Tech Mahindra and Rakuten Open World-Class 5G Lab in Tokyo

Accelerating 5G innovation by implementing world's first cloud-native, fully virtualized, software defined network architecture operating on DevOps principles

Tokyo, New Delhi, February 20, 2019: Tech Mahindra, a leading provider of digital transformation, consulting and business reengineering services and solutions, and Rakuten Mobile Network, Inc., the mobile network subsidiary of Rakuten Group, the Japan-based global leader in internet services, today 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 MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) 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 RAN (radio access network), Mobile edge, virtualized EPC (evolved packet core), virtualized IMS (IP multimedia subsystem) core, OSS (operations support systems) and BSS (business support systems), 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, eliminating the need for late night maintenance, reducing operating costs, and contributing to improving the network experience for customers.

This lab is a joint showcase of what strategic partnerships between two companies can do across national borders to achieve not only an innovative technology platform but also a modern workspace where the best and brightest minds can work and play.

Mickey Mikitani, Chairman, President and 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."

CP Gurnani, Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer, 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."

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."

Opening of this lab illustrates Tech Mahindra and Rakuten's commitment towards co-creating new connected experiences in the digital world.

About Rakuten

Rakuten, Inc. (TSE: 4755) is a global leader in internet services that empower individuals, communities, businesses and society. Founded in Tokyo in 1997 as an online marketplace, Rakuten has expanded to offer services in e-commerce, fintech, digital content and communications to more than 1.2 billion members around the world. The Rakuten Group has over 17,000 employees, and operations in 30 countries and regions. For more information visit https://global.rakuten.com/corp/.

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