

Ericsson to power majority of Virgin Media O2's UK RAN network through major partnership extension

- Next-gen network upgrade to significantly increase Ericsson's Radio Access Network (RAN) footprint with Virgin Media O2
- Ericsson secures majority of Virgin Media O2's latest radio network-focused investment under its Mobile Transformation Plan
- The partnership extension will tap Ericsson's programmable 5G Standalone capabilities, including multiband radios and AI-powered analytics

Ericsson (NASDAQ:ERIC) will become Virgin Media O2's primary radio access network (RAN) partner in a five-year partnership extension that will see Ericsson power the majority of the UK service provider's nationwide UK radio network. Through securing the majority of the radio network-focused element of Virgin Media O2's latest Mobile Transformation Plan, the partnership extension will earn Ericsson several hundred million Euros across the five years.

Virgin Media O2's Mobile Transformation Plan will deliver faster, more reliable mobile connectivity across the UK.

Patrick Johansson, Head of Europe, Middle East and Africa, Ericsson, says: "Virgin Media O2 is a close and trusted customer and partner of Ericsson's. That trust is reflected in the RAN footprint increase in this partnership extension where Ericsson will power the majority of Virgin Media O2's radio network. We are proud to partner with Virgin Media O2 and will work closely with the company to realize its Mobile Transformation Plan."

Jeanie York, Chief Technology Officer, Virgin Media O2, says: "Our Mobile Transformation Plan is all about delivering a step-change in network performance for our customers, ensuring they have fast, reliable connectivity wherever they are. Ericsson is a long-standing partner in our network evolution and this agreement will help us accelerate the modernization of our radio network, unlocking greater capacity, improved efficiency and enhanced reliability for millions of people across the UK."

With Virgin Media O2's mobile traffic more than doubling in the last five years alone, a key element of the network enhancement will focus on maximizing the capabilities of additional 5G mid-band spectrum acquired by Virgin Media O2 in 2025, to strengthen the service provider's UK leadership in 5G Standalone (SA) connectivity.

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The partnership extension is the latest development in Virgin Media O2's Mobile Transformation Plan – with 2026 investments aimed at improving reliability, boosting capacity and widening coverage across its nationwide network.

The upgrade will feature the deployment of a wide range of Ericsson Radio System products, including advanced and energy-efficient multiband Massive MIMO radios – such as the AIR 3229 and the triple-band Radio 4486 – at both new and existing locations.

Ericsson AI and machine learning-based software will also be deployed to intelligently optimize network performance and efficiency in real time.

Network programmability and intelligence will help Virgin Media O2 to utilize the full capabilities of its 5G SA network, supporting advanced differentiated services through network slicing for application, enterprise and industry use cases.

The network upgrade will enable Virgin Media O2 to move more of its customer base to its 5G SA network, which is already available to 87 percent of the UK population. The partnership is also structured to support Virgin Media O2's evolution to Cloud RAN and to scale into future 5G-Advanced.

The 2026 enhanced Ericsson-VM02 partnership is the latest development in a productive longstanding relationship between the companies – which included the 2025 investment tranche of the Mobile Transformation Plan.

That scope included performance and capacity improvements through additional spectrum, network densification and small-cell deployments, targeted upgrades at network hot spots (like stadiums and transport hubs), and extended coverage along railways, major roads, and previously underserved rural and coastal areas.

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