Validated Progress, Proven Value: DTW Ignite Accelerates the Pathway to Autonomous Network Maturity for Connectivity

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• New ANLAV assessment service gives CSPs independent, credible, industry validation of AN level maturity and progress
• 30+ CSPs have completed the TM Forum Autonomous Network Level Evaluation with many on track to reaching AN Level 4 across multiple network scenarios
• Business value being realised today in energy efficiency, operational excellence, new service delivery and cost reduction

TM Forum, the leading global alliance of telco and tech companies, has announced a major milestone in its mission to accelerate the industry's journey towards fully autonomous networks (AN). Three powerful initiatives – the Autonomous Network Level Assessment Validation (ANLAV) service, the AN Levels Skills Path, and the 2025 AN Implementation Guide – provide a comprehensive pathway for Communications Service Providers (CSPs) to reach AN Level 4+ maturity, where AI-driven, self-managing networks reduce operational costs, boost resilience, and enable zero-touch service innovation.

Today's announcement builds on data from TM Forum's Autonomous Network Level Evaluations Tool (ANLET) showing that the ambition stated by CSPs two years ago to reach AN Level 4 maturity by 2025 is being realized today. More than 30 global CSPs have undertaken ANLET evaluations, and many are reporting significant business value across a range of network automation scenarios. These include:

• China Mobile which is nearing AN Level 4 across multiple, complex domains, including IP backhaul and RAN fault management, achieving an 80% reduction in major network faults, saving over 3,200 person-years of labour and more than 4 billion kilowatt hours of electricity.

• China Telecom has saved 1 billion kilowatt hours of electricity and aims to reach AN Level 4 in 40% of its high-value scenarios by year-end.

• TDC NET has become the first operator to be formally validated, via the ANLAV assessment, for RAN energy efficiency optimization –in partnership with Ericsson – demonstrating a path to a reduction in its operational expenditure, and making a contribution to sustainability goals.

• Telefónica Vivo has reached AN Level 4 in Network Creation and Planning for its Transmission Network, with efficiency gains of up to 90% in route convergence and a 60% reduction in budget approval time.

These achievements have been made possible through deep collaboration across TM Forum's ecosystem, including member-driven projects, Catalyst innovation programs, and Innovation Hub. Collectively, members are delivering an industry-standard open architecture that enables self-healing, self-optimizing network domains and readies the network for end-to-end autonomous "Zero-X" operations.

Nik Willetts, CEO, TM Forum: We are not just imagining the future of autonomous networks, we are building it, together. Two years ago, we aimed high and set the milestone for CSPs to reach Autonomous Network Level 4 in key domains in 2025. The results we're seeing today, validated by our benchmarking tools, are extraordinary: enhanced customer experiences, greater sustainability, lower costs and faster growth; tangible proof that shared ambition, collaboration, and standards-based innovation can deliver real transformation."

Nilmar Seccomandi David, Director of Autonomous Network and Infrastructure for Telefónica: "This year, we achieved our first two AN Level 4 milestones with Fractal in Brazil and NetOptimizer in Germany. This represents a significant advancement in automation, enabling Telefónica to increase network resilience and accelerate the mass adoption of 5G. By reaching Level 4 in these use cases, based on ANLET, we are not only realizing internal cost benefits and improvements in customer experience, but also setting the foundation for a future where networks are truly self-optimizing and adaptive."

Li Huidi, Executive Vice President, China Mobile: "The core value of Autonomous Networks lies not only in enhancing the efficiency, but also in establishing a new operating framework, which is driven by AI and interconnected through data. This will play an increasingly vital role in fostering industrial innovation and achieving green development. We look forward to working closely with TM Forum, GSMA, 3GPP, ITU, and other international organizations to shape a smart and sustainable future for all."

ANLAV turns evaluation data into validated proof

TM Forum's ANLET tool supports CSPs on their AN transformation journeys by enabling them to benchmark their network automation maturity and track progress on AN Level 4 across key network scenarios. Seven have been published to date – RAN Fault Management, Core Fault Management (including network stability), IP Network Optimization, IP Network Fault Management, Change Management, Network Planning and Energy Efficiency Optimization – and many more are in development.

However, until now, there has been no means for CSPs to independently validate their AN levels progress and success. With the general availability of the ANLAV service – piloted by China

Mobile, China Telecom, AIS, IOH, TDC Net, and Telkomsel – Members can turn their ANLET evaluation data into an independently audited, industry-validated benchmark, driving industry confidence in moving to AN Level 4 while enabling early adopters to signal their competitive edge.

TDC Net, in partnership with Ericsson, is the first CSP to achieve a formal TM Forum AN Level 4 validation for RAN energy efficiency optimization, providing a clear example of how collaboration, innovation and automation can align with responsible network evolution.

Bradley Mead, Head of Ericsson Managed Network Services: "Introducing, and scaling, autonomy in telecom networks is an essential and exciting element of our industry going forward. Making it happen involves change and transformation across all areas of a CSP and their partners, not just the technical side. Our work with TDC NET to gain verification at Level 4 Autonomy shows that with the right team in place, you can start the journey to make this important transformation possible. This marks an important milestone and we look forward to working with customers and the TM Forum to accelerate more innovation & transformation."

AN Level Skills Path Raises Industry Standards

Only certified evaluators that have completed the AN Levels skill path – which includes hands-on training with the ANLET tool – are recognized as proficient to conduct AN level assessments and submit for ANLAV validation.

To date 13 Member companies have undertaken the AN levels skills path to gain certification including IBM, whose software networking innovation, close partnerships with global telcos and industry expertise from IBM Consulting make the ANLET certification a powerful option to help teams create an autonomous network.

Rahul Kumar, Senior Partner and Global Industry Leader for Telecommunications, IBM Consulting: "Only 6 percent of CSPs are saying they have Level 4 autonomous networks, yet we're on the path to see double-digit growth in this area over the next three years. We're thrilled to pioneer TM Forum's ANLET certification program and provide valuable guidance and expertise to organizations that are on their journey to achieve autonomous networks – delivering on the business objectives of revenue generation, innovation and operational efficiency."

The significant industry momentum behind AN is reflected across DTW Ignite with 25 Catalyst projects focused on autonomous networks, three Innovation Hub demonstrations showcasing real-world Level 4 use cases, the Autonomous Network Summit, and the Google-sponsored AN Level 4 Hackathon featuring teams from Jio, Telefónica, and Telenor.

On the TM Forum Industry Showcase stand, leading organizations including Ericsson, China Unicom, Vodafone and ZTE, will be showcasing AN solutions looking at AI intent-based Ops throughput management, agentic architectures, autonomous computing networks and self-

healing domains.

Full details on the ANLAV assessment service, including how to register can be found on the TM Forum website: https://www.tmforum.org/topics/an-resources/#levels

The 2025 AN Implementation Guide can be downloaded here.

About TM Forum

TM Forum is a global alliance of telco and tech companies, leading the industry in defining the building blocks for new operating models, impactful new partnerships, and advanced software platforms.

TM Forum helps its members unlock the value of data to create nearly endless opportunities for players across the communications ecosystem.

At DTW Ignite, Accelerate and Collaboration events, TM Forum provides a platform for industry change-makers to share groundbreaking innovation, market developments, product launches and business transformation journeys.

We are the only industry body to count the world's top 10 CSPs and all the key hyperscalers as active, strategic members. With over 800 members, we are on a mission to reinvent the telco industry as a vibrant part of the digital landscape – and a driving force in shaping its future.

To find out more, visit: tmforum.org

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