MTN South Africa selects Ericsson for commercial 5G Core and Radio

- 5G commercial contract is part of MTN South Africa’s network modernization
- Contract includes supply of Ericsson radio access network, core, and transport products and solutions
- MTN and Ericsson are working together to identify and develop 5G use cases and applications to drive industry digital transformation

Ericsson (NASDAQ: ERIC) has been selected by MTN South Africa as a 5G network modernization vendor. Ericsson will supply 5G products and solutions from its Radio Access Network (RAN), transport and Core portfolios, with commercial rollout expected to start in 2020.

As part of its transformation strategy, MTN South Africa is upgrading its core network to support 3GPP-compliant 5G Non-Standalone (NSA) architecture.

5G commercialization is planned between 2020 and 2022, with a focus on use cases and applications relevant in the South African context. These include: Enhanced Mobile Broadband, Fixed Wireless Access, and the Internet of Things (IoT). MTN and Ericsson are working together to identify and develop 5G use cases and applications that will contribute to the digital transformation of industry verticals.

In addition to providing end-to-end 5G capabilities, Ericsson has been chosen to modernize MTN South Africa’s existing LTE and legacy radio access networks as part of a three-year deal signed earlier this year. This is aimed at accelerating MTN South Africa’s digitalization ambitions in the expanding South African market.

MTN is using 5G New Radios (5G NR), basebands, and MINI-LINK microwave transmission products from the Ericsson Radio System portfolio to enhance network quality and user experiences for the company’s 30 million customers. Ericsson has also provided MTN with an Ericsson Cloud Core network, including 5G Evolved Packet Core (5G EPC) and User Data Management (UDM).

Giovanni Chiarelli, Chief Technology and Information Officer, MTN South Africa, says: “South Africa is undergoing a huge digital transformation, which will open up new business opportunities and boost the nation’s economy. To enable and speed up this process, MTN, with Ericsson as our partner, is rapidly upgrading our network to deliver the quality, capacity, and overall network performance that our enterprise and customers demand. Launching 5G will accomplish this transformation and, with fixed wireless access, will ensure high quality, increased capacity, and greater reliability for our customers.”
PRESS RELEASE
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Nicolas Blixell, Vice President, Ericsson Middle East and Africa, says: “With this deal MTN South Africa will be one of the true 5G pioneers in Africa. We will work closely with them, just as we have done with other generations of technology, to bring the benefits of 5G to them and their customers. Citizens, enterprises, industry and society in general in South Africa are set to benefit enormously from 5G and we are here to help MTN South Africa make that happen.”

Ericsson now has more than 70 commercial 5G agreements or contracts with unique communication service providers, of which 23 are live networks.

Related links:
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