

Telecom Industry News

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This month's telecom industry news included an array of innovation stories, from the first satellite deployment on a sportfishing yacht to a new app to block texting while driving. News of network expansion, planned 5G rollouts and efforts to bridge the 'digital divide' in various places around the globe also rolled in. Research on the growth of chatbot use, on the considerations of optimizing 5G for indoor environments, and security for mobile wallets also came in this month.



The top telecom industry news stories from the month are summarized below. To view all the news as it breaks, check out *Pipeline's* [News Center](#) or [subscribe](#) to receive our telecom industry news summary each week.

Innovation News

Together with partners VMWare and EANTC, [Broadband Forum](#) will launch the European Open Broadband Lab to accelerate network transformation and migration to a cloud-based broadband infrastructure. Vendor and CSP members will have access to this "sandbox" to validate multi-vendor interoperability of their virtualized solutions.

To advance global digital skills development, [Ericsson and UNESCO](#) have formed a new partnership for an education program—with a specific emphasis on AI skills—intended for today's youth. The program will include online courses as well as support for master trainers.

In another innovation partnership, though with a very different focus, [Microsoft and Facebook](#) have joined forces via the Co-Packaged Optics Collaboration under the Joint Development Foundation, to keep pace with evolving data center architecture and switch designs. The collaboration intends to provide open specifications for design elements, including the electrical signaling interface, optical standard, optical module management interface and reliability requirements. And [SABIC and hte](#) have signed an extension of their existing collaborative partnership, designed to maintain the operation of SABIC's satellite lab for high throughput experimentation in Germany, install a new lab in the Middle East, and support digitalization.

This month, the [Department of Homeland Security](#) showcased featured technology advancements and innovations, including the Information Sharing Assessment Tool (ISAT) for first responders, which allows the public safety community to pinpoint information-sharing capabilities and gaps in 20 minutes or under to improve communications for first responders.

This month's telecom industry news also featured the development of new products. A new tool for spectrum management makes wireless connectivity faster and more affordable, says a new report from [Dynamic Spectrum Alliance](#). The report finds that automated frequency coordination (AFC) systems are the key to unlocking unused spectrum capacity by automatically searching databases for which radio frequencies are available for wireless devices to use at a given location and time. [ADLINK Technology and Charles Industries](#) jointly demonstrated the telecom industry's first complete micro-edge low latency Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning/Deep Learning (AI/ML/DL) solution that can be co-located on LTE small cell poles or with emerging 5G radios. This solution is ideally suited for outdoor telecom use cases and can be deployed globally to enable carriers and communities to provide a wide range of new and advanced services.

In AI news, [Veritone](#) released its enhanced aiWARE™ 2.0, with new features and tools that make the platform easy to use for a variety of use cases—speeding enterprises' AI adoption. [Ziotis](#), which provides cross-domain hyperautomation services based on blockchain, robotics process automation, and AI, announced that it has completed a proof-of-concept for a top-tier Asia Pacific operator.

Musician and inventor Ric Steel has received a patent for [his new app](#), S.A.L.T./ Save A Life Texting. The app, which will be free to the public, connects texting to the GPS on a mobile phone to intercept texts when a vehicle is going more than three miles per hour. It generates an auto-response to texters letting them know the recipient is driving. The app was created in response to the rising rates of car accidents—and injuries and fatalities—attributed to texting. Nearly two-thirds of all vehicular accidents now involve cellphones.

Network Evolution News

New research from [Broadband Forum and Point Topic](#) reveals the markets and technologies driving continued rapid broadband growth and predicts global fixed broadband subscribers will grow to 1.2 billion by 2025.

Global communications service provider [Epsilon](#) has integrated with NL-ix, the pan-European Interconnect Exchange, to provide on-demand access to its IXP for expansion of peering points in Europe. In South Asia, [Vodafone Idea has chosen Nokia](#) in a next-generation LTE rollout deal to transform network integration in India. The deal will include the deployment of Massive MIMO technology, Nokia's Single RAN solution, and other best-in-class equipment and professional services.

In response to growing customer demand for more data capacity, Internet Exchange operator [DE-CIX](#) is scaling to offer 400-Gigabit Ethernet access technology—a world and industry first. The 400-GE upgrade is available now at DE-CIX Frankfurt, the Internet Exchange with the highest peak traffic in the world.

Stateside, [Windstream](#) will expand its Kinetic Internet to bring high-speed broadband access to 1,500 additional locations in Nebraska in continued efforts to span the digital divide. In Florida, [FMC GlobalSat](#) has deployed a Kymeta Satellite Antenna on a sportfishing yacht, delivering reliable and secure satellite and wireless network access and advancing on-the-water broadband access and real-time connectivity.

In other network evolution news, [Anritsu](#) has strengthened its MP1900A BER test functions with the introduction of four PAM4 BERT options, allowing engineers to more accurately and efficiently evaluate the bit error rate of 400GbE transceivers and devices—reducing development time and speeding time-to-market.

5G News

As commercial deployment of 5G draws ever closer, it's not surprising that 5G dominates headlines more each month. News of the road to 5G came in from around the globe.

[Vodafone](#) announced it will launch 5G in 19 towns and cities across the UK during 2019. Trial sites in Bristol, Cardiff, and Liverpool are live as of early this month and are streaming 5G mobile data traffic to and from the Internet using the latest compatible routers. [Ericsson](#) has been selected by Danish service provider TDC to advance a 'Digital Denmark' through roll-out of nationwide commercial 5G in 2020, as part of a major network overhaul. In news of another 5G deal, [Ericsson](#) has been selected by Korea's KT for 5G commercial services, targeted for a nationwide launch in April.

In key domestic news, [U.S. Cellular has selected Ericsson](#) for its network modernization from LTE to 5G under a new multiyear contract for 3GPP standards-based 5G NR hardware and software. It has also expanded upon its relationship with [Nokia](#) on 5G trial activities with a new multiyear 5G

network modernization deal. Under the terms of the deal, Nokia will provide end-to-end 5G technology, software and services to enable U.S. Cellular to offer 5G services and solutions to new and existing customers. This month, [Sprint](#) announced an expansion of its MVNO partnership with Google to include 5G for Google Fi customers.

In related 5G telecom industry news, a new whitepaper from [Ranplan Wireless](#) highlights the challenges of 5G deployment across indoor and dense urban environments, emphasizing how operators must find solutions to plan and optimize new 5G networks as higher frequencies are ineffective at penetrating physical walls and structures.

IoT News

IoT news to advance digital transformation featured [Kerlink and IoT America](#), who are collaborating to enable IoT networks for agriculture and towns across the rural US, contributing to their advancement and to help them cross the digital divide.

To enrich the capabilities of its Curiosity IoT platform, [Sprint is working with Amazon Web Services](#)—AWS storage and IoT services will now be integrated with Sprint's core network.

Cloud News

Over in the Middle East, [Nokia and Telecom Egypt](#) have signed a MoU to commercially launch IoT services in 2019, based on the Nokia WING platform—the first cloud infrastructure in Egypt exclusively for IoT.

In more global news, [IX Reach](#) has launched a newly upgraded and improved SDN platform. Called One Portal, it offers direct, on-demand SDN Cloud connectivity into Amazon AWS, Google Cloud Platform, and Microsoft Azure. All of IX Reach's 170+ points of presence (PoPs) across North America, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and more recently Africa, are enabled on the new platform. Aligned Energy has launched [Aligned Access](#), its software-defined, carrier-neutral connectivity solution to leading cloud service providers, data centers and network service providers.

CX and Consumer Insights News

Standards and specification updates were industry news this month, too. To standardize and advance Wi-Fi network quality, [Broadband Forum](#) has released the industry's first Wi-Fi performance standard, defining carrier-class premium experience across six dimensions: receiver sensitivity, throughput, coverage, multi-user support, anti-interference, and stability. In related news, [the CBRS Alliance](#), an industry organization focused on driving the development, commercialization, and adoption of OnGo shared spectrum solutions, has started work on new specifications that will support OnGo over 6G.

Of course, consumer insights updates bubbled up, too. Among them were new findings from [Juniper Research](#) on the operational cost savings of using chatbots in banking, which it predicts will reach \$7.3 billion by 2023. Chatbots' ability to resolve customer questions with automated resources—or escalate to an agent when necessary—is part of the broader trend of AI-driven CX. Another new [Juniper Research](#) study predicts consumer retail spend to grow by 25 percent by 2023, hitting \$30 trillion—growth fueled by online alternative payments, largely wallets. The study includes strategies for payment providers to consider that reduce friction at checkout and to safeguard security.

In other telecom industry consumer news, the [FCC](#) issued a \$2.32 million fine against Long Distance Consolidated Billing Company for deceptive marketing practices—slamming and cramming—against small business consumers.

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