2021 Was Lift Off Year for the MCX Revolution

Softil releases annual state-of-the-industry review of the global mission-critical communications industry; public safety broadband networks became a reality


Pierre Hagendorf, Softil's CEO

TEL AVIV, ISRAEL, January 25, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The world's leading mission-critical communications (MCX) enabler Softil today releases its annual review of the MCX industry in 2021 and highlights key developments that dominated the MCX year.

"The year 2021 saw the MCX revolution intensify with public safety broadband networks moving closer towards daily reality for the benefit of first responders, emergency and utility workers and railway operators," says Pierre Hagendorf, Softil's CEO. "Not only did MCX standards and technologies continue to mature and solidify, but we witnessed first hand an increased number of MCX networks and solutions being designed and implemented."

In Britain, considerable progress was made in enabling public safety agencies to begin using the rich MCX communications offered by the LTE-based Emergency Services Network (ESN). ESN will bring new 5G capabilities and services to first responder agencies. With 648 of the 700 new ESN cell-site towers now built and 566 already operational, Britain's Home Office is focused on providing blue-light emergency agencies with the tools and dedicated network access needed to work faster, better and at less cost in the shortest timeframe.

In the United States, the nationwide deployment of FirstNet accelerated. 5G is now offered as part of the FirstNet service and new dedicated assets were announced last year to provide fire, EMS, law enforcement and other critical workers with unthrottled access to connectivity when and where they need it. This includes communications in the immediate aftermath of a storm or other disasters when commercial power and other infrastructure may be disrupted.

Ultimately, FirstNet will cut through the clutter of commercial traffic. The speed, performance and reliability it provides allows emergency personnel to share videos, text messages, photos and other essential information during incidents in near real time and utilize location services to help with mapping capabilities during rescues and evacuations.

> The year 2021 saw the MCX revolution intensify with public safety broadband networks moving closer towards daily reality for the benefit of first responders, utility workers and railway operators"
>
> *Pierre Hagendorf, Softil's CEO*

In South Korea, the availability of MCX services continued to advance, now offering 3GPP-compliant nationwide MCPTT public safety service for more than 330 agencies which includes police, firefighters, emergency medical services and military. This deployment also includes the world's first commercial eMBMS (evolved Multimedia Broadcast Multicast Service) service, increasing efficiency of the network bandwidth management.

Finland's Virve 2.0 public safety network made further progress, getting closer to rolling out mission-critical voice and messaging broadband services for public safety agencies and corporate clients. And The European Union's BroadWay project, which paves a technological path for interoperable, cross-border public safety broadband, took another step toward reality last year with the project demonstrating the results of its prototyping phase for buyers in EU member countries.

Noticeable MCX Market trends in 2021

A number of MCX trends emerged as priorities in 2021 and resulted in Softil's MCX-enabling technologies becoming the power house behind a multitude of new solutions.

MCX enabled control rooms

The development of enhanced voice, data and video MCX control room solutions for the ESN network resulted in Capita leveraging Softil's BEEHD MCX technology to develop a new range of control room products. The successful integration testing of Capita MCX control room solution with ESN MCX core powered by Motorola MCX servers was a critical milestone in Capita advancing its roadmap towards next generation dispatch solutions.

This development was echoed by Systel in its drive to enhance public safety agency communications. The French and UK-based provider of communications products to civil security forces chose Softil's BEEHD technology to upgrade its control room solutions for connection to the UK's ESN mission-critical services network.

Zetron, a global leader in integrated mission critical communications technology, also announced that Softil's BEEHD MCX-enabling technology would be used to expand the LTE Push-To-Talk (PTT) integration capabilities of a new range of MCX-based dispatch solutions.

MCX handheld devices and wearables

Several vendors entered the MCX space with new ranges of wireless voice and data devices, including wearables. These are vital to community safety, productivity, and way of life. By licensing Softil's BEEHD framework, the vendors ensure that they are 3GPP standard compliant and interoperable with all MCX networks, control rooms and other devices in the market.

MCX recording solutions
When designing the MCX-based Public Safety Broadband Networks, the need for backend complementary systems arises. One of such systems is a recording solution that needs to be deployed in any MCX network to enable the debriefing that is core to any critical-communication related event. Late last year, traditional public safety recording solution vendors took their first steps towards upgrading their solutions to implement much-needed MCX recording. Being a critical field deployment element, the first MCX recording systems are expected to appear on the market in the second half of 2022.

MCX in the rail industry - FRMCS
Future Railway Mobile Communication System (FRMCS) is the future worldwide communication system designed by the UIC, in close cooperation with different stakeholders from the rail sector, 3GPP, and ETSI, and is the successor of GSM-R technology and a key enabler for continuing rail transport digitalization. Softil's MCX enabling technology already supports FRMCS features and is being used by global terminal providers to the rail industry including Siemens, Hoimyung, and Daeyoun among others.

LMR – LTE interworking
First responders currently rely upon Land Mobile Radio (LMR) analog and digital radios to communicate in the field. Radios offer familiar simplicity and reliability when it comes to emergency communications. While MCX technologies offer much greater capabilities, enriching traditionally voice-centric push-to-talk communications with video, message chat and file exchange, the transition from radio communications to MCX communications is not instantaneous. Vendors such as Catalyst Communications continued enhancing their LMR-LTE bridging interworking products to enable seamless connectivity to and between legacy and next generation MCX devices.

MCX Testing and verification
Testing and verification of FirstNet products and services in the US also accelerated in 2021. One example came from network testing solution provider Valid8 in choosing Softil's BEEHD customizable SDK client framework solution as an MCX reference client to support the development of a US government-sponsored 3GPP MCX standard compliant testing solution for the mission-critical communications industry.

The full MCX review of 2021 can be viewed at https://www.softil.com/press-release/softil-mcx-year-in-review-2021/

###

Hugh Paterson
Whoosh PR
+447465962446 ext.

email us here