AI summary

# Open RAN: AI, Cloud and Seamless Integration

ATXENTERPRISE VOXO

**Open RAN: AI, Cloud and Seamless Integration**
Thursday, 21 May 2026

# Participants

**David Soldani**
SVP Innovation & Advanced Reseach, Rakuten Mobile Inc.

**Binbin Chen**
Duputy Director, Future Communications Research & Development Programme (FCP)

**Michael Tadault**
Chief Technologist Telco APAC, Red Hat

**Xin Huang**
CEO, SynaXG Technologies Pte. Ltd.

**Dennis Juan**
CEO, NeuroRAN Pte. Ltd.

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# Summary

The session explored the evolution of Open RAN (Radio Access Network), focusing on AI integration, cloud-native architectures, and vendor-neutral solutions. The panellists highlighted the challenges of system integration and interoperability, particularly in multi-vendor environments. Rakuten Mobile was showcased as a successful example of a fully virtualised, open, and profitable network, achieving significant cost savings and engineering efficiencies. Discussions also addressed the role of organisations like the O-RAN Alliance in ensuring standards and collaboration, vital for advancing the ecosystem.

A key theme was the importance of telcos regaining control over their networks. Speakers stressed the need for sovereignty over data, AI layers, and control planes to ensure adaptability and innovation. Michael Tadault from Red Hat emphasised the shift from vendor silos to open telco cloud models, which provide flexibility while reducing dependency on single vendors. However, he noted that many telcos still hesitate to fully embrace this approach due to integration complexities. The necessity of AI-driven orchestration and intelligent operations was a recurring topic, with panellists advocating its potential for improving network efficiency.

The discussion also delved into the role of AI in transforming networks into intelligent, adaptive infrastructures. AI-driven spectrum sensing, energy efficiency, and autonomous operations were highlighted as critical capabilities. Dennis Juan from NeuroRAN shared insights into enabling self-optimising networks through AI-native solutions. Meanwhile, Xin Huang from SynaXG Technologies discussed the importance of collaboration among diverse industry players to achieve performance parity and address integration challenges. Both emphasised the need for partnerships and shared testing facilities to ensure seamless interoperability.

David Soldani of Rakuten Mobile underscored their success in deploying over 60,000 base stations and transitioning to profitability within five years. He highlighted their autonomy in managing the entire network stack, including OSS, BSS, and AI applications, which has led to a 40% reduction in operational costs. Additionally, he discussed advancements in autonomous network management and their vision for integrating AI agents into infrastructure to support diverse use cases. This approach was framed as a blueprint for other operators to emulate.

The panellists also discussed future opportunities and challenges, such as integrating AI into 6G networks to enable capabilities like environmental sensing. They argued that telcos must own their AI infrastructure to maintain cost control and avoid over-reliance on public cloud services. The importance of composable disaggregated infrastructure to optimise hardware usage was also noted. These advancements were seen as vital for enabling new monetisation opportunities and adapting to emerging technologies.

To advance Open RAN and AI-driven networks, panellists called for stronger collaboration among governments, standardisation bodies, and industry stakeholders. They emphasised the role of initiatives like the O-RAN Alliance and Singapore's robotics precinct in promoting innovation and large-scale deployment. The session concluded with a shared vision of transforming connectivity layers into intelligent digital infrastructures, urging stakeholders to embrace open-source solutions, invest in testing facilities, and adopt frameworks that prioritise sovereignty and interoperability.

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# Takeaways

## Control Over AI and Data Is Essential for Telcos' Future

The session emphasised the importance of telcos owning their data, AI sublayers, and control planes to maintain sovereignty and control over their networks. This control enables cost management, autonomy in decision-making, and the ability to deliver innovative services like intelligent operations and sensing-as-a-service.

## System Integration Remains a Major Challenge in Open RAN Deployment

Panelists highlighted that while Open RAN and AI-driven orchestration offer significant opportunities for innovation, system integration across diverse vendors presents both technical and organisational challenges. Collaborative efforts among ecosystem players and stringent testing, such as those at the OTIC centres, are required to overcome these barriers.

## AI-Driven Networks Are Central to the Future of Telecommunications

The panel discussed how AI can enhance network operations through intelligent orchestration, energy efficiency, and adaptive applications. AI's role in enabling autonomous networks and next-generation use cases, such as AI-driven spectrum sensing and distributed AI inferencing, was identified as a key trend requiring telcos to rethink traditional operational models.

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