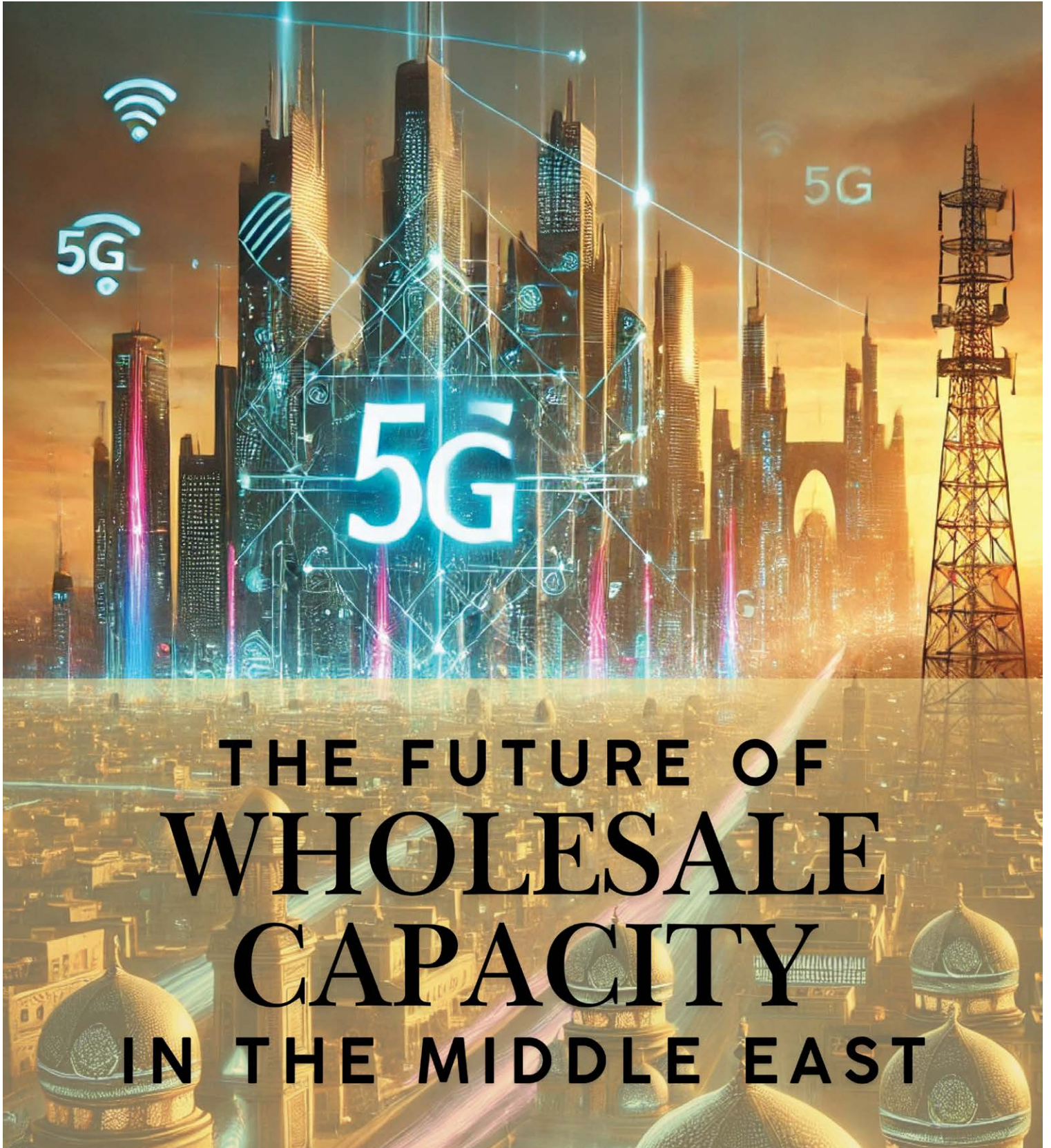


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THE FUTURE OF WHOLESALE CAPACITY

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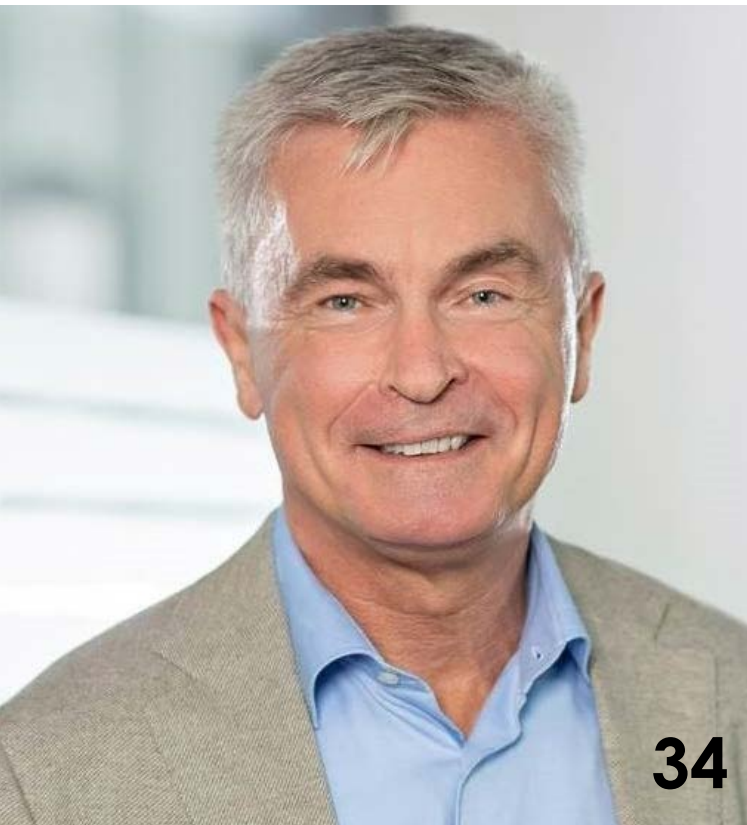


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Editor's Note



Dear Readers,

As we welcome you to the latest edition of Teletimes, we take immense pride in celebrating another month of groundbreaking advancements, industry insights, and in-depth analyses that shape the telecom and technology landscape across the Middle East, Africa, and beyond.

With the rapid pace of digital transformation, 2025 promises to be a defining year for connectivity, innovation, and strategic collaboration. In this issue, we explore the latest trends shaping the future of the telecom sector, from AI-driven network efficiencies to the evolution of 5G, sustainable data centers, and the expansion of digital infrastructure across emerging markets.

I would personally recommend the article featured on the cover, i.e. "The Future of Wholesale Capacity: Middle East Market Trends and Insights" by Gulraiz Khalid. This piece provides a good overview of the recent developments in the capacity market and its future outlook.

On that subject, one of the highlights of this month is going to be Capacity Middle East 2025, a landmark event where industry leaders converge to discuss the region's digital transformation and connectivity advancements.

We remain committed to bringing you the most authoritative perspectives from thought leaders, policymakers, and innovators who are shaping the future. We thank you, our valued readers, for your continued engagement and trust in our publication. Your feedback and insights are invaluable as we strive to keep you informed, inspired, and ahead in this ever-evolving industry.

Enjoy the read, and as always, we look forward to your thoughts and contributions on info@teletimesinternational.com!

Khalid Athar
Chief Editor



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The Future of Wholesale Capacity: Middle East Market Trends and Insights

Gulraiz Khalid

The Middle Eastern telecom wholesale capacity market is experiencing significant growth, driven by technological advancements, strategic investments, and evolving consumer demands.

For instance, Ooredoo, a Qatari telecom company, has secured a 10-year financing deal worth QR2 billion (\$550 million) to expand its regional data centers. The company plans to add 120MW of data center capacity over the next five years, aiming to become a major player in the AI and data market alongside Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Ooredoo has also partnered with Nvidia to equip its centers with high-demand AI chips.

“Capital expenditures (CAPEX) among Middle Eastern telecom operators have remained stable, with a slight decline of 0.5% year-over-year in Q3 2024. Investments are primarily focused on the expansion of 4G and 5G networks,

fiber rollout, and enhancements in digital capabilities.”

For example, Zain Group has increased CAPEX across its operating regions, focusing on network expansions and data center upgrades. Similarly, Ooredoo Group's CAPEX increased by approximately 30% year-over-year, driven by investments in multiple countries, including Iraq, Kuwait, and Qatar.

Let's have a quick look at the emerging trends and opportunities shaping the future of this sector, supported by recent developments.

The Growth of 5G and Edge Computing

5G Expansion

The deployment of 5G networks across the Middle East is accelerating, with countries like the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar leading the charge. This expansion is enhancing consumer mobile experiences

and paving the way for innovative applications across various industries.

In Saudi Arabia, telecom operators are investing heavily in 5G infrastructure to support applications such as smart cities, autonomous vehicles, and advanced healthcare solutions. The Kingdom's Vision 2030 initiative emphasizes digital transformation, with 5G playing a pivotal role in achieving these objectives.

Edge Computing Integration

Edge computing is gaining traction as a means to reduce latency and improve data processing efficiency by bringing computation closer to the data source. This approach is crucial for applications requiring real-time processing, such as IoT devices and autonomous systems.

The UAE has seen significant investments in edge data centers to support its burgeoning IoT ecosystem. These facilities enable faster data processing for smart home

devices, connected vehicles, and industrial automation systems, thereby enhancing performance and reliability.

Increased Private Submarine Cable Investments

Strategic Cable Deployments

The Middle East's strategic location as a bridge between continents makes it a focal point for submarine cable investments. Private companies are increasingly investing in these infrastructures to enhance global connectivity and data transmission capabilities.

“Ooredoo Group has announced plans to build one of the largest international submarine cables in the GCC, connecting seven countries. This initiative aims to bolster regional connectivity and support the growing demand for high-speed data services.”

Another example is Telecom Egypt that has been actively investing in international infrastructure to advance its position as a global connectivity accelerator. The company has strong partnerships with over 170 major global subsea cable players across more than 21 in-service and planned subsea systems.

Emergence of Carrier-Neutral Wholesale Providers

Carrier-Neutral Data Centers

The rise of carrier-neutral data centers is fostering a more competitive and flexible environment for telecom services. These facilities allow multiple carriers to interconnect within a single location, providing customers with a variety of options for their connectivity needs.

“In Saudi Arabia, companies like ZOI are revolutionizing the wholesale telecommunications sector by establishing carrier-neutral data centers. This approach enhances flexibility and scalability for businesses seeking diverse connectivity solutions.”

e& Carrier & Wholesale has joined forces with DE-CIX to expand the capabilities of the SmartHub IX ecosystem, solidifying its role as a key hub for digital infrastructure and connectivity in the UAE.

AI and Automation in Network Management

AI-Driven Network Optimization

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming network management by enabling predictive maintenance, traffic optimization, and enhanced security measures. Automation, powered by AI, allows for more efficient operations and rapid response to network issues.

Telecom operators in the Middle East are

aiming to create seamless communication networks across the Middle East and neighboring regions. These initiatives are crucial for economic integration and the development of regional digital economies.

The Middle East is witnessing increased collaboration among telecom operators to establish cross-border fiber-optic networks. These partnerships aim to improve regional connectivity, reduce latency, and support the growing demand for high-speed internet services.

“Zain Bahrain has joined the Middle East – Europe Terrestrial System (MEETS), an international cable system that provides state-of-the-art high bandwidth regional connectivity solutions, enhancing cross-border communication.”

“Ooredoo Group has announced plans to build one of the largest international submarine cables in the GCC, connecting seven countries. This initiative aims to bolster regional connectivity and support the growing demand for high-speed data services.”

integrating AI to manage the increasing complexity of their networks, especially with the rollout of 5G services. AI applications are being used to optimize network performance, predict potential failures, and enhance customer experiences through personalized services.

Mobily Wholesale is leading the telecom wholesale market with innovative solutions for hyperscalers, carriers, and content providers, utilizing AI and automation to enhance service delivery.

Cross-Border Connectivity Initiatives

Regional Collaboration

Collaborative efforts are underway to enhance cross-border connectivity,

Future outlook

The Middle Eastern telecom wholesale capacity market is poised for significant growth, driven by advancements in 5G, edge computing, private submarine cable investments, carrier-neutral data centers, AI integration, and cross-border connectivity initiatives. Stakeholders in the region are actively embracing these trends to enhance infrastructure, improve service delivery, and position the Middle East as a global hub for telecommunications.

In February 2025, the key players and executives from the ME Capacity space are set to gather at Capacity Middle East in Dubai. We hope to bring you further insights after this gathering concludes. Stay tuned! 📺



Capacity Middle East 2025

Shaping the Future of MENA's Digital Infrastructure

Celebrating Two Decades of Connectivity

Capacity Middle East, colocated with Datacloud Middle East, is the premier meeting place for the key players shaping the MENA region's digital infrastructure. Celebrating its 20th anniversary, Capacity Middle East will feature three days of high-powered business discussions and relationship building, all set in a relaxed, high-level networking environment through its conference and world-class trade show.

Over 3,000 global professionals from the carrier, cloud, peering, hyperscale, content, voice, messaging, finance, edge, software, equipment, data center, and satellite

industries will gather at Capacity Middle East to learn, network, and collaborate with their partners. The conference provides a platform to explore transformative trends, strategic investments, and innovative technologies driving the telecommunications sector across the Middle East and beyond.

This year's event is particularly significant, given the rapid technological advancements and the evolving digital landscape. Capacity Middle East 2025 highlights the region's pivotal role in the global telecommunications ecosystem,

emphasizing its potential as a digital connectivity hub. The conference delves into critical issues such as the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in telecom operations, the expansion and evolution of data centers, and the deployment of 5G networks. It also addresses the growing importance of sustainable practices in digital infrastructure development, responding to the increasing demand for environmentally friendly and energy-efficient solutions.

Capacity Middle East 2025 is set to feature a distinguished lineup of speakers, bringing

together thought leaders and industry experts to share their insights on the evolving telecommunications landscape. The event will host over 130 speakers, representing more than 550 companies from 90+ countries, fostering a rich exchange of knowledge and perspectives.

Among the prominent speakers are:

- Cengiz Oztelcan, CEO of GBI, who brings extensive experience in global telecommunications and strategic leadership.
- Nabil Baccouche, Group Chief Carrier & Wholesale Officer at e&, known for his expertise in carrier services and wholesale operations.
- Karim Benkirane, Chief Commercial Officer at du, recognized for his strategic approach to commercial operations in the telecom sector.
- Anis Bennani, Director of EMEA Network Acquisition at Microsoft, who plays a crucial role in expanding Microsoft's network infrastructure across the region.
- Dame Dawn Childs, CEO of Pure Data Centre, bringing a wealth of experience in engineering and leadership within critical infrastructure sectors.
- Raphael Jouenne, Chief Strategy Officer at center3, who contributes strategic insights into digital infrastructure development.

- Amar Khan, Head of Network Site Investments at Meta, overseeing significant investments in network infrastructure to support Meta's global operations.
- Veer Passi, Group CEO of Kalaam Carrier Solutions, leading initiatives in carrier solutions and telecommunications services.
- Sohail Qadir, CEO of ZOI, with a focus on innovative solutions in the telecom industry.
- Ruth Welter, VP Strategic Alliances at COLT Technology Services, specializing in forging strategic partnerships within the





technology sector. These speakers, among others, will provide valuable perspectives on topics such as AI integration in telecommunications, data center evolution, subsea infrastructure development, 5G rollout, and investment opportunities in the Middle East. Their collective expertise will contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the current trends and future directions in the telecommunications industry.

Discussions

Market Dynamics and Projections

The global telecommunications market is experiencing significant growth, with the Middle East poised to increase its market value substantially over the next few years. Experts analyze market dynamics, identifying key trends and projections for the next 12 to 36 months. The focus is on how the region can strengthen its community interconnections to foster digital infrastructure services, strategic alliances, and scalable network management.

AI Integration in Telecommunications

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing the telecom sector, with substantial investments predicted in the coming years. The Middle East is emerging as a hub for AI, leveraging the technology to enhance customer service and develop autonomous networks. Discussions center around the efficiency gains in network management due to AI and its transformative role in the sector.

Data Center Evolution

The Middle East's data center market is expected to double by 2030, driven by increasing demands for high-performance computing and multi-tenant facilities. Challenges such as scalability, connectivity outside the region, and skills gaps are examined. The role of hyperscalers in driving investment and the importance of developing robust digital infrastructure are



key focal points.

Subsea Infrastructure and Connectivity

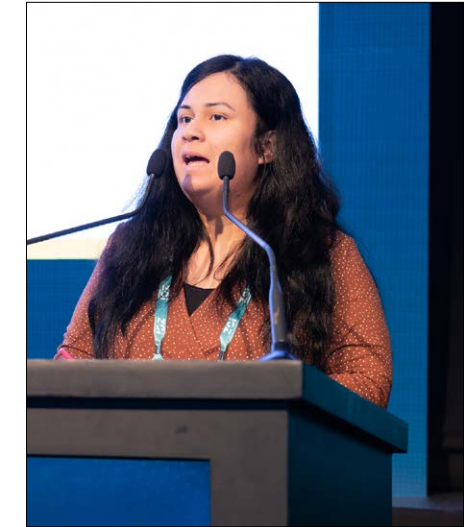
The development of subsea infrastructure is crucial to meet the region's growing data center demands. With new cable deployments taking years, the industry is focused on ensuring carrier-neutral subsea landing stations to enhance international wholesale capacity. Discussions explore the impact of increased data center size on subsea capacity and the importance of resilient network paths.

5G Rollout and Network Expansion

The rollout of 5G across the Middle East is accelerating, with a particular emphasis on middle-income countries. 5G's potential to transform enterprise solutions in healthcare, consumer services, and e-sports is highlighted. The growth in mobile data traffic and the challenges of ensuring robust cybersecurity in the network fabric are also discussed.

Economic Outlook and Investment

The economic outlook for the Middle East is promising, with growing foreign investment and joint ventures. The conference explores what makes the region attractive to investors, the risks involved, and how emerging markets are benefiting from policy changes. The role of investment in digital transformation and the development of infrastructure is a key theme.



Africa's Connectivity and Middle East Relations

The growing broadband internet access in Africa and its impact on Middle Eastern connectivity is a significant topic. Efforts to create pan-continental infrastructure in Africa, the role of regulatory frameworks, and the importance of sustainable

development are explored. The potential of alternative terrestrial fiber routes to improve connectivity between the Middle East and Europe is also discussed.

Digital Economy and Internet Infrastructure

The need for robust Internet infrastructure



to support the digital economy is emphasized. Non-technical decision-makers are encouraged to understand the core elements of network scaling, routing security, and peering. These foundational components are essential for maintaining the stability and growth of the digital economy.

Gaming Industry Boom

The gaming industry in the Middle East is booming, with significant government investments fueling its growth. The behavioral patterns of gamers, device preferences, and network performance are analyzed. The development of stronger relationships between game developers, mobile operators, and smartphone manufacturers is also considered critical for future growth.

Messaging and Communication Evolution

The evolution of messaging technologies, such as Rich Communication Services (RCS) and Voice over IP (VoIP), is transforming communication in the Middle East. The increasing number of smartphone users and the challenges in adapting platforms for future needs are discussed, along with strategies to overcome these challenges.

Network-as-a-Service (NaaS) and Optical Networks

The rise of Network-as-a-Service (NaaS) is seen as a way to boost profits through enhanced flexibility and automation. Optical networks are also gaining



prominence, with the potential to handle growing connectivity demands cost-effectively. The emergence of passive optical network (PON) technology and the role of regulation in market development are explored.

Sustainable Data Centers and Efficiency

Sustainability in data centers is a crucial topic, with the region's embrace of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The challenges of implementing sustainable technologies, the impact on pricing, and the management of power and cooling requirements for AI workloads are discussed.

Future of A2P and eSIMs

The future of Application-to-Person (A2P) messaging in light of declining international business SMS traffic is analyzed. The potential for eSIMs to revolutionize the travel landscape and their strategic implications for telecom operators are

also examined, focusing on the impact on tourism and regulatory challenges.

The event serves as a barometer for the region's economic outlook, exploring the impact of foreign investments, regulatory changes, and market dynamics on the telecommunications sector. It offers insights into the future trajectory of connectivity, with a particular focus on enhancing subsea infrastructure, developing alternative terrestrial fiber routes, and strengthening regional and international network resilience.

Capacity Middle East 2025 is not just a conference but a catalyst for dialogue and collaboration among industry leaders. It facilitates the exchange of ideas and best practices, fostering an environment that encourages innovation and the creation of new business opportunities. The event is a testament to the Middle East's growing influence in the digital age, positioning itself as a leader in the global telecommunications landscape. ■

Ooredoo Group to build one of the largest international submarine cables in GCC connecting seven countries

Fibre in Gulf (FIG) submarine cable is a strategic initiative to significantly enhance regional connectivity and solidify Ooredoo's leadership in digital infrastructure



Ooredoo Group has signed a historic agreement to build a new submarine cable connecting seven countries in the region – Qatar, Oman, the UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iraq – with Alcatel Submarine Networks (ASN), a leading French company in the manufacture and installation of submarine cables.

The Fibre in Gulf (FIG) project will provide all GCC countries a low latency, shorter and secure route to a new corridor connecting Europe with up to 24 fibre pairs and a capacity of up to 720Tbps. This advanced infrastructure will deliver exceptional connectivity benefits to hyperscalers, business customers, governments, AI providers, data centres and telecom operators, by enhancing network reliability and security, as well as significantly enhancing connection speeds.

The region's digital industry is set to receive a significant boost from Ooredoo's investment, which will support the growth of cloud services, big data initiatives, and the acceleration of digital transformation across the region.

Aziz Aluthman Fakhroo, Group CEO, Ooredoo, said: "This historic project aligns with Ooredoo's ambitious strategy to lead in digital infrastructure by expanding network capacity and interconnectivity across the GCC and beyond. We will deliver cutting-edge technologies to the region while ensuring sustainable growth for our investors through long-term revenue from rising



data demand and market leadership in digital infrastructure. This initiative positions Ooredoo as a key player in addressing the rapidly growing data demand between Asia and Europe."

Alain Biston, CEO, ASN, said: "We are honoured to partner with Ooredoo on the Fibre in Gulf (FIG) submarine cable project, a game-changing initiative that will mark a turning point in regional connectivity across the GCC. Leveraging ASN's cutting-edge technologies and operational excellence, this state-of-the-art infrastructure will reliably deliver exceptional capacity and connectivity, empowering the region's digital transformation ambitions and establishing it as a pivotal hub for global data exchange."

Ooredoo has been cementing its position as the leading digital infrastructure provider in the region through its initiatives in artificial

intelligence (AI), data centres, submarine cable systems, fintech, and Internet of Things (IoT) technologies. The company became the first NVIDIA Cloud Partner in the region in 2024, and is set to deploy advanced GPU chips during the first quarter of this year. Ooredoo Oman, an Ooredoo Group company, last year signed an agreement to land the 2Africa Cable System in Barka and Salalah in Oman.

Najib Khan, Group Chief Business Services Officer, Ooredoo, said: "We are excited to launch this strategic project, which features state-of-the-art technologies deployed for the first time in the region. This will provide substantial benefits to hyperscalers, business customers, governments and AI application providers. It reflects our commitment to becoming the leading digital infrastructure provider in the region, delivering innovative business services and driving regional growth." ■

UAE's unified approach to public safety featured at Intersec 2025

As urbanisation accelerates and security challenges become more complex, the UAE is redefining security management through unified Command & Control Centres (CCCs), a key focus of the Security Leader's Summit at Intersec 2025.

Traditionally, command centres in sectors such as policing, border security, customs, and critical infrastructure have operated in silos, often leading to fragmented responses and inefficiencies. The introduction of "OneCCC" represents a paradigm shift, aiming to unify these command centres into a single, agile framework.

Speaking at the high-level summit, Sharang Gupta, Director at PwC Middle East, said: "OneCCC is a game-changer for the UAE, enabling unprecedented collaboration between various security domains. By unifying command centres, we can enhance real-time situational awareness and optimise resource allocation and incident response times, ensuring a safer environment for all."

The convergence of CCCs has significantly enhanced public safety and security in the region, with emergency response times decreasing by 20-30% and monitoring coverage expanding by 70% due to improved situational awareness.

Gupta highlighted that many cities in the region have already started realising the advantages of such a unified ecosystem.

"Recent success stories include a unified CCC managing public safety at the World Expo and another in a regional mega-city enhancing decision-making across multiple domains. Additionally, a state-of-the-art CCC at a major sporting event ensured 360-degree situational awareness and prevented crises," he added.

The Security Leader's Summit at Intersec



2025, which concluded on January 16 at the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC), featured an impressive lineup of speakers and topics designed to address the most pressing challenges in the global security landscape.

Notable sessions included insights from Brett Taylor, Safety & Security Director at Diriyah, who explored innovative strategies for security risk assessments in the built environment. Meanwhile, Leo Levit, Chair of the ONVIF Steering Committee, discussed media authenticity in video surveillance and Majid AlShowdari, a Cyber Security Leader from a confidential government agency in Saudi Arabia, addressed the future of cybersecurity resilience.

Grant Tuchten, Portfolio Director at Intersec organiser Messe Frankfurt Middle East, said: "Intersec 2025 is the premier platform where global security leaders converge to shape the future of the industry. This year's Security Leader's Summit highlighted the innovative solutions and collaborative strategies that are driving the security sector forward, addressing the unique challenges faced by the UAE and the wider

region."

Intersec 2025, held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mansoor Bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, was the most extensive edition yet with over 1,200 exhibitors from 61 countries and an anticipated 52,000 visitors. The event showcased cutting-edge technologies across five key product sections: Commercial & Perimeter Security, Fire & Rescue, Safety & Health, Cyber Security, and Homeland Security & Policing.

This year, several exhibitors showcased advanced command centre solutions, including LundHalsey, GESAB, WEYTEC, Room Dimensions, Johnson Controls, and CTF Consoles, highlighting the event's focus on integrated, high-tech security solutions.

As the world's leading the world's biggest business event mapping the future of safety, security, and fire protection, Intersec continues offer a platform for innovation, knowledge-sharing, and networking in the global security industry. **I**

stc's Smart Truck: Empowering Seniors to Navigate the Digital World Safely

We've all been there. The frantic phone call from a parent or grandparent who's accidentally clicked on a suspicious link, the worried voice asking for help with a confusing email, or the frustration in their eyes when they almost fell for a scam promising riches. In today's digital world, staying safe online is a critical skill, and for many seniors, it can be a daunting challenge.

The rise in digital fraud is a growing concern. Many Saudis have been targeted by financial fraudsters through phone calls or electronic means. Even more troubling, many of those targeted reported that the fraud attempt was linked to their online activities, highlighting the risks associated with navigating the digital world. Sadly, some victims surveyed lost money due to these scams.

The need for greater digital literacy and cybersecurity awareness is clear, particularly among vulnerable populations like the elderly. Recognizing this challenge, stc Group, Saudi Arabia's leading digital enabler launched the "Smart Truck" initiative, a groundbreaking project that aims to empower seniors with essential digital skills and protect them from the growing threat of online scams and fraud. Since it launched in 2023, the Smart Truck has covered a distance of 6,476 km reaching more than 3,440 beneficiaries around the kingdom. On 8th November, it set off on its third journey and is set to visit 21 cities across 36 days.

Bridging the Digital Divide, One Smart Truck at a Time

The Smart Truck is a mobile digital classroom equipped with cutting-edge technology, bringing digital literacy training directly to communities across the Kingdom. The initiative focuses on educating seniors about essential digital tools and concepts, including:

- **Basic computer skills:** Seniors learn how to use computers, navigate the internet, and operate smartphones and tablets effectively.



- **Online safety and cybersecurity:** The program emphasizes the importance of online safety, educating seniors about cyber threats like phishing scams, identity theft, and online fraud. They are taught how to recognize and avoid these threats, protecting themselves and their personal information.

- **Digital services and applications:** Introduction to various online services, such as online banking, e-commerce, and healthcare applications, enabling full participation in the digital economy.

Empowering Seniors, Building Confidence

The Smart Truck initiative has significantly impacted the lives of numerous people, empowering them with digital literacy and enhancing their independence and quality of life. By acquiring these essential skills, they can:

- **Stay connected with loved ones:** Seniors can use social media and video conferencing tools to communicate with family and friends, reducing social isolation and loneliness.

- **Access vital services:** They can access online healthcare services, government portals, and banking services, making their lives more convenient and manageable.

- **Protect themselves from cybercrime:** With increased awareness of online threats, they can confidently navigate the digital world, minimizing the risk of falling victim to scams and fraud.

The Smart Truck program has been invaluable in helping seniors embrace digital tools. Participants have shared how the program has not only equipped them with essential digital skills but also boosted their confidence in using the internet safely. With the resources offered on the stc Smart Truck, they feel empowered to connect with loved ones online, manage their finances, and access important services, all while staying safe from cyber threats.

A Beacon of Hope in the Digital Age

The Smart Truck initiative exemplifies stc Group's commitment to social responsibility and digital inclusion. By empowering seniors with digital literacy, stc is not only bridging the digital divide but also creating a safer online environment for a vulnerable population. This initiative aligns with Saudi Vision 2030, which aims to build a digitally inclusive and secure society. As technology continues to evolve, stc's Smart Truck initiative serves as a beacon, guiding and protecting those who need it most. **I**



Vertiv leads discussions on advanced cooling solutions for AI at Data Center Nation in Riyadh

Vertiv participated at the inaugural Data Center Nation held recently in Riyadh. The event brought together key players, thought leaders, and innovators in the field. Vertiv, in collaboration with Mohammed Mansour Al-Rumaih (MMR KSA), participated as a gold sponsor, highlighting their joint commitment to advancing data center infrastructure and innovation in the region.

During the event, Vertiv led an insightful panel discussion titled "Cooling the AI Era," moderated by Piergiorgio Tagliapietra, Director of Application Engineering Thermal Management for EMEA, Vertiv. The session delved deep into the transformative power of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its profound implications for data center infrastructure. As AI adoption accelerates, driving high-performance computing (HPC) advancements, power and cooling requirements have significantly increased, with rack densities now frequently surpassing 100 kW per rack. The discussion highlighted the industry's shift from traditional cooling systems to advanced solutions such as direct-to-chip liquid

cooling and rear-door heat exchangers. Attendees at Vertiv's booth experienced the innovative Vertiv™ 360AI platform, which integrates liquid and air-cooling technologies for high-density deployments of up to 132 kW per rack. This solution delivers unparalleled heat management, operational efficiency, and future readiness.

Vertiv's team of experts also engaged with participants to discuss 2025 data center trends, focusing on the industry's response to AI through advancements in power and cooling infrastructure, energy management, sustainability practices, and cybersecurity. The discussions underscored the importance of collaboration in developing AI Factory roadmaps, integrating IT with infrastructure, and addressing the growing regulatory focus on AI applications and their environmental impact.

Tassos Peppas, Regional Director METCA, Vertiv said: "We were thrilled to be part of the inaugural Data Center Nation event in Riyadh, an emerging hub for data center innovation. Vertiv has always been at the

forefront of technological evolution, and our commitment to advancing industry conversations remains steadfast. Engaging in forums like this, alongside our strategic partners and regional thought leaders from across the region, builds on our successes at similar events in the UAE, Poland, and Italy. Leading the discussion on 'Cooling the AI Era' allowed us to delve deep into the challenges and opportunities brought about by AI's rapid expansion."

"Saudi Arabia is undergoing an unprecedented digital transformation, fueled by strategic investments aligned with the Kingdom's ambitious Vision 2030 initiative." added Peppas. "Vertiv is proud to support this remarkable growth by providing cutting-edge infrastructure solutions that power the Kingdom's vision for digital diversification and technological excellence. Our participation in Data Center Nation reinforces our commitment to advancing Saudi Arabia's digital transformation, supporting high-performance, scalable, and energy-efficient data centers critical to the region's future development." ■

Huawei and IEEE UAE section launch groundbreaking Wi-Fi 7 innovation program to shape the future of wireless connectivity

In a significant move to advance wireless technology innovation, Huawei and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) UAE section have unveiled the 'Imagine Wi-Fi 7 to Reality' program. This strategic initiative, running from January 20 to April 20, 2025, aims to explore new requirements based on Wi-Fi 7 scenarios, cultivate high-end talent in the connectivity field, and accelerate intelligent industry transformation across Middle East and Central Asia (ME&CA). The program emerges at a crucial time in wireless technology evolution, as Wi-Fi 7 promises unprecedented advancements in speed, reliability, and user experience. With data transmission rates approximately three times faster than its predecessor, Wi-Fi 7 is poised to transform everything from 8K video streaming to immersive virtual reality experiences and mission-critical enterprise applications.

The launch ceremony in Dubai attracted Huawei executives and key stakeholders from the University of Dubai, IEEE UAE section, and industry partners. In his opening keynote, Dr. Eesa Bastaki, President of the University of Dubai and IEEE Honorary Chair, commended the program's achievements. "The outstanding progress of Imagine Wi-Fi 7 over the past year has been remarkable. The Wi-Fi 7 standard has sparked thoughtful discussions and extensive idea-sharing across the industry. Looking ahead, we eagerly anticipate even more comprehensive and insightful dialogues in the upcoming season."

Abdulaziz AlNuaimi, Chief Security Officer, Huawei UAE, delivered a speech highlighting the successful partnership between Huawei, the IEEE UAE section, and the University of Dubai. He emphasized how the new season aims to promote industry development and trigger multi-dimensional thinking on



user experience and data security. "Our longstanding collaboration with IEEE and the University of Dubai has consistently delivered remarkable results in ICT talent development and innovation. This continued partnership strengthens both our industry's growth and the UAE's position as a technology leader. Together, we're creating a robust ecosystem that fosters innovation and develops the next generation of ICT talent," AlNuaimi added.

Ryan Pan, IP Product & Solutions Manager, Huawei Middle East & Central Asia, presented a comprehensive review of Imagine Wi-Fi 7's achievements in 2024 and outlined Huawei's wireless strategy for 2025. "Huawei has an abundance of industry know-how and considerable experience in Wi-Fi technologies, making remarkable contributions to Wi-Fi industry standards," noted Pan, highlighting several successful Wi-Fi 7 deployments across the Middle East and Central Asia region.

Mohammad Haneef, Chief Information Officer, University of Dubai, shared insights from their Wi-Fi 7 implementation. "Our tests demonstrate significant advancements in speed and user experience," Haneef commented. "Huawei's Wi-Fi 7 technology effectively meets the demanding requirements for bandwidth, security, and network operations in digital education

within higher education institutions." The Imagine Wi-Fi 7 to Reality initiative features two contests catering to different segments of the technology ecosystem. The Wi-Fi 7 Pioneers track engages industry practitioners who have implemented Wi-Fi 7 solutions, offering them platforms to share deployment experiences through live presentations at Huawei IP Club events and video submissions. Participants can earn up to 1,500 IP Club points through combined participation methods.

The Innovation Pioneer track opens the field to a broader audience of technology enthusiasts, researchers, and visionaries. Participants will explore cutting-edge applications of Wi-Fi 7's advanced features, including Wi-Fi Shield technology, VIP Experience Assurance, and Dynamic Zoom Smart antenna implementations, through compelling video presentations.

The program offers substantial recognition for outstanding contributions. Elite achievers will experience the Huawei HQ IP Club Explorer Tour to Huawei headquarters and receive the prestigious Pioneer Trophy, jointly presented by IEEE and Huawei. Additional honors include participation in the Huawei Tech Carnival 2025 in Uzbekistan and the latest Huawei FreeClip devices for top social media engagement. ■

e& is World's Fastest Growing Brand in the latest Global 500 Brand report

e& has achieved exceptional brand value growth this year and is ranked by Brand Finance as the "World's Fastest Growing Brand" in their Global 500 Brand 2025 report released earlier today during World Economic Forum at Davos. This recognition reflects a remarkable eight-fold increase in brand value versus last year, reaching an all-time high brand value of USD15.3 billion for e& as a standalone brand.

This success is the culmination of a three-year transformation journey, during which e& consolidated its historic "Etisalat" brand under a unified identity.

The significant increase of e&'s brand portfolio and investment value in the 2025 report was driven by growth in investments and portfolio exceeding USD 20 billion, including but not limited to PTCL (Pakistan), Mobily (Saudi Arabia), and the acquisition of a controlling stake (50 per cent plus one economic share) in the service and infrastructure companies of PPF Telecom Group. Furthermore, this growth was strengthened by the integration of the historic Etisalat brand and an organic year-on-year growth for e& of 13 per cent on a consolidated basis. e& also received a Brand Strength Index (BSI) rating of AAA, with a score of 84.6 out of 100.

In addition, e&'s high-profile partnerships, including a 15-year collaboration with Manchester City Football Club and its role as a founding partner of the Formula 1® Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, have brought the brand to global audiences, enhancing its visibility and strengthening its position as a leader in innovation and technology.

The brand's call to 'Go for More'

The e& brand, introduced as part of the group's strategic transformation, reflects a forward-looking vision that transcends



traditional telecommunications. Though relatively young, it has quickly established itself as a technology powerhouse, housing five distinct business verticals that drive its growth and innovation. Last year's Brand Finance Global 500 report ranked both the e& and 'etisalat by e&' brands, with the latter now fully absorbed into e&, significantly enhancing its position and overall brand portfolio value in the rankings, which soared 700 per cent year-on-year.

Since unveiling its new brand identity in 2022, e& has quickly redefined what it means to deliver value to customers worldwide. Through its inspiring "Go for More" brand positioning, the global technology group highlights a dynamic portfolio that spans connectivity, digital services, entertainment, fintech, and enterprise solutions. Brands like e& UAE, Mobily KSA, and e& PPF Telecom provide cutting-edge connectivity, while platforms such as STARZPLAY, Charge&Go, and e& money simplify and enrich everyday life.

With a focus on empowering individuals, businesses, and communities across 38 countries, e& has built a powerful ecosystem designed to inspire growth, enable innovation, and create opportunities

for a brighter, more connected future.

A brand of global significance

e& is also ranked among the Top 10 Most Valuable Telecom Brands globally according to the Global 500 Brand 2025 report. The company has consistently received recognition in its home market, including from Kantar BrandZ, which named it the most valuable brand in the UAE in November 2024.

The Global 500 2025 report again recognised Hatem Dowidar as the "Telecom Guardian of the Year" for the third consecutive year. In the 2025 rankings, he achieved an overall position of 39th and secured the number one spot in the telecom sector.

As the world's leading brand valuation consultancy, Brand Finance has bridged the gap between marketing and finance for more than 25 years. It evaluates the strength of brands and quantifies their financial value to help organisations of all kinds make strategic decisions. Every year, Brand Finance conducts more than 5,000 brand valuations, supported by original market research, and publishes over 100 reports that rank brands across all sectors and countries. **■**

Ooredoo appoints Sheikh Nasser as Chairman BoD for Ooredoo Kuwait



Ooredoo has appointed Sheikh Nasser Bin Hamad Al Thani as Chairman of the Board of Directors (BoD) for Ooredoo Kuwait. This decision reflects the group's commitment to enhancing strategic leadership and supporting sustainable growth in its operating markets.

Sheikh Nasser Bin Hamad Al Thani boasts an impressive career spanning over 20 years in the telecommunications sector. He is recognized as a prominent executive leader who has played a pivotal role in achieving major strategic objectives and enhancing the performance of organizations he has served on both local and international levels. Currently, he serves as the Regional Chief Executive Officer of Ooredoo Group for the Middle East, a position that highlights his extensive expertise and exceptional contributions to the sector.

Sheikh Nasser also played a critical role in leading Ooredoo's operations during the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar.

Sheikh Nasser earned a Master's degree in Business Administration from the University of Wales and completed advanced executive programs at HEC Paris, the London School of Economics, and Harvard Business School. **■**

Marc Murtra appointed as Executive Chairman of Telefónica



Telefónica appoints Marc Thomas Murtra Millar, as Executive Director of the Company, also appointing him as Executive Chairman of the Board of Directors and delegating to him all the powers that may be delegated by the Board of Directors, to be exercised jointly and severally.

Marc Murtra is an Industrial Engineer from the Escola Tècnica Superior d'Enginyers Industrials de Barcelona (ETSEIB), of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya. He also holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from the Leonard School of Business at New York University.

Until now, he was the Executive Chairman of Indra's Board of Directors. Additionally, he is an independent Director of Ebro Foods, S.A., and member of its Executive Committee and Audit and Control Committee, and he is also a director of Industria de Turbo Propulsores, S.A.

He is a trustee of the Fundación Bancaria Caixa d'Estalvis i Pensions de Barcelona, 'La Caixa'.

He began his career in the nuclear industry at British Nuclear Fuels Ltd in the UK, and he then worked for the management consultancy DiamondCluster, where he worked for large technological companies. **■**

CMC Networks appoints Paolo Gambini as Chief Revenue Officer



CMC Networks has appointed Paolo Gambini as its new Chief Revenue Officer (CRO). Gambini joins CMC Networks from his prior role as Head of Enterprise Sales at Arelion, where he spent over five years leading global sales initiatives. He brings more than 25 years of telecommunications experience and expertise to CMC Networks to continue to drive revenue growth, strengthen customer relationships, and support requirements across Africa and the Middle East.

Gambini has a proven track record in international sales, business development, marketing, network design and more, providing a multifaceted skillset to expand upon CMC Networks' success. The appointment marks a key step in the company's roadmap and mission to ensure businesses and users can benefit from world-leading technologies, no matter where they operate.

"Big things are happening at CMC Networks, and I'm thrilled to join at such an exciting time," said Paolo Gambini. "I'm looking forward to working with the team to support the company's strategic goals and drive the next phase of growth, cementing CMC Networks as the go-to provider for business connectivity in the MEA region." **■**

AI and cybersecurity drive SMB market, with telecom providers targeting SOHOs for future expansion - GlobalData



The small and medium-sized business (SMB) market is witnessing a growing emphasis on artificial intelligence (AI) and cybersecurity, with telecom service providers increasingly focusing on small office/home office (SOHO) businesses as the next key target. As AI and cybersecurity solutions gain traction, service providers are expanding their reach beyond mature markets, particularly in regions like Africa, Latin America, and Asia-Pacific, seeking high-growth opportunities, says GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

Telecoms service providers are rolling out AI and generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) solutions to SMBs, as well as the enterprise market. This is also true when it comes to cybersecurity solutions, with constant product enhancements and innovations to help protect businesses from both external and internal threats.

Robert Pritchard, Principal Analyst, Enterprise Technology & Services at GlobalData, says: "For the foreseeable future, AI and cybersecurity will continue to get the greatest amount of attention and create the most market noise. This is inevitable as they represent considerable opportunities and threats for businesses of all sizes."

GlobalData analysis also noted that targeting the SMB market is also extending geographically beyond 'mature' markets, as service providers look for long-term growth from faster growing opportunities across the Africa, Latin America, and Asia-Pacific regions.

Pritchard adds: "SMBs are the engine of economic growth globally. This explains why attention has expanded to new geographies where the potential for growth is huge, especially when

compared to so-called mature markets that tend to be highly competitive and where businesses already have a wide choice of service providers."

GlobalData now sees the SOHO market as a future key battleground. As predicted, this follows an almost universal shift in focus onto the SMB market over the last two years.

Pritchard concludes: "SOHOs present a whole new set of problems – both organizationally and in terms of products, propositions, and channels to market. But they offer the same fundamental attraction as SMBs – they tend to be more 'sticky' (i.e., lower churn rates), they represent a very substantial overall market opportunity in revenue terms, and they will – like all other segments – increasingly need value-added, high-margin services like cybersecurity and AI." **T**



PAIX Data Centres announces the construction of a new ultra-modern data centre in Dakar, Senegal

PAIX Data Centres has announced the construction of a new state-of-the-art data centre in Dakar, Senegal. This development marks an important strategic milestone for PAIX Data Centres as it continues to expand its network in West Africa to meet the growing demand for high-quality digital infrastructure.

PAIX Data Centres is already operational in Accra, Ghana, Nairobi, Kenya and Djibouti.

Four submarine cables are already connected to Dakar (ACE, MainOne, SAT3, SHARE) and more cables are currently being installed (2Africa), making the data centre a key access point for customers looking to serve the region's emerging markets.

The PAIX Dakar data centre will provide essential digital infrastructure to support innovation and economic growth in West Africa.

Businesses will benefit from access to

reliable connectivity and high-quality colocation services, helping to strengthen their competitiveness and resilience.

To set up the infrastructure, PAIX Data Centers purchased the land to build the buildings to house the data center equipment. The goal is to have a modern facility offering approximately 918 m² of usable space and critical power of up to 1.2 megawatts. The first phase of the project is scheduled to be operational in 2026, marking a milestone in the development of digital services in the region.

The new PAIX Dakar data center will provide a robust and secure infrastructure to host IT equipment. This state-of-the-art facility is designed to deliver optimal performance, exceptional reliability and flexible solutions tailored to the needs of local and international businesses. The main features of the PAIX Dakar data center are:

* 1.2 MW of IT load to ensure sufficient

and stable power supply for critical operations.

* 900 square meters of colocation space offering flexible and scalable solutions for a variety of hosting needs.

* 330 bays to house a wide range of IT equipment in a secure and controlled environment.

PAIX Data Centres has made a series of environmental commitments and is continually working to design high-performance data centres that take advantage of the latest design innovations.

Operational strategies aim to optimise the maximum use of local resources, operating at the most efficient temperatures and saving cooling water consumption in water-stressed regions.

PAIX Data Centres is committed to using 100% renewable energy in the

construction of its data centres by 2030.

PAIX Data Centres and its investor Africa50 (established by 32 African governments, including Senegal) are committed to providing best-in-class data centre solutions that meet the evolving needs of customers and contribute to the growth and prosperity of Senegal and West Africa.

The construction and operation of the PAIX Dakar data centre will create jobs in Senegal. Nearly 200 workers will be involved in building the infrastructure, while around 20 employees will work full-time to operate the data centre in Dakar. In addition, the new data centre will create business opportunities for suppliers, including architects, engineering consultants, contractors and maintenance companies.

PAIX Data Centres is a member of the European Global Gateway Business Advisory Group and works in collaboration with the European Union to foster the development of digital infrastructure on the African continent. Supporting secure and resilient digital infrastructure is essential to unlocking economic development opportunities and attracting investment to African countries as well as ensuring the protection of digital sovereignty, security, democracy and fundamental rights.

Boubacar Fall Sy, Managing Director of PAIX Data Centres Senegal, said: "The construction of this new data centre in Dakar demonstrates our commitment to the development of digital infrastructure in West Africa. We look forward to providing local and international businesses with world-class colocation and connectivity services, facilitating their digital transformation.

Mohsen Chirara, Managing Director of Arc Informatique, said: "PAIX, with its African experience and expertise is a sure answer with an approach of a neutral actor. All the best in your project"

Norman Albi, Managing Director of AFR-IX Telecom, said: "This new data centre of PAIX Data Centres will further strengthen the digital infrastructure of the region, providing local and international businesses with a solid platform for innovation and growth. This new data centre will also be crucial for AFR-IX telecom's networks, enabling more robust and faster connectivity for our customers."

"We are delighted to see this initiative come to fruition and look forward to continuing to support the technological development of Senegal and West Africa as a whole."

Yankhoba Ndiaye, Managing Director of Dariss Consulting, said: "The launch of the

new PAIX Data Centres data centre comes at a crucial time to support the rise of cloud computing in Senegal. This initiative is essential to meet the growing needs for technological infrastructure and to position Senegal as a digital hub in West Africa.

Dariss Consulting is particularly enthusiastic about this ambitious project. Indeed, it will offer us the opportunity to expand the capabilities of our clients, by providing them with more efficient and secure data storage and management solutions. This will significantly contribute to Senegal's digital sovereignty, by strengthening the country's autonomy in the management of its data and reducing its dependence on foreign infrastructure.

Wouter van Hulst, CEO of PAIX Data Centres, says: "PAIX Data Centres' investment in the PAIX Dakar data center positions it at the crossroads of connectivity between West Africa, Europe and South America. The strong network hub created by the aggregation of multiple submarine cable landing points connecting to terrestrial cables makes Dakar a very attractive gateway."

"We have received strong interest from our connectivity, CDN, social media and cloud customers looking to serve the emerging markets accessible by these cables. We plan to develop thriving cloud and content magnet hubs in Dakar." ■

stc Group receives global recognition for Procurement Excellence from CIPS

stc Group has been awarded the globally recognized Procurement Excellence Certification by the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS), reaffirming its position among an elite group of global leaders in procurement and supply chain management.

This prestigious certification highlights stc Group's commitment to advancing procurement operations that drive



efficiency, promote sustainable sourcing practices, enhance collaboration within the group, and establish a marketplace as

a global sourcing hub, making stc Group's supply chain the partner of choice.

It also reinforces stc Group's commitment toward streamlining operations, optimizing costs, and strengthening supplier relationships, which are crucial to supporting its growth strategy and investments, while aligning with its mission to drive digital transformation in Saudi Arabia and beyond. ■

e& and IBM study focuses on MENA's opportunity to lead AI transformation despite tech readiness challenges

A new study from e& and the IBM Institute for Business Value highlights transformative trends in AI adoption and opportunities poised to redefine digital transformation across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Titled "MENA's AI advantage: Opportunity to leap ahead and lead," the report explores insights gathered from interviews with key regional CEOs and policymakers in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt shedding light on the nuanced opportunities and challenges unique to the region's dynamic economic and technological landscape.

The report shows that the conditions for AI adoption in the MENA region are highly favourable, with 65 per cent of MENA CEOs pushing their organisation to embrace Generative AI (GenAI)—outpacing the global average of 61 per cent. Key factors contributing to this momentum include robust government support, focused research, investments in infrastructure, strategic upskilling, and cross-sector collaboration. Governments are particularly enthusiastic about AI due to the significant economic value it promises, further accelerating its integration across industries.

Harrison Lung, Group Chief Strategy Officer, e&, said: "As the MENA region stands on the brink of an AI-driven future, the timing of this research collaboration between e& and IBM could not be more crucial. This report serves as a roadmap for CEOs and policymakers to bridge the gap between ambition and execution, enabling the MENA region to cement its position as a global leader in AI innovation."

While 54 per cent of MENA CEOs recognise advanced GenAI as critical to gaining a competitive edge, the report also reveals significant barriers, including challenges in tech readiness, data privacy, security,



and talent development. These obstacles underscore the need for a strong focus on foundational capabilities—such as upskilling talent, and scaling infrastructure and data systems to match regional ambitions.

"We are proud to partner with e&, to capture the region's readiness to accelerate AI's impact across sectors. Together, we are helping CEOs and boards navigate the AI frontier, with a clear focus on building infrastructure, scaling talent, and unlocking data to fuel business success," said Saad Toma, General Manager, IBM Middle East and Africa.

Other key findings include:

- While CEOs across the region recognise the importance of digital infrastructure, confidence in its ability to support scaling and deliver new investments has sharply declined—from 82 per cent in 2023 to 64 per cent in 2024.
- 54 per cent of tech leaders in the region believe their organisations have the necessary technology risk tolerance to successfully execute AI strategies—lagging the global figure of 63 per cent.

- MENA CEOs cited organisational resistance to change from top management (41%) and employees (43%) as barriers to innovation.

Five priorities for AI transformation

The report also outlines five key priorities to drive AI transformation in the MENA region, helping CEOs accelerate their AI initiatives and scale effectively.

1. While public partnerships are helping, organisations must align their talent strategies with business needs to stay competitive in the AI-driven future.
2. Modernising data architecture is a critical focus, with 46 per cent of MENA CEOs recognising its importance for achieving AI goals in the next three years.
3. Talent acquisition and retention remain a challenge, with only 23 per cent of MENA CEOs prioritising talent strategy. While public-private partnerships are helping, organisations must align their talent strategies with business needs to stay competitive in the AI-driven future.
4. Responsible AI is increasingly important

for sustainable growth. With rising concerns over data privacy and regulatory compliance—identified by 48 per cent and 43 per cent of MENA CEOs as top barriers to GenAI adoption—organisations must implement robust AI governance frameworks to ensure compliance and build trust.

5. The MENA region's national AI strategies and public-private partnerships are pivotal for advancing AI adoption. By leveraging government support, the region can build an integrated ecosystem that aligns strategy, infrastructure, and talent while fostering an innovation-driven mindset.

"With visionary leadership, abundant resources, and a digitally empowered population, the region is uniquely positioned to chart its own transformative AI journey. However, turning this potential into measurable impact requires bold, pragmatic action—investing in tailored infrastructure, nurturing talent, and embracing collaboration to address regional nuances," Harrison added.

To unlock AI's full potential and drive regional transformation, the report also identifies key imperatives that bridge strategy and execution. These imperatives offer a blueprint for regional CEOs to align leadership, integrate resources, optimise operations, and leverage public-private collaboration to create a dynamic and sustainable AI ecosystem.

- Leadership alignment: Successful AI integration demands cohesive C-suite leadership, aligning business goals, technology, and financial strategies with clear objectives and adaptive decision-making.
- Integrated strategy: A comprehensive AI strategy links infrastructure, data, and talent to business goals, ensuring adaptability to regulations and market demands.
- Operational excellence: Balance quick wins with long-term growth through agile decisions, scalable solutions, and clarity on internal versus external capabilities.

- Public-private partnerships: Building on public sector AI investments fosters collaboration, aligns innovation, and drives shared progress across the region.

AI adoption demands a tailored approach

The MENA region is diverse, with significant differences in economic structures, regulatory environments, and technological readiness. As a result, AI strategies must be tailored to individual markets rather than applying a one-size-fits-all approach.

What sets the region apart is its unique combination of ambitious national visions, substantial investments, and strengths like abundant capital, energy resources, and a tech-savvy, youthful population eager to embrace the future. Governments are leading AI adoption by crafting models suited to their specific needs, supported by collaborations with global tech giants, which drive the development of essential AI infrastructure. ■

Ooredoo Group implements GSMA CAMARA API

Ooredoo Group has become the first operator in the MENA region to implement the GSMA CAMARA open-network APIs, harnessing the power of 5G and IoT technologies. This innovative step delivers unmatched personalisation and opens new opportunities for customers, developers, and businesses, cementing Ooredoo's position as a leading digital service provider.

The GSMA CAMARA APIs offer a standardised, developer-friendly way to access advanced telecom network features, such as silent authentication services and edge computing, while maintaining robust security and privacy. By enabling interoperability across networks, these APIs simplify integration and offer sophisticated, reliable, and scalable global services.

Timos Tsokanis, Group Chief Technology & Information Officer, Ooredoo, said:

"The implementation of GSMA CAMARA APIs is a major milestone for Ooredoo, reaffirming our commitment to developing a vibrant digital ecosystem where operators and developers collaborate to deliver meaningful digital experiences. This innovation streamlines telecom networks and introduces advanced capabilities, enabling customers to enjoy faster, smarter, and more secure online transactions alongside highly reliable services. Simultaneously, developers and businesses gain access to cutting-edge tools, such as advanced payment solutions and anti-fraud measures, empowering them to upgrade their customers' digital journeys and drive growth for their own businesses."

Ooredoo's collaboration with GSMA Open Gateway and TMF APIs establishes a global standard for seamless integration between telecom networks. Together, these

APIs enable developers and businesses to access advanced telecommunications capabilities through an open and federated marketplace, encouraging, innovation and streamlining the delivery of services like Anti-Fraud, Network-as-a-Service (NaaS), and Data-as-a-Service (DaaS).

The initiative has already launched in Ooredoo Maldives, where the CAMARA SIM Swap API and One-Time Password (OTP) API have been certified. It will soon be expanded across the Group's footprint, including Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Algeria, Tunisia, Palestine, and Iraq. Last year, Ooredoo Group was awarded the Gold tier in the 'TM Forum Conformance Certification Program' for completing conformance certification for over 10 real-world Open API implementations, further affirming its leadership in advancing telecom standards. ■



In its 2024 outlook, the GSMA identified generative AI, 5G advancements and eSIM expansion as pivotal trends shaping the telecommunications sector. Now, as the year concludes, how has the industry evolved in these areas? Hamish White, CEO and founder of telecommunications software provider Mobilise, reflects on the key developments of 2024 and shares his insights on what might drive the industry in 2025.



Hamish White

2024 has been transformative for the telecom sector. Generative AI has revolutionised customer care efficiency, 3G network shutdowns accelerated, and ongoing mergers and acquisitions have left the industry speculating about its future landscape. But has it lived up to expectations — and what could be next?

Monetising 5G

By 2025, 5G networks are predicted to cover one-third of the world's population. The focus now, however, isn't so much about enhancing coverage, but how network operators can monetise 5G.

In its report, The Telecoms Industry in 2024: Trends to Watch, the GSMA highlights that 5G monetisation remains a top priority

network slicing with compelling consumer-facing use cases. Without a clear value proposition, monetising 5G could remain aspirational.

While the GSMA identifies network API exposure as a key driver, the industry's real challenge is bridging technical innovations like network slicing with compelling consumer-facing use cases. Without a clear value proposition, monetising 5G could remain aspirational."

Moving forward, it's inevitable we'll see networks prioritise 5G Standalone (SA) deployments to unlock features like network slicing and ultra-low latency, enabling clear pathways to monetisation. We've already seen the likes of EE unveil new locations for 5G standalone coverage, and we can assume more of this in 2025.

Unlocking AI's potential

It's easy to forget that ChatGPT was only launched in November 2022. While most of 2023 was spent understanding generative AI's potential, we've been able to see some solid use cases in 2024. May 2024 saw Verizon launch new AI tools designed to enhance customer experience, including a Personal Research Assistant, AI-driven matchmaking for customer care and a "Segment of Me" feature, aimed at personalising interactions and improving service accuracy. Vodafone has also set out to transform the customer experience, as part of a far-reaching ten-year strategic partnership with Microsoft launched in January 2024.

However, that doesn't mean the industry has carved out a clear path to AI success just yet. While promising, we're mostly seeing just that right now — a lot of promise and potential for the coming years. Regulation around the use of AI in telecoms will also become increasingly important, with several frameworks emerging to ensure ethical and secure deployment. In Europe, the EU AI Act officially took effect in August but we can expect its provisions to continue to be implemented well into 2025. This act is the first of its kind globally, setting a precedent for AI regulation and we should expect it to

for operators, with network API exposure identified as a crucial driver for maximising 5G return on investment. It also anticipated that plans such as speed-based 5G tariffs or 5G tariffs linked to digital services will be an important element of this push to monetise 5G to consumers. We've seen multiple success cases in the past twelve months, including Nokia's breakthrough in end-to-end 5G slicing that enables operators to deliver tailored, high-performance network services, unlocking new revenue streams for advanced enterprise and consumer use cases.

While the GSMA identifies network API exposure as a key driver, the industry's real challenge is bridging technical innovations like

shape the way AI use cases develop moving forward.

Generative AI's promise is undeniable, but its deployment must go beyond flashy features such as Nvidia powered AI-RAN tech to tackle persistent telecom pain points, such as real-time fault resolution and predictive maintenance. The EU AI Act will be something to watch in the coming months and years it has the potential to shape how AI innovation evolves in the EU and for its citizens.

Are we finally eSIM ready?

Another interesting prediction came from the GSMA. Reflecting on 2023, it anticipated we'd be seeing a lot more from eSIMs in 2024. But has that lived up to be true?

There were more eSIM device and service launches in the first half of 2023 than any previous period, and it's evident that uptake

is increasing. Now that eSIM technology is widely available both in smartphones and as a service in more than half of the world's countries, the GSMA thought eSIM would receive more consumer uptake in 2024.

Many expected Apple to make a move with an eSIM-only iPhone 16, after doing so in the US with the 14 model back in 2022. This, however, didn't happen. While it is clear that network operators are talking more about eSIM to their customers, especially in the context of digital-first propositions, more needs to be done to make more eSIM-only devices viable worldwide.

Resistance from traditional players, a lack of consumer awareness, regulatory hurdles and cost considerations continue to present challenges in eSIM's mass uptake. However, that doesn't mean we shouldn't remain optimistic. 2025 could well be the year that eSIM breaks into the mainstream. As more

devices — beyond smartphones —integrate eSIM capabilities, from wearables to IoT solutions, the technology is poised to redefine connectivity for both consumers and industries.

eSIM adoption is more about ecosystem readiness than technological readiness. Until operators harmonise efforts globally and effectively communicate benefits to consumers, eSIM will remain a niche feature. The potential is clear, and the momentum is building but the industry needs better alignment.

2024 was a year of incremental advances rather than breakthroughs. The 5G myth was finally busted and we saw clear evidence that data growth rates are now slowing. For 2025, the telecom sector must focus on converting its potential into tangible, scalable solutions that resonate with both enterprises and consumers. ■

Telefónica recognized as a Leader in the 2024 Gartner® Magic Quadrant™ for 4G and 5G Private Mobile Network Services report

Telefónica has been recognized as a Leader in the first Gartner Magic Quadrant for 4G and 5G Private Mobile Network Services report. Telefónica has a private network value proposition that stands out mainly for its multi-vendor approach, its sector specialization and its strong presence in Europe and Latin America.

Private networks are mobile communications infrastructures deployed exclusively for an organization to connect all its smart devices and provide a secure, customizable, and low latency connection as the data is processed in the customer's own facilities.

The global value proposition of private networks, integrated in the Telefónica Tech portfolio, stands out for its multi-vendor approach, as it has different products to offer the customer the one that best suits their needs. These include, depending on the geography, dedicated or on-premise private networks (those that are implemented in

isolation in the customer's facilities and are demanded in situations with little or no public coverage, such as in mining environments) and hybrid networks (using public radio to solve the problem of lack of dedicated spectrum).

Telefónica's 4G/5G private network service currently has a leading position in deployments in Europe and Latin America, and is focused on sectors as diverse as mining, manufacturing, public sector and defense, oil and gas, ports, healthcare and education.

Carlos Carazo, global director of product, technology and IoT operations at Telefónica Tech, said: "We are very proud that Telefónica has been recognized as a Leader in the first Gartner Magic Quadrant for 4G and 5G private mobile network services report. We continue to work to improve and simplify the way organizations can access private network technologies and leverage their full potential".

More than 80 sites managed from the NOC

Telefónica has deployed more than 80 4G/5G private network sites globally by May 2024, which are monitored and managed from a proprietary Network Operation Center (NOC) that Telefónica Tech has in several locations in Spain and Brazil.

Telefónica Tech's NOCs are equipped with advanced monitoring and diagnostic tools to detect and respond to incidents and potential problems before they affect systems and users. Therefore, they play a fundamental role in guaranteeing the correct operation of private networks, including security and quality of service.

The private network monitoring and management service is operational 24 hours a day, every day of the year, and has business continuity and disaster recovery plans to ensure that network operations are constant, secure and reliable. ■

Key trends and innovations set to transform telecom industry in 2025

Ian Hood, Telecommunications CTO, Red Hat

The pace of change continues to accelerate and the ecosystem surrounding our telecom industry thrives on tackling innovation through open collaboration. With ongoing operational and economic challenges to stay competitive, service providers are taking a measured and deliberate path forward, with a focus on business benefits, while constantly adapting to ongoing changes. Many service providers are also tackling the transformation of their customer and business processes to evolve from telcos to digital tech companies. In the coming year, service providers will continue to focus on a number of key themes, as follows.

Driving expansion and commercial success of 5G

Next generation 5G continues being deployed globally, with greater focus on identifying successful business models as well as coverage expansion. While competition to lead the industry remains fiercer than ever, commercial success has been somewhat slower than expected. To fully unlock the potential of 5G, we will see a renewed focus on fresh operational methodologies, innovative business opportunities, and new partnerships.

Using AI to improve business and resource efficiency

AI has already made significant strides over the past few years, and in 2025, this momentum will continue with tremendous speed and have more impact on how we live, especially in telecommunications. AI is well suited to the distributed nature of telco networks, enabling automation of lifecycle management, providing insights across every segment of technology, every device and service. AI is poised to accelerate the offering of innovative new experiences, while improving business and resource efficiency. While some companies may achieve substantial annual gains enabled by AI, leaders should identify a realistic goal for increasing productivity and operational

efficiency through AI and implement it across their business accordingly.

Service providers have the opportunity to control their destiny. If they are truly willing to disrupt themselves, break away in their market, and embrace AI, they will survive this transition. Now is the time to focus on disruption and speed.

Harnessing observability to enable autonomous infrastructure

Observability enables a data-driven approach to automating the infrastructure across hardware, software, and cloud deployments. Data is the new differentiator to the value of service provider futures. Combining predictive analytics, generative AI (gen AI), and open APIs enables service providers to talk to their data to provide insights and operational recommendations with closed-loop automation.

Over the past years, service providers have been applying AI to their core mobile and wireline networks, and will look at ways to deploy AI in RAN to dynamically manage frequencies, sectors and base stations, improving efficiency, power consumption, and performance metrics. Similarly, gen AI and AIOps are enabling predictive maintenance, root-cause analysis and smarter decision-making with guardrails for privacy and compliance.

Laying the foundations for 6G

Service providers are taking a more pragmatic approach to the next generation of mobile architecture (6G) with a focus on improving business outcomes. Defining 6G involves more than just infrastructure — it requires the participation of a broader ecosystem of industry players, demanding structural and cultural shifts across the value chain. This collaborative approach will be key to driving



innovation and ensuring the technology meets the demands of the future.

The growing telco industry ecosystem will focus over the next year on the following:

- What key aspects of 6G differentiate from 5G's capabilities
- Distributed architectures with AI driven autonomous infrastructure
- Fostering new collaboration behaviors to accelerate transformation
- Open APIs to streamline multi-system interactions and offer new services
- Horizontal platforms to mitigate risk and improve operational consistency
- Evolution of network slicing with AI inference to enable intelligent connectivity
- Holistic sustainability as a core driver of next-gen networks
- Integrating all photonic and non-terrestrial network (NTN) technologies

Exploring new use cases:

- Immersive AR/VR/XR experiences
- Precision positioning
- Advanced autonomous vehicle (V2X)
- Integrated sensing - situational awareness
- Energy efficient IoT integration

Open source will play a pivotal role in addressing innovation, flexibility, unpredictability, and independence in this rapidly evolving space. The road to 6G will focus on harnessing AI and automation to unlock new data-driven services and meet ambitious sustainability goals. In our increasingly disruptive world, the journey will require pragmatic, deliberate, and constant evolution to differentiate and stand out from the crowd, while ensuring business value is delivered across industries and geographies. ■

Nokia and stc Group set MEA region record with 1Tbps data center connectivity across 850km network

Nokia and stc Group have successfully concluded the first-ever 1Tbps (terabit-per-second) long haul field trial in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) region. Leveraging stc Group's live Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing (DWDM) terrestrial network, this innovative trial highlights the unique potential of Nokia's sixth generation of super-coherent Photonic Service Engine (PSE-6s) technology in delivering high-capacity, efficient, and scalable connectivity for data centers.

With the ability to significantly increase the capacity of the digital network, stc Group and Nokia are enabling faster and more efficient data transmission over long distances. With this advanced optical infrastructure, stc Group is well-positioned to meet future market demands and continue its supply of rapid and reliable connectivity while aligning with Saudi Vision 2030's digital transformation goals.

The field trial transported 6 x 100GE and 1 x 400GE high-speed services over 1Tbs single wavelength across 850km, demonstrating the trusted performance and seamless integration of Nokia's Data Center Interconnect (DCI) DWDM solution into stc Group's data center environments. Designed to seamlessly fit into the data center with advanced energy efficiency, the solution addresses the dynamic needs of AI/cloud services transport and will offer consumers across the kingdom improved network efficiency and performance.

Nokia and stc Group's collaboration sets a new benchmark for data center interconnectivity across the MEA region, in line with the kingdom's wider digital transformation journey. With ambitions to enhance Saudi Arabia's digital infrastructure, expand 5G coverage, and promote cloud computing adoption among other Vision 2030 goals, this collaboration is laying the groundwork for future-ready network infrastructure. ■

Vertiv drives AI and Edge Computing innovation at Dell Technologies Forum 2025 in Dubai

Vertiv participated in the Dell Technologies Forum 2025, that took place on January 16, 2025, in Dubai. The Dell Technologies Forum 2025 served as a premier platform for exploring the transformative power of AI-integrated solutions in reshaping business operations, enhancing productivity, and driving innovative approaches to solving complex challenges.

As part of its exhibit, Vertiv highlighted its easily deployed Vertiv™

SmartCabinet™ ID, a robust micro data center solution designed to withstand harsh industrial environments characterized by dust, dirt, humidity, and temperature fluctuations. This solution integrates power management, space-saving cooling, flexible heat rejection and feature-rich racks to provide superior protection for critical IT systems, enabling enterprises to efficiently manage edge computing challenges.

Attendees had the unique opportunity to experience live demonstrations of the SmartCabinet™ ID and discover how it can optimize infrastructure performance in industrial and commercial settings.

In addition to its exhibit, Vertiv delivered a presentation that addresses how the current and future escalating demands of AI-driven workloads require new strategies for cooling and power management. Vertiv's experts provided attendees with valuable insights into the future of AI and high-performance computing (HPC) technologies. ■

MOX Networks joins Topaz subsea cable system to extend capacity and create a new Asia-Pacific gateway



MOX Networks has acquired a spectrum from Google on the Transpacific Topaz subsea cable system, the first-ever fiber cable to connect Canada and Asia. The new cable path combined with MOX's network infrastructure portfolio will bring new wholesale capacity to customers seeking secure, diverse paths between Japan and North America.

Topaz boasts 16-fiber pairs, delivers a total capacity of 240Tbps, and features Wavelength Selective Switch (WSS) technology, a software-defined spectrum slicing capability on an optical fiber pair for flexibility in routing and enhanced resilience. The Eastern end of the cable begins in Vancouver and connects to the prefectures of Mie and Ibaraki in Japan.

MOX is a commercial provider of wholesale bandwidth solutions

from Vancouver, Westward to Tokyo, and South down to Seattle. Offering up to 400G Wavelengths and dark fiber channels over a multi-terabit network, MOX is poised to provide connectivity to the data hubs on both ends of the subsea network via highly dense cables and systems that fully serve the Americas and Japan. The MOX network spans over 16,000km with submarine and terrestrial fiber, including access to the latest next-generation subsea system, Topaz. ■

Abu Dhabi's TII unveils breakthrough in quantum simulations

The Technology Innovation Institute (TII), the applied research arm of Abu Dhabi's Advanced Technology Research Council (ATRC) and a global leader in scientific research, has announced a pioneering advancement in analogue quantum simulations. This breakthrough represents the first-ever successful demonstration of learning large-scale quantum simulator dynamics from data – a technology poised to revolutionize industries worldwide.

In a collaboration with Google AI Quantum, the University of Maryland, and Freie Universität Berlin, led by Dr. Ingo Roth, TII's Quantum Research Center (QRC) developed advanced data-processing algorithms that deliver unmatched precision in understanding quantum systems.

Analogue quantum simulators, the focal point of this research, are highly controlled laboratory quantum systems designed to replicate the behavior of complex quantum systems that are otherwise impossible to observe or calculate with conventional computing power.

Studying quantum systems traditionally demands enormous computational resources, placing limits on what can be achieved with classical computers. However, analogue quantum simulators present a groundbreaking alternative, enabling scientists to experiment with and study these systems directly in a controlled environment.

Dr. Ingo Roth, Lead Scientist at TII's Quantum Research Center, added: "This achievement demonstrates the power of collaboration and innovation in quantum science. By bridging experimental and theoretical approaches, we've taken a significant step towards unlocking the full potential of analogue quantum simulations."

This milestone comes during the United Nations International Year of Quantum Science and Technology 2025, a global initiative highlighting the importance of quantum advancements in addressing some of humanity's most pressing challenges.

The research, recently published in Nature Communications, underscores TII's commitment to advancing quantum technologies and driving global innovation. With applications spanning material

science, pharmaceutical development, and energy solutions, this milestone positions Abu Dhabi as a key player in shaping the future of quantum research and its real-world applications. ■

Teammates.ai launches next-gen AI workforce with funding boost



After a successful round of funding, Teammates.ai launches a category-defining platform that drastically transforms the way businesses operate. Previously known as Uktob.ai, the rebranded platform builds on its experience in artificial intelligence (AI) agents, enabling businesses to use AI to take on entire job functions through Autonomous AI Teammates.

This announcement marks a significant milestone for the company. The rebranding to Teammates.ai coincides with a strategic shift to provide enterprise-grade AI solutions and an expanding collection of Teammates. The first Teammate, Raya, was launched in 2024, focusing on customer service. Its capabilities include voice calling, inbox management, and seamless software integration allowing it to effectively support every function of the role.

Alongside Raya, the company is launching its second Teammate, specialized in Inside Sales. With superior language competencies and an Arabic user interface, every Teammate has leading AI capabilities that allow them to speak and understand over 50 languages, including every dialect of the Arabic language; a first for the MENA region.

Expressing his excitement over the launch, Kareem Ayyad, Founder and CEO of Teammates.ai, said: "Rebranding to Teammates.ai marks a defining moment in our journey to transform how businesses leverage AI. Raya and our newly launched Sales Teammate are just the beginning of a broader AI Workforce—designed to work alongside human teams. We've already seen how this approach cuts costs, amplifies productivity, and empowers employees to focus on higher-impact challenges. This is only the beginning—each new AI Teammate pushes the boundaries of what's possible for modern enterprises."

Elizabeth Yin, General Partner at Hustle Fund, added: "2025 is the year of AI Agents, and Teammates is making work easier for people to become more efficient in their jobs. We're super excited for their launch!" ■

Eutelsat partners with NIGCOMSAT to launch LEO satellite services in Nigeria

Eutelsat and Nigerian Communications Satellite Limited (NIGCOMSAT) have announced a groundbreaking multi-year, multi-million-dollar partnership to deliver low Earth orbit (LEO) satellite services in Nigeria.

This strategic agreement positions NIGCOMSAT as Nigeria's leading satellite service provider by leveraging the OneWeb LEO network to deliver high-speed, low-latency connectivity. The services will cater to a wide range of sectors, including government, enterprises, and underserved rural areas, supporting essential applications like remote communications, mobile connectivity, and offshore operations.

Commenting on the development, Cyril Dujardin, President of the Connectivity Business Unit at Eutelsat Group says, "We are honoured to partner with NIGCOMSAT in this transformative initiative to enhance digital inclusion in Nigeria. LEO satellites are vital for providing fast, reliable connectivity in remote and underserved areas. This

collaboration underscores Eutelsat's commitment to driving global digital transformation. We look forward to a long, fruitful relationship with NIGCOMSAT."

On her part, NIGCOMSAT's Managing Director/CEO, Jane Nkechi Egerton-Idehen, stated that, "We are delighted to deepen our collaboration with Eutelsat, a globally renowned satellite technology leader. This partnership is a milestone for NIGCOMSAT, enabling us to bridge Nigeria's digital divide through the cutting-edge capabilities of OneWeb LEO satellites. Together, we will deliver scalable, reliable connectivity solutions to foster growth across government services, businesses and communities nationwide."

This partnership attests to the strong ties between Nigeria and France in advancing satellite and space technology. By joining forces, Eutelsat and NIGCOMSAT are poised to drive innovation, accelerate digital transformation, and open new opportunities for connectivity across Nigeria and beyond. ■

Gilat and Hispasat provide immediate satellite communication to support disaster recovery efforts after Hurricane Helene

Gilat Satellite in partnership with Hispasat have swiftly responded to Southern Linc's urgent request for additional satellite capacity in the wake of Hurricane Helene. This Category 5 hurricane—a rare 100-year event—severely impacted Southern Linc's Georgia service territory, requiring a rapid and reliable solution to support disaster recovery operations of affected utilities, area sheriff departments, the Georgia Department of Public Safety and the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency.

Within hours of the hurricane's impact, Gilat's team alongside Hispasat mobilized to provide additional satellite network capacity necessary to ensure uninterrupted communication for critical services. The additional bandwidth enabled first responders and utility workers to operate effectively during the recovery efforts, underscoring the importance of reliable satellite connectivity during natural disasters.

"Our satellite network provider, Gilat and their partner Hispasat, moved rapidly to provide additional satellite network capacity for our network so we could keep essential wireless communication systems operational during and immediately following this critical event," said Southern Linc Vice President of Engineering and Operations Alan McIntyre.

As Southern Linc's trusted partner, Gilat's ability to provide dependable satellite network services and managed solutions within hours of their request was instrumental, enabling our customer's success. ■

Advancing In-flight connectivity: The impact of innovative ESA technologies

Tracy Trent, President, Gilat Stellar Blu



I'm thrilled to share exciting news that marks a new chapter for Stellar Blu Solutions (SBS) and the future of in-flight connectivity (IFC). As the CEO of Stellar Blu Solutions, I couldn't be prouder to announce that we are now part of the Gilat Satellite Networks family. This acquisition not only strengthens our collective capabilities but solidifies our position as the leading force in IFC terminal solutions.

Gilat has been a global leader in satellite-based broadband communications for over 35 years, and by combining their cutting-edge satellite technology with our next-generation avionics, we're set to redefine in-flight connectivity—

delivering unmatched performance and reliability for airlines and service providers worldwide. Beyond our industry-leading ESA technology, Gilat offers a comprehensive range of advanced IFC products, including modems, baseband equipment, and transceivers that support both Ku and Ka bands. This transformative combination positions us to drive the future of aviation connectivity.

In-flight connectivity (IFC) has quickly evolved from a luxury to an expectation. Leading airlines now offer free Wi-Fi as a standard feature, driven by the growing demand for a seamless, "at-home" experiences at 30,000 feet. Passengers

no longer view connectivity as a perk—it's essential to their journey.

With this rising demand, IFC providers are rethinking their strategies, investing in new technologies to ensure reliable, high-speed service across entire fleets. Keeping passengers connected isn't just about convenience—it's about delivering consistent performance while managing costs.

As data-heavy activities like streaming, gaming, and video conferencing become the norm, the pressure is on. Airlines need to provide robust, uninterrupted connectivity that meets modern expectations—ensuring every passenger

Azercosmos to host Space Technology Conference 2025 in Baku

Baku will host the highly anticipated Space Technology Conference (STC2025) on April 24-25, 2025, bringing together key figures from the global space sector.

The event, organized in collaboration with Azercosmos and Dialogue Events Ltd., will serve as a pivotal platform for discussing the future of space exploration and technology. The conference aims to examine the latest trends in space technology and research, foster knowledge exchange, and strengthen regional and international partnerships.

More than 400 participants from 35 countries will gather in Baku, including representatives

from 112 organizations across the space sector. Participants will come from regions including the Middle East, Europe, Asia, North and South America, and Africa.

STC2025 will bring together space agency leaders, government officials, executives from private space companies, investors, and media representatives. Additionally, on April 23, one day before the conference begins, the leaders of the space agencies from the member states of the Turkic Council – Turkey, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, along with observer members Hungary and Turkmenistan – will convene for their next meeting. ■

can stay online from gate to gate.

The market shift towards connectivity leveraging LEO-based satellite constellations requires a parallel shift in the IFC equipment installed on the aircraft. LEO-based networks provide ubiquitous, high-performance service but impose demanding requirements on IFC terminals to maintain uninterrupted, high-quality service throughout the flight.

The Emergence of ESA Technology

Traditional mechanically steered antennas have served well, but they're starting to show their limits—especially when it comes to supporting next-generation non-geostationary orbit (NGSO) services. The challenge lies in their slower satellite tracking and handover speeds. NGSO constellations require antennas to continuously switch beams and satellites while handing over signals instantaneously, in less than a thousandth of a second. Mechanical antennas simply can't keep up, leading to service interruptions that fall short of passenger expectations. On top of that, their moving parts—like motors—introduce reliability issues, increasing downtime, maintenance needs, and operational headaches for airlines.

Enter LEO satellites—the game-changers of global connectivity. By delivering low-latency, high-speed internet to even the most remote areas, LEO constellations are reshaping communication networks. But this leap forward comes with a catch: LEO satellites move fast, constantly crossing the sky. Conventional antennas struggle to keep pace, leaving gaps in connectivity.

For in-flight connectivity, ESAs are not just an upgrade—they're essential for delivering the seamless, always-on experience that today's passengers expect.

Gilat's Innovative IFC Technology Combined with Stellar Blu Delivers the

Ultimate Global Flying Experience

For over 15 years, Gilat has been investing in IFC technology to serve commercial, business, government, and defense aviation markets. Gilat technology has been proven, including in multi-orbit operations supporting satellites in GEO, MEO and LEO orbits.

Gilat was selected by Satcom Direct as the driving force behind the technology that will deliver the highest possible bandwidth to business aviation customers utilizing OneWeb's Low Earth Orbit (LEO) constellation.

Introducing Sidewinder, a full ESA for Multi-Orbit and LEO Only Solutions

As the first to bring multi-orbit ESA technology to commercial and business aviation, we've built a one-stop shop for inflight connectivity—covering everything from development and certification to integration and installation. Our focus has always been on next-gen avionics and satellite solutions that ensure global coverage, even in high-traffic regions or areas with LEO regulatory restrictions.

It's very exciting that SBS has officially joined the Gilat family! By joining forces, we're creating a powerhouse of innovation that will drive faster, more reliable IFC solutions to the market. With this partnership, airlines and operators can expect even greater performance, expanded capabilities, and seamless connectivity—helping shape the future of inflight connectivity like never before.

The Stellar Blu "Sidewinder" ESA solution is breaking new ground with its open, modular architecture—designed to unlock the performance and cost benefits of multi-orbit connectivity. Its adaptable design isn't just for commercial aviation; it can easily scale to meet the needs of other aerospace applications.

Sidewinder's open architecture allows seamless integration with any service

provider, giving airlines unmatched flexibility. Its sleek, radome-free design not only boosts performance but also streamlines installation and maintenance—driving down total cost of ownership. With best-in-class performance and adaptability, Sidewinder is setting the standard for the future of inflight connectivity.

Industry leaders like Intelsat, Panasonic, Boeing, OneWeb, and more have chosen the Sidewinder platform to power their next-gen satcom solutions. With over 1,000 installations planned in the next 18 months, some of the world's largest airlines are already on board. And Gilat's solutions are widely deployed in over 30 airlines around the world.

Conclusion

LEO satellite systems are ushering in a new era of in-flight connectivity, meeting the growing demands of passengers and the aviation industry alike. Electronically Steered Antennas (ESAs) are essential to enabling LEO-based services, allowing airlines to provide seamless connectivity for travelers.

Gilat is at the forefront of this transformation, leading the market with ESA solutions that combine performance, flexibility, and reliability. As ESA technology continues to evolve, the sky is no longer a barrier to communication or productivity—it's an expansive space where passengers can stay connected, and airlines can exceed the expectations of the digital age.

The combination of Gilat and Stellar Blu Solutions brings even more exciting potential to the future of aviation connectivity. Together, we're combining innovation and expertise to revolutionize the passenger experience. With a full lineup of industry leading solutions, airlines and service providers can count on Gilat, with Stellar Blu now on board to deliver reliable, high-performance connectivity for passengers around the world, shaping the future of air travel and connectivity. ■

Space42 deploys second phase of its Foresight satellite constellation

Space42 has successfully deployed the second phase of its Foresight satellite constellation. In partnership with ICEYE, a pioneer in Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) satellite operations for Earth observation, the companies launched the next-generation SAR spacecraft into orbit on 14 January 2025.

Launched via integrator Exolaunch, the Foresight spacecraft successfully lifted off aboard the Transporter-12 Rideshare mission with SpaceX from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California, USA. The spacecraft has established communication, and early routine operations are underway.

Having Foresight-1 and Foresight-2 in orbit, the second phase of the constellation will continue to boost Space42's geospatial insights and capabilities with increased speed and precision. Additionally, these capabilities will support the UAE's Earth Observation (EO) Space Program. Space42's comprehensive SAR constellation is expected to be completed by 2027.

Using the advanced SAR active sensing system, the satellites produce high-fidelity images of the Earth's surface around the clock, regardless of weather conditions or solar illumination, at the highest resolution in the industry for small satellites. This allows the tracking and monitoring of smaller objects and minute surface changes from space, helping address critical challenges such as disaster mitigation, maritime surveillance, and urban mobility.

Karim Michel Sabbagh, Managing Director, Space42, said: "The successful launch of the second phase of the Foresight constellation demonstrates the strength of our partnership with ICEYE and reaffirms our commitment to advancing the regional and global SpaceTech industry. With cutting-edge technology, this spacecraft enhances our capacity to deliver precise,



real-time geospatial insights, advancing the UAE's Earth Observation capabilities. This achievement reflects our dedication to innovation and fostering local talent in line with the National Space Strategy 2030."

Hasan Al Hosani, CEO of Bayanat Smart Solutions, Space42, commented: "The expansion of the Foresight constellation has furthered the UAE's position as a global leader in satellite-based Earth Observation while enabling us to strengthen our credentials as a multi-orbit satellite operator. Through the SAR constellation, we continue to drive the development of our local satellite manufacturing capabilities while boosting nationwide preparedness for emergency response, ensuring we deliver maximum value to our customers in the region and beyond."

Rafal Modrzewski, CEO and Co-Founder of ICEYE said: "ICEYE's revolutionary satellites have a ground-breaking combination of capabilities - smaller size and high performance. With today's announcement, we also celebrate the launch of the second

mission of ICEYE spacecraft for Space42, and we look forward to further successful collaboration on their missions and developing the UAE's space capabilities."

The orbiting spacecraft will revisit the Middle East frequently, enabling the delivery of near real-time, high-definition images of on-the-ground conditions across the region and beyond.

This is the latest development in the ongoing partnership between ICEYE and Space42. In December 2024, both companies announced a joint venture to manufacture SAR satellites in the UAE.

The UAE's Earth Observation Space Program was created in 2023 to build national satellite remote sensing and EO capabilities, placing it amongst 20 countries that operate SAR space assets. The program is a testament to Space42's commitment to advancing the UAE's space sector and establishing sovereign satellite data acquisition and processing capabilities. ■

ABS reports solid financial performance for the twelve months ended 30 September 2024

Operating Highlights

- Senior management team refreshed with appointment of new Chief Executive Officer and Chief Business Development Officer
- Major new contract wins with key partners including Gilat Telecom, Azercosmos, Rignet and Sonema
- Strengthening collaboration with Tier 1 satellite operators in regions where ABS has valuable capacity they require
- Established strategic partnership with Telespazio to deliver enhanced connectivity services

Financial Highlights

- Revenues of \$66.3 million, down 4% YoY under very competitive market conditions
- Adjusted EBITDA₂ of \$35.9 million at 54% margin
- Free cashflow₃ stable at \$19.1m



Mark Rigolle

- Net debt of \$31.6m, following \$15.0m debt paydown since August 2022
- Industry-leading net debt leverage of 0.9x at 30 September 2024

Mark Rigolle, CEO, said: "ABS has delivered another strong set of numbers outperforming

Summary Statement of Comprehensive Income (US\$m)		
	Year Ended 30 September	
	2024	2023
Revenue	66.3	68.9
Cost of Goods and Services	(35.9)	(31.4)
Administrative Expenses	(17.9)	(18.1)
Add back: Depreciation & Amortisation	22.7	18.4
Other Items & Adjustments	0.7	1.3
Adjusted EBITDA	35.9	39.1

Summary Statement of Cash Flows (US\$m)		
	Year Ended 30 September	
	2024	2023
Net Cash Generated from Operating Activities	20.0	19.5
Net Cash Used in Investing Activities	(0.9)	(0.5)
Repayment of Loans	-	(7.5)
Dividends Paid	(19.9)	(16.7)
Other Financing Cash Flows	(4.6)	(3.9)
Net (Decrease) / Increase in Cash & Cash Equivalents	(5.4)	(9.1)
Cash and Cash Equivalents at beginning of the year	17.0	26.2
Effect of Foreign Exchange Rate Changes	(0.1)	(0.1)
Cash and Cash Equivalents at end of the year	11.5	17.0

the broader GEO satellite market with revenues excluding customers serving the CIS market largely flat year over year. We have been laser-focused on developing our distribution into new markets in order to counter the headwinds the sector is facing from Starlink in particular. We remained highly cost-disciplined while growing our pipeline of sales opportunities and building partnerships in order to develop our orbital slot filings.

ABS has incredibly strong assets. Our team is second to none and in particular our technical department is one of the most efficient in the industry. Our satellites are healthy with many years of useful revenue life ahead. The quality of our Ka-band filings is superb and the focus of our longer term growth plans is to develop

these filings in strategically-important, high-potential markets for both commercial and defence users.

Having joined last May I have come to appreciate the strengths of ABS and look forward to continuing the success we have been enjoying with our existing assets, while driving forward the building of the platform for future growth."

Parm Sandhu, Chairman, said: "Mark has brought a new energy to ABS and very quickly has assembled a world class management team in Dubai. ABS has a unique set of highly valuable assets which this team with our strong capital structure is well positioned to monetise." ■



New data demands, same tightrope - balancing usability and security in the age of AI and regulation

Dave Russell, Senior Vice President, Head of Strategy at Veeam Software

Keeping data both safe and easily accessible has been a challenge for organisations since, well, since the first paper file was stored away. Admittedly, over the last couple of decades, this has become much trickier to navigate - digitisation means the sheer amount of data collected, stored, and used has grown exponentially. And now, we're seeing another data growth spurt due to widespread AI adoption.

Meanwhile, governments worldwide are doing their best to keep up, introducing growing levels of data regulations seemingly every year. This puts organisations under increased pressure to ensure data resilience as they get to grips with this new age of AI. They've been left to walk a tightrope between ensuring that



data is usable for business use while also keeping it secure and resilient, in line with

evolving regulations.

Dude, where's my data?

With the widely acclaimed promise of AI, the demands on enterprise data have never been greater - requiring it to be accurate, accessible, and usable at all times. While the initial excitement around generative AI has quietened, organisations are now adopting the technology in earnest to unlock increased business value from all that existing data. According to the latest McKinsey Global Survey on AI, 65% of respondents worldwide reported that their organisations are regularly using AI. But what does this mean for data resilience?

Well, it's no secret that AI relies on data.

Some would say the more data the better, but the wiser approach is the more accurate and relevant data, the better. While some AI applications might only need to be trained once, most require live access to a data pool to analyse and react to changes in real time. Any inaccuracies or inconsistencies in data across an organisation can quickly render AI's output useless. As the adage goes: garbage in, garbage out. Of course, it's important to be careful about what data you feed the beast, namely any sensitive, mission-critical or customer data. There's very much still a balance to be figured out as more and more organisations embrace AI.

used in such technologies. While these new considerations fall primarily under the responsibility of chief information governance teams, achieving compliance with AI-related regulations will require effort across the entire organisation. And this is all while ensuring that relevant teams have access to the data they need to innovate and grow.

No need to throw away the key

So, at the moment, organisations are starting to walk the tightrope between ensuring a suitable speed of access to data

creating and needing exponentially more data as it evolves, however, this gap could start to widen unless action is taken.

Collaboration between teams, from data governance to security IT and production has always been, and continues to be, essential to staying on top of data resilience. Working together to create a new set of business risk assessments will lead the way forward for organisations working with data in AI models.

Despite the additional work it brings for organisations, these regulations are perfectly timed to coincide with this AI boom as they demand a re-evaluation of data security practices. But, organisations shouldn't be reliant on new regulations to prompt this. Monitoring and adjusting risk levels should be a regular, ongoing process, especially when a new technology such as AI comes into the picture.

Two birds, one backup

Ultimately, as in so many cases, it comes back to data backups. Already a key aspect of modern data regulation in its own right, they will play a larger role in AI-specific regulation in the future. It will provide those teams developing AI and LLMs a much-needed anchor in a constantly changing environment.

Not only do they ensure that data remains accurate, secure, and usable at all times but they can also provide a comprehensive record for organisations to prove their adherence to regulations. An invaluable source of truth when dealing with AI as its very nature makes it difficult to account for how exactly it has used the data it's been fed or trained on. But, by using data backups, organisations can account for the security of their data at any given time, no matter where it's being used.

Of course, total security can never be fully achieved when dealing with data and there will always be a weighing up of risk and reward for organisations. But, with quality data backups, you can be assured that you've got a safety net to, well, fall back on. ■

According to the Veeam Data Protection Trends Report 2024, 76% of organisations recognise a 'Protection Gap' between how much data they can afford to lose and how often their data is protected. That sounds like a big gap, but it's been getting smaller in recent years. With AI creating and needing exponentially more data as it evolves, however, this gap could start to widen unless action is taken.

What should help organisations strike this balance is the wave of regulations demanding greater data resilience and responsibility both in AI and more broadly. These regulations, including NIS2 and the EU AI Act, have all placed increased responsibility on organisations to ensure data security, and rightly so. This new wave of data regulation focuses largely on extending the line of custody that organisations have on their data, requiring them to consider how it will be secured when plugged into AI and other new technologies. When data was originally collected and stored, organisations likely didn't have AI on their radar, let alone consider how their data might be

while also maintaining data resilience in line with evolving regulations. While this might seem like a herculean task, it is the same problem that organisations have been tackling for years, just with a new set of systems and circumstances.

This challenge never ends, it just evolves. The principles stay the same, but the technology, the environments, and the scale keep changing. According to the Veeam Data Protection Trends Report 2024, 76% of organisations recognise a 'Protection Gap' between how much data they can afford to lose and how often their data is protected. That sounds like a big gap, but it's been getting smaller in recent years. With AI

U.S. AI startups attract \$49.4b – What's holding Europe back?



A new study found that AI startups based in the US are clearly leading in terms of investment, contributing the largest share of the investments.

The study conducted by Writerbuddy.ai found that U.S.-based companies raised \$49.4 billion, accounting for 93.62% of the total funding among the top AI companies analyzed. California leads the charge with 32 of the top 50 AI companies headquartered there, securing \$47.9 billion in funding—over 91% of the total U.S. AI investment—thanks to the thriving tech ecosystem in Silicon Valley.

Conversely, France and Canada attracted \$1.3 billion (2.38%) and \$1.2 billion (2.32%) respectively, while Germany, the United Kingdom, and others also contributed smaller amounts to the global AI landscape. Although these countries are far behind the U.S. in total funding, they are steadily growing

their contributions and establishing themselves as emerging players in AI innovation.

Short Methodology: This study analyzed funding, valuation, and influence trends among 50 top AI companies from the 2025 Forbes AI 50 list. Data was sourced from Crunchbase, PitchBook, and news articles, with companies categorized into eight sectors. Key analyses included funding trends, geographic distribution, and ex-Google employee influence, focusing on private companies through October 2025.

Key Findings:

- Total Funding: The top 50 AI companies raised \$52.8B as of 2025, with a 600% surge in 2023 to \$20.7B compared to 2020.

- Total Valuation: The collective valuation is \$358.37B, indicating strong market confidence.

- Top Funded Sector: AI Infrastructure & Models led with \$35.5B (67% of total), followed by Data & Analytics (\$5.9B) and Defense & Security (\$3.8B).

- Geographic Insights: U.S.-based companies raised \$49.4B (94% of the total), followed by France with \$1.3B. California attracted \$47.9B, making it the leading AI hub.

- Google Alumni Influence: Ex-Google alumni led 14 companies, raising \$14.7B (28% of the total) and valuing them at a combined \$71.61B.

- Most Funded Startups: OpenAI (\$21.9B), Anthropic (\$9.7B), and Databricks (\$4B).

- Top Unicorns: OpenAI (\$157B), Databricks (\$43B), and Anthropic (\$40B). Among the top 50 companies, 29 are unicorns.

- Notable CEOs: Sam Altman (OpenAI),

Ali Ghodsi (Databricks), and Dario Amodei (Anthropic).

United States:

Dominates with \$49.4 billion (93.6%) across 39 companies, including major players like OpenAI, Anthropic, and Databricks, which are leading the charge in AI infrastructure, generative models, and data analytics.

France:

Secured \$1.3 billion (2.4%) with two companies, Mistral AI and Potoroom, focusing on building AI infrastructure and advancing creative AI applications, marking France as a growing AI hub.

Canada:

Received \$1.2 billion (2.3%) from two key players—Cohere, which specializes in AI infrastructure, and Waabi, advancing autonomous systems and robotics, establishing Canada as a rising AI contributor.

Germany:

Attracted \$400 million (0.8%) with companies like DeepL, which is driving progress in generative AI for language translation, highlighting Germany's growing interest in AI innovation.

Funding Raised by AI Companies by Country (2025)

Country	Total Funding	%	Number of Companies
United States	\$49.4B	93.62%	39
France	\$1.3B	2.38%	2
Canada	\$1.2B	2.32%	2
Germany	\$400.0M	0.76%	1
United Kingdom	\$257.6M	0.49%	2
Netherlands	\$97.4M	0.18%	2
Sweden	\$82.0M	0.16%	1
Australia	\$38.8M	0.07%	1

United Kingdom:

Secured \$257.6 million (0.5%) across two companies, ElevenLabs and Synthesia, which are pushing the boundaries of generative AI, particularly in content creation and AI-driven video production.

Netherlands:

Received \$97.4 million (0.2%) in funding, with Weaviate focusing on data and analytics and Cradle working on healthcare and biotech AI, marking a strong AI presence in Europe's tech ecosystem.

Sweden:


Gained \$82 million (0.2%) led by Sana, a company developing AI search tools, showcasing Sweden's commitment to leveraging AI for both creative applications and workplace productivity.

Australia:

Attracted \$38.8 million (0.1%) in funding,

with Leonardo.AI contributing to advancements in generative AI, positioning Australia as an emerging player in AI-driven innovation.

California is the clear leader in AI, with 32 of the top 50 AI companies and \$47.9 billion in funding, making up 91% of total U.S. AI investment. This dominance is fueled by Silicon Valley's robust infrastructure, talent pool, and culture of entrepreneurship.

While California remains the epicenter, cities like Paris, New York, Ontario, and London are emerging as key contributors. Paris secured \$1.3 billion with Mistral AI and Potoroom, New York hosts major AI companies like Hugging Face, Runway and Ontario's AI sector is growing with companies like Cohere. These regions are helping to diversify and expand the global AI ecosystem. 

Scan to explore the full study and methodology

Wireless Broadband Alliance 6G vision calls for greater industry collaboration if ubiquitous connectivity is to be achieved



The Wireless Broadband Alliance (WBA), the global industry body dedicated to driving the seamless and interoperable service experience of Wi-Fi across the global wireless ecosystem, has released an introductory report on 6G's potential transformative role titled, "6G - WBA Vision Statement." The statement calls for greater collaboration between all stakeholders if 6G is to deliver on its promise, and details five key vision points for 6G, to achieve ubiquitous connectivity that comprises Wi-Fi, cellular, non-terrestrial networks, IoT LPWANS, and other wireless technologies at its core.

Wi-Fi and cellular are the two most adopted wireless broadband technologies in the world, available in billions of devices and used daily by billions of users all around the world. To date, both technologies have been evolving from the standards point of view, on independent paths, resulting in separate

technical standards, architectures, and industry ecosystems.

While the cellular standards organizations have made efforts to integrate these systems and positive progress has been made, with converged solutions like Wi-Fi Calling or SIM-based seamless Wi-Fi authentication, broader real-world adoption and implementation have lagged for reasons including the need to harmonize fragmented user experiences, complexity of non-3GPP access methods, costs related to implementation complexity, and the need to learn from previous cellular generations.

WBA Vision for 6G

1. Ubiquitous connectivity for all: Advocate for a wireless ecosystem where wireless networks collaborate rather than compete. This environment ensures uninterrupted experiences for users,

regardless of environment, urban, rural or indoors.

2. Practical solutions for industry challenges: 6G should prioritize resolving industry pain points such as fragmented user experiences, costly network implementations, and inconsistent coverage. Realistic, scalable models that leverage Wi-Fi and cellular, and other wireless technologies, to address these issues effectively.

3. Cost and operational efficiency: Operators must balance increasing data demands with operational/energy efficiency to ensure sustainability. Wi-Fi's cost-effectiveness can complement 6G to reduce CAPEX, operational costs and network densification, particularly indoors.

4. Targeted applications for impact: Unlike 5G's broad focus, 6G should concentrate

on practical verticals like healthcare, smart cities, and industrial automation. These areas benefit most from reliable, low-latency, and seamless connectivity.

5. Global collaboration and standardization:

Importance of industry-wide collaboration, aligning Wi-Fi, cellular, among other technologies advancements through standards bodies like 3GPP, GSMA, IEEE, IETF, WBA and the Wi-Fi Alliance to avoid fragmentation and ensure interoperability.

Recommendations to address industry fragmentation

In addition to outlining its vision for 6G across the industry, the WBA is making three recommendations which it believes will help address fragmentation in the industry and contribute to successful outcomes for 6G:

- **Balance between service requirements and technology-driven solutions:** A key consideration is whether 6G benefits from a customer-led approach rather than technology-led convergence efforts. While equipment manufacturers, both cellular and Wi-Fi vendors, drive many innovations in their respective technologies, operators may be better positioned to take a holistic, technology-agnostic view of customer needs and their own challenges. Operators can bring balance to the ecosystem by ensuring that solutions are designed with customer challenges and real-world use cases in mind, avoiding a technology-driven approach that may overlook cross-network requirements. The ecosystem needs a balanced approach where operators lead in defining end-user requirements while vendors contribute with specialized technology.

- **Strategic role of the Wi-Fi in IMT-2030 and 6G development:** Industry alignment will be critical in the 6G standards process by ensuring that convergence, particularly involving relevant access technologies like Wi-Fi, plays a key role in how 6G meets customer needs. This includes promoting multi-stakeholder engagement to align technical specifications with real-world user

needs and ensuring that 6G development focuses on interoperability between access technologies.

- **Supporting innovation labs for 6G:**

Industry should support the creation of an "Innovation Lab" for 6G convergence to foster real-world convergence use cases, such as ATSSS, and support vendor Proof of Concept (PoC) and prototype development. The objective of these labs would be to validate vendor innovations and produce viable industry solutions that address fragmentation, benefiting both operators and end customers. These efforts will ensure vendors across Wi-Fi, cellular, and other networks can prototype solutions that work seamlessly together.

Tiago Rodrigues, CEO of the Wireless Broadband Alliance, said: "Collaboration between cellular, Wi-Fi and other wireless technologies stakeholders, including operators, vendors, and vertical industry players, is crucial for the success of 6G. By centering its vision on densification, capacity, efficiency, and collaboration, the WBA aims to make 6G not just a technological leap but a practical solution for global connectivity challenges."

Actionable steps

The WBA will be promoting several actionable steps to drive broad industry alignment, which it believes will ensure the 6G opportunity resonates beyond the technical community, appealing to policymakers, businesses, and end-users alike:

- Advocate for simplified, cross-network policies that focus on the end user experience.
- Develop frameworks for seamless identity management and access steering.
- Promote affordable and scalable solutions like Federated Roaming (e.g. OpenRoaming) and neutral host models for network densification.
- Leverage AI to optimize network selection

and reduce operational overhead.

- Establish innovation labs for real-world testing and vendor collaboration.

The 6G - WBA Vision Statement was prepared with the input and support of the following WBA member organizations: AT&T, Airties, Boingo Wireless, Boldyn Networks, BT, Charter, Cisco, Comcast, HFCL, Intel, Reliance Jio, Telekom Deutschland and Turk Telekom.

JR Wilson, Vice President, Tower Strategy and Roaming at AT&T, WBA Chairman, said: "Our customers will measure the success of 6G by how well it meets their needs in the real world. At AT&T our focus is implementing solutions that best serve customers, with the right technology and user experience for every consumer and business use case, underpinned by our ability to support them operationally. The WBA 6G Vision Paper, highlights how important it is to meet those needs regardless of the technology concerned."

Maria Cuevas Ramirez, Board Director, Wireless Broadband Alliance and Network Infrastructure Research Director at BT, said: "It is important that the 6G era brings together cellular, Wi-Fi, and non-terrestrial access in a more seamless fashion, to create a "network of networks" that delivers a great experience for customers. Collaboration will be critical to achieving this and we're pleased to support the WBA Vision Statement for 6G which aims to identify and propose key enhancements to enable the industry to deliver on this ambition."

Dr. Mehmet Ozdem, Director of Network Design and Service Management, Turk Telekom, added: "The convergence of 6G and Wi-Fi will enable interoperability between different communication protocols and architectures, creating a more efficient and user-centric ecosystem. This convergence will play a strategic role for operators by accelerating digital transformation. WBA will provide guidance and leadership in this area through its work with technology stakeholders and industry leaders." ■

Technology gives content creators control over AI access and a path to monetisation

Tony van den Berge, VP, EMEA at Cloudflare

The market for AI-generated music and audiovisual (AV) content is set to skyrocket in the next couple of years, growing from around €3 billion today to €64 billion in 2028. While this may be good news for those dancing to Gen AI's tune, it's likely to hit a bum note for content creators.

Despite providing the "creative fuel of the Gen AI content market," these human creators could be about to see their income drop by around a quarter.

That amounts to a cumulative loss of €22 billion over the next five years – €10 billion in music and €12 billion in audiovisual – according to a new report commissioned by the International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers (CISAC), which represents some five million people in the creative industries.

The report – Study on the economic impact of Generative AI in the Music and Audiovisual industries – is touted as the first-ever global study of its kind to tackle the subject.

It warns that unless this situation changes, content creators will be squeezed on two fronts: the loss of revenues because of the unauthorised use of their works by Gen AI models, and the loss of income from people buying AI-generated content.

"For creators of all kinds, from songwriters to film directors, screenwriters to film composers, AI has the power to unlock new and exciting opportunities – but we have to accept that, if badly regulated, generative AI also has the power to cause great damage to human creators, to their careers and livelihoods," said CISAC President and ABBA frontman Björn Ulvaeus.

"Which of these two scenarios will be



the outcome? This will be determined in large part by the choices made by policy makers, in legislative reviews that are going on across the world right now. It's critical that we get these regulations right, protect creators' rights and help develop an AI environment that safeguards human creativity and culture," he said.

Content creators face an existential threat

While there is clearly a role for legislation, technology can also help provide a solution not only to protect content from Gen AI creators, but also to provide an avenue to monetise it.

With so much content online – everything from those who make a living from art and animation to filmmakers and wordsmiths – it's a problem that extends far beyond the music industry.

In most cases, site owners have had little control over how AI services use their content for training or other purposes. Recently, though, new tools have been developed that make it easier for site owners, creators, and publishers to take back control of their content.

Cloudflare empowers creators with tools

to safeguard and monetise their content

At Cloudflare, we are uniquely positioned to address these challenges by leveraging our global network to create innovative solutions. Our recently introduced AI Audit tools empower creators and site owners to regain control over their content in the age of generative AI. These tools allow creators to monitor AI bot activity, identifying which AI services are accessing their content, how often, and what specific material is being targeted. With one-click solutions, creators can block unauthorised AI crawlers, ensuring only approved entities can use their work. Beyond protection, Cloudflare helps them monetise their content by giving them analytics and control over who can scan based on the licensing agreements they sign with model providers.

To understand how these new tools fit into the bigger picture, it's worth stepping back to see how AI models are accessing digital content in the first place. Bots typically "crawl" the internet looking for material. "Good bots" – such as search engine crawlers – are beneficial because they help people discover sites and drive traffic. "Bad bots," on the other hand, can pose a security threat.

But the rise of Large Language Models (LLMs) and other generative tools has created a murkier third category. Unlike malicious bots, some of the crawlers associated with Gen AI platforms are simply looking to Hoover up content to train new LLMs. And that's precisely the problem for content creators.

New tools are key in battle to monetise content

That's why there's so much interest around the development of these solutions. Not

only do they allow content providers to identify who – or what – is scraping their content, they also allow them to block access to particular bots.

The result is two-fold. First, content creators are able to stop scrapers from accessing their intellectual property. Second, it allows content creators to negotiate access deals directly with AI companies. In other words, it gives content creators the chance to be paid for their output.

In a sign that the balance of power may

already be shifting in terms of control and ownership, many of those contracts include terms about the frequency of scanning and the type of content that can be accessed.

That said, it's still early days. There is still some uncertainty about the value of content used this way, and standardization discussions on enforceable mechanisms to express AI crawling preferences are still ongoing. Meanwhile, site owners are at a disadvantage while they play catch-up. But unless – and until – there is a resolution, content creators and site owners will be

discouraged from launching or maintaining Internet properties.

The fear is that more and more creators will stash their content behind paywalls, which may solve one problem but could invariably lead to others.

Ultimately, all parties – policymakers, tech companies, and creators – need to come together to enable AI innovation to thrive while safeguarding creativity. For those in the music industry, it's not just a question of harmony, but of hitting the right notes too. ■

GenAI will make 2025 an intriguing year for team collaboration platforms - GlobalData

While generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) significantly shaped team collaboration platforms in 2024, its influence will only continue in 2025. The year is set to be an intriguing one, marked by rising adoption of Agentic AI, transformation of contact center environments, disruption to GenAI feature pricing, and growing popularity of mobile solutions, according to GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

Gregg Willsky, Principal Analyst, Enterprise Technology & Services at GlobalData, comments: "When GenAI arrived on team collaboration platforms, widespread fear was generated that hard-earned skills – along with the employees that cultivated them - would be displaced. Those fears continue to soften as GenAI increasingly earns recognition as a tool that makes workers more productive."

Productivity enhancements have been delivered largely through a proliferation of virtual assistants involving every major competitor. These assistants represent the centerpiece of a 'permeate the platform' approach that has competitors sprinkling GenAI features across their full portfolios.

Willsky continues: "When anything gets



sprinkled, inevitably spots are missed. Competitors are going back and filling the 'holes' with features that harness information residing platform-wide."

In 2025, some past trends will continue to flourish while others will emerge anew. Contact centers will keep transforming with a greater focus on customer experience, pivoting from agent-centric to self-service, from transaction-based to relationship-based, from generic to personalized, and from multichannel to omnichannel. Mobile collaboration solutions that enable workers to seamlessly communicate between wireless and landline devices as well as pivot

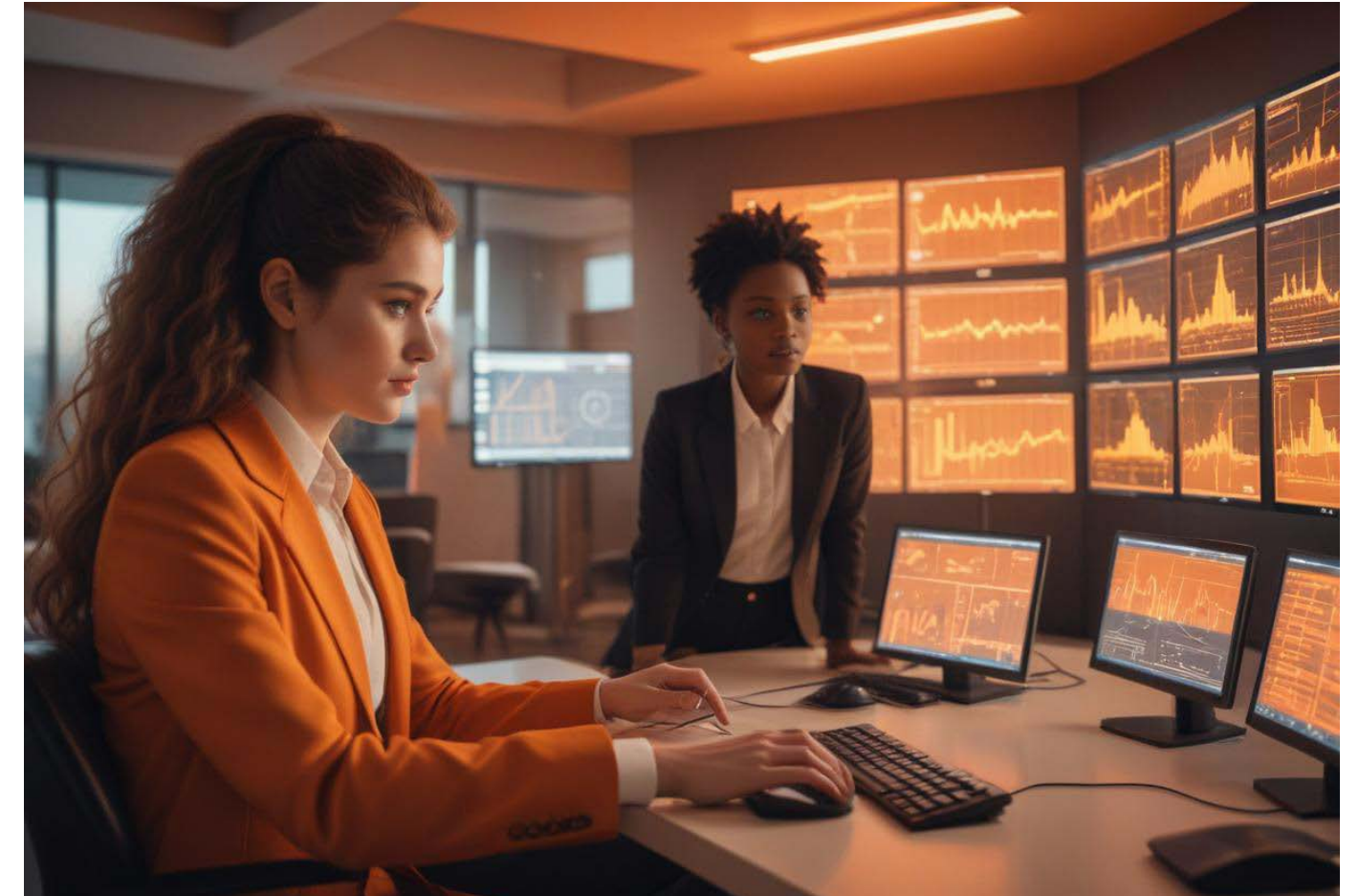
between calls and meetings will remain popular.

Vendors will introduce Agentic AI capabilities rapidly in 2025, climbing from its current, nascent state to appearing platform-wide seemingly overnight. Additional fees that some vendors charge for GenAI features will evaporate only to be baked into higher platform subscription prices.

Willsky concludes: "With team collaboration platforms increasingly becoming saturated with GenAI in 2024, the stage is set for noteworthy developments in 2025." ■

Artificial intelligence has become a key driver of broadcasters' direct-to-consumer strategies

Damien Organ, VP, Product Marketing, Cleeng



Artificial intelligence (AI) is playing an increasingly central role in broadcasters' direct-to-consumer (D2C) strategies. This shift was evident at IBC 2024, where discussions underscored AI's evolution from a buzzword to an essential driver of innovation in media and entertainment. According to a recent Google Cloud study, nearly two-thirds of senior media and entertainment executives now see AI as a critical driver of future revenue growth. Yet, the question remains: How exactly does AI support revenue generation for broadcasters?

The Role of AI in Tackling Churn to

Protect Revenue

Churn remains one of the most significant threats to revenue growth in subscription-based models. Research conducted by Omdia uncovered that average industry churn rates range from 11% to 14% per month. This implies that many streaming platforms are churning nearly half of their subscriber base every six months. With three-quarters of industry leaders predicting churn will hold steady or even increase, the challenge at hand is evident.

AI steps in here by equipping

broadcasters with the tools to proactively address churn. By identifying at-risk subscribers and enabling timely, targeted interventions, AI becomes a powerful ally in retaining customers and protecting revenue. Let's explore how this works in practice.

Four Key AI Applications to Reduce Churn and Drive Revenue Growth

1. Proactively identifying and retaining at-risk subscribers: AI's predictive analytics capabilities are revolutionizing how broadcasters identify subscribers at risk of churning. By using machine

learning models to analyze patterns in viewing habits, customer interactions, and tenure, AI systems can highlight subscribers likely to cancel—and even pinpoint underlying reasons. This data can inspire proactive engagement strategies, offering an opportunity to retain subscribers before they leave.

Once an at-risk subscriber is identified, AI-driven tools can help broadcasters tailor interventions to different segments based on those subscribers' unique profiles. This may include special offers, relevant content recommendations or engagement prompts. With this approach, broadcasters can get better positioned to retain high-value subscribers, thereby protecting at-risk revenue.

2. Delivering personalized, targeted responses to drive loyalty: Timely, relevant outreach is critical for effective retention. AI-driven campaigns empower broadcasters to connect with audiences through personalized messaging, offers, and reminders based on a subscriber's history and engagement. This precise targeting is essential for building loyalty in today's hypercompetitive market.

By identifying at-risk subscribers and enabling timely, targeted interventions, AI becomes a powerful ally in retaining customers and protecting revenue."

AI-powered content recommendations based on individual viewing histories, for example, can help deepen engagement and build excitement for future offerings. In fact, nearly 50% of streamers report appreciating AI-curated recommendations, according to a Media Play News survey, underscoring how valuable these personalized suggestions are for retention.

Beyond content, AI can support dynamic, flexible pricing strategies. By analyzing regional preferences, user activity, or behavioral data, AI can enable broadcasters to offer personalized pricing options, such as discounts,

upgrades, or subscription adjustments. These models can allow broadcasters to meet subscribers' needs more precisely, reducing the likelihood of cancellation.

Another application: AI-driven in-app notifications can further enhance engagement by nudging subscribers to explore new content or remind them of upcoming events they may enjoy. Predictive analytics can also anticipate payment behaviors, allowing for timely payment reminders or alternative options to reduce involuntary churn. These tailored interactions can help build a subscriber experience that meets users where they are and strengthens retention efforts.

3. Enhancing marketing performance with data-driven insights: AI's capabilities aren't just restricted to predicting churn and enabling action; It can also enhance the overall effectiveness of marketing efforts. By analyzing subscriber responses in real time, AI can allow broadcasters to continuously refine their retention strategies.

For instance, AI can identify which types of campaigns perform best, what drives engagement and which subscriber segments are at highest risk. This data can equip broadcasters to adjust tactics based on proven insights rather than on guesswork. Over time, these adaptations can make marketing efforts more effective and efficient, directly impacting subscriber loyalty and revenue.

Additionally, AI can even simplify the process of gathering insights. Using AI tools, broadcasters can quickly obtain answers to key questions about subscriber behavior, churn drivers, and revenue trends from vast datasets without extensive manual analysis. This can enable faster, data-driven decision-making and reduce the dependency on large analytics teams, streamlining operations and costs.

4. Delivering an outstanding subscriber experience to combat churn: Customer experience is a critical factor in retaining

subscribers. A seamless streaming experience directly correlates with satisfaction and, ultimately, subscriber loyalty. AI has a pivotal role here as well by continuously monitoring and optimizing the quality of experience (QoE). AI tools can detect network issues or buffering risks early, preventing disruptions that can lead to subscriber dissatisfaction.

AI can also strengthen customer support by addressing common inefficiencies associated with traditional support mechanisms, such as long response times and impersonal interactions. AI-powered chatbots, for example, can handle a wide range of subscriber queries, improving first-contact resolution rates and freeing human agents to focus on more complex issues.

Over time, these chatbots learn from interactions, enhancing their effectiveness and personalization capabilities. In cases requiring human intervention, AI can support agents with data-driven insights, enabling them to provide faster, more personalized assistance. This combination of automation and intelligent support can enhance the subscriber experience, reduce frustration, and contribute to lower churn rates.

Bottom Line: Now Is the Time To Invest in AI for Sustained Growth

As we look ahead, AI has transitioned from a "nice-to-have" to a business imperative in the direct-to-consumer streaming landscape. The competitive environment demands solutions that not only attract new subscribers but also retain existing ones. By leveraging AI, broadcasters can take meaningful steps to mitigate churn, optimize marketing efforts, and elevate the subscriber experience. AI offers a clear path to safeguarding and growing revenue through strategic, data-driven approaches to customer engagement, retention, and satisfaction. Truly, the time to act is now. ■

MBRF concludes exceptional year of achievements in knowledge dissemination and innovation

The Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation (MBRF) marked a year of significant progress and remarkable achievements in 2024, solidifying its position as a leading entity in the field of knowledge dissemination and innovation.

During the previous year, MBRF successfully launched a number of innovative initiatives and projects and organized various enriching events. These efforts have substantially contributed to the dissemination of knowledge locally, regionally, and internationally, aligning with its mission to develop sustainable knowledge societies that thrive on scientific and technological advancements. By pioneering these initiatives and efforts, MBRF continues its journey in knowledge leadership, embodying the vision of the wise leadership to enhance the UAE's position as a global hub for knowledge and innovation.

His Excellency Jamal bin Huwairib, CEO of MBRF, said: "Reflecting on the previous year, we are proud of the remarkable feats and milestones achieved and the robust alliances we forged with global knowledge entities. These accomplishments demonstrate our steadfast dedication to enhancing knowledge, innovation, and learning. We aim to support communities, inspire young people, and foster a culture of innovation, in line with our goals to establish the concepts of innovation and knowledge-based entrepreneurship. By doing so, we strive to achieve the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to position Dubai as a leading global scientific and intellectual hub with a strong knowledge-based economy." H.E. reaffirmed MBRF's commitment to continuing its journey as a leading entity in fostering knowledge pathways and advancing sustainable development.

Projects and Achievements

The ninth edition of the Knowledge Summit, one of the most prominent knowledge events, was held on November 18 and 19, 2024, marking one of the major milestones for MBRF last year. The summit convened over 100 esteemed global figures and prominent academics in fields such as AI, technology, economics, education, environment, and other vital sectors. Insightful discussions on critical topics shaping the future were held during the summit. Over 40 panel discussions and other valuable, inspiring knowledge events were also organized, which addressed future skills and modern technologies, particularly AI. With over 3,000 visitors and an online reach exceeding 22,000 through its websites and social media platforms, the Knowledge Summit proved to be a resounding success.

A significant highlight of the summit was the hosting of the 3rd UNESCO World OER Congress on the sidelines of the Knowledge Summit. The congress, organized by UNESCO, was held for the first time in the Arab region.

Furthermore, MBRF honored the esteemed recipients of the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Award for 2024, recognizing their invaluable contributions to the advancement of knowledge, education, and scientific research. A dedicated dialogue session at the summit served as a platform for these winners to share their inspiring journeys and insights with the audience.

Building upon the resounding success of the 'Future Skills for All' initiative, the Knowledge Summit 2024, hosted the inaugural meeting of the "Global Alliance for Skills Development". This event brought together prominent figures and stakeholders to unite efforts in empowering young people with advanced skills and

cultivating strong leadership qualities. This initiative has now entered a new phase with the launch of the 'Future Skills Academy,' a joint venture by MBRF, UNDP, and the global educational platform 'Coursera,' aiming to provide free access to quality education and training opportunities for 10 million learners by 2030.

In 2024, MBRF also embarked on a significant project – 'Documenting the Legacy of Sheikh Rashid' – to commemorate the 34th anniversary of the passing of Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum. The project seeks to preserve and share the late ruler's rich legacy and the profound impact of his vision and leadership. It will serve as a valuable resource and archive for future generations, highlighting the authentic qualities, values, and principles that have shaped the remarkable journey of Dubai and the UAE.

Enhancing Presence

MBRF successfully hosted the second edition of the 'Youth Knowledge Forum' (YKF) in Egypt last year, with the primary objective of inspiring and motivating knowledge workers to drive innovation and contribute to societal progress.

The 'Digital Knowledge Hub' (DKH), MBRF's flagship Arabic knowledge platform, continues to expand its vast repository of digital and intellectual knowledge content. With a collection exceeding 800,000 titles divided into 8,500,000 digital items, the DKH remains at the forefront of accessible knowledge in the Arab world. Additionally, the DKH constantly updates its accessibility mechanisms through its three digital portals and more than 18 specialized digital libraries, employing smart mechanisms to analyze users' knowledge preferences. These tools are considered crucial for guiding the authorship and publishing processes in the Arab world.

Under the Dubai International Program for Writing (DIPW), MBRF conducted several intellectual workshops and events. This includes the 'Writing Children's Stories Workshop,' 'Book Criticism Workshop,' 'Scientific Translation Workshop,' 'Workshop on Creating Illustrations for Children's Stories,' and 'Novel Writing Workshop in Jordan'.

DIPW organized a number of events as part of MBRF's participation in both local and international book fairs, including the Sharjah International Book Fair, Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, Cairo International Book Fair, London Book Fair, Frankfurt Book Fair, and various other events where DIPW members actively participated. One of the DIPW's primary outcomes is the

production of a series of valuable children's and scientific books, totaling more than 15 publications. Through the MBRF platform, these novels have been extensively reviewed and discussed both virtually and in-person. Furthermore, the MBRF participated in 'GITEX Global 2024,' the Kuwait Fair, and the 'Riyadh International Book Fair'.

MBRF additionally arranged over 40 knowledge events and panel sessions as part of the 'Knowledge Lounge' initiative. These sessions witnessed the participation of renowned figures in the knowledge and publishing fields, discussing a wide range of topics and highlighting the numerous prominent books that have garnered widespread readership.

The 12th edition of the 'Bil Arabi' initiative marked the conclusion of MBRF's initiatives in 2024. The objective of this initiative is to foster the use of the Arabic language in day-to-day interactions. Most recently, the initiative received the 'King Salman Global Academy Award for Arabic Language' in its third edition, recognizing its remarkable achievements in supporting and enriching the Arabic language. The campaign garnered widespread engagement from the public, featuring a variety of events and activities celebrating the Arabic language across major shopping centers in the UAE. Additionally, the hashtag #bilarabi saw significant traction on social media. The campaign also extended its reach internationally, with events organized in Bahrain, Egypt, the UK, Kazakhstan, and Pakistan. ■

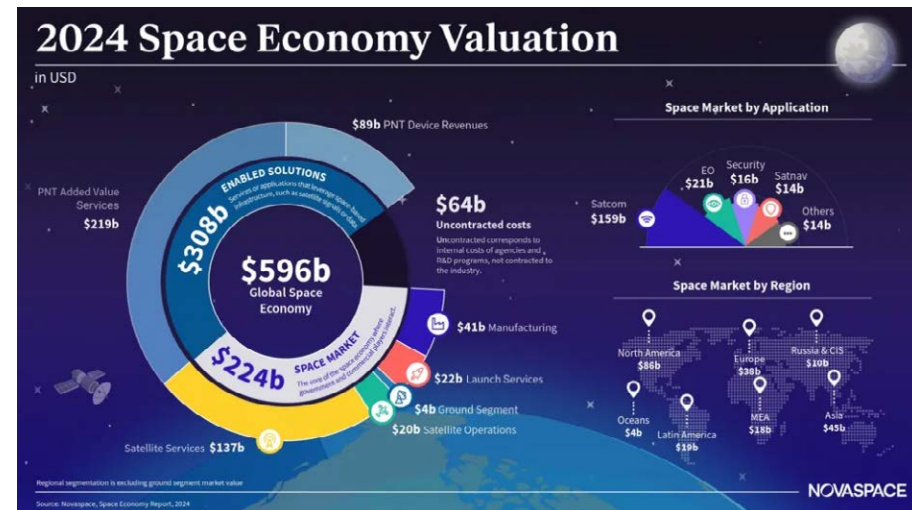
The space economy to reach US \$944 billion by 2033: Novaspacereport

Novaspacereport has released the 11th Edition of its Space Economy Report, forecasting the global space economy to grow from \$596 billion in 2024 to \$944 billion by 2033. This steady growth, driven primarily by advancements in downstream solutions, marking a pivotal decade for the industry.

The report emphasizes the essential role of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and cloud computing in downstream applications. These innovations are enhancing data collection and processing capabilities, fostering convergence with the digital economy, and creating new opportunities for commercial adoption.

Downstream Solutions Lead Industry Expansion

"Downstream applications are the main driver behind the projected \$348 billion growth over the next decade, notes Lucas Pleny, Novaspacereport Senior Consultant and report lead author. "Satellite-enabled services, such as navigation, Earth observation, and communications, are becoming increasingly integral across diverse industries, including agriculture, logistics, and urban planning."



While downstream activities play a central role, upstream sectors face persistent challenges. Inflation, supply chain disruptions, and material shortages are reshaping traditional ecosystems, prompting industry consolidation and increased competition from vertically integrated players.

A Transformative Decade for the Space Industry

As the space economy approaches a trillion-dollar valuation, it is positioned at the intersection of technological innovation and

market disruption. Emerging business models, such as Direct-to-Device services and in-orbit economies, hold promise for the industry's future. However, their success will depend on early mission performance and commercial viability.

Government investment remains a key factor in driving growth, with global military space budgets exceeding \$64 billion. Defense spending continues to outpace civilian expenditures, underscoring the strategic importance of space in national security and international competitiveness. ■



CXG, a consulting and solutions firm dedicated to enhancing luxury brand performance through innovative customer and employee experience strategies, has unveiled a comprehensive new report offering an in-depth analysis of AI's impact on the luxury retail industry.

Emphasising the technology's transformative effect on forecasting, sustainability, and personalisation, "The Age of Artificial Intelligence: Part 2" explores how AI leverages unprecedented data processing to enhance the accuracy of predictive modelling and brand strategy, particularly within the thriving luxury market of the GCC.

GCC: An Innovative Global Player in Luxury

As a rapidly evolving hub for global premium retail, the findings of this report are particularly pertinent to the GCC. It underscores the vital role of new technologies in maintaining a competitive edge and highlights the importance of adopting these pioneering tools for the benefit of all stakeholders.

"AI is no longer a concept for the future but a present-day necessity for those looking to thrive in the dynamic luxury markets of the GCC," explains Christophe Cais, Founder and CEO of CXG. "From predicting emerging trends to minimising environmental footprints, AI

empowers brands to innovate, adapt, and lead in an era of transformation."

Aligned with strategic initiatives such as Saudi Vision 2030 and the UAE Strategy for Artificial Intelligence, the GCC's adoption of AI-powered practices to reduce waste and improve profitability will be a core factor in the future success of both individual brands and the market as a whole. AI will play a critical role in positioning the GCC on the international stage, with its data-driven insights enabling brands to target niche regional audiences through micro-trend forecasting.

Key Findings: AI's Industry-Shaping Influence

The report highlights several groundbreaking insights into AI's impact on forecasting, sustainability, targeting, and resale within the premium retail industry.

• **Trend Forecasting:** AI-driven predictive models can analyse vast datasets from sources such as social media to anticipate emerging trends. This allows algorithms to accurately preempt developments, including new styles and fashion cycles. AI processes can be customised to focus on the unique blend of local and global tastes that define the GCC market, identifying new opportunities much earlier than ever before.

• **Sustainability and Efficiency:** By generating more reliable assessments of product demand, broken down by time, location, and demographic, GCC brands can significantly reduce the potential for waste in both physical and financial forms. Accurate projections optimise inventory management and supply chains, driving increased efficiency and enabling the region's brands to meet sustainability goals.

• **Consumer Targeting:** AI insights provide businesses with a deeper understanding of demand and market nuances. By analysing the influences and motivations that drive action in the retail environment, brands in the GCC can tailor marketing strategies, in-store experiences, and customer touchpoints to enhance the success and profitability of their offerings.

• **Luxury Resale:** AI unlocks new opportunities in the resale market by combining the abilities to predict trends, improve efficiencies, and refine targeting. By applying data sets to diverse demographics, AI goes beyond forecasting for primary markets, also considering the potential of secondary markets. This includes improving results by selecting the most effective channels, locations, messaging, and timing for each product.

"As the GCC luxury market continues to evolve, AI presents an unparalleled opportunity to blend the artistry of traditional design with the efficiencies made possible by one of the most groundbreaking innovations of our time," added Christophe Cais. "By integrating AI into their strategies, brands can not only exceed the region's high standards and drive greater economic returns but also set new benchmarks in sustainability and responsible operations."

Unlocking the Future of the GCC

With the GCC's luxury market experiencing rapid growth, CXG's latest report offers a strategic roadmap for brands to harness the full potential of AI. By adopting AI-powered solutions, businesses can solidify their position in the global landscape while addressing the region's unique challenges and opportunities. ■

Aleph Alpha announces launch of a pioneering new tokenizer-free (T-Free) architecture innovation for next-generation sovereign LLMs and a new powerful collaboration with AMD and Schwarz Digits

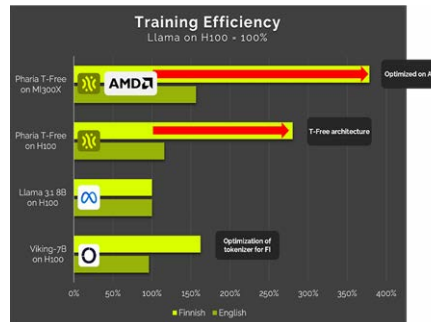
Aleph Alpha, an AI technology solutions provider headquartered in Germany, has announced a new architecture innovation for LLMs to address one of the most critical challenges in AI.

Teaching today's popular closed- or open-source LLMs new languages or unique industry knowledge (often crucial for enterprises and governments) tends to produce underwhelming results and fine-tuning often proves ineffective. A key reason for this is that the patterns these LLMs learn are based on the tokenized version of the text they were trained on. If new text differs considerably from the original training data, it cannot be efficiently tokenized.

"Our tokenizer-free model architecture is a key solution to tackle a major challenge in AI: fine-tuning and creating sovereign models for diverse alphabets, low- resource languages and highly specific industry needs – areas where customization efforts have fallen short so far. Paired with the groundbreaking efficiency of the latest AMD AI technology, this marks a transformative leap, unlocking strategic opportunities previously out of reach," says Jonas Andrusis, Founder & CEO, Aleph Alpha.

Aleph Alpha's new LLM architecture does not require a tokenizer, extending LLM capabilities beyond the original training data. This approach solves a key problem of current Language Model Architectures, which most commonly can only be trained efficiently on data that uses similar tokens to their original training data. Fine-tuning current models on out-of-distribution data requires very large data sets (often not available for less common languages) and massive amounts of compute, resulting in a model with inferencing costs and an environmental footprint at an unsustainable level.

This groundbreaking development is set



to lay the foundation for a new generation of sovereign AI solutions that enable governments and enterprises to build their own sovereign GenAI solutions based on their native languages, cultural specifications, and specialized knowledge and terminology. Consequently, this will democratize access to this technology and promote economic and cultural plurality.

"I founded Aleph Alpha with the mission to empower the sovereignty of countries and companies around the world in the era of AI. For our customers, this means open-source integration, maximal transparency and trustworthiness for a new era of human-machine collaboration, future-proof transformative AI solutions and free choice of execution environment," says Jonas Andrusis, Founder & CEO, Aleph Alpha.

By combining Aleph Alpha's cutting-edge GenAI technology with the performance and efficiency of AMD Instinct™ MI300 Series accelerators, and optimizations for the open AMD ROCm™ software stack, the company has achieved significant advancements in GenAI performance. Through leveraging the significant memory capacity of the AMD Instinct accelerators, this turnkey solution offers both performance and efficiency advantages, particularly for low-resource languages.

For example, using Finnish, this innovative AI architecture can deliver a 70 percent

reduction in training cost and carbon footprint compared to alternative options (see the figure below, which presents a comparison of single-node performance measurements between T-Free and state-of-the-art tokenizer-based models).

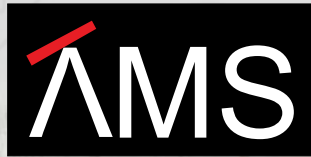
"This collaboration brings more than AI – it delivers resiliency and innovation to the European AI ecosystem," says Keith Strier, SVP, Global AI Markets, AMD. "We are thrilled to collaborate with Aleph Alpha and Schwarz Digits to boost Europe's native AI capabilities and create a new AI trifecta for governments: a hyper-transparent GenAI platform, developed and trained within Europe, delivering exceptional efficiency on our AMD AI infrastructure."

In addition to a high-performance compute platform based on AMD Instinct GPUs and the open AMD ROCm software stack, Aleph Alpha is also leveraging the AMD SiloAI team in Helsinki, which helped demonstrate the revolutionary multilingual capabilities of its new model architecture. This initiative is further strengthened by the data center and technical delivery capabilities of STACKIT, the sovereign cloud of Schwarz Digits, the IT and Digital Division of Schwarz Group, Europe's largest retailer with 575,000 employees, based in Germany.

Aleph Alpha's Pharia Operating System's AI capabilities, now optimized on AMD, create a full-stack sovereign offering that combines AI software and hardware. This will deliver significant benefits in terms of computing costs and environmental footprint. In addition to the new Pharia LLM generation of tokenizer-free foundation models pioneered by Aleph Alpha, PhariaAI incorporates several unique innovations that enable unprecedented levels of explainability, transparency, and efficiency, facilitating the rapid integration of trustworthy GenAI into industry and government operations. 🇩🇪

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03-06 March 2025 MWC GSMA Barcelona, Spain	13-15 May 2025 CABSAT Dubai, UAE	03-06 November 2025 GLOBAL MILSATCOM 2025 London, UK
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