

Tech Mahindra and Rakuten Mobile Network Inc. have announced the opening of the Rakuten Cloud Innovation Laboratory, a world-class next generation (4G and 5G) software-defined network lab located in Tokyo.

Established in line with the joint Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by Tech Mahindra and Rakuten in October 2018, the Rakuten Cloud Innovation Laboratory is a unique, fully automated testing facility that aims to foster innovation across mobile network, IT digital architecture, cloud and enterprise applications.

The lab infrastructure replicates end-to-end network domains, including the virtualized radio access network (RAN), mobile edge, virtualized evolved packet core (EPC), virtualized IP multimedia subsystem (IMS) core, operations support systems (OSS) and business support systems (BSS), along with scalable network traffic simulation capabilities, enabling comprehensive end-to-end testing across the entire network. These robust testing capabilities reduce anomalies in the software, lowering the instance of failures in commercial networks.

Furthermore, the lab implements and automates the entire continuous integration and continuous deployment (CI/CD) pipeline, which, coupled with DevOps principles, enables Rakuten to quickly test, integrate and continuously deploy new features and technologies. This eliminates the need for late night maintenance, reducing operating costs, and contributing to improving the network experience for customers.

Commenting on the development, Mickey Mikitani, chairman, president and chief executive officer (CEO), Rakuten, Inc., said, “Rakuten is working towards the launch of the world’s first fully virtualized, end-to-end cloud-native mobile network. Our collaboration with Tech Mahindra on this world-class lab will allow us to drive innovation and disruption in the mobile industry, and take us one step closer to providing consumers with a broad variety of cost-effective services.”

Meanwhile, CP Gurnani, managing director and CEO, Tech Mahindra, said, “5G is the universal growth code that will fuel growth across industry verticals and domains. The Tokyo 5G lab is just the beginning of what Rakuten and Tech Mahindra can achieve to define the 5G Economics of future. Our collaboration with Rakuten will help us further drive innovation in the 5G space and lead the 5G revolution.”

## Tech Mahindra and Rakuten open a 5G Lab in Tokyo

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Further, Manish Vyas, CEO, network services, Tech Mahindra, said, “We are truly humbled with what we have been able to achieve in partnership with Rakuten. This is truly a world class lab which showcases modern workspace for new innovators & integrators on one hand and the world’s first true software defined network blueprint with disaggregated hardware & software on the other.”

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