6 key defining factors for WiFi as we gear up for 5G

- Fontech, the technology arm of Fon, highlights the most compelling opportunities and trends in the WiFi industry right now

20 MARCH 2018. MADRID. – 5G represents a telecommunications revolution rather than an evolution. But, in order for this revolution to take place, 5G will have to make use of a variety of different technologies in an ecosystem of heterogeneous networks. It won't be limited to mobile technology, but will include new as well as existing access technologies, including satellite, fiber, and WiFi.

Unlike 3G and 4G, where enhanced broadband was the only use case, 5G will address a broad range of new use cases from augmented reality to IoT and Smart Everything. WiFi will play an important role in this ecosystem, acting as the link between fixed and mobile networks. In this context, service providers must focus on improving existing WiFi services to ensure customer satisfaction and maintain market share, but they can also reap the benefits of offering a broader portfolio of services to existing clients, as well as meeting the needs of new verticals. Alex Puregger, CEO at Fon, highlights the top six current trends for WiFi players:

- **We have seen a boom in home WiFi solutions.** These solutions address customer experience issues, such as interference and coverage. Operators have just identified these issues and are starting to react accordingly. While OTT providers are already targeting the consumer segment, communication service providers (CSPs) are searching for solutions that will allow them to not only improve customer experience but also to maintain visibility and control over the experience of their subscribers.
- **WiFi has become vital in most enterprise environments and will continue to enable new ways of working.** The growing popularity of mobility initiatives such as BYOD presents a huge opportunity for providers of cloud-managed WiFi-as-a-service. In fact, according to the Wireless Broadband Alliance, the market for cloud-managed enterprise WLAN infrastructure and managed services is expected to triple from 2015-2020, growing from $1.1 billion to $3.3 billion.
- **The rise of machine learning algorithms is facilitating better WiFi connections.** More data is being processed, and algorithms that can learn, make predictions, or make decisions based on the inputs are key in order for service providers to extract value from it. This grants real-time monitoring of network performance, making it easier to identify issues as well as anticipate them and potentially implement corrective measures before a problem occurs.
- **CSPs are becoming digital companies with an increasing range of services.** Operators are using WiFi value-added services to target new verticals such as IoT, Smart Cities, MDUs, and transport. In addition to offering new, innovative services to end users, digitization means delivering these services in a way that gives the end user more visibility and control over their management, for example through easy-to-use apps.
- **Selling managed guest WiFi services to businesses and venues represents an exponential opportunity for growth**. This represents a significant revenue opportunity for CSPs and gives them the chance to further engage with high-value enterprise customers. In addition to providing connectivity, they want to gain valuable insights about their own customers by offering guest WiFi services.
- **WiFi is enabling cost-effective MVNO approaches and improved customer satisfaction through increased coverage.** WiFi has an increasingly important role within the MVNO scope. Operators in the US are already broadly using WiFi networks to enable WiFi-First strategies, and this is picking up speed in other regions too. MNOs and MVNOs can also use WiFi to increase coverage, especially indoors, and therefore provide a better

The WiFi industry isn't static. In fact, it's continuously evolving towards more powerful standards such as 802.11ax and 802.11ay. As our collective demand for connectivity rises, WiFi will remain an essential technology that enables service providers to meet the needs of their clients and customers in a cost-effective way. It will also open the door to many additional revenue opportunities. Operators and enterprises interested in taking advantage of the benefits of WiFi must look for a reliable and agile technology provider, such as Fontech, with the expertise and ability to deploy flexible WiFi solutions fast.

About Fontech

Fontech, the technology arm of Fon, makes managing and operating WiFi smart and simple for operators and enterprises. Our portfolio of software-based solutions and team of experts empower our clients to deliver carrier-grade WiFi services in a secure, scalable, and uniquely flexible way, enabling an exceptional WiFi experience for their customers. We are the trusted WiFi software provider to top-tier global telcos and enterprises such as the Deutsche Telekom Group, SoftBank, Telstra, and Vodafone Group. More information at fontech.com

Fon is the global WiFi network. We pioneered residential WiFi sharing over a decade ago and, together with leading telcos, we've built the world's largest WiFi community of over 21 million hotspots. We are experts in keeping people seamlessly connected by aggregating residential and prime public WiFi footprints, as well as facilitating interconnection between WiFi networks. Our global clients include AT&T, British Telecom, Eurona, KPN, Proximus, Travel Club, and Virgin Mobile. Discover more at fon.com

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