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IRIDIUM CERTUS LIVE AFTER \$3 BILLION SPEND



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IRIDIUM CERTUS LIVE AS \$3B SATELLITE CONSTELLATION COMPLETED

Telecommunications provider Pivotal has congratulated Iridium Communications on the commercial launch of its Iridium Certus broadband service, enabled by the company's new \$3 billion Iridium NEXT satellite constellation.

Iridium Certus is a new advanced multi-service platform that Pivotal says redefines the capabilities of mobile satellite communications across maritime, government, IoT, aviation, land mobile, and other applications.

The service extends the reach of terrestrial and cellular infrastructure “like never before”, providing uncompromised coverage to the most remote locations across the planet.

Peter Bolger, Pivotal CEO said the company is proud to be the first and only mobile carrier in Australia approved to provide the Iridium Certus service.



“The debut of Iridium Certus marks a new era of satellite communications where consumers are offered access to secure and reliable voice and data solutions that are mobile, compact and can operate in the most remote environments virtually anywhere in the world, and we’re thrilled to be among the first providers in the world to bring this service to market,” Bolger said.

“The smaller profile and competitive pricing of the Iridium Certus satellite terminals will open up new markets for satellite-based mobile data, and we’re expecting emergency services, utilities and government agencies to be among the early adopters.

“The dual mode cellular and satellite-land terminals with least-cost routing will allow customers to maintain critical communications virtually anywhere in the country, further closing the digital divide between city and country.”

Pivotal says it plans to launch the new service shortly in Australia and New Zealand using Australian ‘04’ mobile numbers, and local area numbers in the United States, ensuring customers have access to the same benefits they currently enjoy with Pivotal’s regular satellite services.

This includes calls to Iridium Certus at call-to-mobile rates, simple dialling rules, free incoming satellite calls, and local customer support.

Iridium CEO Matt Desch said he is pleased to partner with a leading company like Pivotal as it helps the company to push boundaries and provide connectivity for customers residing within the 80-plus percent of the world that lacks cellular coverage.



"The launch of Iridium Certus has been a huge achievement and we're eager for our valued partners to adopt and roll-out the new service which has been long-awaited by every target industry," said Desch.

"Iridium Certus addresses the needs of satellite communications users with a robust suite of solutions available, disrupting the status-quo through our smaller, faster, lighter and more cost-effective terminals and service."

Pivotal says seafarers are also among those set to benefit. The simplicity of truly global coverage and cost-effective plans will allow maritime users to have a more competitive range of choices when evaluating connectivity solutions for vessels of any size.

Pivotal expects the service will be highly regarded by operators of medium sized vessels wanting Iridium Certus as their primary data connection or as a reliable backup to VSAT on large vessels.

The launch of the Iridium Certus service comes at the end of a long running project that involved integrating Pivotal's Australian carrier network with the Iridium Certus infrastructure in Tempe, Arizona and provides points of interconnect in Australia, Los Angeles and New York.

Peter Dinham

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TELSTRA USES INFINERA TECH TO BOOST ASIA-PAC NETWORK SERVICES

Telstra and transport network provider Infinera have announced an upgrade to the Australian telco's network services for its Asia-Pacific customers, with a 160% increase in fibre capacity to its subsea infrastructure using Infinera's Infinity Capacity Engine 4.

In a statement, Telstra said the ICE4 optical engine would boost the capacity, agility and reliability of its network.



The ICE4 solution is claimed to allow rapid increase of new capacity, providing multi-terabit capacity with low power consumption and high reliability.

The ICE4 solution increased the port density by 140%, Telstra said.

Telstra's network planning principal Andy Lumsden said the company was committed to continually developing its network to support the increasing demand for data right across the Asia-Pacific region.

"Our commitment to our Asia Pacific customers means we are always adapting and creating capacity where it is needed. This means we are continually working to deploy new technologies that enhance our existing network and complement our latest capacity investments," he said.

"With Infinera's ICE4 optical engine, we are deploying the latest technology across our network. We can now provision new services faster than ever before, which is critical in a region when capacity demand on our international networks has almost doubled over the past two years."

Infinera's vice-president of sales, Andrew Bond-Webster, said early testing on the rollout had shown good results.

"ICE4, our latest optical engine, enables Telstra to deliver multi-terabit capacity cost effectively with low power consumption and with the reliability required for subsea networks to perform," he said.

"We have partnered with Telstra for a decade, and work collaboratively to co-create solutions that respond rapidly to changing data consumption and the growth of bandwidth-heavy applications."

The ICE4 network upgrade will be completed in coming months.

Sam Varghese



John de Ridder

Telecommunications Economist

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SINGAPORE ANNOUNCES FIRST LIVE 5G FACILITY FOR TESTING

National telco Singtel, Singapore Polytechnic and Ericsson have opened the country's first live 5G facility at the polytechnic's Dover Road campus, to serve as a training centre, test bed and ideation lab to develop Singapore's 5G ecosystem and encourage adoption of 5G.

A statement from Singtel said the facility, named 5G Garage, was connected to Singtel's latest pilot 5G network located at Ayer Rajah, and would run on 3.5GHz trial spectrum provided by the Info-communications Media Development Authority.



Singtel, Ericsson and Singapore Polytechnic have signed a memorandum of understanding to:

- Build and operate a 5G facility where enterprises can develop and test 5G solutions;
- Co-develop 5G solutions relevant to industries such as transportation, logistics, healthcare and manufacturing;
- Develop and deliver 5G wireless technology curriculum for the SP's School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering; and
- Develop 5G capabilities for the workforces of the three organisations.

Singtel Group chief technology officer Mark Chong said: "Singtel is pleased to partner with Ericsson and SP on our 5G Garage initiative.

"As Singapore advances its digital economy and becomes a smart nation, the benefits of 5G will first be seen in enterprises, especially in their digital transformation when they integrate technology into their processes, services and products.

"With 5G standards largely established, now is an opportune time for SMEs and enterprises to join us in shaping our 5G future."



Martin Wiktorin, country manager Singapore, Brunei and the Philippines, Ericsson, said: "5G has the potential to transform industries and bring enhanced mobile broadband experience for consumers.

"At Ericsson, we are already collaborating globally with 42 operators, 45 institutes and 31 industry partners, to create a thriving 5G ecosystem.

"We are delighted to partner with Singtel and Singapore Polytechnic towards the setting up of the 5G Garage, which we hope will stimulate SP students to come up with new 5G use cases."

About 250 final-year students from SP's diploma in electrical and electronic engineering and diploma in computer engineering will learn about 5G wireless technology and how to utilise it, as part of their course work.

SP staff and students will also be able to learn from technology transfer from experts at Singtel and Ericsson.

Soh Wai Wah, Singapore Polytechnic's principal and chief executive, said: "This collaboration reflects our strong industry partnership, which is key to keeping our student learning relevant and updated.

"This latest collaboration will equip our students with skills in the latest technologies and nurture them to innovate and create solutions for the world."

Sam Varghese

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ANALYST FIRM: T-MOBILE WILL BE FIRST IN US WITH 'REAL 5G'

T-Mobile is best positioned among US telcos to deliver "real 5G whenever that reality actually materialises", the analyst firm BTIG Research says, adding that its deep and unused low-band spectrum should enable it to launch real 5G before any other firm.

In [a research note](#), analyst Walter Piecyk said T-Mobile's network investments had generated traction in markets where its market share was low.

"New, unused spectrum has historically been a necessary building block for rolling out new technologies.

"It's even better if the spectrum is low-band, which provides a superior coverage solution," Piecyk wrote.

"This was clear during the technology transitions to 3G and 4G. Remember that Verizon purchased 20 MHz of nationwide low-band spectrum at a 2008 FCC auction for the express purpose of rolling out LTE before all of their major competitors. Sprint and T-Mobile skipped that auction due to their lack of funding.

"Those without unused low-band or mid-band spectrum believe that millimetre wave spectrum is the answer, but we, like many in the industry, are sceptical about that approach for mobile 5G."

He pointed out that T-Mobile owned 30 MHz of low-band spectrum which it had bought in 2017 for US\$8 billion.

"We believe T-Mobile is uniquely positioned to use this clean, low-band spectrum to roll out 5G-NR faster than its peers who:

- "have used most of their existing spectrum for LTE;
- "are hoping mmWave spectrum can provide mobile coverage; or
- "are waiting for more mid-band spectrum to become available from Dish, CBRS, or C-Band," Piecyk said.

"We do not believe that any of those spectrum alternatives can match the speed at which T-Mobile could deliver 5G to the market on its existing low-band spectrum.

"T-Mobile should be the first to market with real 5G and, if the Sprint deal is approved, will have the mid-band spectrum to further solidify their lead."

The analyst firm's parent, BTIG LLC, is an institutional brokerage and fund services company.

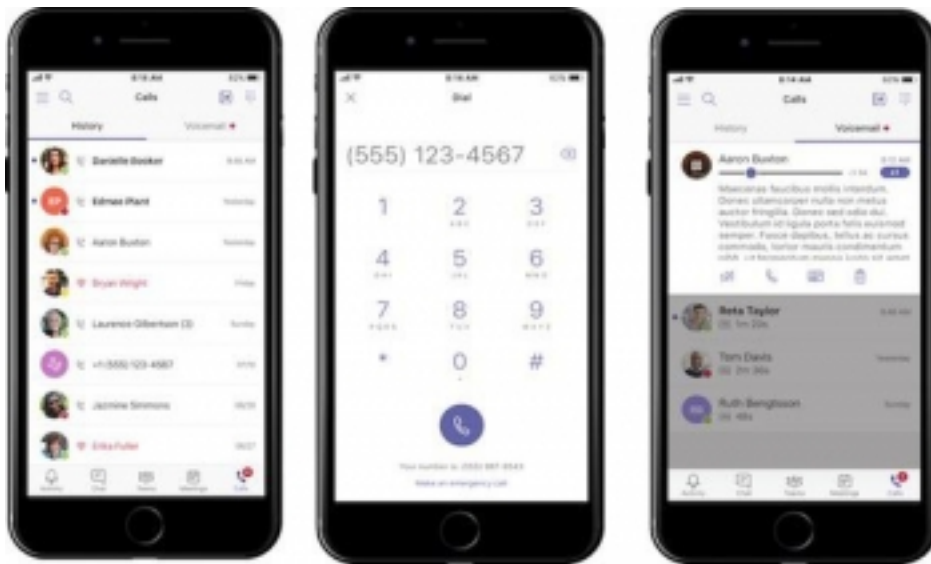
Sam Varghese

MNF HOOKS UP PSTN PHONES WITH MICROSOFT TEAMS

Unified communications and collaboration provider MNF Enterprise, a division of MNF Group, has announced a PSTN calling integration for Microsoft Teams.

MNF Enterprise's [Cloud Connect for Teams](#) adds enterprise-style PBX facilities to Microsoft Teams.

This means organisations can use a single tool for enterprise collaboration, video conferencing and traditional calling, with features such as click-to-dial and making and receiving external calls using existing phone numbers.



Following extensive trials with enterprise and government customers, the service is now available to organisations with 20 or more users in Australia, New Zealand and Singapore.

Additional integrations provide the option of connecting MNF's call recording and call analytics services, and Salesforce

CRM.

"Enterprises are adopting modern collaboration tools like Microsoft Teams, but they don't want to give up their phone calling capabilities. Cloud Connect gives them the best of both worlds," said MNF enterprise general manager, enterprise and government, Greg Round.

"Microsoft Teams now has calling features comparable to Skype for Business and traditional PBX phone systems.

"With the addition of Cloud Connect, organisations can safely retire those old phone services and legacy on-premise equipment and move telecommunications to the cloud with confidence."

In addition, the service is available to Microsoft Partners that want to add PSTN calling to their managed services catalogue.

Stephen Withers

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