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Volume 17, Issue 5

IT & Telecom Industry News

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A year into the pandemic, we're gaining perspective on how the rapid shift to remote work, school and communications has changed demand for networks and connectivity. We heard this month from OpenVault on increased broadband usage and from Juniper Research on the boom in video calling during the time of COVID-19. We also heard from the Federal Communications Commission and its new acting chairwoman on how the US agency is stepping up expanded emergency access to keep households, schools and businesses connected during this time. This month's news also included a bounty of headlines on innovation in IoT, strategic partnerships, and advancements in smart cars and vehicle connectivity.



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.

Customer Experience News

In customer experience news, [Windstream Enterprise and Google](#) are partnering to deliver intelligent CX. Windstream has enhanced its XCaaS service to include Mitel's Virtual Agent and Agent Assist solutions powered by Google Cloud Contact Center AI (CCAI). [Windstream](#) has also fortified its WE Connect portal with CX enhancements for customers and channel partners.

BT shared news that lies at the nexus of CX and network transformation. Engineers and IT experts from [BT](#) have played a vital role in helping the NHS deliver the biggest vaccination program in its

history, by bringing high-speed fiber and Wi-Fi connectivity to more than 110 vaccination centers across England and Wales.

Network Evolution News

Network evolution news included a new report from [OpenVault](#) on increased broadband use during the time of COVID-19. Traffic on broadband networks rose by more than half and average broadband usage approached one-half a terabyte at the end of 2020, according to the Q4 2020 OVBI (OpenVault Broadband Insights) report issued by OpenVault. In a complement to these findings, [Juniper Research](#) released a new study on the video-calling boom. The number of mobile video-calling services reached 1.8 billion globally in 2020, rising from 1.2 billion in 2019. This represents a growth of 50 percent over 12 months as the need rose for remote communication services.

In the US, the [Federal Communications Commission](#) is working to expand the newly established emergency broadband program for struggling households. It is also advancing the next phase of the COVID-19 Telehealth Program and the Commission's efforts to collect more precise and granular broadband availability data.

[FirstNet and AT&T](#) are working in partnership to expand the United States' public safety network, which now covers more than 2.71 million square miles and includes new capabilities for first responders and the communities they serve, including urban, rural and tribal lands.

[Impact and RouteTrust](#) announced the successful rollout of an automated API for toll-free services. This will allow carrier customers to acquire, provision, and modify toll-free numbers on the network without requiring human intervention.

5G News

In 5G news, [Telekom](#) has set up Germany's first 5G standalone antenna site near Munich, the first in Germany with this technology. Elsewhere in Europe, network access solutions specialist [Ekinops](#) has successfully completed its first 5G business connectivity tests with Orange Business Services in the Orange Labs environment in France.

Collaborations also made 5G news. [T-Systems and Ericsson](#) have combined their expertise to offer a fully integrated set of campus network solutions, which the two companies will make available to partners worldwide. With the Georgia Institute of Technology, [T-Mobile](#) and Curiosity Lab at Peachtree Corners announced the creation of the 5G Connected Future incubator program. The incubator is designed to support the growth and development of entrepreneurs and startups as they work to build the next big thing in 5G.

In other 5G news, [Gilat Satellite Networks](#) announced the launch of its next-generation family of VSATs, Aquarius, supporting 5G networks and LEO/MEO constellations. The ultra-high-

performance, multi-orbit VSATs provide over 2 Gigabits per second of concurrent speeds and support seamless satellite handover.

Innovation and Transformation News

Innovation and transformation news included announcements on new and existing partnerships to advance how we work and connect. [Google Cloud and TELUS](#) announced a strategic alliance to co-innovate on new services and solutions that support digital transformation within key industries, including communications technology, healthcare, agriculture, security, and connected home. Google Cloud and [Tata Communications](#) will work together to drive cloud adoption and transform Indian businesses.

In Asia, [Japan and Cisco](#) announced a collaboration framework through Cisco's Country Digital Acceleration Program to drive mass-scale digitization across Japan in support of its Society 5.0 vision and towards an inclusive recovery from the global COVID-19 pandemic.

[Nokia and Elisa](#) will partner in a joint go-to-market alliance to drive industrial-grade private mobile network deployment. The collaboration will strive for market leadership in the fast-growing Finnish business marketplace.

[Microsoft](#) and a group of technology and media companies have partnered to form the Coalition for Content Provenance and Authenticity (C2PA), a Joint Development Foundation project established to address disinformation, misinformation and online content fraud through developing technical standards for certifying the source and history of media content.

In startup news, [Wayra](#), Telefonica's open innovation hub, and Zone2boost, the international initiative from CaixaBank, Global Payments, Worldline and Visa, are joining forces to strengthen their commitment to innovation and collaboration with new business ventures.

Security News

In security news, Telefonica's startup [Wayra](#) has created Shaadow. Shaadow relies on a technology patented by ElevenPaths, Telefonica Tech's cybersecurity company, which generates invisible watermarks on documents. [Accurics](#) unveiled its latest cloud cyber resilience report, which highlights security risks identified in cloud native environments.

IoT and Connectivity News

This month's IoT news brought convergences in the advancements of smart vehicles and transit networks.

A new study from [Juniper Research](#) predicts the smart car market to grow to 287 million by 2025. The research found that the total number of vehicles with intelligent cockpits will reach rise from the current level of 122 million in 2021.

The growing demand for smart cars made headlines, but so did advancements and acquisitions related to changing how vehicles move. [Vodafone](#) has successfully used new precision positioning technology to remotely track a vehicle to within just 10 centimeters of its location, an improvement over the current standard satellite-based systems. [Verizon](#) announced it has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire incubed IT, the creator of a software platform providing autonomous navigation tools to administer, manage and optimize mixed fleets of robots in industrial settings. ADVA announced that [Colt Technology Services](#) has successfully conducted a field trial of quantum-secured transport using its FSP 3000 platform with ConnectGuard Layer 1 encryption technology.

In other vehicle-related news, this month [Bittium](#) joined the global GENIVI Alliance. The goal of the GENIVI Alliance is to develop standard approaches to compatibility, integration, and connectivity of different operating systems to improve time to market and cost-efficiency in the development of vehicles.

In other IoT news, TELUS has launched [TELUS Global Connect](#), enabling customers to customize and manage IoT device connectivity on cellular networks around the globe.

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