholders and key entities. It further reflected its belief in the importance of combined efforts and joint initiatives and projects, which focused on preparedness in dealing with crises and responding to disasters and emergencies.

His Excellency emphasized the centre's



commitment to participating in these events, as they offered valuable platforms for sharing knowledge and expertise. These events helped promote the centre's strategy to enhance Abu Dhabi's preparedness in addressing future challenges, while prioritizing the safety and well-being of the community.

Furthermore, His Excellency highlighted the crucial role of data analysis in enhancing the emergency and crisis management system. By enabling precise risk mapping and proactive impact assessments, data analysis equipped decision-makers with reliable information for expedited and informed decision-making. It further reinforced crisis response strategies by offering a comprehensive and objective view of potential challenges. He emphasized the centre's dedication to utilizing and analyzing data through the creation of a cutting-edge data centre, which served as a central hub for collecting information from stakeholders. Additionally, the Analytics/Operations Centre was established to support and streamline

data-driven processes.

ADCMC was keen to develop its internal capabilities by hosting joint training sessions with various government entities and incorporating the latest technological innovations such as artificial intelligence and big data analysis in emergency management. These solutions were designed to enhance decision-making and improve crisis coordination response. The Centre was further dedicated to developing comprehensive plans to ensure expedited and effective responses to potential risks, reflecting Abu Dhabi's commitment to enhancing security, safety, and readiness for future challenges.

The Emergencies, Crises, and Disasters Management Centre Abu Dhabi pioneered the application of crisis management strategies. By setting higher benchmarks and periodically updating its plans, it aimed to achieve the highest level of preparedness, along with efficient crisis response, further positioning Abu Dhabi as a leading global example in crisis response. ■

Ericsson and e& UAE collaborate to expose 5G capabilities to application developers

Ericsson and e& UAE have collaborated to enhance access to 5G network capabilities by application developers, Hyperscale players and enterprises. The collaboration enables e& UAE to expose its advanced network capabilities via Network APIs (application programming interface), providing a more programmable and adaptable connectivity experience tailored to various application needs.

The collaboration utilizes Ericsson's Network Exposure Function, part of the Ericsson 5G Core solution. This function facilitates seamless integration of network and platform capabilities with e& UAE CAMARA Service Exposure API layer, allowing third-party applications to innovate and build robust services on top of the 5G Standalone (SA) network.

The integration of standardized CAMARA APIs, including Quality on Demand will allow application developers to create differentiated services that optimize user experience in real-time. Customers can expect a more stable network with enhanced latency and



Khaled Al Suwaidi, Senior Vice President of Core Networks and Platforms at e& UAE

throughput based on their specific application requirements.

Khaled Al Suwaidi, Senior Vice President of Core Networks and Platforms at e& UAE, says: "Enabling developers to efficiently access our 5G network capabilities is key to fostering innovation in the UAE. Through this collaboration with Ericsson, we are taking a significant step toward unlocking new opportunities in the digital economy."

Ekow Nelson, Vice President and Head of



Ekow Nelson, Vice President and Head of Global Customer Unit for e& at Ericsson Middle East and Africa

Global Customer Unit for e& at Ericsson Middle East and Africa, says: "Network APIs allow application developers to embed communications capabilities more easily in consumer and enterprise solutions and enhance user experiences. As highlighted in a recent Ericsson ConsumerLab survey, 23 percent of UAE smartphone users are willing to pay premiums for enhanced connectivity experiences and generate incremental revenue growth. Exposing the rich capabilities of the network will drive the next wave of digital innovation." **T**

Ericsson conducts seamless automated upgrade of Vodafone Oman's Core and Cloud

Ericsson has completed the automated upgrade of Vodafone Oman's core network applications and cloud infrastructure. The upgrade has prepared Vodafone Oman to deploy 5G standalone and 5G services for its consumer and enterprise customers.

The scope involved the upgrade of the complete Ericsson end-to-end core network and cloud infrastructure, network management, life cycle management and business support systems (BSS) in a single project, marking it as a significant first in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region.

Vodafone Oman's core network consists of virtual and containerized functions

implemented over the upgraded cloud infrastructure, including Evolved Packet Core (EPC), Home Subscriber Server (HSS), Unified Data Management (UDM), IP Multimedia Subsystem (IMS), Policy and Charging Rules functions (PCRF), and Management and Orchestration (MANO) applications. The upgrade of the core network functions was enabled by Ericsson's automation pipeline with minimal human intervention.

Upgrading through this model means Vodafone Oman is set up well to reduce risks in the network due to the ability to implement the latest security patches and corrections. It also facilitates improved performance and faster time-to-value

compared to manual processes.

Bader Al Zidi, Vodafone Oman Chief Executive Officer, says: "At Vodafone Oman, we are committed to supporting the goals of Oman Vision 2040 by driving digitalization and fostering economic growth. We are actively collaborating with global technology leaders, such as Ericsson, to create a connected tech-telco ecosystem. This upgrade, and the introduction of the Ericsson automation framework to support further automated upgrades, are an important stepping stone for us to enable the implementation of new technology services and preparing Vodafone for a smooth introduction of 5G SA." **T**

AW Rostamani Group and e& sign partnership to drive EV adoption across the UAE



AW Rostamani Group (AWR), one of the UAE's leading family business groups whose automotive vertical has been servicing consumers' mobility needs for more than 50 years, and Charge&go, the electric mobility subsidiary of e& have joined forces to drive the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) across the UAE. Signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at GITEX 2024, the partnership aims to support the UAE government's ambitions to accelerate the transition to sustainable mobility in the UAE.



Aligning with the global sustainability agenda, this strategic partnership showcases AWR Group's efforts to address the perceived barrier of 'range anxiety' by making EV ownership more convenient for its existing customers and offering an incentive to those considering buying an EV vehicle. This strategic move builds on the Group's introduction of premium electric mobility brand ZEEKR to the UAE earlier this year, expanding consumer choice in the country's growing EV segment. The collaboration represents a shared vision towards easing charging-related concerns and establishing an optimal EV adoption journey.

Under this partnership, AWR Group

customers will benefit from exclusive EV charging benefits, bundled packages, and access to Charge&go's extensive network of charging stations across the UAE. To further enhance the EV experience, Charge&go will install charging stations at various properties under the AWR Properties portfolio, including showrooms, offering customers convenient charging solutions and a seamless EV experience.

Commenting on the partnership, Mahesh Rohra, Chief Strategy & Business Development Officer at AWR Group stated: "By listening to our customers, we understand that a key barrier to EV adoption is the availability of a comprehensive charging infrastructure. Through this partnership with Charge&go,

we're addressing this perceived concern head-on, making EV ownership more convenient and accessible for our customers. This exciting collaboration aligns with AWR Group's ongoing commitment to sustainable mobility, contributing to a greener future for the UAE and supporting the nation's zero-emission goals."

Muammar AlRukhaimi, Chief Executive Officer, Etisalat Services Holding, said: "Our collaboration with AWR Group marks a strategic step in making electric vehicle ownership more appealing in the UAE. By expanding the charging infrastructure and delivering exclusive customer benefits, we're breaking down the barriers to EV adoption and driving the nation's transition toward a more sustainable, eco-friendly future." **T**

e& UAE and Huawei complete first global 5G virtual network service

e& UAE and Huawei have achieved a significant milestone by commercializing the 5G virtual network service based on 3GPP 5G-LAN technology under the 5G SA Option 2 architecture. This successful collaboration marks the first-ever commercial deployment of this, setting a new benchmark for telecom innovation and its first-ever global use for multicast uplink service. The successful implementation underscores the transformative potential of edge computing and highlights the importance of enriching vertical-focused service offerings in the telecommunications industry.

Enterprises across the UAE have long relied on traditional devices connected via Wi-Fi, accessing enterprise networks through fixed network access. However, the growing dependence on mobile networks for portable devices has led to significant challenges. High construction costs, unguaranteed user experience, and low corporate information security have been persistent issues. As digital transformation accelerates, enterprises are in dire need of solutions that offer greater flexibility, connectivity, scalability, security, and processing power.

The introduction of 5G-LAN technology is set to revolutionize enterprise network communications. By offering convenient management, flexible interoperability, and reliable communication, 5G-LAN technology addresses the key pain points of traditional enterprise networks. As mobile communications become increasingly integral to enterprise office systems, the need for seamless and secure digital services has never been greater. 5G-LAN technology rises to the occasion, providing enterprises with a robust solution that power not only enhances flexibility and connectivity but also ensures high security and processing power, paving the way for a brighter future in telecommunications.

5G technology is expanding the scope and

reach of 3GPP-defined technologies, offering a multitude of applications across residential, office, enterprise, and factory environments. In these varied market segments, 5G is poised to provide services that mirror the functionalities of Local Area Networks (LANs) and Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) but with the enhanced capabilities of 5G. This includes high performance, long-distance access, mobility, and security. The support for fundamental Ethernet transport requirements and any necessary modifications to accommodate a 5G-LAN-type service further solidifies the versatility of 5G technology.

The 5G MEC-based 5G-LAN technology enables e& UAE subscribers to experience a new level of service quality. This technology offers:

- **Higher Uplink Bandwidth:** Ideal for specialized scenarios such as enterprise applications that require substantial data transfer capabilities.
- **Lowered User-Traffic Latency:** This improvement is particularly beneficial for gaming experiences, including VR gaming, where latency can significantly impact user experience.
- **Increased Security:** 5G-LAN technology protects enterprise data and communications against potential threats by adhering to industry best practices.
- **Private Mobile LAN Services:** These services are based on 5G terminal connection capabilities and essential 5G network services, allowing enterprise administrators to manage terminals flexibly as they were within the intranet.

One of the standout features of 5G-LAN technology is its ability to provide a virtual LAN experience through mobile network access. This eliminates the need for costly hardware investments and maintenance contracts,

making it an attractive option for large and small UAE enterprises. By replacing traditional Wi-Fi networks in enterprise campus scenarios with 5G-LAN, businesses can significantly reduce network construction and maintenance costs while benefiting from the enhanced capabilities of 5G technology.

5G-LAN technology is designed to cater to enterprises' diverse needs. Key requirements such as Virtual Private Network (VPN) experiences, closed group facilities, IP and Ethernet PDU support, and multicast and broadcast transport capabilities are addressed. Additionally, 5G-LAN technology provides the added benefit of 5G-based mobility, ensuring that enterprises can maintain seamless connectivity regardless of physical location.

Another significant 5G-LAN technology application is its integration with Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) services. 5G FWA offers higher throughput in both downlink and uplink, as well as reduced latency compared to 4G. With the new 5G-LAN capabilities, e& can now offer 5G SA FWA that provides Layer 2 transport services equivalent to existing fiber broadband offerings. This integration represents a significant advancement in the telecommunications industry, offering enterprises a powerful and flexible alternative to traditional fixed broadband services.

Traditional enterprise local networks rely on LAN as the primary networking unit for local hosts or terminals, where devices communicate at Layer 2 through broadcast messages. However, in traditional wireless networks, only Layer 3 interworking is typically supported, necessitating the deployment of AR routers to implement Layer 3 to Layer 2 data conversion. This deployment process can be complex and costly. 5G-LAN technology mitigates these challenges by enabling Layer 2 switching for 5G devices, eliminating the need for specialized AR (access routers), and simplifying network infrastructure. ■

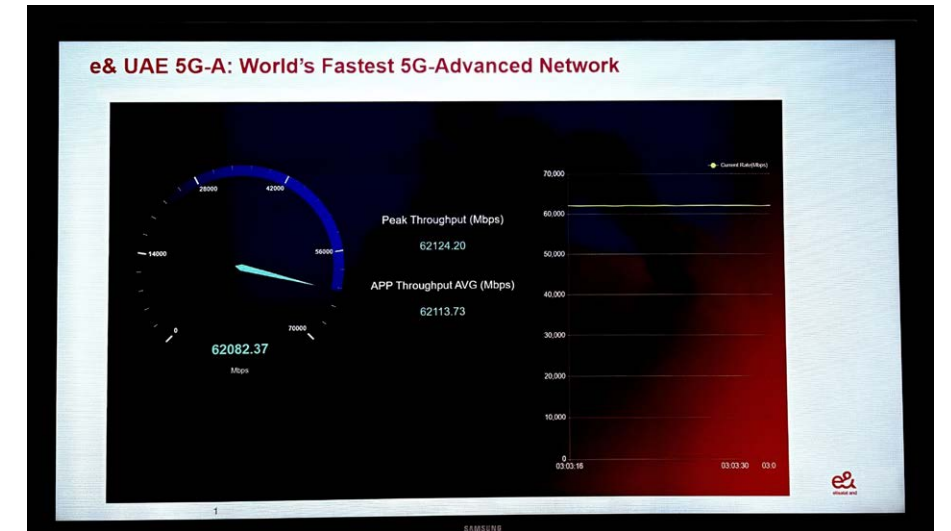
e& UAE achieves world's fastest aggregated 5G-Advanced speed of 62Gbps

e& UAE achieved fastest aggregated 5G-Advanced Speed of 62Gbps, making UAE residents the first to experience landmark speeds globally.

Utilizing cutting-edge hardware and sophisticated algorithms like MU-MIMO (multi-user, multiple input, multiple output), e& UAE successfully aggregated multiple carriers across high-band and low-band over simplified architecture, reaching a new record speed of 62 Gbps. This achievement marks e& UAE's collective efforts in driving progress to create a better tomorrow, transforming industries and stimulating creativity with no delay in this fast-paced information driven age. In the digital transformation era, this accomplishment will pave the way for technology innovations that will make a difference across sectors, not only within the UAE but also across the globe.

Khalid Murshed, Chief Technology & Information Officer, e& UAE said: "We are thrilled to announce e& UAE's achievement of the world's fastest 5G-Advanced network speed. With the target of 10Giga nation, we are poised to unleash the boundless potential of technology, empower innovative services and applications that will transform the fabric of society and the economy."

The backbone of this endeavor lies in e& UAE's advanced network, ensuring



stable performance at every step. But the innovation doesn't stop there - e& UAE is harnessing the power of artificial intelligence (AI) to deliver seamless and personalised experiences to every customer. Moreover, AI technologies will spearhead intelligent energy-saving initiatives, driving environmental responsibility and technological excellence to new heights.

Aligned with the UAE's ambitious digital agenda, e& UAE's relentless investment in its network and technologies underscores its commitment to delivering premium digital services. e& UAE has one of the largest 5G-Advanced ready network. "By adopting the latest 5G-Advanced solutions, we are

not only delivering unparalleled experiences to individuals and organizations today but also paving the way for ultra-high download speeds in the future, amplifying their overall experience," added Murshed.

This achievement solidifies e& UAE's position as a trailblazer in the telecommunications industry, reaffirming its dedication to pushing the boundaries of innovation and delivering connectivity solutions for the digital age. It also aligns with the company's mission to contribute to the UAE's leadership efforts in technological innovation, thus establishing the nation as a hub for innovation, connectivity, and digital progress. ■

stc Group commits to developing skills through partnership with Ericsson

stc Group have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to provide a comprehensive six-month on-the-job training program for stc Group's employees across various telecommunications areas of expertise.

The 'Job Attachment Program' MoU is

an extension of the continuous strategic partnership between Ericsson and stc Group. It will serve as a testimony to the strong relationship between the two companies and their continued collaboration in various fields.

stc Group is committed to continuously

offering skills and talent development for its employees, fostering a high-performing workforce that can translate their ambitious growth strategy into reality. The MoU with Ericsson to expand stc Group's employees' expertise, ensures the ability to innovate and drive digital transformation remains above industry standards. ■

e& UAE and Huawei partner to introduce first 5G-Advanced -NWDAF-based intelligent personalized experience service

e& UAE and Huawei come together to announce a groundbreaking milestone in their 5G journey: the introduction of an Intelligent Personalized Experience capability powered by Huawei's cutting-edge NWDAF (Network Data Analytics Function) technology. This marks the first commercial deployment of this advanced solution in the Middle East and demonstrates both companies' commitment to investing in the future of connectivity and driving innovation in the telecommunications industry.

Khaled Al Suwaidi, Sr. Vice President/ Core Network & Platform, e& UAE, said: "This exciting new technology will allow e& UAE to enhance its 5G network by using real-time data and AI-driven insights to deliver a customized and optimized experience for users. Whether it's ensuring faster downloads, smoother streaming, or uninterrupted video calls, e& UAE's network will now intelligently adapt to meet each customer's unique needs. This personalized approach redefines how people experience mobile networks, ensuring that every user enjoys the best possible service based on their preferences and behaviors."

Wang Lei, President of Huawei e& Global Key Account, said: "We are proud to partner with e& UAE to introduce the region's first 5G-Advanced NWDAF-based intelligent personalized experience service, a major step in the evolution of 5G technology in the Middle East. This collaboration is a testament to our shared vision of leveraging cutting-edge innovation to bring unprecedented, personalized experiences to consumers and industries alike. By integrating advanced analytics and AI-driven solutions into 5G networks, we are enhancing connectivity and paving the way for smarter, more intuitive, and differentiated services that will redefine how people and businesses interact with technology."

What Does This Mean for Customers?

With the new Intelligent Personalized Experience, e& is bringing the power of 5G technology closer to everyday users. For example:

- The network can detect changes in how users are accessing the internet and adjust in real-time to deliver the best speed and quality.
- Users can enjoy prioritized services, ensuring that their experience remains smooth and uninterrupted, even during peak usage times.
- Customers will receive personalized notifications, such as performance improvements or speed boosts, through simple SMS updates, keeping them informed of how their network is working for them.

These advancements are made possible through the integration of Huawei's NWDAF technology, which uses artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning to analyze and manage network performance. This ensures that every customer, from everyday mobile users to heavy data consumers, gets a network experience that's fast, reliable, and tailored to their specific needs.

Driving the Future of 5G Innovation

e& UAE is no stranger to innovation. As a leader in the UAE's telecom sector, the company has always been at the forefront of adopting new technologies. With this latest development, e& UAE takes a major step toward the future of 5G, paving the way for the next generation of mobile networks, known as 5G-Advanced.

5G-Advanced is set to deliver even better performance, powered by AI and energy-

efficient technology. It will not only improve the speed and reliability of mobile networks for customers but also open up new possibilities for industries like healthcare, education, and entertainment, where smart technologies will transform the way services are delivered.

A New Standard for Network Intelligence

At the heart of e& UAE's innovation strategy is the Network Data Analytics Function (NWDAF), which plays a vital role in making the 5G network smarter and more responsive. This technology collects and analyzes data to ensure that the network can adapt to the changing needs of users, whether at home, on the go, or in large crowds. It also helps in identifying VIP users and making sure they get a superior experience, even under heavy network load.

For e& UAE, this is about more than just network performance. It's about creating a future where customers feel the benefits of 5G in their everyday lives—whether through personalized services, improved reliability, or new ways to experience content.

Looking Ahead: The 5G-Advanced Era.

With the 3GPP R18 standard being set in July 2024, e& UAE is gearing up to lead the way in the 5G-Advanced era, with plans to roll out this technology commercially. This next evolution of 5G will bring even more innovative services to customers, further enhancing the user experience by using AI to continuously monitor and improve network performance.

As part of this innovation, e& UAE is also working on new service offerings like the Live Broadcast Package, which will allow customers to experience real-time streaming with flawless quality, even in challenging network conditions. ■

e& UAE partners with ServiceNow and Quintica to drive AI-powered digital transformation and revolutionize operations



e& UAE has announced a multi-year technology transformation program in partnership with ServiceNow and Quintica. This program signifies e& UAE's commitment to modernizing their technology infrastructure by leveraging cutting-edge AI automation and predictive analytics to transform their ability to deliver customer-centric product offerings and creating a seamless user experience while leveraging their existing application stack, creating even more value across its portfolio.

Through this partnership, Quintica will leverage the ServiceNow Platform® and its industry-specific workflows designed for Telecommunications, Media & Technology (TMT) companies to drive e& UAE's transformation journey. This will enable e& to:

- **Modernize Technology Infrastructure using AI:** Using the ServiceNow platform Quintica will help e& UAE implement a modern and integrated set of technology solutions powered by AI, ensuring efficiency and scalability.
- **Improved Customer Experiences:**

ServiceNow AI and real time monitoring functions allows e& to proactively address potential service disruptions before they impact customers. This capability enhances service reliability and responsiveness, leading to a more seamless and satisfactory customer experience.

• **Future-Ready Agility:** Leveraging the advanced capabilities of ServiceNow Platform positions e& UAE to adapt quickly to market changes and evolving customer needs. This partnership will ensure that e& UAE can effectively meet the demands of a rapidly changing digital landscape.

"Creating a rewarding and seamless user experience across all customer engagements is at the core of what e& aims to achieve for our customers," said Khalid Murshed, Chief Technology and Information Officer, e& UAE. "Leveraging the power of the ServiceNow Platform in conjunction with Quintica's expertise, will allow us to accelerate our modernization journey, harness the full potential of AI and automation and deliver a richer experience for our customers. This partnership

positions us to stay ahead in the rapidly evolving technology industry, ensuring we remain agile and responsive to the needs of the digital age."

"As customer expectations evolve, businesses require intelligent, efficient, and intuitive solutions to meet those needs," said Fabio Spoletini, GVP, Southern Europe, Middle East & Africa, ServiceNow. "We're thrilled to be working with e& UAE to help them revolutionize their user experience with the Now Platform and to collaborate alongside our valued partner Quintica on telco-specific innovations that increase value for e& UAE's customers and the industry."

"Telco companies are looking to reinvent their operations and are eager to harness the benefits of next-generation artificial intelligence and platforms to drive customer satisfaction and provide flexibility in today's increasingly personalized world," commented Saki Missaikos, Quintica Group CEO. "We are proud to partner with e& UAE on this transformative journey and empower them to achieve their strategic goals." ■

Positive Technologies study: Cyberattacks in the Middle East tripled

Positive Technologies has announced the findings of its latest study on cyber threats in the Middle East during its participation at GITEX 2024. In this study, they noted a significant increase in hacktivist attacks amidst the escalation of geopolitical conflicts. Moreover, the Middle East was a frequent target of APT groups. As of Q2 2024, every second successful attack against organizations resulted in a data breach—the most frequent consequence of cyberattacks in the region during the studied period.

Experts note that in Q4 2023, the number of successful cyberattacks in the Middle East doubled compared to the same period the previous year, and in Q1 2024, it tripled.

Irina Zinovkina, Head of Information Security Analytics Research at Positive Technologies, commented: "The surge in hacktivist attacks in the Middle East indicates a shift in modern conflict strategies, with cyberattacks becoming an inherent component. Our forecasts suggest that rising tensions in the region can lead to more DDoS attacks on media and government institutions. Additionally, if groups form alliances, they could execute large-scale cyberattacks with greater destructive potential."

APT groups in the region conducted complex and prolonged cyberattacks to steal data, gather information, or disrupt organizational operations. Nearly every cybercriminal group studied targeted government institutions at least once. Additionally, 69% of these groups focused on the energy sector, indicating their intent to disrupt critical infrastructure.

The public sector was the most targeted industry, making up 24% of all cyberattacks on organizations. Government institutions

store and process vast amounts of confidential data, which can be a goldmine for cybercriminals. In the first half of 2024, 16% of dark web listings for information from government companies were related to Middle Eastern countries.

The manufacturing sector comes in second among the most targeted sectors (17%) and also faces cyberthreats involving wipers. Wipers erase data on compromised ICS devices, causing major disruptions to critical infrastructure. In attacks on Israeli companies, the BiBi wiper was used, rendering the data of targeted systems inaccessible or unusable. Overall, malware remained the most popular tool for attacking organizations in the region.

Cybercriminals also targeted institutions using social engineering tactics (54%), even leveraging AI technologies. With the advancement of generative AI systems, the amount of malicious content surged, and email phishing attacks skyrocketed by 222% in H2 2023 compared to H2 2022.

Experts at Positive Technologies found that the primary consequence of successful cyberattacks on organizations in the Middle East was data breaches. In Q3 2023, these accounted for 35%, and by H2 2024, they surged to 49%. The average damage from cyberattacks on organizations in the region is almost double the global average.

Given the heightened activity of cybercriminals in the region, experts recommend that companies adopt result-driven cybersecurity, a proactive approach to building cyber resilience. Result-driven cybersecurity helps build a comprehensive automated defense system against non-tolerable events—consequences of cyberattacks that could prevent an organization from achieving its operational



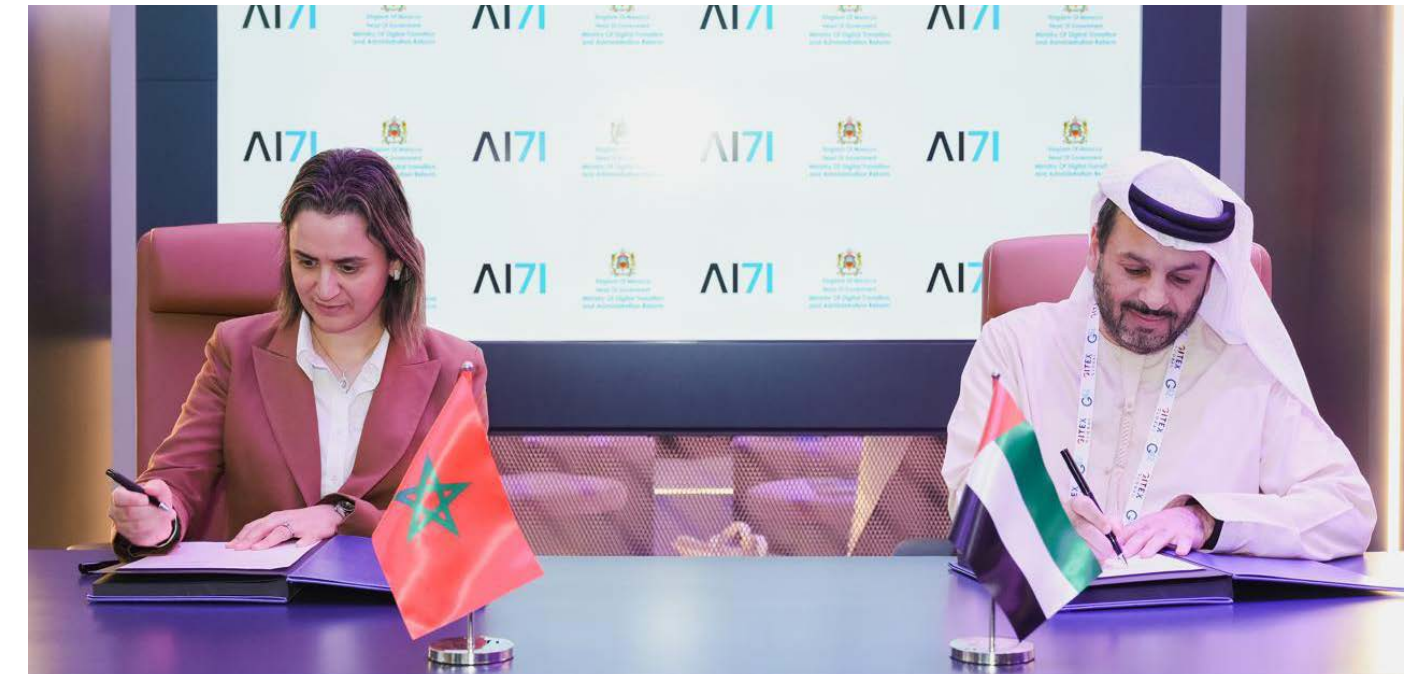
Irina Zinovkina - Head of the Analytical Research Unit at Positive Technologies

or strategic goals. The approach based on result-driven cybersecurity leverages cutting-edge security tools, including:

- **SIEM systems (security information and event management) for continuous monitoring of cybersecurity events and rapid detection of cyberattacks**
- **Specialized solutions for traffic analysis and detection of suspicious activity in industrial control systems—essential for manufacturing companies**
- **EDR systems (endpoint detection and response), designed to protect your endpoints from sophisticated and targeted attacks**
- **Advanced sandboxes for detecting complex and unknown malware**
- **NTA products (network traffic analysis) for proactive cyberthreat hunting in your network**
- **VM systems (vulnerability management) for automated IT asset management, as well as rapid detection and elimination of current vulnerabilities**

Moreover, result-driven cybersecurity involves continuous security assessment of infrastructure, including through bug bounty programs and employee training initiatives. ■

UAE's AI71 and Morocco's ministry ink deal at GITEX to support Morocco's digital strategy and transformation



AI71, which develops transformative industry solutions powered by the Technology Innovation Institute's Falcon AI models, signed a deal with Morocco's Ministry of Digital Transition and Administrative Reform at GITEX GLOBAL. This partnership aims to advance digital transformation in Morocco, aligning with the country's recently announced Digital Morocco 2030 strategy.

The partnership agreement was signed by His Excellency Faisal Al Bannai, the Secretary General of the Advanced Technology Research Council, and Her Excellency Ghita Mezzour, the Delegate-Minister to the Head of Government in charge of Digital Transition and Administration Reform at the Dubai World Trade Center.

As a next step, the ministry and AI71 will work together to advance Morocco's digital transformation agenda by exploring the potential of adopting AI solutions to

enhance citizens' access to government services and ensure a more accessible and user-centric experience for the public.

"We are honored to support Digital Morocco 2030, and to bring our AI expertise and solutions to even more people," said Reda Nidhakou, the Acting CEO of VentureOne, AI71's parent company. "Morocco's government and startups have the power to supercharge the national economy. Empowering them with the right digital solutions will help ensure many more people can benefit from AI's transformative power. We look forward to seeing Morocco move forward on its ambitious journey to digitization and further solidify its position as a leader within the region."

In addition to helping enhance government services, AI71 is also awarding \$100,000 USD worth of compute power to four Morocco-based AI startups following the conclusion of a successful joint competition with Morocco's Ministry of Digital Transition

and Administrative Reform, which was designed to foster AI innovation in Morocco.

The competition kicked off at GITEX Africa earlier this year, where the ministry invited 200 start-ups to present their solutions to AI71 for a chance to be supported with compute power. In total, 35 AI startups participated in the competition, and four exceptional winners were selected based on novelty, technical feasibility, and growth potential: TOUM AI, Heyy.ma, PostGoo, and Thinkable.

Each will be given compute power via AI71's API Hub, which provides easy, affordable access to the Falcon series of AI models, enabling them to accelerate development, experimentation, and solution-building with AI.

AI71 will monitor the winning startups' progress and continue to explore potential opportunities for further funding, support, and collaboration. ■

Vertiv co-develops with NVIDIA complete power and cooling blueprint for NVIDIA GB200 NVL72 platform

Vertiv has released a complete 7MW reference architecture of the NVIDIA GB200 NVL72 platform, co-developed with NVIDIA, that will enable customers to transform traditional data center architectures into AI factories capable of powering AI applications across the enterprise.

The reference architecture will accelerate the deployment of the NVIDIA GB200 NVL72 liquid-cooled rack-scale platform and supports up to 132kW per rack. The architecture takes an end-to-end approach to infrastructure design to optimize deployment speed, performance, resiliency, cost, energy efficiency and scalability for current- and future-generation data centers.

“We are proud to deepen our collaboration with NVIDIA to enable AI-driven data centers of today and tomorrow,” said Giordano (Gio) Albertazzi, CEO of Vertiv. “As a leader in critical power and cooling infrastructure, Vertiv is uniquely positioned to support the NVIDIA GB200 NVL72 platform. Our portfolio of high-performance power and cooling solutions, combined with our global scale, will enable customers to deploy AI data centers faster, more efficiently and with greater flexibility to address densification, dynamic workloads, retrofits and enable future-ready designs.”

“New data centers are built for accelerated computing and generative AI with architectures that are significantly more complex than those for general-purpose computing,” said Jensen Huang, founder and CEO of NVIDIA. “With Vertiv’s world-class cooling and power technologies, NVIDIA can realize our vision to reinvent computing and build a new industry of AI factories that produce digital intelligence to benefit every company and industry.”

With Vertiv™ power and cooling infrastructure matched to, and closely coupled with, the NVIDIA Blackwell platform, the reference architecture simplifies and accelerates deployment of AI workloads in



new and existing data centers while reducing risk and enabling standardization across sites. The architecture’s complete critical power infrastructure is designed to significantly reduce stranded power by aligning AI clusters to data center capacity blocks. The hybrid liquid- and air-cooling infrastructure leverages the interdependent impact of the two approaches to efficiently manage high-density heat removal. In addition, the design includes guidance for optional Open Compute Project-inspired systems, such as DC power shelves.

The reference architecture is part of the Vertiv™ 360AI portfolio of reference designs for retrofit and greenfield data centers, designed to help customers navigate integrated solutions for power and cooling for AI and other high-performance computing applications. Key benefits of the co-developed reference architecture for the NVIDIA GB200 NVL72 design include:

- **Rapid Deployment and Retrofit:** Enabling the use of preconfigured modules and factory integration, Vertiv™ MegaMod™ CoolChip delivers turnkey AI critical infrastructure up to 50% faster than onsite builds.

- **Space-Saving Power Management:** Using Vertiv’s advanced power technologies, including Vertiv™ Trinergy™ uninterruptible power supply system (UPS) and Vertiv™

EnergyCore lithium battery cabinet, the design delivers industry-leading reliability and energy-efficient power management in ~40% less space compared to legacy offerings.

- **Energy-Efficient Cooling:** Integrating liquid and low-GWP (Global Warming Potential) air cooling technologies at scale - including Vertiv™ AFC chiller, Vertiv™ Liebert® CW chilled water-based room cooling system and Vertiv™ XDU coolant distribution units - offers up to 20% lower annual cooling costs compared to fixed screw solutions.

- **Dynamic Workload Management:** Integrated load averaging via lithium-ion battery and next generation UPS provides support for dynamic GPU workloads.

- **Installation and Operations Services:** With an industry-leading scale, scope, and reach of ~4,000 field service engineers globally, Vertiv is the trusted lifecycle service partner and complex system-level expert for retrofit and newbuild.

As enterprises embrace AI at an unprecedented pace, Vertiv is reshaping the future of critical power and cooling to support accelerated computing, with the most complete portfolio of critical digital infrastructure that enables AI-ready infrastructure capable of managing the unique requirements of AI and other accelerated compute applications. **■**



Deloitte and Liferay partner to deliver future-ready digital experiences

Deloitte Middle East and Liferay have formed a strategic alliance to redefine digital experiences and address evolving customer needs. This collaboration integrates conceptualization, design, development, and implementation on Liferay’s Digital Experience Platform (DXP) to deliver seamless, end-to-end customer journeys to customers in the GCC.

The partnership was formalized during an MoU signing at GITEX GLOBAL between Shakeel Sawar, Deloitte Middle East Partner and Moussalam Dalati – General Manager, MEA and France, Liferay.

Deloitte’s digital experience approach is built around three core pillars: Advise, Implement, and Operate to fuel the design and implementation of

a tailored digital experience platforms that integrates effortlessly and resolves specific customer challenges. Liferay’s DXP provides a robust foundation for facilitating future-ready digital experiences. Upon launching the platform, Deloitte manages and scales it, introducing new capabilities that drive sustained optimization and long-term business growth.

Shakeel Sawar, Deloitte Middle East Partner, stated: “At Deloitte, we connect creativity with technology for business, bringing empathy, ideas and experiences into all that we do. Together across the breadth of our organization we make an impact that matters for our clients, talent, partners and communities. Our collaboration with Liferay will help unlock

the full potential for our clients and shape digital experiences that matters”

Moussalam Dalati, General Manager – MEA and France, stated: “In this era, where digital transformation plays a central role in the growth of organizations, it is imperative that they build a digital backbone founded on a powerful strategy that showcases readiness to include future requirements. By combining our digital expertise with Deloitte, we empower organizations to meet new demands and adapt to future challenges.”

This partnership positions both Deloitte and Liferay to deliver innovative digital experiences, ensuring clients remain ahead of market trends and customer expectations. **■**

Commvault and Meerana announces strategic partnership to enhance cyber resilience in the UAE



Commvault and Meerana have announced a strategic partnership at GITEX GLOBAL 2024. The new collaboration will help drive strategic business initiatives in the UAE. Meerana will focus on expanding Commvault's reach within the market, to further strengthen cyber security and data protection. Under the terms of the partnership, Meerana will work as a Value Added Partner for Commvault's industry-leading solutions, focusing on expanding market penetration. This strategic alliance is designed to achieve significant growth by combining Meerana's extensive reach with Commvault's cutting-edge technologies.

Nizar Elfarrar, Channel Sales Director, Emerging Markets at Commvault said: "Our partnership with Meerana will enable us to further expand in the UAE market and provide businesses with the tools they need to protect and recover their critical data. We are excited to collaborate with Meerana to deliver impactful solutions that drive value for our customers."

"At Meerana, we are thrilled to embark



on this strategic partnership with Commvault, a global leader in cyber resilience and data protection," said Matar Almheiri, Chief Executive Officer, Meerana. "By combining our market expertise with Commvault's solutions, we are confident that together we will enhance the security landscape and offer businesses unparalleled protection for their critical data."

The partnership between Commvault and Meerana underscores their shared commitment and vision to enhancing cyber resilience and delivering innovative solutions that meet the

evolving needs of businesses in the UAE. By combining their expertise and resources, the two companies aim to create significant business opportunities and deliver unparalleled value to their customers.

Commvault has been present in the UAE and wider Middle East region for decades, supporting government and private sector companies strengthen their cyber resilience and data protection. Commvault has worked with a wide range of key organizations including ENOC, G42, ROSHN, MEEZA, Emirates Steel, and more. **T**

Intelligent automation primed for \$47 billion revenue by 2030, driven by GenAI - GlobalData

Intelligent automation goes beyond traditional automation systems by integrating artificial intelligence (AI) to manage more complex business processes. It drives innovation and creativity, making it essential for organizations looking to stay competitive in today's market. The intelligent automation market is set to grow from \$18 billion in 2023 to \$47 billion in 2030, driven by advancements in AI, particularly the rapid adoption of generative AI (GenAI), according to GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

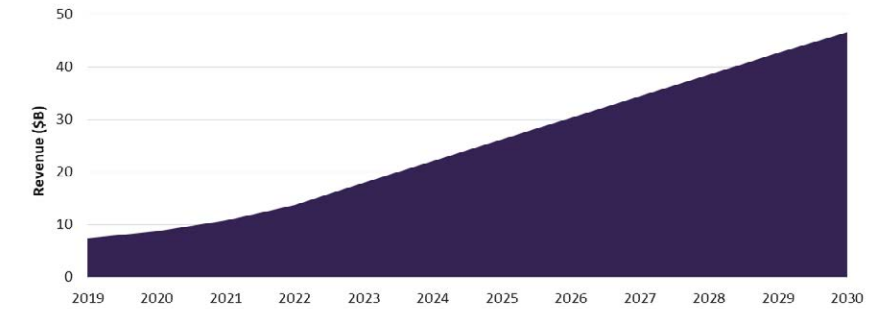
GlobalData's latest report, "Thematic Intelligence: Intelligent Automation," reveals that AI is now integrated across most facets of intelligent automation. This new era of automation goes beyond simple task execution, allowing systems to analyze data, make decisions, and learn from interactions. This boosts efficiency and fosters innovation, potentially leading to a future where software bots not only perform tasks but also drive strategic growth and creativity.

Nicklas Nilsson, Consultant, Strategic Intelligence at GlobalData, comments: "Intelligent automation is transforming how businesses operate, not just enhancing efficiency but fundamentally reshaping processes through AI-driven innovation. As automation evolves into a strategic asset for organizations, it unlocks new areas of creativity and growth. Companies that embrace this transformation will be better positioned to navigate the demands of an ever-changing business landscape."

GenAI has emerged as a key driver in intelligent automation, expanding the scope of automatable tasks and empowering non-technical employees to create their own solutions. In the past year, every major player in the field added GenAI capabilities through integrations with

The global intelligent automation market will be worth \$47 billion by 2030, up from \$18 billion in 2023

Global intelligent automation revenue, 2019-2030

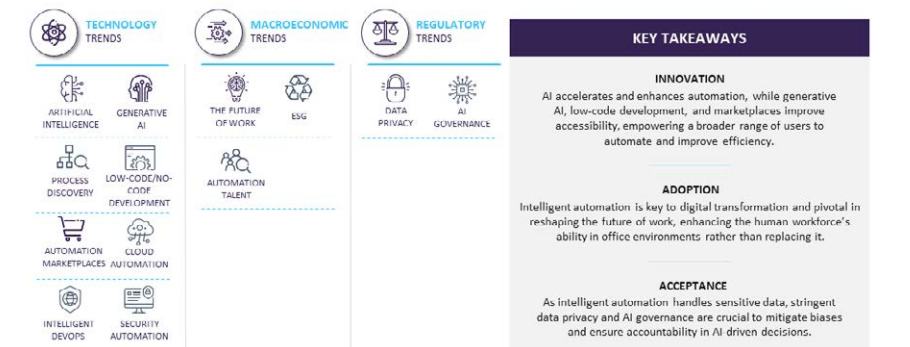


GlobalData.

Source: GlobalData Intelligent Automation

Top intelligent automation trends

The chart shows the key technology, macroeconomic, and regulatory trends impacting intelligent automation



GlobalData.

Source: GlobalData Intelligent Automation

well-known solutions like ChatGPT and the development of bespoke copilot tools, allowing businesses to speed up innovation and broaden access to automation.

Nilsson continues: "GenAI's ability to generate new, contextually relevant content from simple prompts has opened many possibilities. By democratizing access and empowering employees without technical expertise to craft solutions, it accelerates innovation and boosts productivity across organizations. However, it is essential that companies establish strong governance frameworks to ensure these tools are used securely and effectively.

Despite its benefits, GenAI faces challenges related to governance, security, and compliance. As automation becomes more advanced, companies will need to implement stricter controls to protect sensitive data and ensure their systems comply with industry regulations.

Nilsson concludes: "The future of intelligent automation will depend on a delicate balance between innovation and governance. As AI continues to evolve, businesses must ensure that their automation strategies are secure, compliant, and equipped to handle the complexity of modern business operations." **T**

Tencent Cloud and Balance to revolutionize Middle East payment landscape

At GITEK 2024, Tencent Cloud has partnership with Balance to revolutionize the Middle East payment landscape. Balance will adopt the Tencent Cloud technologies into its payment system, enabling compliant, secure and seamless identity authentication for payment. Over the longer term, Balance will explore the adoption of the TCMPP platform as part of its app, providing users access to a host of essential daily services and products through a single interface.



well as enhance the overall digital payment experience for consumers.”

Kartik Tikku, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Balance said: “We are fortunate to be working with Tencent Cloud as this allows us to break into new markets such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE, which have witnessed strong demand for cloud services. This partnership aligned with our strategy to revolutionize mobile banking in the Middle East through exciting innovation, add value to our ecosystem as

Dan Hu, Vice President of Tencent Cloud International for the Middle East and Africa, said: “As Tencent Cloud continues to deepen its presence in the region, we are confident that our cloud and AI solutions are fully aligned with the local market’s needs and digital transformation goals. The partnerships with Balance is a testament to our technology’s ability to empower local businesses and

government services alike, creating secure, efficient and innovative platforms that enhance the everyday lives of users.

“Looking ahead, we see tremendous potential in the gaming sector, where our proven capabilities will serve as a key enabler to foster growth and cultivate a thriving ecosystem of developers and players. Leveraging our track record of supporting the Weixin/WeChat ecosystem with over 1.3 billion monthly active users, Tencent Cloud envisions a dedicated ‘MiniGame Platform’ to attract a new demographic of mobile gamers.”

With the UAE’s electronic gaming market expected to reach nearly US\$500 million in revenue by 2027, the MiniGame Platform will play a critical role in driving new revenue streams for gaming businesses and supporting the local game development ecosystem. ■

Elm and cBrain sign cooperation agreement to elevate regional IT services industry

Elm has signed a cooperation agreement with cBrain to promote ubiquitous development within the digital service delivery and design domain. The long-standing expertise of both organisations in the dynamic information services landscape will be leveraged to achieve this goal.



The agreement was signed by Alameen Alhazmi, Group Executive Officer of Integrated Solutions at Elm, and Per Tejs Knudsen, CEO of cBrain, on the sidelines of GITEK GLOBAL 2024.

The agreement primarily aims to bolster strategic collaborations within the industry by introducing cutting-edge digital solutions and facilitating professional consultancy services. Moreover, the agreement encourages both entities to forge a stronger relationship with other public and private organisations by utilising robust communication channels.

Majid bin Saad Al Arifi, the official spokesman and CEO VP of the Marketing Sector at Elm, said: “We are delighted to collaborate with cBrain, to enhance opportunities for cooperation, and knowledge exchange by leveraging both organisations’ shared expertise. The collaboration is poised to play a pivotal role in the development and launch of highly

comprehensive and innovative digital services, products, and solutions, catering to the evolving needs of the entrepreneurial community. At Elm, we remain committed to consistently improving our strategic partnerships and investing in the creation of best-in-class digital products featuring advanced technologies. Such initiatives reaffirm Elm’s stature as a pioneer within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s IT services market, giving us the ability to deliver secure digital services and solutions to our clients across public and private sectors.”

Arifi further stated: “Our alliance with cBrain symbolises a key milestone in our efforts to enhance collaboration within the industry. The partnership will facilitate the exchange of expertise, paving the way for the creation and launch of innovative and comprehensive digital services, products, and solutions that will benefit the broader business community as well as our clients.” ■

Khalifa University shows 23 innovative robotics and AI solutions at IROS 2024

Khalifa University of Science and Technology showcased 23 innovative robotics and AI solutions, as well as drone technology, during the 36th edition of the International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS 2024), validating its status as an academic institution that remained proactive in advancing automation and technology.

With its theme ‘Robotics for Sustainable Development’, the event marked the Middle East and Africa (MEA) region’s first-ever IROS 2024, which was held in Abu Dhabi. The Khalifa University stand at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Center (ADNEC) displayed projects encompassing all areas of robotics and AI solutions for sustainable development in the marine sector, as well as industries such as Space, Telecom, Computing, Transportation, Agriculture, and wildlife conservation.

The projects included ‘TomFormer’ for real-time disease detection in tomato leaves, ‘UTM: Unmanned Traffic Management’, ‘Lunar Rover’ for lunar exploration, an Exoskeleton wearable robot for enhancing human capabilities, ‘Smart Trash Bin’ using computer vision for efficient waste separation, ‘Ocean Monitoring and Cleaning’ for sustainable marine ecosystems, ‘Autonomous Port Inspection’ for maritime security, ‘Houbara Robot’ for behavioral studies of the Houbara bird in its natural habitat, ‘Coral Reef Inspection’, ‘Autonomous Driving Platform’, and various drone projects including firefighting drones and UAV swarms for inspection and tracking.

Also featured at the Khalifa University stand were the Droneleaf project, which focused on monitoring and analyzing agricultural fields, ‘Spider Robot’ for various applications in climbing different terrains, ‘Soft Robotics at KU’ featuring flexible and adaptable applications of technology,



a ‘Heterogeneous Swarm of Underwater Autonomous Vehicles’ for underwater tasks, ‘Quadrotor Control Projects’ enhancing quadrotor flight control, and the ‘Satellite Control Levitation Setup’, which demonstrated satellite control mechanisms, as well as the project on ‘Design and Performance Evaluation of a Marine-Compliant Gripper’ for handling uneven

large objects in marine environments. ‘Autonomous Underwater Robotic System for Aquaculture’, ‘Autonomous Driving Platform’ for developing and testing autonomous technologies, ‘Robotic Manipulator’ for precise manipulation tasks, and projects focused on innovative maritime solutions were part of the Maritime Grand Challenge. ■

H.E. Mubarka Ibrahim honored as "Best Chief Information Officer" in the Middle East

In a remarkable achievement for a distinguished leader in the realm of artificial intelligence and information technology, H.E. Mubarka Ibrahim, Chief AI Officer, and Acting Executive Director of the Information Sector at the Emirates Health Services (EHS), has been awarded the title of "Best Chief Information Officer of 2024." This honor was bestowed upon her at three prestigious award ceremonies that celebrate the foremost contributors to digital transformation across the Middle East, including the Intelligent ICT Awards, the Future Enterprise Awards, and the ICT Leadership Awards in the category of Distinguished Personalities.

This accolade underscores H.E. Mubarka Ibrahim's extensive dedication to driving digital transformation within the UAE, leveraging over 30 years of experience in information technology. Recognized as a trailblazer, she has successfully spearheaded significant advancements in the healthcare

sector through the development of ambitious digital strategies and the promotion of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies. Her initiatives have also played a vital role in advancing the sustainability goals outlined in the UAE Net Zero by 2050 strategic initiative, including creating innovative digital solutions that have transformed patient visits into virtual experiences, resulting in a remarkable decrease of 15 million tons in CO2 emissions.

Expressing her pride in receiving these prestigious awards, H.E. Mubarka Ibrahim stated, "I am deeply honored by this recognition, which reflects the relentless efforts of the entire team at Emirates Health Services. While these awards are a source of immense pride for me, they also serve as a powerful motivation to continue our commitment to realizing the institution's vision and the UAE's strategy in artificial intelligence. I am eager to pursue further achievements that will enhance our institution's standing and



elevate our beloved country's reputation on the global stage."

It is important to note that Emirates Health Services appointed H.E. Mubarka Ibrahim as Chief Executive Officer for Artificial Intelligence last September, alongside her role as Acting Chief Information Officer. This appointment acknowledges her unwavering efforts to foster digital innovation in healthcare, aimed at improving efficiency, quality, and the overall patient experience. This initiative is part of the institution's ambitious strategy to integrate digital solutions into its operations and ensure the sustainability of health services in line with global advancements in smart healthcare. ■

Google appoints Dawn Kubicek as a Women Techmaker Ambassador

A local businesswoman has been selected out of thousands of applicants to represent Google across the Middle East. As a Women Techmaker Ambassador, Dawn Kubicek, CEO of Leaders in Digital, will support women in the industry to learn, grow and innovate through a series of events and community-building campaigns. Google's global initiative to empower women to thrive in the tech space started in 2013 and has amassed over 82,500 members globally. The Women Techmakers Program has held over 1,260 events and has a presence in 193 countries, with the Middle East set to become a prominent piece of the puzzle under the guidance of new Women Techmaker Ambassador for the region, Dawn Kubicek.

With over 23 years of Google and SEO expertise, Dawn has spent the last eight years growing Leaders in Digital, the first female SEO consultancy in the Middle East



specialising in strategic business growth across Google platforms. Her expertise lies in SEO, data-driven marketing, paid search and media, strategic consultancy, analytics, and organic marketing. She is now set to bring this knowledge and experience to the masses in her new role with Google, as she continues to grow and manage Leaders in Digital.

Dawn Kubicek, CEO of Leaders in Digital, said:

"It is an honour and privilege to be selected by Google to help women in the region to thrive in the tech world. I have always been passionate about creating a community where women especially can reach their potential and gain access to mentorship, knowledge and career development tools. In my role as a Google Techmaker Ambassador, I am looking forward to supporting women on this journey and leveraging Google's global tech ecosystem to bring people together."

As a member of Women Techmakers, you will receive emails tailored to your interests, exclusive opportunities from major partners, early-access invites to high-profile workshops and events, the opportunity to connect with a global network of women in technology. Hackathons, ideathons and codelabs are also on offer as well as several other hands-on learning experiences. ■

U.S. Ambassador to U.A.E. comments on G42's collaboration with U.S. technology leaders at GITEX GLOBAL

U.S. Ambassador to the U.A.E., Martina Strong, visited the G42 stand at GITEX GLOBAL 2024 on the occasion of the announcement of a strategic partnership between Core42 and Qualcomm.

The Ambassador emphasized the growing strength of the U.S.- U.A.E. relationship, exemplified by G42's collaborations with U.S. technology leaders such as Microsoft, NVIDIA, Qualcomm, and others.

She underscored how these partnerships are driving innovation and creating



pathways for advancements that will benefit society at large. ■

Presight Datahub launches at GITEX GLOBAL 2024

Presight has launched the Presight Datahub, a sovereign enterprise data marketplace platform that lets organizations create data products, realize value and seamlessly exchange data.

The first of its kind in the UAE, Presight Datahub serves as a powerful tool for organizations in both the public and private sectors, allowing them to turn their data into a growth accelerator.

Presight Datahub is a cloud-native platform that will be deployed in the UAE on Microsoft Azure, ensuring data sovereignty and security, while allowing for the flexibility to suit various organizational needs. Its extensive customization capabilities enable businesses to tailor the marketplace to their specific requirements.

Thomas Pramotedham, CEO of Presight, said: "At Presight, we recognize that the true potential of Artificial Intelligence lies in the practical application of its technologies, or Applied Intelligence, uncovering actionable insights to create real-world impact. Presight Datahub is a step forward in data democratization, making it easier

and faster to understand the data and extract value. It's the latest example of how we enable our customers to harness data effectively and convert it into meaningful products and insights that fuel a strategic advantage."

Dr. Adel Alsharji, COO of Presight, shared: "As businesses continue to adapt to a data-driven environment, the Presight Datahub platform offers powerful capabilities to create data products, enabling secure and efficient data exchange and management. This not only empowers organizations to confidently navigate their data strategy but also helps them transition from value creation to value realization. This is a first for the UAE and a powerful proposition for our customers and partners."

Any organization with large amounts of data can generate value using Presight Datahub. Some examples of sectors include:

- **Finance** – helping companies securely exchange data, tailor data products, improve trade strategies, and ensure compliance, powered by GenAI insights and visualization tools.

- **Retail & Hospitality** – allowing firms to leverage the platform to support personalized customer experiences, optimize inventory management, refine demand forecasting, and improve marketing strategies using advanced data management and GenAI capabilities.

- **Transportation & Mobility** – organizations can use data exchange for streamlined operations, visualize route planning efficiency, with enhanced innovation through collaborative data insights.

- **Smart Cities** – use shared data products to enhance energy distribution, strengthen utility management, and optimize resource efficiency to drive sustainability with GenAI and visualization features for smarter decision-making.

With the launch of Presight Datahub, organizations gain a powerful data marketplace along with Presight's expertise in data strategy and exchange. Through tailored enablement services, Presight helps businesses transform data into actionable insights, driving innovation and growth. ■

GLOBAL ICT, TELECOM & SATCOM EVENTS 2024-25

14-18 November 2024  Cape Town South Africa	03-04 February 2025  Dubai, UAE	13-15 May 2025  Dubai, UAE
18-19 November 2024  Doha, Qatar	04-06 February 2025  Dubai, UAE	20-22 May 2025  Dubai, UAE
19-20 November 2024  Riyadh, KSA	03-06 March 2025  Barcelona, Spain	27-29 May 2025  Singapore
19-20 November 2024  Bangkok, Thailand	10-13 March 2025  Washington DC	18-20 June 2025  Shanghai, China
03-05 December 2024  Manama, Bahrain	14-16 April 2025  Marrakesh	12-15 September 2025  Amsterdam Netherlands
03-06 December 2024  Singapore	06-08 May 2025  Dubai, UAE	13-17 October 2025  Dubai, UAE

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