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The fusion of Fronthaul and Backhaul in 5G networks

The communications world has coined the expression “**mobile data tsunami**” to describe the massive increase on mobile data traffic, which continues to gather momentum as it is about to hit us. Indeed, mobile data traffic is forecasted to increase 11-fold between 2013 and 2018.

The research community is tackling this looming reality on all possible fronts. **5G networks** is one of them. The fifth generation of communication networks, now under development and expected to supersede 4G around the year 2020, will require fronthaul and backhaul solutions capable of dealing with this increased traffic load while fulfilling new stringent 5G service requirements in an adaptive, sharable and cost-effective manner.

Looking at various research and standardization forums leading the development of 5G, such as 5G-PPP, NGMN, 3GPP, IEEE, ITU, IETF, ETSI, etc., all seem to align on the vision that **the fronthaul and the backhaul segments of the transport network will converge or fuse in 5G into what is now popularly referred to as *Xhaul* or *Crosshaul***.

So what requirements are driving such a fusion in 5G? Which enabling technologies could make it happen? Where are the remaining gaps and what is the industry doing to make it happen? And when are we going to see this change? To answer these questions 5TONIC Vice-President Arturo Azcorra is to participate in a **panel** entitled ‘**Crosshaul (Xhaul) - The fusion of Fronthaul and Backhaul in 5G!**’ at the upcoming **Mobile World Congress 2017**. Featuring leading experts in the industry, the panel aims at discussing the Crosshaul topic from the various angles of requirements, architecture, enabling technologies, standardization and market deployment.

The panel will be moderated by Alan Carlton, Vice-President of International Labs (**InterDigital**, UK) and will count with expert panelists Diego Lopez, Senior Technology Expert at **Telefonica** (Spain), Theodore Sizer, Head of Mobile Radio Research for **Nokia Bell Labs** (USA), Li Fung Chang, the Chief Architect at **5G Office (Taiwan)**, and Arturo Azcorra, Vice-President of **5TONIC** (Spain), Project Coordinator of the **5G-PPP 5G-Crosshaul project** as well as Director of the Madrid research institute **IMDEA Networks**.

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***Some keywords that define us:** 5G, Big Data, blockchains and distributed ledgers, cloud computing, content-delivery networks, data analytics, energy-efficient networks, fog and edge computing, indoor positioning, Internet of Things (IoT), machine learning, millimeter-wave communication, mobile computing, network economics, network measurements, network security, networked systems, network protocols and algorithms, network virtualization (software defined networks – SDN and network function virtualization – NFV), privacy, social networks, underwater networks, vehicular networks, wireless networks and more...*

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