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5G winners won't rely on customers paying more for faster speeds

By Ken Wieland

Hayim Porat, CTO for Israel-based supplier ECI Telecom, warned mobile operators they will need to transform from being 'digital' to 'universal' service providers if they are to take full advantage of 5G.

"That means providing an ever-growing list of services, which traverse both mobile and fixed, both man and machine, and both local and global," he told *Mobile World Daily*.

There is a pressing need to do so. According to the CTO, the biggest 5G misconception is that people will pay more for faster speeds only. "Surprisingly, many carriers are under this impression. They need to realise that customers will pay a premium for services that offer them a unique value, not just for more speed," he said.

The transformation from digital to universal service provider, although 5G enables it, looks a daunting one for mobile operators

to manage. "5G will effectively stretch the capabilities of service providers to their limits," said Porat, since many services – if they are to have the 'unique value' – will be tailored to a specific customer's needs, which are then delivered dynamically and on-demand, he argued.

"Various services will require true assurance, rather than the prevalent best-effort assurance which exists today," he added. "Networks will need to transition from the current static, reactive networks to future networks that are more intelligent, more proactive and more self-learning. This is what I call intelligent, multi-gear, dynamic and assured."

Network topologies will also need to change, said the CTO, moving from hub-and-spoke architectures to ones that enable any-to-any connectivity.

The CTO pointed out that 5G New Radio specifications ratified by the 3GPP in December 2017 were



just the first stage on the road to end-to-end 5G. The next stage, he said, will focus on bringing additional intelligence to the network edge.

"The third stage will require an upgrade of the core with the introduction and deployment of not just SDN, but also machine learning and artificial intelligence," said Porat. "The promise of 5G services will require 'superhuman' capabilities."