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By: [Pipeline Magazine](#)

The new year opens with a flurry of activity in telecommunications and infrastructure, as providers embed AI deeper into operations, advance autonomous networks, bolster security against evolving threats, expand connectivity to underserved areas, and innovate in satellite, defense, and edge technologies.

The month's top industry news stories are summarized below. To view current breaking news in real-time, visit [Pipeline's News Center](#), follow *Pipeline* on [social media](#), or [subscribe](#) to receive our weekly industry enterprise and communications technology news summary.



AI-Native Innovations and Automation

AI is rapidly becoming the native language of infrastructure, transforming how networks are designed, managed, and monetized. [PacketFabric's launch of PacketFabric.ai](#) exemplifies this shift, offering the industry's first AI-native Network-as-a-Service platform where enterprises can use simple natural-language commands—like "connect my AWS region to Azure with 10Gbps and encryption"—to instantly design, price, and provision connectivity on a vast global private backbone. This not only compresses traditional multi-week workflows into mere seconds but also sets the stage for future phases incorporating predictive modeling, automated troubleshooting, and conversational interfaces, ultimately enabling more agile AI-driven data flows across hyperscale environments.

Similarly, [Lightyear's introduction of the first AI-native telecom expense management platform](#) leverages retrieval-augmented generation (RAG) optimized AI to handle the tedious task of extracting, categorizing, and auditing invoice charges from diverse global carriers, ensuring standardization and accuracy while flagging variances against contracts. This tool addresses a perennial pain point for infrastructure teams, reducing overspend and freeing resources for strategic initiatives.

In a bold move for vertical integration, [Riyadh Air and IBM are pioneering the world's first truly AI-native airline](#), constructed entirely without legacy systems. By embedding watsonx Orchestrate at every level—from agentic AI concierges and voice bots to real-time operational performance management—this partnership promises seamless data unification, enhanced

efficiency, and personalized experiences, serving as a model for how AI can redefine entire industries reliant on robust infrastructure.

[NVIDIA is fueling this momentum with the Nemotron 3 family](#) of open models (Nano, Super, Ultra), featuring a hybrid mixture-of-experts architecture that delivers up to four times higher throughput and lower inference costs for building multi-agent AI systems. Complementing this, [NVIDIA's collaboration with Mistral AI](#) accelerates optimization of the multilingual, multimodal Mistral 3 models for supercomputing and edge platforms, enabling more sophisticated applications in real-time data processing.

[Juniper Research underscores the scale of this trend](#), projecting a 1,000% surge in AI-agent automated customer interactions—from 3.3 billion in 2025 to over 34 billion by 2027—driven by enterprise adoption and standards like the Model Context Protocol, which streamline integrations across business systems.

Further expansions include [IBM's \\$11 billion acquisition of Confluent](#) to create a smart data platform that merges real-time streaming with watsonx for generative AI, tackling hybrid data silos; [Deutsche Telekom's multi-year pact with OpenAI](#) for early alpha model access and co-developed products enhancing European communication and productivity, with pilots starting Q1 2026; [Qualcomm and CP Plus's alliance](#) to integrate edge AI into video security for smart cities and public safety in India; [Innodisk's GMSL2 camera modules](#), which provide long-distance, low-latency edge AI vision for autonomous vehicles, robotics, and smart manufacturing, accelerating real-time data processing in demanding environments; and [IBM and Pearson's collaboration on AI-powered personalized learning products](#) using watsonx.

Cloud, Compute, and Cooling Advances

As AI workloads explode, cloud and compute infrastructure is evolving to handle unprecedented demands for performance, efficiency, and thermal management. [AWS/Amazon is at the forefront with the general availability of compute-optimized EC2 C8a instances](#), powered by 5th Gen AMD EPYC processors, offering up to 30% higher performance, improved price-performance, and 33% more memory bandwidth than predecessors—ideal for high-performance computing (HPC), gaming, and analytics. Complementing this, [the memory-optimized X8aedz instances](#) achieve peak CPU frequencies of 5GHz, doubling compute power over prior generations for memory-intensive tasks like electronic design automation (EDA) and databases.

[Airsys Cooling Technologies unveiled PowerOne](#), an intelligent modular solution engineered for extreme power densities. Scalable from 1MW edge deployments to over 100MW hyperscale facilities, it incorporates multi-medium architectures like CritiCool-X chillers and LiquidRack immersion systems, positioning itself amid projections of a \$15 billion North American market by 2030 driven by AI's energy demands.

[Marvell Technology reported significant adoption of its PCIe Gen5 and CXL 2.0 retimers](#) by leading AI and data center providers, ensuring signal integrity, high-speed data transfer, and reduced latency in server environments. Marvell is also [accelerating its Active Electrical Cable \(AEC\) ecosystem](#) through strategic initiatives focused on hyperscaler adoption, fostering innovation in comprehensive data infrastructure solutions.

[Qualcomm fast-tracked its data center expansion by completing the acquisition of Alphawave Semi](#) a quarter ahead of schedule, gaining key assets for enhanced connectivity and processing. Meanwhile, [ING's adoption of VMware Cloud Foundation 9.0](#) modernizes its private cloud, enabling global workload mobility, regulatory compliance, and improved digital services across regions.

Autonomous Networks and 5G Deployments

Network autonomy is reaching new heights, promising self-optimizing systems that reduce operational complexity and costs. [Nokia is leading with its collaboration with du on the first 5G Advanced autonomous network slicing solution](#), powered by MantaRay, AirScale, and AutoPilot technologies to deliver intent-based premium services with guaranteed SLAs for gaming, XR, AI, and enterprise apps. Nokia also [deployed MantaRay SON across NTT DOCOMO's multi-vendor LTE/5G RAN](#) in Japan's inaugural such integration, automating toward Level 4 autonomy; [upgraded RailTel's DWDM and metro optical networks](#) in India for resilient high-speed connectivity; and [revealed research surveying 2,000 decision-makers](#), uncovering substantial investments needed to meet the AI supercycle's demands on telecom and data center infrastructure.

[Ericsson is advancing monetization through its minority stake in LotusFlare](#) and blueprints for network API exposure, leveraging DNO Cloud and Vonage for 5G/AI capabilities. Ericsson [signed a five-year Master Frame Agreement with stc Group](#) to boost Saudi Arabia's digital infrastructure; [activated 4.5 GHz Massive MIMO AIR 3255 radios in DOCOMO's network](#) for enhanced capacity and beamforming; and [partnered with Vodafone and Spirent](#) on an automated platform for rapid multi-vendor 5G core software integration across Europe.

[New 5G technologies are tackling in-building connectivity challenges](#) in high-capacity venues like stadiums and airports. [Rogers Communications expanded 5G to 34 more eastern Ontario communities](#) via the \$300-million EORN Cell Gap Project, bridging rural gaps, and [enhanced its Xfinity platform with Amazon Luna cloud gaming](#) for seamless TV-based access to titles like Hogwarts Legacy. [Verizon partnered with Array Digital Infrastructure](#) to leverage national towers for 5G enhancements. [Intracom Telecom and GeoLinks demonstrated 1.6 Gbps aggregate throughput](#) at 5 miles in LMDS spectrum during WISPAPALOOZA 2025, confirming fixed wireless readiness for fiber-like services. [The Wireless Broadband Alliance's trials showed up to 70% latency reductions](#) using standardized Wi-Fi QoS, benefiting video conferencing, gaming, and streaming.

Security and Risk Mitigation

With threats amplifying alongside AI adoption, security remains a critical pillar. [Juniper Research projects digital goods fraud costing eCommerce merchants \\$27 billion globally by 2030](#)—a 162% rise from 2025—driven by synthetic identities, promo-abuse, and AI tools, necessitating real-time AI prevention and behavioral biometrics. [Dell'Oro Group forecasts the network security market surpassing \\$26 billion in 2025](#), fueled by cloud-delivered solutions like SSE and WAF amid a shift to zero-trust and application modernization.

[VIAVI and QNu Labs are developing quantum-safe technologies](#), including test cases, badging, and reference architectures for post-quantum cryptography (PQC) and quantum key distribution (QKD) to resilient critical infrastructure. [Kaspersky's report warns of ongoing APTs, DDoS attacks, and supply-chain vulnerabilities](#) pressuring telecom operators in 2026, exacerbated by AI automation, post-quantum shifts, and satellite integration.

[Palo Alto Networks and Google Cloud expanded their partnership](#) to secure AI development with Prisma AIRS, combining cloud AI capabilities for code-to-cloud protection. [NCC Group and Qualys integrated asset discovery and risk management](#) into managed Attack Surface Management. [TELUS and Qohash strengthened Fuel iX data security](#) with Qostodian against breaches. [Bell Canada secured Québec's first compensatory and punitive damages \(\\$24,000\)](#) in a copper theft case, highlighting efforts to combat disruptions to essential services.

Satellite, Defense, and Specialized Connectivity

Satellite and defense sectors are innovating for global resiliency. [Gilat Satellite Networks secured a \\$10 million customized Earth Observation solution](#) for real-time geospatial capabilities and [reinforced its defense SATCOM portfolio](#) with Solid-State Power Amplifiers (SSPAs), TWTAs replacements, and DIFI-standard solutions like Powerstream and Aerostream for rugged tactical operations.

[Viasat unified its Ka-band satellites with Global Xpress](#) for seamless multi-orbit government connectivity, enhancing military mission performance, and [provided InRange telemetry for INNOSPACE's first commercial Brazil launch](#) of the HANBIT-Nano rocket. [Iridium partnered with HD Hyundai Construction Equipment](#) to integrate global satellite IoT into Hi MATE for remote heavy equipment management.

[Bittium Wireless licensed its Tough SDR technology to Indra Group](#) with an initial €50 million order, enabling sovereign high-performance radios for Spain and beyond. [Deutsche Telekom's investment in Quantum Systems](#) via T.Capital Tech Fund commercializes autonomous drones for critical infrastructure surveillance across Europe. [Solace Power and NetComm Wireless unveiled the world's first wirelessly powered, window-mounted 5G CPE](#), simplifying deployments. [IPEX Health patented an AI-orchestrated neuroacoustic system](#) to stabilize sleep for space missions, addressing human risks in extreme environments.

Collaboration, Expansion, and Market Moves

Partnerships and expansions are bridging gaps in collaboration and access. [VOSS and Virsae combined expertise](#) for enhanced telemetry across Cisco, Microsoft, Avaya, and Genesys, fueling AI initiatives in digital workplaces and CX. [TX RX Systems launched high-performance dipole antennas](#) for reliable critical communications in demanding environments.

[Beacon Communications expanded into structured cabling](#) for integrated data transmission. [Beyond Now secured majority investment from Bregal Milestone](#) to transition to scale-up. [Orange acquired full ownership of MasOrange](#) for €4.25 billion, consolidating Spain's leading operator. [Bell Canada introduced the Fibe TV app](#) for hardware-free streaming with personalized recommendations.

[Empire Fiber Internet grew its network](#) in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, for broader high-speed access. [1547 launched the McAllen Internet Exchange](#) to reduce latency and boost South Texas interconnection. [Zenture Partners released a blueprint](#) for modernizing network procurement in global manufacturing, emphasizing visibility and resiliency. [EMA outlined Network Source of Truth strategies](#) for centralized data in automation.

[kini mobile and TELUS launched 5G prepaid plans](#) tailored for the Filipino-Canadian community, supporting dual Philippine-Canadian services. [Cisco and OECD research revealed AI adoption disparities](#), with emerging economies like India leading among younger users. [Juniper Research predicted declining travel eSIM margins](#) by 2025 due to competition, recommending service bundling and rewards.

Overall Trends Summary

Collectively, these developments paint a picture of an infrastructure ecosystem in hyperdrive, where AI-native architectures are not just augmenting but fundamentally redefining networks, compute, and operations for unprecedented efficiency and intelligence. The AI supercycle is fueling massive investments in autonomy, cooling, and edge processing to handle exploding

data demands, while security innovations counter rising threats from quantum vulnerabilities to AI-amplified fraud. Connectivity expansions—via 5G, fiber, satellite, and drones—are prioritizing inclusivity and resiliency, closing rural and global gaps. Market moves like acquisitions and partnerships signal consolidation and collaboration as keys to scaling, with a clear emphasis on quantum-readiness and sustainable growth. As 2026 unfolds, expect this convergence to accelerate digital transformation, but with challenges in energy consumption, ethical AI deployment, and equitable access demanding vigilant oversight.

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