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MOBILE

WORLD DAILY

DAY TWO • TUESDAY 27TH FEBRUARY

Operators highlight mobile's role in transforming lives

By Anne Morris

Industry executives took to the floor on Monday to highlight the leading role the mobile communications industry is taking, and must take, in improving the lives of people all over the world, and how collaboration, partnership and leadership during this current period of digital disruption will be key to fuelling innovation, transforming industries and spurring new opportunities.

During the opening keynote session at Mobile World Congress, Mats Granryd, GSMA director general (pictured left), emphasised the important role that mobile will play in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

"As an industry, we have an opportunity - and, I would argue, an obligation - to leverage our mobile networks and services to help achieve the SDGs," he said. "The mobile industry is helping people in times of disaster, reducing inequalities, helping to preserve the world's resources, and we are positively impacting people's lives every day."

Marie Ehrling, chair of both Telia Company and security firm Securitas (pictured right), said the industry must now lead and shape its future through a period of digital disruption, both in terms of strategy, actions and culture, and also emphasised the need for collaboration.

"Silo thinking is not only unadvisable, but also wouldn't



work. From every company I've worked with today, collaborative working environments are rich across industries and across markets. It's one of the most important catalysts of success," Ehrling said.

Shang Bing, chairman of China Mobile, called on mobile operators to engage in a "global conversation" with one another and relevant digital players to drive innovation.

He also echoed the views of other keynote speakers that 5G



would help boost economies worldwide, provided mobile operators cooperated with what he called "ICT industries".

"No single company can do it all alone," he said. "By working together we can make the cake bigger."

This was especially true in developing ecosystems surrounding big data. "We want to create win-win digital ecosystems," he added.

During the keynote, NTT DoCoMo provided concrete details

of its mid-term strategy, "Beyond", which will take the Japan-based mobile operator into the 5G era from 2020 onwards. The operator plans to launch 5G in 2020 to coincide with the Olympic Games in Tokyo.

In common with other keynote speakers Kazuhiro Yoshizawa, president and CEO of NTT DoCoMo, emphasised the importance of "co-creation" strategies with partners to establish what he described as a "richer future with 5G", also ensuring that people will be able to use services on new 5G networks "from day one".

To support this strategy, the operator has launched the DoCoMo 5G Open Partner Programme, and has already received expressions of interest from 610 entities that wish to participate.

As well as 5G, Granryd highlighted artificial intelligence as a new area of innovation, fuelled by the availability of high-speed connectivity, the mass-market adoption of smartphones and the power of machine learning.

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Pai announces plans for US mmWave auction

By Diana Goovaerts

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) chairman Ajit Pai (pictured centre) revealed plans to hold a mmWave spectrum auction in the

US in the fourth quarter, provided the government acts in time to resolve an outstanding financial issue.

On the keynote stage, Pai said the FCC is aiming to hold an auction for 28GHz spectrum in November,

which would immediately be followed by a 24GHz auction. But for that to happen, Pai said the US Congress needs to act by 13 May to remedy a wrinkle in how upfront payments from bidders are held.

The law currently requires those funds be held in interest-bearing accounts, but Pai previously said regulatory requirements have dissuaded private institutions from opening such accounts.

He warned: "If we don't get the problem fixed, our efforts to realise America's 5G future will be delayed."

The Commission is also eyeing spectrum between 3.7GHz and 4.2GHz, and Pai said he intends in the coming months to propose next steps to make that band available for terrestrial commercial use.

He added the FCC is working to streamline infrastructure siting laws, noting "all the spectrum we devote to 5G won't be put to good use if the physical networks to carry 5G traffic are never built".

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Securing the internet of things must take priority, warns AT&T

By Kavitha Majithia

Chris Penrose, president of IoT solutions for AT&T (pictured), underscored the importance of embedding security into connected products and services from “day one of design”, revealing the US operator had seen a 3,198 per cent increase in attacks scanning for vulnerabilities in IoT devices over the past three years.

Penrose said that a multi-layered security approach across networks, devices and applications was becoming “essential to dealing with today’s threats and business environment”.

“Companies across the technology ecosystem need methods and tools to detect and correct vulnerabilities, block attacks, and remediate compromised devices,” he said.

Penrose added, naturally, that as the number and kinds of connected devices multiply, “so have the security risks”, and the problem continues to grow with industrial IoT as enterprises use connectivity for mission critical services.

“Businesses also need to conduct ongoing organisational risk

assessments to identify the types of risks – data and physical/operational – that IoT deployments may introduce, including completion of a full audit of devices that connect to its networks,” he told *Mobile World Daily* ahead of a panel appearance on Massive and Industrial IoT at Mobile World Congress 2018.

Penrose explained that AT&T has also seen an increasing overlap between business and consumer IoT applications, which results in the same solutions often being used by both segments. He used the company’s partnership with the Otis Elevator Company as an example, which is helping to improve in-building transportation for more than 2 billion people per day.

“Enterprises and consumers are similar in that they want convenient solutions and reliable data to help them make decisions and provide peace of mind,” he said. “Whether that’s tracking and monitoring a shipping container as it crosses the ocean or a family pet who has escaped the back yard. Connectivity and near-real time data can improve the way we work, live and play.”

Amazon bullish on voice commerce

By Joseph Waring

With the rapid adoption of voice-based personal assistants, Amazon believes voice commerce is going to be the next big technological change.

Giulio Montemagno, GM for Europe at Amazon Pay, said that as voice-based personal assistant

devices become an integral part of consumers’ lives, people are demanding more of them.

“Voice commerce, we believe, will revolutionise how consumers and brands interact in ways not witnessed since the dawn of e-commerce. It is so much more than a new interface or an additional channel in an omni-channel world. It promises to be a curator of

Q&A

Amit Hammer,
CEO, Neura

AI Everywhere: Consumer Applications



Hall 4 Auditorium 2
Tuesday 27 February, 14:00-15:00

How is Neura contributing to the consumerisation of Artificial Intelligence (AI)?

Neura was created to bring user awareness to consumer mobile apps, IoT devices and digital products. It is an ingredient technology with an AI-as-a-Service model. When Neura’s technology is integrated into an app or product, that product is able to create and adapt offerings based on who the consumer is in the real world and interact with the consumer based on the context throughout their day.

How is integrated AI and machine learning still limited regarding use cases with the consumer? How can these be advanced?

While AI and machine learning have been integrated across many industries, some are slower than others. Not surprisingly, regulated industries require more checks and balances, more tests and more assurances than other consumer industries. We’ve been working with companies that have these additional requirements, such as financial institutions and insurance companies, and though it is a slower process, it is possible to get through the process and to have large deployments. We’ve also found that after you’ve been approved through these processes, the next one is quicker, and the one after that even faster.

Considering devices like smart speakers, do you believe these will become the major user interface as the public begins to interact more with AI technology?

While smart speakers have the potential to become a major user interface, there are other products also entering the market that are vying to be the main user interface. There are also many more products that will become available this year that will have their own user interface. With the kind of technology that Neura provides, the vocal interface is just one of many options of consuming a personalised and contextual service.

How has AI changed the way consumers interact with brands and other companies?

Ultimately, AI is changing how products interact with consumers. Consumers don’t pick a brand or a product because it has AI in it. AI is an ingredient to make products better fit the needs of consumers. Today, many great products, such as smart home IoT products, aren’t fully used because consumers tend not to programme them completely or consistently. A product with AI in it can learn the consumer’s preferences and routines, then begin to adapt itself to the consumer. In the long run, it will be the products that are interacting more with the consumer that will be used more.

How important is it for consumer brands to innovate their systems and accommodate more intelligent solutions?

It is imperative that consumer brands accommodate more intelligent solutions. For those who are doing it now, it’s a competitive edge. For those who haven’t started yet or don’t start this year, they will be playing catch up.

What do you believe will be the most important use cases when it comes to AI in the future?

This is a tough question because the most important use case is the one that matters most to an individual. I think AI will have a big impact that will be felt in communities throughout the world. AI’s ability to help people change their behavior to make better decisions, whether it is remembering to take medicine or drive more safely, will have a significant impact on individual lives. That’s pretty powerful.

How can devices like speakers advance to become more essential for the consumer?

Today speakers are great for playing the style of on-demand music that consumers have already indicated they like. Speakers can be more advanced by automatically knowing who is in the room and offering appropriate content without being prompted. In other words, the speaker interacts with the consumer, not the consumer making requests of the speaker. Another possibility is the speaker could understand the context of the consumer’s day. For example, consumers have different content preferences if they are waking up, getting ready for bed or are just returning from a long day at the office. Understanding the individual user and their context will incorporate speakers more into a consumer’s life.

services and experiences that intelligently meet needs and engage consumers emotionally – anytime, anywhere,” he said.

Montemagno, who spoke with *Mobile World Daily* ahead of today’s The Future of Consumption session, acknowledged that we are still at the very beginnings of conversational commerce, but the extraordinarily rapid early adoption will drive investment and innovation, consequently enabling an entirely new way for brands to build relationships with consumers.

“These relationships will

seamlessly extend across consumers’ relationship lifecycle with brands – from marketing to sales and service – creating an entirely new, more instinctive way for consumers to engage with brands,” he said.

With the evolution of voice commerce, he predicted that only the retailers who can reassure and deliver the expected value to their consumers through this channel can succeed. The conversational aspect of engagement with brands will create immense insight to allow a deeper understanding of and

“Voice commerce will revolutionise how consumers and brands interact”

empathy towards the consumer.

These insights should be leveraged to deliver solutions that develop trust and relevancy to the connected consumer in turn building brand affinity and loyalty, he said.