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## Outpacing Change in Cellular Connectivity

By: [Bruce Lancaster](#)

The rapid expansion of available spectrum and the pursuit to harness the full potential of 5G technology are fundamentally transforming cellular connectivity. As new spectrum allocations enhance capacity, businesses encounter both opportunities and challenges in seamlessly integrating advanced solutions with their existing infrastructure. Notably, nearly half of IT and operations leaders identify rapid technological change and complexity as significant hurdles, underscoring the necessity for a proactive approach.



This article delves into the strategic shift in connectivity planning, emphasizing the importance of scalable and flexible systems that meet current demands while adapting to future needs. By focusing on proactive optimization, enterprises can treat connectivity as a utility—the backbone of their operations—ensuring reliability, resilience, and enabling transformational technologies, like the Internet of Things (IoT), and real-time collaboration. Connectivity's role has evolved into a critical enabler of innovation and long-term competitiveness. Through scalable and forward-thinking strategies, businesses can align their connectivity infrastructure with changing requirements, fortifying their readiness to meet future complexities.

### The Expanding Spectrum Landscape

The telecommunications industry is witnessing an unprecedented expansion in spectrum availability, particularly in the mid-band frequencies. This expansion is necessary due to the ever-increasing demand for wireless connectivity. It is also pivotal for deploying 5G networks, offering a balance between coverage and capacity. According to a [report by CTIA](#), deploying each additional 100 MHz of mid-band spectrum can add \$260 billion to the U.S. GDP, highlighting the significant economic impact of spectrum availability.

During the initial deployment of 2G and 3G networks in the U.S., only 85MHz of bandwidth was available across 2 frequency bands. 4G networks in the U.S. have expanded that occupied bandwidth to over 4x that bandwidth (up to 336MHz) and it has expanded to 5 frequency bands. Today, 5G networks demand support for up to 500MHz bandwidth in more than frequency 6 bands, and mmWave deployments now demand a staggering amount of bandwidth of over 1GHz. Similar spectrum expansion has taken place in Europe, Asia, South America, Australia, and other countries. This expansion does not account the 2-way radio bands, the 700 and 800 MHz public safety bands,

nor the CBRS spectrum that is now available in the U.S., increasing the spectrum availability and complexity.

Expanded spectrum availability creates new pathways to deliver higher throughputs and lower latency via cellular networks. This is accomplished by aggregating multiple bands of spectrums owned by carriers. This new spectrum also allows for the deployment of private 5G networks and other tailored connectivity systems. Organizations can leverage these developments to enhance operational efficiency and drive innovation.

The integration of advanced connectivity solutions presents a dual-faceted scenario for businesses. On one hand, enhanced connectivity facilitates the adoption of IoT devices, real-time data analytics, and seamless communication across various platforms. On the other hand, the rapid pace of technological advancement introduces complexities in ensuring compatibility with existing systems and maintaining security protocols.

## The Imperative of Proactive Connectivity Planning

In response to these challenges, a proactive approach to connectivity planning becomes imperative. Enterprises must prioritize the development of scalable and flexible systems capable of addressing current demands while being adaptable to future technological landscapes. This involves investing in infrastructure that supports seamless integration of emerging technologies and allows for incremental upgrades without significant overhauls.

The [GSMA](#) highlights the importance of regulators meeting the demand for IMT spectrum for private networks from industry users while ensuring that mobile operators have the spectrum required to support public mobile networks. This balance is crucial for businesses planning their connectivity strategies.

## Connectivity as a Utility: The Backbone of Operations

Treating connectivity as a utility underscores its critical role in modern business operations. Reliable and resilient connectivity infrastructure ensures uninterrupted access to essential services and applications, thereby minimizing downtime and enhancing productivity. Moreover, a utility-based approach to connectivity facilitates the implementation of transformational technologies such as IoT, which relies on stable and pervasive network access to function optimally.

The concept of [network slicing](#) in 5G networks exemplifies this utility approach, allowing for the creation of virtual networks tailored to specific application requirements, thereby optimizing resource utilization and ensuring service quality.

## Strategic Alignment for Future Readiness

To remain competitive, businesses must align their connectivity infrastructure with evolving technological requirements. This involves adopting forward-thinking strategies that anticipate future developments and position the organization to leverage new opportunities as they arise. By investing in scalable solutions and fostering a culture of continuous improvement, enterprises can ensure that their connectivity infrastructure remains robust and adaptable, ready to meet the complexities of the future.

A report by [BCG](#) emphasizes that spectrum availability, networks, innovation ecosystems, business climate, and talent collectively serve as an index of 5G growth and influence, highlighting the multifaceted approach needed for strategic alignment.

# Proactive Planning

The expansion of available spectrum and the drive to unlock 5G's potential are revolutionizing connectivity. While these developments present significant opportunities for enhancing operational efficiency and driving innovation, they also introduce challenges that require a proactive and strategic approach. By prioritizing scalable and flexible connectivity solutions, treating connectivity as a critical utility, and aligning infrastructure with evolving requirements, businesses can fortify their readiness to meet future complexities and maintain long-term competitiveness.

However, during the evaluation processes it is critical that businesses strategically select hardware and software solutions that align with these objectives, and provide the most effective platform for maximizing these benefits at the lowest TCO (total cost of ownership).

Connectivity is critical, and incredible amounts of bandwidth must be deployed to meet the needs of businesses and public venues. In this era of rapid technological advancement, connectivity has evolved beyond a mere support function to become the backbone of modern enterprises, enabling transformational technologies and serving as a critical enabler of innovation. Through strategic planning and proactive optimization, businesses can harness the full potential of enhanced connectivity to drive growth and success in the digital age.

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