

Telecom Industry News

By: Scott St. John

Recent weeks brought a cornucopia of telecom industry news, from innovation awards to new collaborations to advance network development and evolution across the globe. The FCC was in the mix, with reforms intended to help boost accessibility to high-speed broadband as well as with 'bold strategies' to crack down on the scourge of robocalls. Updates on 5G included planned switch-on dates for networks in the UK as well as 5G roaming in certain European countries.



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

Industry awards for innovation made headlines this month. [CloudSmartz](#) received two 2019 Pipeline Innovation Awards for Most Innovative Technology Provider and Innovations in Data Aggregation, awarded at the annual awards banquet in Nice, France, in late May. The annual awards provide industry-wide recognition of technical innovation, and this year's competition featured over 250 selected nominees. Also this month, [Sprint Curiosity™ IoT](#) announced it had won the 2019 Leading Light Award from Light Reading for the Most Innovative M2M/IoT Strategy. Ericsson, which provides the IoT network infrastructure, was also recognized. The award was given at the annual Big 5G Event in Denver, Colorado.

In partnership news, [Microsoft and the Mid-Atlantic Broadband Communities Corp](#) will work together to build the SOVA Innovation Hub in southern Virginia to foster innovation and economic opportunity in the region. [Sigma Systems](#), a leading provider of catalog-driven software, and Tech Mahindra, a provider of digital transformation consulting and business re-engineering services and solutions, announced the launch of a connected car service subscription management platform. The solution has been selected and will be an integral part of a global automobile manufacturer's connected car services program, paving the way for emerging on-board digital and IoT-based applications. In Asia, [SK Telecom and Microsoft](#) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for comprehensive global cooperation in cutting-edge ICT, including 5G, AI and cloud to jointly promote IoT business, media and entertainment services, and new ways of working.

New US patents were awarded this month. British company [Noetica](#) has been awarded a US Patent for Live Person Detection in an Automated Calling System. The AI-driven innovation allows call centers to detect answering machines or live callers, thereby increasing efficiency in making outbound calls. [Unified Office](#), a managed services provider offering reliable hybrid cloud-based business communications services, IoT services, and data analytics, received its second US patent for its Highest Quality Routing Protocol™ Transmission Network. Unified Office's HQR™ eliminates the need for costly dedicated T1 access lines, MPLS tunnels and other expensive legacy techniques that are typically used to try to create quality and reliability.

Network Evolution News

The Federal Communications Commission had an active month, with incentives, updates, reallocations, and proposed crackdowns. [Recent FCC reforms](#) to the Universal Service Fund will result in improvements in accessibility to high-speed broadband in 43 states, affecting 106,000 rural homes and businesses. FCC Chairman Ajit Pai called these reforms “yet another example of how the FCC is working hard to close the digital divide.” Taking further steps to modernize its Universal Support Program for Rural Broadband, the [FCC](#) also introduced incentives and subsidies to 516 rural “rate-of-return” companies in 46 states to advance faster broadband deployment over the next decade. The effect could be to bring faster speeds to over a million rural homes and businesses, helping to span the digital divide. The [FCC](#) has proposed reallocating spectrum in the 1675-1680 MHz band for shared use. The band is currently used for weather forecasting services and the proposed reallocation would allow new, non-federal flexible-use wireless operators to use the spectrum. In other agency-related announcements, the [FCC chairman](#) has proposed bold strategies, including call blocking by default, to help protect consumers from the scourge of unwanted robocalls. Providers that offer consumers network-wide call-blocking tools based on analytics and contact lists to block calls that fail caller authenticity would earn ‘safe harbor.’

Elsewhere in the US, [United Fiber & Data](#) has completed a fiber-optic network connecting New York City to Ashburn, Virginia, a region known as “Data Center Alley.” The high-capacity, low latency path provides much-needed redundancy along this critical corridor for data transit.

In network innovation news, [CloudSmartz and Seaborn Networks](#) are redefining how network capacity can be purchased with a completely automated portal that allows for a one-stop shopping experience along with real-time clarity into service delivery functions. CloudSmartz will enable Seaborn’s digital transformation strategy and deployment over the coming months and together the companies will offer an end-to-end automation platform enabling services to be delivered by SDN technology.

Global network evolution news came in from Canada, Europe, and Asia. To our north, [MobileEdgeX and TELUS](#) will work together to trial Canada’s first mobile edge network, which will enable next-generation technology and experiences, including Industry 4.0, real-time multiplayer gaming and AR. In Frankfurt, [DE-CIX](#) and data center operator maincubes have entered into a collaboration designed to create a new “DE-CIX Enabled Site,” boosting redundancy and strengthening DE-CIX’s position as the largest Internet Exchange in the world. And [Riedel Communications](#) supplied a comprehensive integrated communications infrastructure for May’s Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi, spanning more than 30 venues and locations and including managed IT network services.

5G News

This month, 5G industry news included technical breakthroughs and highly anticipated ‘switch-on’ dates.

[Sprint](#) launched mobile 5G in Houston, Atlanta, Dallas-Ft. Worth and Kansas City, with service expected to launch in areas of Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City, Phoenix, and Washington, DC in the coming weeks. Once all nine markets go live, Sprint mobile 5G will cover nearly 2,200 square miles and serve 11.5 million people total, giving it the largest initial 5G coverage footprint in the US.

[Ericsson and Deutsche Telekom](#) achieved a technical breakthrough with the landmark transmission rate of 100 Gbps in a trial microwave link over 1.5km at DT’s Service Center in Athens.

[Vodafone](#) has announced it will switch on its 5G network for consumers and business customers in seven cities across the UK on July 3, with 12 other cities to go live by the end of 2019. Vodafone will also offer 5G roaming in the UK, Germany, Italy and Spain over the summer. Four 5G smartphones and a 5G home router will debut soon. Vodafone is the first to announce a set switch-on date. In other 5G-related news, [Vodafone and ESL](#) launched the world’s first international 5G mobile Esports tournament this month. Slated to run until September 29, 2019, the tournament is

open to players from 17 countries where Vodafone is present. The competition features two popular online mobile games: arcade racer Asphalt 9: Legends; and multiplayer battle royale title, PUBG MOBILE.

[HUBER+SUHNER](#) introduced its outdoor MIMO antennas, intended for use within existing city infrastructure such as street fixtures to provide increased capacity and coverage for 4G and 5G deployments. The SENCITY urban antenna are the first of their kind, and they give operators cost-effective options for new cellular sites in urban areas with limited available space for installation.

Cloud News

This month, [Bluebird Network](#) announced its partnership with Megaport Limited, a global leading Network as a Service (NaaS) provider, to enable private access to cloud providers such as AWS, Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud, Oracle Cloud, Alibaba Cloud, IBM Cloud, Nutanix, and Salesforce.

Industry analyst firm Ovum has released new research predicting public cloud usage by CSPs to double in 2019. Touting the report, [Optiva](#) led a summit on cloud migration at this month's TM Forum Digital Transformation World emphasizing OSS/BSS savings of up to 80 percent for those telcos that have migrated to the cloud.

Customer Experience News

[Calix](#) announced enhancements to its AXOS platform that continue to simplify operational infrastructure, capabilities, and processes for CSPs—driving toward the elimination of up to 75 percent of process steps to help advance focus on customer experience.

Satellite News

[Telenor Satellite](#) has selected Newtec Technology to meet growing demand for bandwidth. Newtec's Dialog® platform will enable Telenor to deliver more scalable services for cruise liners, ferries and offshore support vessels.

[FMC GlobalSat and LeoSat](#) have entered into an agreement to deliver faster, more reliable connectivity globally via secure and highly efficient satellite connectivity for maritime, energy, and in-transit use cases. [FMC GlobalSat and AT&T](#) have signed an operating agreement in which the former will provide AT&T's enterprise customers 4G LTE wireless connectivity to help drive next-generation IoT and transportation applications through converged wireless services and satellite connectivity.

[Gilat Satellite Networks and Telesat](#) conducted the first-ever successful demo of 5G connectivity over low-earth orbit (LEO) satellite—a breakthrough that has ramifications for 5G use beyond major metropolitan areas. The demonstration included video chatting, web browsing and simultaneous streaming of up to 8K video, as well as the transfer of 4K video to the edge of the 5G network. Honeywell has chosen [Gilat's Aero Modem](#) for its JetWave Satellite Communication Solution. The aero-modem integration enabling in-flight communication will be deployed first in China on domestic and international flights, with plans for expansion to additional regions around the globe.

Security News

[Orange](#) has signed an agreement to acquire 100% of SecureLink in a €515m Enterprise Value deal. The acquisition of SecureLink, one of Europe's largest cybersecurity service providers, strengthens Orange's position as a cybersecurity leader.

[Bittium](#) launched the new ultra-secure Bittium Tough Mobile™ 2 smartphone this month. The phone has a multilayered security structure to ensure that the data stored in the device and during transfer are highly protected. The unique information security

built within the smartphone includes several encryption-, authentication- and key management-related features, boot and runtime security checks, and a tamper-proof information security platform as well as a privacy mode.

IoT News

In recognition of its ongoing efforts to accelerate mass adoption of the Internet of Things through standardization, [oneM2M](#)—the global standards body for IoT—has won Top IoT Standards Body of the Year, awarded at the seventh Annual Compass Intelligence Awards.

New findings by [Juniper Research](#) note that smart city traffic technology solutions intended to ease chronic congestion will generate \$4.4 billion in revenue by 2023, up from \$2 billion in 2019. Such solutions use sensors in combination with machine learning software algorithms to dynamically alter traffic light phasing in response to urban traffic levels.

In IoT collaboration news, [Nokia has joined ConectarAGRO](#), an initiative of eight agribusiness and high technology companies, to improve connectivity issues, spur the use of precision agriculture technologies by Brazilian farmers, and advance access for over 500,000 people to IoT and Agriculture 4.0 technologies. Nokia will provide microwave, satellite, 4G products and services and work in close cooperation with Brazilian network operator TIM.

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