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Ericsson Ramps Focus on Enterprise Wireless Solutions

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Ericsson Invests in Enterprise Solutions

At its recent Analyst Day event, Ericsson laid out updated details regarding the company's evolutionary push, turning from its deep wireless communications and service provider heritage toward solving the wireless networking needs of enterprises large and small. The new solution lineup is hitting the market at a time when TechTarget's Enterprise Strategy Group is seeing rapidly increasing interest in 5G, both for wireless WAN and private cellular networking. The new three-part Ericsson Enterprise product strategy provides important new choices for enterprises considering cellular networking options for both inside and outside their perimeters.

Enterprise Wireless Networking Solutions From a Wireless Stalwart

Ericsson goes back to the earliest days of communications technologies, having been founded in 1876. During the past century and a half, it became a mainstay supplier of all manner of communications equipment to the telephony and telecommunications provider sector, including a heavy focus on mobile communications over the past few decades. This has helped the company build a rich and proven background in cellular networking, including both 4G LTE and 5G standards. Ericsson is so pervasive in mobile communications today that it claims nearly half of all 5G communications worldwide (not including China) run on Ericsson networks.

While Ericsson has long had enterprise-oriented solutions within its extensive portfolio of solutions, a recent strategic shift has increased focus on moving to the leading edge by way of two key acquisitions: Cradlepoint, acquired in 2020, and Ericom, acquired in 2023. The products and technologies offered by these two companies put Ericsson squarely in the competitive mix for secure wireless networking solutions for the enterprise.

In late 2024, the Cradlepoint and Ericom brand names were fully folded under the Ericsson brand as part of the preexisting Enterprise Wireless Solutions business unit. The new business is composed of three pillars, each addressing a specific set of wireless network needs. They are:

- Ericsson Cradlepoint Wireless WAN routers and adapters for 5G and LTE connectivity, including embedded local Wi-Fi and Power over Ethernet support.
- Ericsson Enterprise 5G for private cellular network infrastructure and neutral host coverage extension.
- Ericsson NetCloud software, including NetCloud Manager for cloud-based management and orchestration, and NetCloud Secure Access Service Edge (SASE) for cloud-based security and software-defined WAN (SD-WAN) services.

Importantly, Ericsson will leverage a multichannel strategy to reach enterprise clients with these solutions, building on its long-standing carrier relationships, as well as the significant enterprise-facing channel network that was inherited as a result of the Cradlepoint acquisition.

Enterprise Strategy Group Analysis

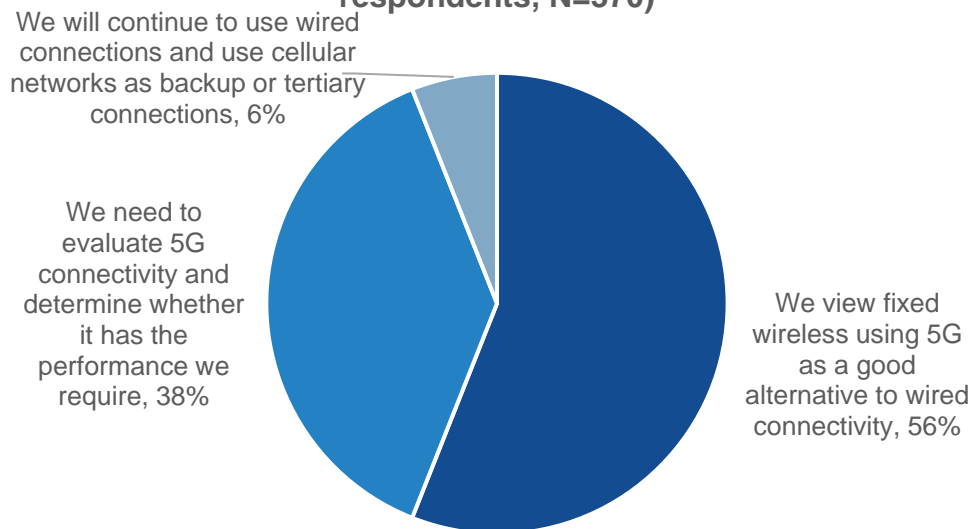
Ericsson’s new alignment of enterprise solutions will help it to leverage its service provider heritage, rather than be constrained by it. Ericsson has helped to make 5G a reliable and ubiquitous communications technology and is in an excellent position to take that strength and apply it to the somewhat different needs of enterprises.

For instance, making cloud-based management tools such as Ericsson NetCloud Manager available for configuring, monitoring, managing, and upgrading 5G wireless networking gear is an important step in making 5G technology more accessible and usable by enterprise organizations. NetCloud Manager now includes AIOps functions for fault detection, isolation, root cause analysis, and recommended remediation, as well as APIs for integrating with other management systems—all high priorities for enterprise operations teams.

Recent Enterprise Strategy Group research found that interest in private 5G networks and 5G fixed wireless access technologies is significant. As one example, most organizations (56%) now view 5G fixed wireless access as a viable alternative to wired connectivity for edge environments (see Figure 1).¹ For those organizations that have fully deployed a private 5G network, that majority rises to 73%, indicating that 5G networking technologies are meeting or exceeding most expectations.

Figure 1. 5G Fixed Wireless Access Is Now in the Mainstream for Internet Connectivity

Which of the following best describes your organization’s approach to using 5G for public fixed wireless access (FWA) as a primary connection at your edge environments? (Percent of respondents, N=370)



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

That same research found that neutral host mobile networking, which is a means for improving mobile communications efficacy for several carriers within closed or limited coverage areas, is a top five priority for enterprises.² In addition to representing a fully functional alternative to Wi-Fi for wireless LAN, Ericsson’s private 5G networking solutions can also deliver a multi-operator radio access network (MORAN) solution that massively simplifies the infrastructure and costs required for successfully deploying neutral host.

¹ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Complete Survey Results, [Private 5G: Inside the Progress and Opportunity](#), May 2024.

² Ibid.

Ultimately, the potential is interesting, but real examples are the gold standard. At the Analyst Day event, Ericsson invited one of its channel partners to discuss the results of a project that involved the deployment of a private 5G network. In short, the use case was a supply warehouse, which was using Wi-Fi to track mobile equipment as it moved around the site, managing inventory and fulfilling materials requests. Due to the motion involved, the equipment kept losing connection with the Wi-Fi network, resulting in operational downtime costing more than \$100,000 per hour. The partner deployed an Ericsson Private 5G network, which required only two cellular access points to replace 39 Wi-Fi access points and fully eliminated the downtime issues.

Conclusion

Two trends are converging to make this topic directly relevant to enterprises. First, across the industry, network refreshes and expansions are in planning or in process, driven in no small part by the looming wave of new AI technology and the desire to move AI out to the edge. Second, there is a surging and active interest in 5G as a networking technology for private networking as well as wireless internet access and SD-WAN/SASE. Add to that the permanent demand for cost-effective, neutral host options, and Ericsson's new Enterprise Wireless Solutions portfolio is perfectly aligned to help organizations meet their future-focused needs.

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