



Network X

by informa...

13-15th October 2026

VIECON, Vienna, Austria

AI-Driven Network Transformation: Insights from Industry Leaders

How European Telcos Are Deploying AI Across RAN, Transport, Fibre, and Home Networks

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NETWORK X

Foreword

As we approach Network X 2026, the telecommunications industry stands at a pivotal moment. Artificial intelligence has moved from experimental pilot to production deployment across every layer of network infrastructure—from the radio access network to the home router.

This eBook captures insights from telco operator executives and industry experts who shared their experiences at Network X 2025 in Paris and through extensive research conducted by Omdia, Heavy Reading, and other leading analyst firms. What emerges is a clear picture: AI is already delivering measurable value in energy savings, operational efficiency, and customer experience—but significant challenges around trust, skills, and economic viability remain.

The conversations documented here represent the cutting edge of telecom AI deployment. Operators like **NTT Docomo**, **Telus**, **CityFibre**, **Liberty Global**, and **A1 Telekom Austria** are sharing not just their successes, but their concerns and unanswered questions. This transparency is essential as the industry navigates the transition from AI experimentation to AI-native infrastructure.

Network X 2026 will build on these discussions, bringing together more than 5,500+ telecom leaders in Vienna to address the next wave of challenges: Optical upgrades, 6G preparation, hyperscaler partnerships, sustainability imperatives, and the fundamental question of who captures value in the AI-driven network ecosystem.

I invite you to join us in Vienna this October to be part of these critical conversations.



Chris Lycett, Event Director

Network X

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About Network X 2026

Network X is Europe's premier event for telecommunications infrastructure leaders, bringing together operators, vendors, and technology innovators to address the industry's most pressing challenges.

- **Dates:** 13-15 October 2026
- **Location:** VIECON, Vienna, Austria
- **Expected Attendance:** 5,500+ Attendees, 1,500+ Telco Operators
- **Focus Areas:** Mobile Networks, Fibre Infrastructure, Wi-Fi & Home Networks, Data Centre Connectivity, IP & Optical Transport

Why Attend?

- **25+ keynote presentations** from telco operator CTOs and technology leaders
- **150+ technical sessions** across 6 specialised tracks
- Exhibition featuring **150+ leading** vendors and solution providers
- **Networking opportunities** with peers facing similar infrastructure challenges
- **Hands-on demonstrations** of AI-powered network management platforms

Who Attends: Network X attracts C-level executives, CTOs, network architects, and infrastructure planners from communications service providers, cable operators, wholesale network providers, and technology vendors across Europe and globally.

AI in Fibre

How European Telco Execs Are Making AI Pay Off in Fibre Networks

European telecom execs share their views on using AI to shave opex costs in their fibre networks as well as challenges such as education and data sharing.

Featured in This Article

- David Tomalin, Group CTO, **CityFibre**
- Alexander Brait, Head of Network & Infrastructure Strategy, **A1 Telekom Austria**

Across Europe, communication service providers (CSPs) are speaking out about how they are practically putting AI to work in their fibre networks. Rising AI-driven traffic, tightening capex, pressure to modernize ageing plant, and yes AI hype are prompting them to analyze if AI really saves money, will frontline teams use it, and how to approach data sharing and other challenges.

The good news is that carriers are using AI for a wide range of operational improvements, including to better predict and troubleshoot problems and reduce human error. CTO David Tomalin of CityFibre, a wholesale UK fiber network operator, discussed this on the panel [AI in Fixed-Line Networks](#) at Network X 2025 in Paris. CityFibre is using visual AI reviewing installation photos, and predictive tools flagging faults before they cause outages.

Tomalin's panel also discussed some challenges such winning over field teams who see automation as a threat rather than a tool and closing the skills gap needed to integrate AI into legacy multi-vendor systems.

Some of the latest carrier thinking on AI in fibre networks is going to be shared at Network X 2026 in Vienna, October 13-15, on a panel featuring Alexander Brait of A1 Telekom Austria called Future-Proofing Fibre: GPON Standardisation, AI Integration & Convergence, as well as other fibre infrastructure issues ([Register here](#)).

Let's look at the latest AI in fibre networks trends from telecom experts and from recent conversations with CSP infrastructure executives.

Top Carrier Issues With AI in Fibre Networks

- Can operators actually prove AI pays for itself? Carriers are already saving Opex costs using AI to troubleshoot problems, reduce error, and speed up installation times.
- Will frontline teams actually adopt it? Smart carriers are spending time educating their infrastructure teams and partners on using AI.
- Who controls the data, and who gets to see it? Sharing with aligned wholesale partners is one calculation; sharing outside that circle, where it aids a competitor, is another.

AI in Fibre

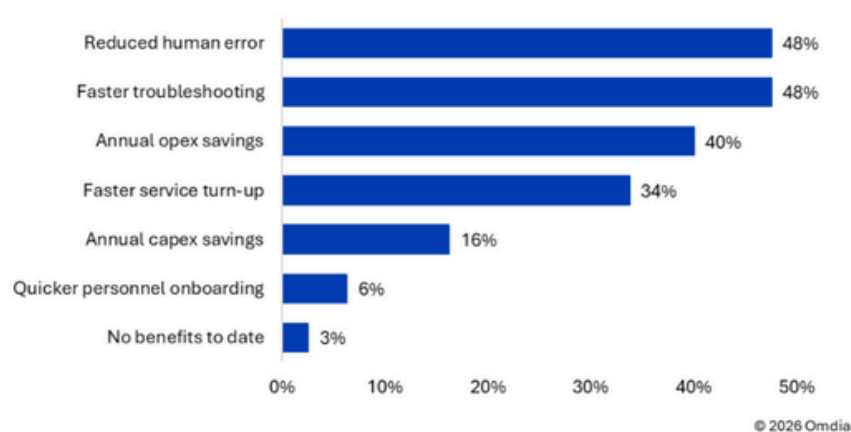
How European Telco Execs Are Making AI Pay Off in Fibre Networks

What does the research show about AI impact in carrier fibre networks?

Data and interviews of carrier executives show they are bullish on the potential of using AI to improve their fibre networks. And that will be important because of their big worry that their networks will not be able to scale with the increased bandwidth expected from AI-driven traffic.

AI is moving from pilot to routine in transport network operations. In an Omdia survey of 80 CSPs, run with Ciena and Cisco in November 2025, 12% said AI is already a routine part of daily transport-network operations and planning, and a further 24% expect that within a year. The leading benefits operators cite are fewer human errors and faster troubleshooting (48% each), followed by opex savings (40%). ([Omdia/Ciena, Mar 2026](#)).

To date, what are the most significant benefits of AI for your transport network operations? (Select up to three)



n=80
Source: Omdia

Network Optimization and Performance Monitoring. Heavy Reading/Omdia analyst Sterling Perrin notes in this report that carriers are using digital twins (virtual copies of the physical network), potentially to validate the use of Agentic AI recommendations before they are implemented in a live network. Use of digital twins was critical for network optimization and performance modeling.

Optical networks aren't ready for increased AI-traffic demands. In an August 2025 survey of 77 fixed, mobile, converged, and cable network operators by Heavy Reading and Ciena, only 16% called their optical networks "very ready" for AI; 40% said they were only "somewhat ready," with much work remaining, and 5% said their networks weren't ready at all. ([Telecoms.com, Aug 2025](#)). Capex constraints and network management complexity were the CSPs leading barriers to AI readiness, the survey said.

AI in Fibre

How European Telco Execs Are Making AI Pay Off in Fibre Networks

Where are CSPs are using AI to drive cost savings in fibre networks?

All panelists on the [AI in Fixed-Line Networks](#) session, including Tomalin, Jeremy Chelot, CEO of Netomnia (a UK fibre network), and Dr. Sunil Piyarlall of Openserve (a fibre wholesaler in South Africa) agreed that AI is already delivering significant cost savings in infrastructure operations, particularly in build-out, installation, and maintenance.

CityFibre's Tomalin talked about shifting from sample-based checks to 100% automated quality assurance has reduced rework, accelerated contractor payments, and improved first-time-right performance using an AI-powered vision platform.

In a [case study](#) published by IQGeo, CityFibre used to rely on manual audits by field engineers and contractors. But managers reviewed just 20% of installations, spending up to 60 minutes per audit and resulted in discrepancies between field data and system records.

Now CityFibre's engineers capture fibre installation images before and after their work. The platform analyzes every photo in real-time to ensure stringent quality standards are met, flagging any deviations instantly. The result was a 92% decrease in QA time with AI automatically checks 100% of photos, leaving only problematic cases for human review. The system now catches installation mismatches in real time, not after a fault.

Neil McRae, CTIO of CityFibre, also talked to [TelecomTV](#) about how AI is allowing network engineers to speed up installations by using voice to check-off key installation tasks vs. time-consuming form filling on iPads. He also talked about AI to improve processes. "I think that everything we do in telco there will be an AI or old fashioned automation opportunity to improve the experience," McRae said.

The [Network X panel](#) agreed that AI-driven network observability is getting better. Operators are using performance data to identify micro-faults, predict degradation, and schedule proactive maintenance, for example, replacing filters before they impact service quality. However, group emphasized that AI's effectiveness is constrained by data availability and quality.

Will telco teams actually adopt AI for use on fibre networks?

A key challenge identified by the [Network X panel](#) were skills shortages and the complexity of integrating AI into legacy, multi-vendor networks. Operators building their own OSS/BSS stacks to move faster are concerned that every new AI capability can theoretically touch the entire system architecture.

These operators also noted that engineers may perceive automation as a threat. Reframing AI as a tool that improves efficiency and earnings such as faster payment cycles for contractors who met quality thresholds confirmed by AI was suggested.

McRae, CityFibre's CTIO agreed. "I think the biggest challenge is mindset," he told [Telecom TV](#). That's why CityFibre built an internal AI hub on Microsoft Copilot — a low-risk way in for CityFibre employees to start learning about AI.

AI in Data Centre

The Questions Telco Execs and Experts are Asking about AI in the Data Centre and Transport Network

As AI traffic reshapes bandwidth, power and latency demands, carriers are racing to keep pace with hyperscaler-scale growth and use AI itself to help them do it.

Network X 2026 runs 13–15 October in Vienna. [Register now](#). Operators and vendors will be there to talk about what's next for AI in the data centre and transport network.

Inside data centres and across the transport links that connect them, operators are now re-architecting power and automation policy in near real time, just to keep pace with hyperscaler demand.

The key questions that Communications Service Provider (CSP) executives are asking include: Can transport networks absorb AI-scale traffic growth without a costly rebuild? How much of that network is a CSP willing to let AI run and power down on its own? And can carriers capture a share of the AI infrastructure boom that today mostly flows to hyperscalers and their suppliers?

At Network X 2025 in Paris, Omdia's Ian Redpath, Research Director for Transport Networks and Components, opened the IP Transport & Network Convergence track with a picture of an industry mid-buildout. The top four cloud providers' combined capex was projected to near \$350 billion for 2025, with Amazon alone at roughly \$100 billion, and EMEA data centre capacity was on track to grow from 29 GW today to 47 GW within three years.

Fibre construction was picking up in ways the industry hadn't seen in a generation, and more than 500 new “AI shelters” are replacing amplifier huts that were never built to carry AI-era loads. Carriers such as Lumen are already installing them, Redpath said. AI is driving a vast ecosystem, he added, that runs from enterprise data lakes through the “AI middle mile” to gigawatt-scale training campuses, and a holistic view of it is now critical for anyone planning data centre and transport capacity.

Here's what the latest research and these carrier conversations reveal about where AI in the data centre and transport network is actually paying off, and where operators would like to go next.

Execs and Experts Featured in This Article

- **Ian Redpath**, Research Director, Transport Networks and Components, **Omdia**—[view speaker profile](#)
- **Hayrullah Kolukisaoglu**, IP Network Principal, **Turkcell**—[view speaker profile](#)
- **Sterling Perrin**, Senior Principal Analyst, **Heavy Reading**—[read the survey findings](#)

The Questions Telco Execs and Experts are Asking about AI in the Data Centre and Transport Network

What does the research show about AI's impact on the data centre and transport network?

A Heavy Reading survey of 77 network operator executives, published in August 2025, put numbers on the gap between expectation and readiness (TelecomTV). Twenty-nine percent of operators expect AI to make up more than half of their long-haul traffic within three years, and 18% expect the same for metro traffic. Yet only 16% called their networks "very ready" for that demand, and a further 39% said they were ready but still had work to do. North American operators were notably less confident than the rest of the world (44% ready or very ready, against 68% elsewhere), even though they face some of the earliest AI traffic growth. Capex constraints, thin management buy-in and security concerns were the top-cited obstacles.

What Carrier Execs Are Asking About AI in the Data Centre and Transport Network

Can the network handle the traffic?

Operators expect AI to dominate long-haul and metro traffic within three years, but Heavy Reading's research shows readiness lagging expectation, especially in North America.

Can operators trust AI to act on live infrastructure?

Agentic AI scores highest for troubleshooting and live optimization, but accuracy and reliability concerns mean most CSPs are staging autonomy with guardrails rather than removing humans from the loop.

Omdia followed up with its own survey of 80 qualified CSP respondents, fielded in November 2025 with Ciena and Cisco. It found AI already routine in daily transport operations at 12% of operators; another 24% expect to reach that point within a year, and 45% more within one to three years. Asked why, operators pointed to fewer human errors and faster troubleshooting (48% each) and lower opex (40%). Digital twins drew the sharpest interest as a specific technology, rated most valuable for network optimization and traffic engineering (46%) and for performance monitoring (43%) ([Light Reading](#)).

Where are operators finding real value in the network today?

Much of it centres on turning predictive traffic models into power savings. AI doesn't treat every router as always-on. Instead, it can target specific components, such as ports and fabric units, for localized energy savings. It analyzes traffic patterns to anticipate demand shifts, then moves hardware in and out of sleep modes before it's needed.

The architectural catch, as Turkcell's IP Network Principal Hayrullah Kolukisaoglu frames it ahead of Network X 2026, is guaranteeing that power reduction never touches latency, throughput or reliability. The SLA has to survive contact with the energy-saving algorithm.

The Questions Telco Execs and Experts are Asking about AI in the Data Centre and Transport Network

Will operators trust AI to run the transport network without a human in the loop?

Sterling Perrin of Heavy Reading followed up with an Omdia survey on agentic AI specifically. It found 47% of CSPs expect agentic AI to become at least very important in transport networks, with the clearest use cases in troubleshooting assistance (55%), live performance optimization (50%) and on-demand natural-language reporting (45%) (Light Reading).

But 45% also named accuracy and reliability as their primary concern. The report put it bluntly: "The move from traditional AI to agentic systems requires a significant operational shift, and few network operators wish to remove humans from the loop entirely." Most CSPs are staging autonomy with guardrails and clear intervention points. Few plan to hand over the keys outright.

What's next for AI in the data centre and transport network at Network X 2026?

Ian Redpath returns to Vienna to chair the track again. He opens 13 October with an Analyst Welcome & Market Outlook, then joins panels on The Future of IP-Optical Convergence and Disaggregation and Open Networking: Balancing Innovation, Cost Control and Risk. He closes out on 15 October with a session that tackles the question hanging over the whole ecosystem: Telcos and Hyperscalers: Who Captures the Value in the AI Data Centre Ecosystem?

Turkcell's Hayrullah Kolukisaoglu delivers an Operator Address, AI Predictive Dynamic Energy Saving, in the IP and Optical Transport track on Thursday, 15 October, 14:00-14:20. He'll dig into granular power management and predictive traffic modeling, and the SLA safeguards operators will demand before they trust it in production. The same afternoon, the Data Centre Networks track runs its own Operator Address, Achieving Sustainability in Data Centre Networks, and closes with a Panel Discussion, The Future of Data Centre Connectivity: 2025-2030 Vision.

Network X 2026 runs 13-15 October at VIECON, Vienna. More than 5,500 telecom leaders are expected, spanning mobile, fibre, Wi-Fi and data centre networking. View the agenda and register to hear how operators are answering these questions in practice.

FAQs: AI in the Data Centre and Transport Network

- **Where is AI improving data centre and transport network performance today?** Digital twins for traffic engineering and performance monitoring, and predictive power management that targets individual router components, are the two use cases operators rate most valuable right now, per Omdia's November 2025 CSP survey.
- **What's the biggest obstacle to broader AI adoption in the transport network?** Readiness. A Heavy Reading survey found only 16% of operators call their networks "very ready" for AI-scale traffic growth, and trust is the other gate: most CSPs want a human in the loop before agentic AI acts autonomously on live infrastructure.
- **Where can telecom leaders discuss AI in the data centre and transport network in person?** Network X 2026 in Vienna hosts an Operator Address on AI Predictive Dynamic Energy Saving on Thursday, 15 October, 14:00-14:20, in the IP and Optical Transport track. View the session and register to join the conversation.

AI in the RAN

What Telco Execs Really Think about AI-RAN in Their Networks

Telecom executives are sorting out where AI genuinely improves radio access network performance today, and how much control they're willing to hand it.

Network X 2026 runs 13–15 October in Vienna. Register now — operators and vendors will be there to talk about what's next for AI in the RAN.

Communications service providers (CSPs) are asking hard questions about AI in the mobile RAN — the radio access network. Which use cases actually move the needle? Where should the intelligence physically sit? And how much control are operators willing to hand to an algorithm making real-time decisions on a live network?

At Network X 2025 in Paris, CSP execs on the AI-RAN: Redefining Network Opportunities panel said AI-driven anomaly detection and predictive analytics are becoming essential to extracting maximum value from network investments.

Carrier Execs Featured in This Article

- **Dr. Yue Wang, Chief Technologist, Network and AI, China Telecom** — [view speaker profile](#)
- **Bernard Bureau, VP, Wireless Strategy & Services, Telus** — [view speaker profile](#)
- **Takehiro Nakamura, Chief Standardisation Officer, NTT Docomo** — [view speaker profile](#)

These executives made the case in Paris and after. Telus's Bernard Bureau, VP of Wireless Strategy & Services, laid out what's already working at Network X Americas 2026. Telus can “predict how customers are perceiving network experience,” he said, using AI for anomaly detection and network observability, then pushing remedial actions straight into the network. He also described a federated AI model layered on centralized data engineering — Telus's way of scaling AI use cases without losing control of them (Rakuten Symphony, Jul 2026).

China Telecom's Dr. Yue Wang, the operator's chief technologist for network and AI, argued in mid-2026 that today's telecom architectures weren't built for AI workloads. They need restructuring, she said, around what she calls network-compute orchestration: “the ability to orchestrate the network and compute together to support the new AI services we face today.” (RCR Wireless, Jun 2026).

Some of that same debate returns at Network X 2026 in Vienna, October 13-15, where NTT Docomo's Chief Standardisation Officer Takehiro Nakamura headlines an Operator Address titled What's Actually Scaling in AI Across the RAN Today? in the Mobile Networks track ([Register here](#)).

Here's what the latest research and these carrier conversations reveal about where AI in the RAN is actually paying off, and where operators are still holding back.

AI in the RAN

What Telco Execs Really Think about AI-RAN in Their Networks

What does the research show about AI's impact on the RAN?

Operators are increasingly convinced AI-native RAN infrastructure is coming, even if the timeline is fuzzy. In a Heavy Reading Platforms for Future RAN Systems Operator Survey sponsored by Fujitsu, 80% said new AI and generative AI applications will demand AI-native RAN platforms, and 82% expect shared AI-and-RAN infrastructure before 6G lands around 2030 — yet only 23% expect real deployments before the end of 2026. Asked what benefits they expect, operators put improved RAN performance and spectral efficiency first (65%), followed by cost-optimized operations (58%) and enhanced coverage (48%); 54% said AI would make multi-vendor RAN deployments more likely, not less (Light Reading, Feb 2025).

What are the Top Carrier Issues with AI in the RAN?

Is AI-RAN worth the capex?

Operators are split: centralized AI for energy savings and fault detection already pays off; GPU-native compute at every cell site is still an open economic question.

Can operators trust AI to act autonomously?

Explainability and human-in-the-loop governance remain prerequisites before AI gets more control over live networks, particularly in Europe.

Where should the intelligence live?

Edge, core, or both — vendors and operators don't yet agree, and site-level economics (power, space, security) are forcing the debate.

A separate Heavy Reading survey of 115 CSPs, sponsored by VIAVI Solutions, Google Cloud, and Broadcom's VeloCloud, found operators already running AI in production single out RAN performance, especially proactive fault detection and dynamic resource allocation, as a leading payoff area, even as edge and MEC use cases lag (Light Reading, March 2025). Dell'Oro projects cumulative AI-RAN revenue will reach \$35 billion between 2026 and 2030, up from an earlier \$10-billion-by-2029 estimate (Light Reading; Telecoms.com). Omdia lists AI-RAN as one of three defining RAN trends to watch in 2026, alongside 5G monetization and 6G groundwork.

Where are operators finding real value from AI in the RAN today?

Per the Network X 2025 panel, the most mature AI-RAN use cases remain centralized “AI for RAN”: energy savings, capacity planning, anomaly detection, and increasingly fast root-cause analysis, driven by the complexity of managing dense, multi-band, multi-vendor networks (Network X). Some operators are pushing further: SoftBank says a Transformer-based AI model lifted 5G uplink throughput by 30%, up from 20% with its earlier CNN model, using existing hardware and a pure software upgrade — a concrete AI-for-RAN win that doesn't require a forklift replacement (Telecoms.com, August 2025). Momentum is visible industry-wide, too: Vodafone joined the AI-RAN Alliance as its 100th member in mid-2025, pledging to use AI to optimize its Open RAN deployments, even as the two-year-old alliance is still moving from membership growth to concrete deliverables (Telecoms.com, July 2025).

AI in the RAN

What Telco Execs Really Think about AI-RAN in Their Networks

Will operators trust AI enough to give it more control?

Trust remains the sticking point. At that same Paris session — moderated by [James Kirby](#) of Analysys Mason, with Nokia's [Ari Kynäslähti](#) and Intel's Udayan Mukherjee joining Wang and Bureau on stage — panelists said operator confidence in autonomous, AI-driven network changes, especially in Europe, is still limited by concerns about transparency and explainability. Operators want to know why an AI model recommended an action, and what alternatives it considered, before the change touches a live network.

Human-in-the-loop governance and digital twins that let operators test AI decisions in a safe virtual environment before deployment were cited as necessary bridges. The panel's closing consensus, as recapped on the [Network X news and insights hub](#): AI-RAN is “transitioning from experimentation to strategic necessity,” but only if operators resolve trust, distributed-compute cost, and interoperability challenges first.

How far out on the edge network should AI-RAN be located?

Orange CTO Bruno Zerbib pushed back on the dominant AI-RAN vision of GPU-equipped compute at the base of every mast. “Having like 20 or 30 or 40 [GPU sites] deployed in Paris? I don't think that makes sense,” he said, citing GPU cost, total cost of ownership, and the security risk of parking valuable compute in unprotected roadside cabinets in a market that has already dealt with copper theft.

Nvidia has since pivoted toward an “AI Grid” strategy spreading GPUs across roughly 100,000 distributed network data centers rather than concentrating them at 7 million individual RAN sites — closer to what the industry calls AI-core than AI-RAN (Light Reading, March 2026).

What's next for AI in the RAN at Network X 2026?

These questions — how much AI belongs at the edge, and how much operators will trust it with — return to the stage in Vienna. NTT Docomo's Takehiro Nakamura opens the Mobile Networks track's AI conversation with an Operator Address on what is actually scaling in AI across the RAN today, running Tuesday, 13 October, 16:00–16:20. Network X 2026 runs 13–15 October at VIECON, Vienna, drawing more than 5,500 telecom leaders across mobile, fibre, Wi-Fi, and data centre networking. View the agenda and register to hear how operators in Europe and leading CSPs around the world are answering these questions in practice.

FAQs: AI in the RAN

- **Where in the network is AI improving RAN performance?** AI in the RAN is driving RAN performance. Centralized “AI for RAN” use cases, including energy savings, anomaly detection, and capacity planning, are in production today, and Heavy Reading survey data shows operators expect measurable spectral-efficiency and coverage gains. GPU-native AI-RAN, where AI workloads run inside distributed units, is still mostly pilots, and some operators, including Orange, are openly skeptical it scales economically at every cell site.
- **What's the biggest obstacle to broader AI-RAN adoption?** Trust and cost. Operators want explainability before letting AI make autonomous changes to a live network, and the industry is still debating whether GPU compute belongs at the base of every mast or centralized in fewer, larger sites.
- **Where can telecom leaders discuss AI-RAN in person?** Network X 2026 in Vienna hosts an Operator Address on AI-RAN scaling with NTT Docomo's Takehiro Nakamura on Tuesday, 13 October, 16:00–16:20, in the Mobile Networks track. [View the session and register](#) to join the conversation.

AI on the Home Network

What Telco Execs Really Think About AI on the Home Network

Carriers are already using voice agents and agentic AI to turn proactive, self-healing Wi-Fi management into fewer truck rolls. Now they're eyeing AI as broadband's next revenue line.

Network X 2026 runs 13–15 October in Vienna. Register now — operators and vendors will be there to talk about what's next for AI on the home network.

Communications service providers (CSPs) are asking hard questions about AI in the home network: the router, the mesh nodes, and the dozens of connected devices sitting in a customer's living room.

Among them: Which use cases actually cut truck rolls and churn? How much troubleshooting is a CSP willing to hand to an algorithm making real-time changes inside someone's home? And can AI turn a commodity broadband pipe into a monetizable smart home platform?

At Network X 2025 in Paris, Liberty Global's Mark Kinlen, VP, Platform Architecture, pointed to three converging forces that can simplify the digital home including customer-facing voice agents, agentic AI, and gradual smart home standardization.

In his operator keynote, "Improving In-Home Network Performance and Smart Home Monetisation with Wi-Fi Technology," Kinlen said the value of AI shows up once LLMs are embedded inside agentic frameworks that can reason and act across telco systems. The objective, in Kinlen's framing, is hyper-automation paired with logic and explainability at machine speed, so care and service workflows get faster without becoming a black box (Network X).

Some of that same debate returns at Network X 2026 in Vienna, October 13-15, where Vodafone's Oscar Gallego, Director of Home Technology & Products Group Networks, opens the WiFi Networks & Services track with an Operator Address, Transforming Home Routers into Smart Home Command Centers ([Register here](#)).

Here's what the latest research and these carrier conversations reveal about where AI on the home network is actually paying off, and where operators would like to go next.

Carrier Execs Featured in This Article

- **Mark Kinlen, VP, Platform Architecture, Liberty Global** — [read the Network X 2025 session recap](#)
- **Oscar Gallego, Director of Home Technology & Products Group Networks, Vodafone** — [view speaker profile](#)
- **Fabrizio Campanale, VP Network Operations, TV & In-Home Engineering, Sunrise** — [view speaker profile](#)

AI on the Home Network

What Telco Execs Really Think About AI on the Home Network

What does the research show about AI's impact on the home network?

The most specific data yet on this question comes from a September 2025 report Omdia produced for the Broadband Form called The Future of the Connected Home which surveyed 116 broadband service provider executives across 32 countries plus 13 in-depth interviews.

According to the survey results, 74% ranked AI as important or very important to their connected home strategy, a third had already deployed it in production broadband services, and another 56% planned to within a year.

What are the Top Carrier Issues with AI on the Home Network?

Does AI actually cut cost?

Centralized Wi-Fi management is already mainstream and self-healing pilots point to fewer truck rolls and support calls, but cost, complexity, and skills gaps still hold back roughly a fifth of operators.

Can operators trust AI to act inside a customer's home?

Explainability and auditability are the design requirement, not an afterthought. Liberty Global's Mark Kinlen argues agentic AI must be able to reason and act with logic operators can inspect before it touches a live home network, echoing the same trust gap seen in the RAN.

Where's the new revenue?

Broadband speeds are climbing far faster than ARPU, and operators are still working out how AI-enabled smart home services — not just faster Wi-Fi — become a paid tier. debate.

Asked to prioritize AI use cases, operators put network traffic optimization first and Wi-Fi performance and optimization second, ahead of customer support chatbots and energy management. The report singles out adaptive Wi-Fi as the most promising immediate use of AI. Report author and Omdia Senior Research Director Michael Philpott found operators are focused on reducing fragmentation at the chipset, CPE, and software-platform level which “helps drive greater innovation.”

AI on the Home Network

What Telco Execs Really Think About AI on the Home Network

Where are operators finding real value from AI in the home network today?

Liberty Globals Kinlen noted in the Paris session that front-line care agents often juggle 20 to 40 data points across multiple screens despite years of IT investment. He said customers blame their provider for in-home performance issues no matter the root cause, whether it's building materials, neighboring RF conditions, or a household's own mismatched smart devices.

His prescription was agentic AI that consolidates that context automatically, recommends actions, and supports triage. That requires controlled openness, which he said included agent-to-agent protocols, the right data exposed at the right layer, and clear pathways from customer-facing assistants into the operational stack. It also requires cross-ecosystem collaboration spanning silicon, CPE, middleware, and back-office systems, since no single operator can standardize the smart home alone (Network X).

Will operators let AI touch the home network without a human in the loop?

Broadband Forum CEO Craig Thomas, speaking to the Network X Content Council, said agentic AI is essential if operators want AI's full benefit inside the home: "If you're going to have the full benefits of AI, the agentic AI is critical, so it can make its own decisions autonomously, so that if there's something wrong with the Wi-Fi, for example inside the home, it can make those changes there and then without actually having a third party human interface" (Network X).

Wireless Broadband Alliance CEO Tiago Rodrigues pointed to quality-of-service and quality-of-experience data as the area already delivering the clearest wins for the end-user device. Counterpoint Research's Marc Einstein flagged Wi-Fi sensing (turning the router into a home security and health-monitoring device) as the next frontier operators are building on top of the network itself (Network X).

What's next for AI on the home network at Network X 2026?

Kinlen's call for cross-ecosystem collaboration and auditable AI returns to the stage in Vienna. Vodafone's Oscar Gallego opens the WiFi Networks & Services track on 13 October with an Operator Address on turning home routers into smart home command centers. Next comes a panel on customer retention with Omdia's Michael Philpott and Sky Italia's Giuseppe Galeone.

The track's headline session, Panel Discussion: AI-Driven Proactive Network Management, runs 15:40-16:20 and brings together Philpott, Gallego, Sunrise's Fabrizio Campanale (VP Network Operations, TV & In-Home Engineering), and Wi-Fi Alliance VP of Marketing Jeff Platon to dig into systems that can reallocate bandwidth for a detected gaming session without user input, and self-healing networks that cut truck rolls and support calls.

Vodafone's Ivo Buljevic closes the track's AI conversation with an address on monetization beyond speed. That sets up a final panel on value-added services with BT Group's Hassan Jaafar. Network X 2026 runs 13-15 October at VIECON, Vienna. More than 5,500 telecom leaders are expected across mobile, fibre, Wi-Fi, and data centre networking. View the agenda and register to hear how operators across Europe are answering these questions in practice.

AI on the Home Network

What Telco Execs Really Think About AI on the Home Network

FAQs: AI on the Home Network

- **Where is AI improving home network performance today?** AI is driving proactive Wi-Fi management and, per Liberty Global's Mark Kinlen, a shift toward voice agents and agentic AI as the interface for a fragmented smart home. It's already helping carriers cut truck rolls and resolve issues before a customer notices.
- **What's the biggest obstacle to broader AI adoption on the home network?** Trust and revenue are the big ones. Operators want a human in the loop before AI acts autonomously inside a customer's home, and Omdia's research shows broadband speeds are rising far faster than ARPU. That leaves CSPs searching for how AI-enabled smart home services translate into new revenue rather than just lower support costs.
- **Where can telecom leaders discuss AI on the home network in person?** Network X 2026 in Vienna hosts Panel Discussion: AI-Driven Proactive Network Management on Tuesday, 13 October, 15:40-16:20, in the WiFi Networks & Services track. [View the session and register](#) to join the conversation.
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Network X 2026 offers the opportunity to:



Learn from Peers:

Hear directly from operators who have deployed AI in production, including their successes, failures, and lessons learned.



Influence the Agenda:

Participate in discussions that will shape industry standards, best practices, and collaborative initiatives.



Discover Solutions:

Explore the latest AI-powered network management platforms, automation tools, and infrastructure technologies from leading vendors.



Build Relationships:

Connect with potential partners for data sharing, joint development, or ecosystem collaboration.

The AI transformation of telecommunications is not a spectator sport. Every operator, vendor, and technology provider must decide how to navigate this shift—and those decisions will shape the industry for the next decade.





Network X

by informa...

13-15th October 2026 | VIECON, Vienna, Austria

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Network X: Where Telcos, AI & Networks Converge

Fibre

Hear from Tier 1 telcos and AltNets on M&A, fibre network investments, monetization models, and more!

Wi-Fi Networks and Services

Learn how telcos are driving new in-home revenue streams and developing innovative products to increase ARPU.

IP & Optical Transport

Discover telco transport network investments across routing, switching, subsea, optical, and more to meet the needs of telcos and AI data centers.

Data Center Networks

Interconnect, optics, intraconnect, and more – learn how data center networks are evolving to support the data, power, and sustainability requirements of AI.

Mobile Networks

AI, automation, 6G, satellites, and more – see how the future mobile network will take shape!

Mobile Services

FWA, network APIs, D2D, and more – learn how operators are driving monetization across mobile networks!

For Businesses Exploring Regional Expansion



Use Austria as a Strategic Hub for Entering European Markets

Understand the Regional Landscape:

Attend sessions that explore Austria's connectivity to Western, Central, and Eastern Europe. Learn how its advanced infrastructure and strategic location can support your regional growth plans.

Identify Cross-Border Opportunities:

Use the event to explore how Austria's digital infrastructure can facilitate seamless operations across multiple European markets.

Meet Regional Experts:

Network with industry leaders, consultants, and government representatives who can provide guidance on navigating the diverse markets of Europe.



Build Partnerships and Navigate Cultural Differences

Participate in Networking Events:

Take advantage of structured networking opportunities, such as roundtables and one-on-one meetings, to build relationships with Austrian and regional stakeholders.

Engage with Multilingual Experts:

Connect with Austria's multilingual workforce and cultural experts to gain insights into local and regional business practices.

Collaborate on Innovation:

Explore opportunities to partner with Austrian startups, research institutions, and tech hubs. Use the event to identify potential collaborators for joint ventures or innovation projects.

General Tips to Maximize Your Network X Experience



Plan Ahead:

Review the event agenda and identify sessions, speakers, and exhibitors that align with your goals. Schedule meetings in advance to make the most of your time.



Leverage Event Technology:

Use the Network X app or platform to connect with other attendees, schedule meetings, and stay updated on event activities.



Engage Actively:

Participate in Q&A sessions, join discussions, and share your expertise to build visibility and credibility.



Follow Up:

After the event, follow up with the contacts you've made to solidify relationships and explore next steps for collaboration.

By approaching Network X with a clear strategy and leveraging its unique opportunities, attendees can position themselves to capitalize on Austria's growth, expand regionally, and build lasting partnerships.

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Early Access 1-2-1 Meetings via the Network X App	✓	✓		✓		✓	
Onsite 1-2-1 Meetings via the Network X App	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5km Run	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Network X Exhibition	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Network X Party	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Lunch and Coffee Vouchers	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Network X Headliners	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Conference Tracks: <i>Fibre; Wi-Fi Networks & Services; IP & Optical; Data Centre Networks; Mobile Networks; Mobile Services</i>	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Co-located event: BDC by WBBA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Expo Stages	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Post-Show Bite-Size Presentation Summaries	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Presentation Slides - Post-Show	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Co-located event: WGC EMEA by WBBA	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
VIP Roundtables				✓			
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