Global telecom leaders join forces to redefine the industry with network APIs

- Landmark agreement to accelerate adoption and innovation of network APIs includes a newly formed company that will drive new monetization opportunities for the industry.

Madrid, 12th September 2024. – Today, some of the world's largest telecom operators, including América Móvil, AT&T, Bharti Airtel, Deutsche Telekom, Orange, Reliance Jio, Singtel, Telefonica, Telstra, T-Mobile, Verizon and Vodafone, together with Ericsson are announcing a new venture to combine and sell network Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) on a global scale to spur innovation in digital services. Network APIs are the way to easily access, use and pay for network capabilities. The venture will drive implementation and access to common APIs from multiple telecom service providers to a broader ecosystem of developer platforms.

Modern mobile networks have advanced and intelligent capabilities, which have historically been inaccessible to developers. Additionally, it has been impractical for developers to integrate the different capabilities of hundreds of individual telecom operators. The newly formed company will combine network APIs globally, with a vision that new applications will work anywhere and on any network, making it easier and quicker for developers to innovate.

Easily accessible advanced network capabilities will open up the next frontier in app development and empower developers to create new use cases across many sectors. These could include anti-fraud verification for financial transactions and the ability to check device status so streaming providers can dynamically adjust video quality.

The newly formed company will provide network APIs to a broad ecosystem of developer platforms, including hyperscalers (HCPs), Communications Platform as a Service (CPaaS) providers, System Integrators (SIs) and Independent Software Vendors (ISVs), based on existing industry-wide CAMARA APIs (the open-source project driven by the GSMA and the Linux Foundation). Vonage and Google Cloud will partner with the new company, providing access to their ecosystems of millions of developers as well as their partners. The new venture shareholders will bring funding and important assets, including Ericsson's platform and network expertise, global

telecom operator relationships, knowledge of the developer community and each telecom operator's network APIs, expertise and marketing.

Additional telecom operators are encouraged to join the new company, further driving the industry and developer experience, and allowing all participants to tap into a significant new revenue opportunity, such as telecom operator Three Sweden (Hi3G Access) which is already in discussions.

Closing of the transaction is expected early 2025, subject to regulatory approvals and other customary conditions. Upon closing, Ericsson will hold 50% of the equity in the venture while the telecom providers will hold 50% in total. Built on a deep understanding of developer and enterprise needs and in keeping with the industry-body GSMA Open Gateway principles, the new venture's platform and partner ecosystem will remain open and non-discriminatory to maximize value creation across the industry.

Quotes from the partners

Daniel Hajj, Chief Executive Officer, AMX: "We are very excited to join Ericsson and other key players in our industry in this innovative global platform initiative that will benefit the digital ecosystem as a whole. New API solutions will establish exciting value-added offerings to our customers on the top of our networks' infrastructure".

Jeremy Legg, Chief Technology Officer, AT&T: "At AT&T, we've been creating API tools to empower developers for well over a decade. Now, with a broad-based, interoperable API platform, we're giving innovators a new global toolbox where the world's best app developers can create exciting user experiences at scale. This high-performance mobile ecosystem will usher in a new era of greater possibility for customers and mobile users around the world".

Gopal Vittal, Managing Director and CEO, Bharti Airtel: "Today marks a defining moment as the industry comes together to form a unified platform that will allow more developers and businesses to utilize our networks and explore API opportunities through open gateway principles. This move will enhance network monetization opportunities. Airtel is delighted to partner in this initiative that will help enable the telecom sector to drive growth and innovation across the ecosystem".

Tim Höttges, CEO of Deutsche Telekom: "The new company accelerates our leading work with MagentaBusiness APIs to expose our network capabilities for customers and developers. We believe that this company will open up new monetization opportunities for the industry. We encourage and look forward to more telecom operators joining us to expand and develop this ecosystem".

Börje Ekholm, President and CEO, Ericsson: "Today is a defining moment for the industry and milestone in our strategy to open up the network for increased monetization opportunities. A global platform built on Ericsson's deep technical capabilities and with a comprehensive ecosystem, that provides millions of developers with a single connection, will enable the telecom industry to invest deeper into the network API opportunity, driving growth and innovation for everyone".

Christel Heydemann, Chief Executive Officer, Orange: "This is a critical first step in our innovation journey to fully harness the power of our networks at scale, providing secure access to new on-demand network services and advanced network capabilities. By delivering a common and simple set of network APIs for developers globally, we can unleash this network value for businesses, large and small. This is a definitive gamechanger for businesses, opening up the possibility of a new wave of digital services".

Mathew Oommen, President, Reliance Jio: "We spearheaded the transformation of both mobile and fixed home broadband by delivering affordable, high-quality broadband to everyone, across India. As we rapidly adopt an AI and API-driven technology ecosystem—by collaborating with global leaders, Jio is thrilled to offer a suite of innovative and transformative APIs to enterprises and developers worldwide. Together, we are not just building networks; we are laying the foundation for a smarter, more connected, and inclusive world in the AI era".

Mr Yuen Kuan Moon, Group Chief Executive Officer, Singtel, "This unified platform and global eco-system will enable even more developers and businesses to leverage 5G quality networks to exploit API opportunities using GSMA's open gateway principles. We look forward to helping even more enterprises and organizations in Asia to use network API solutions to drive growth and innovation through this timely collaboration".

José María Álvarez-Pallete, Chairman & CEO of Telefónica: "This collaboration will drive the GSMA Open Gateway initiative and provide customers with a consistent set of Camara APIs. Our belief is that this industry movement, which will be open to all networks, can set the stage for unprecedented innovation and value creation for the sector, by unlocking the potential of network capabilities".

Vicki Brady, CEO of Telstra: "This is a groundbreaking initiative for our industry. This new global venture will create an ecosystem that provides developers, partners and customers with access to programmable, advanced network capabilities that will unleash a new wave of innovation in digital services and further unlocks the benefits of our 5G network. We've been making good progress locally with Ericsson and other partners, and we look forward to further accelerating digital transformation for our Australian customers and bringing value and simplicity to application developers around the world".

Telefónica, S.A.
Dirección de Comunicación Corporativa
email: prensatelefonica@telefonica.com
telefonica.com/en/communication-room/press-room/

Ulf Ewaldsson, President of Technology, T-Mobile: "At T-Mobile, we've always been laser focused on championing change across the industry to create the best customer experiences, while fueling growth and innovation across the entire wireless ecosystem. That level of transformation takes unprecedented collaboration and expertise. We are excited about the possibilities this venture will create for developers and wireless customers around the world".

Joe Russo, EVP & President, Global Network and Technology of Verizon: "The depth and value of the services and data insights accessible through Verizon's renowned 5G network are practically boundless. Verizon has been at the forefront of developing various network APIs to assist developers in enhancing customer security, reducing pain points in customer interactions, and enabling the creation of novel experiences. This exciting collaboration with global partners will broaden the availability of these services and accelerate adoption of APIs worldwide".

Margherita Della Valle, Vodafone Group Chief Executive, said: "Network APIs are reshaping our industry. This pioneering partnership will enable businesses and developers to use the collective strength of our global networks to develop applications that drive growth, create jobs, and improve public services. Just as 4G and smartphones made apps integral to our everyday life, the power of our 5G network will stimulate the next wave of digital services".

Thomas Kurian, CEO of Google Cloud, said, "We understand the power of an open platform and ecosystem in driving innovation. We are proud to participate in this important partnership in the telco industry to create value for our global customers via network APIs – and ultimately deliver on the promise of the public cloud".

Niklas Heuveldop, CEO Vonage: "This groundbreaking, open industry collaboration effectively removes the single largest barrier for developers to leverage mobile networks to their full potential. Developers across the world's leading developer platforms will benefit from accessing advanced network capabilities in partner networks globally through common APIs, accelerating the digital transformation of businesses and the public sector. As one of the leading developer platforms, we look forward to engaging our developer community as we grow the network API business".