



NEWS RELEASE

Cisco and Airtel Team to Build India's Largest 5G-ready IP Network

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BARCELONA, Spain, Feb. 24, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- Mobile World Congress -- Cisco today announced its collaboration with Airtel to build India's largest 5G-ready, IP-based fully automated network. Together the companies will help Airtel deliver enhanced subscriber experiences and offer world-class high-speed mobile access for its customers across the country.

India is the world's second largest mobile communications market with more than 1.1 billion subscribers. The monthly data usage per smartphone in India is expected to increase from 3.5 GB in 2017 to 17.5 GB by 2022¹. This hypergrowth in network usage requires a new model for delivering services and connecting more end users while paving the path to 5G.

Airtel partners with Cisco Customer Experience to transform its network to extend reach, reliability and scalability that greatly enhances its customers' experiences, extends IP services to even deep rural markets and importantly, lay a solid foundation for evolution towards 5G. The network architecture is based on open network standards to simplify adoption by other operators, thereby enabling mobile access to more people throughout India.

Airtel's IP-based network architecture will enable new functionality, including segment routing, traffic engineering and ethernet VPN that helps ensure seamless interoperability and the ability to leverage existing investments in its MPLS-TP network. The fully-automated IP network architecture will also give Airtel the ability to enhance its services to SMBs and enterprises in urban centers and rural communities, including key growth verticals such as Smart Cities, IoT, Utilities, Manufacturing, Agriculture and Retail.

"As part of Project Leap, Airtel has built a world-class network that is ready to serve the explosive growth in high speed data services in a market with over one billion subscribers," said **Randeep Sekhon, CTO at Bharti Airtel**. "Partnering with Cisco will help us transform our network architecture to enhance customer experiences while concurrently preparing for 5G and the era of connected things."

"Cisco and Airtel share a vision for simplification through automation, and are working closely to define mobile networking best practices that will support its growth plans," said **Jonathan Davidson, senior vice president and general manager, Service Provider Business, Cisco**. "With today's announcement, Airtel is marking key milestones in its network architecture transition to prepare the company for greater reach and scale and deliver quality services to mobile users in India- no matter their location."

Cisco is leading the disruption in the industry with its technology innovations in routing, 5G, subscriber experience (mobile, cable, fixed), automation, optical and optics. Together with its Customer Experience team of experts, Cisco enables service providers, media and web companies to reduce cost and complexity, helps scale and secure their networks, and grow their revenue.

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¹ Cisco Mobile Visual Networking Index (VNI) Forecast 2017-2022

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