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New *iGR* study explains the use of fronthaul and backhaul in evolving mobile networks

Study explains how implementations vary significantly

AUSTIN, Texas, October 6th, 2014 – Fronthaul, the connection between remote radio heads (RRHs) and baseband units, and backhaul, the connection between the baseband units and the EPC, are two elements in a mobile operator’s network. However, these basic definitions are overly simple, as many variations exist on the implementation of both fronthaul and backhaul. In order to further explain the two elements of a mobile network, *iGR*, a market research consultancy focused on the wireless and mobile industry, has released a new market study, *A Primer on Fronthaul and Backhaul*.

Today, the term fronthaul is typically used when referring to the connection between remote radio heads (RRHs) deployed at the top of a cell tower and the baseband processing units (BBUs) in the enclosure at the bottom of the tower. Note that “tower” in this case could also be a building roof, a water tower, the side of a building, etc., since many of these locations also serve as macrocells. Both fronthaul and backhaul revolve around the need for optical fiber.

“With respect to fronthaul, most up-to-date LTE network deployments leverage RRHs on the tower with Common Public Radio Interface (CPRI)/fiber links to the baseband,” said Iain Gillott, president and founder of *iGR*, a market research consultancy focused on the wireless and mobile industry. “Moving forward, CPRI and increasing fiber availability will likely drive the adoption of a Cloud-RAN network, in which the BBUs are not at the bottom of a tower, but are deployed in a centralized data center.”

iGR’s new market study, *A Primer for Fronthaul and Backhaul*, examines both fronthaul and backhaul and how these elements may be deployed in a mobile network.

The following key questions are answered in the new market study:

- What is backhaul? What is fronthaul?
- What are the common backhaul technologies?

- What are small cells? What is the heterogeneous network?
- What is a metrocell? What is a remote radio head? What is the key difference between the two?
- What is CPRI?
- What are some of the basic requirements for backhaul and fronthaul?
- What companies provide fiber services?

The information in this report will be valuable for:

- Mobile operators, particularly those servicing the U.S. market
- Mobile backhaul providers, including telcos and cable MSOs
- Wired and wireless backhaul vendors and solution providers
- Mobile OEMs, particularly those servicing the U.S. market
- Wired and wireless infrastructure vendors, particularly those servicing the U.S. market
- Financial analysts and investors.

The new report can be purchased and downloaded directly from *iGR*'s website at www.iGR-inc.com. Alternatively, contact Iain Gillott at (512) 263-5682 or at Iain@iGR-inc.com for additional details.

About *iGR*

iGR is a market strategy consultancy focused on the wireless and mobile communications industry. Founded by Iain Gillott, one of the wireless industry's leading analysts, in late 2000 as *iGillottResearch*, *iGR* is now in its fourteenth year of operation. *iGR* continuously researches emerging and existent technologies, technology industries, and consumer markets. We use our detailed research to offer a range of services to help companies improve their position in the marketplace, clearly define their future direction, and ultimately improve their bottom line.

iGR researches a range of wireless and mobile products and technologies, including: smartphones; tablets; mobile wearable devices; connected cars; mobile applications; bandwidth demand and use; small cell and het-net architectures; mobile EPC and RAN virtualization; DAS; LTE; VoLTE; IMS; NFC; GSM/GPRS/UMTS/HSPA; CDMA 1x/EV-DO; iDEN; SIP; macro-, pico- and femtocells; mobile backhaul; WiFi and WiFi offload; and SIM and UICC.

A more complete profile of the company can be found at www.igr-inc.com.