

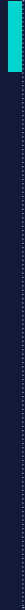
2026 Edition

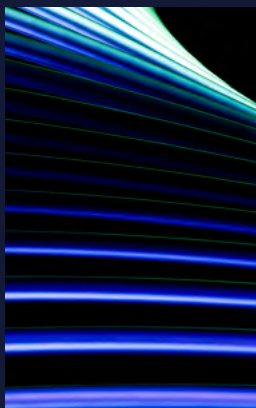
The B2B Pulse for Telcos

Six strategic imperatives to win
in connectivity and beyond

Make it real.

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Executive summary

This is the 2026 edition of our *B2B Pulse* for the telecom industry, an annual study examining the evolving needs, challenges, and experiences of business customers (hereafter referred to as customers or organizations) across sectors. The report highlights the pain points organizations face with telecom providers (telcos) and identifies six priority areas where providers must improve to strengthen service delivery and unlock greater business value.

Our research shows that telcos must act as:

1. Growth partner: Customers want their telco to be a strategic partner that goes beyond connectivity and understands their industry, shares risk, and delivers measurable outcomes

- 74% of customers want telcos to be accountable for business outcomes; [however](#),

[only 39% say their telco provider drives top-line growth.](#)

- 74% want a strategic partner for digital transformation, [but only 41% see telcos adding value beyond connectivity.](#)
- Most (69%) expect tailored solutions; 64% expect deep industry knowledge; and 77% want telcos to demonstrate a strong grasp of business workflows. [Yet only 37% say their telco consistently delivers what they need.](#)
- There is growing appetite for a tailored offering: 65% will pay a premium for this, up from 57% in 2024. And 78% now expect bundled services, although [only 34% believe current telco bundles solve operational or strategic problems.](#)

2. Ecosystem orchestrator: Organizations expect telcos to embrace partnerships across the value chain:

- A majority (65%) of organizations believe telcos should orchestrate ecosystems across IT, software, system integrators (SIs), and original equipment manufacturers (OEMs).
- Seven in 10 (70%) expect telcos to collaborate (rather than compete) with hyperscalers and partners.
- 61% expect telcos to collaborate with partners specifically for AI/Gen AI services.
- [However, only 35% say their telco currently acts as an end-to-end orchestrator.](#)

3. Network innovation architect:

Coverage and resilience are non-negotiable, and NTN are going mainstream

Most (61%) see non-terrestrial networks (NTNs) as essential to expanding footprints and reaching new markets. Over half (54%) expect NTNs to power Internet of Things (IoT)/

Executive summary

machine-to-machine (M2M) and asset tracking and are actively exploring NTN solutions (55%). A further 53% would partner with telcos that offer NTNs.

The network must become intelligent and on-demand

- More than half (53%) of organizations are already adopting advanced services (SD-WAN, private 5G, network as a service (NaaS), network APIs, slicing).
- Of the organizations that are currently using or planning to use network APIs in the next one to two years:
 - A majority (69%) view network APIs as a route to new revenue.
 - Most want telcos to offer them guidance and support in scaling: 65% seek advice

from telcos on compliance, security, and privacy, and 67% expect telcos to partner with ecosystem players in building a viable API ecosystem.

- Of the organizations implementing or planning to implement network slicing:
 - Most (69%) believe network slicing will improve efficiency, security, and service customization
 - 62% expect telcos to help them identify high-value use cases.

4. AI transformation engine: Customers expect telcos to play a strategic role in enabling their AI ambitions

AI has moved from pilots to platform decisions: Over the next one to two years, 84% of organizations plan to invest in AI/ML services, 81% in data analytics, 76% in AI/Gen AI platforms (AI as

a service), and 70% in AI factories/GPU as a service (GPUaaS).

Customers expect telcos to lean in: 73% seek deeper integration of AI with connectivity; 67% want AI-native edge; and 66% want robust data governance and compliance.

The challenge: [72% say their telco lags hyperscalers and tech-natives in AI and cloud](#). This makes partnerships, sovereign infrastructure plays, and outcome-focused offers imperative.

5. Trusted ally: Investments in sovereign cloud and AI and next-gen cybersecurity are growing; and organizations prefer telcos as trusted partners

- 52% of organizations will invest in sovereign cloud and 42% in sovereign AI within two years.

Executive summary

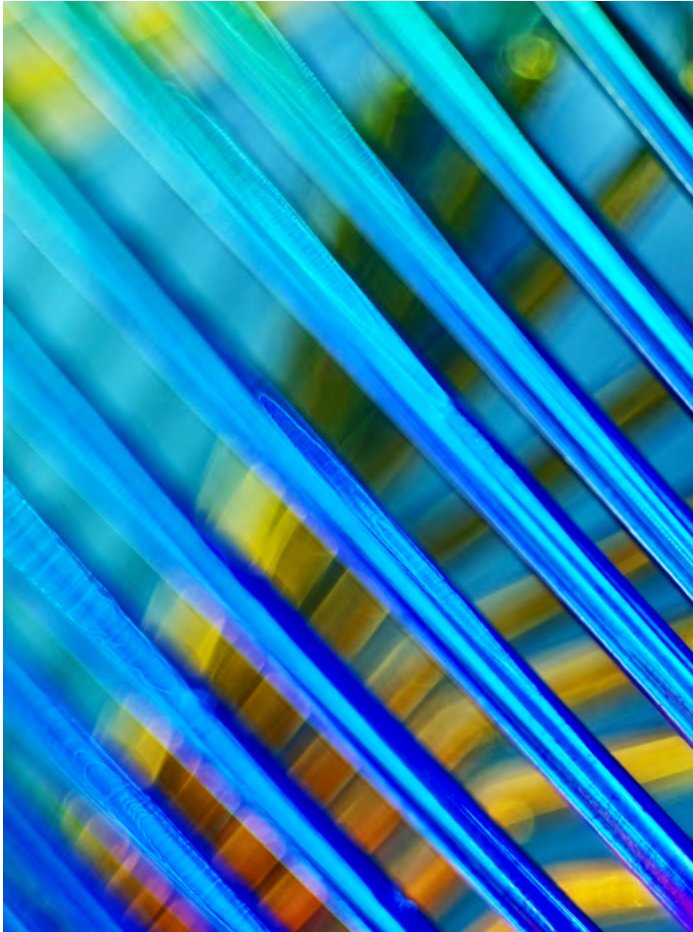
- Telcos are rapidly emerging as key enablers of sovereign AI ecosystems globally, stemming from their long history of operating national infrastructure. More than 60% of organizations prefer telcos as sovereign partners in-region.
- Next-gen cybersecurity spend is also accelerating: 76% plan AI-driven security investments; 63% expect AI-powered cyber- and threat-detection from telcos; and 60% want guidance on quantum-risk-exposed products. However, a gap remains between expectation and satisfaction: just 51% are satisfied with telcos' AI/Gen AI-driven cybersecurity.
- Most (64%) B2B customers deem seamless CX important. However, 65% find the buying process too complex (up from 51% in 2024), with billing transparency still the top pain point for 65% of organizations.
- Customers are clear: the B2B buying process must be fully digital and intuitive, with self-service that gives them control.
- Customers also want solution-led selling (68% want integrated solutions, not point products), but only 46% see sufficient industry/technical expertise in sales, and 61% are unhappy with post-sales support for integrated solutions.
- Fostering partnerships across the value chain through co-creation with partners
- Strengthening trust as a differentiating advantage by providing sovereign and secure digital solutions
- Making AI the center of your operating and value-creation model by embedding intelligence across operations and customer experience
- Building future-ready talent and culture by equipping your workforce with a solution-oriented mindset and skills.

6. Personalized and simplified experience

provider: Organizations demand seamless digital CX, solution-led account management, and intelligent support

The telco playbook for accelerated B2B growth includes:

- Choosing your battleground by prioritizing high-value plays aligned to your customers and core advantages



Who should read this report and why?

This report is essential reading for executives across the telecom sector, particularly those responsible for shaping B2B strategy, customer engagement, and future growth. Key personas who will find this report valuable include heads of enterprise or B2B sales, product and portfolio leaders, network and infrastructure executives, and those driving customer experience, managed services, and cybersecurity. It is equally useful for strategy, innovation, and transformation teams navigating the industry's shift from connectivity provision to integrated digital partnership.

Beyond telcos, the report will also be valuable to enterprise IT, procurement, operations, and digital transformation leaders across industries that rely on telecom solutions to power their digital ambitions. As organizations increasingly expect trusted, secure, industry-specific, and AI-enabled solutions, understanding how telcos are evolving is critical for selecting the right partners.

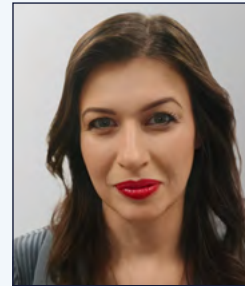
This year's study identifies the key expectation gaps between what business customers need and what telcos currently deliver, drawing on insights from 1,100 organizations across 13 countries and 13 industries, complemented by in-depth executive interviews. It highlights six priority areas where telcos must improve, spanning solution relevance, ecosystem orchestration, trust, network intelligence, next-gen services, and digital experiences. The report offers guidance on how telcos can focus their investments, embed AI across operations and customer journeys, strengthen sovereign and secure capabilities, and define their strategic role in the evolving B2B landscape. Equipped with these insights, leaders can make informed decisions on partnerships, offerings, and transformation pathways to stay competitive and drive differentiated value in the market.

We'd like to extend our sincere thanks to our panel of industry executives for sharing their valuable insights with us.



Nick Giannakakis

Group CIO, Motor Oil



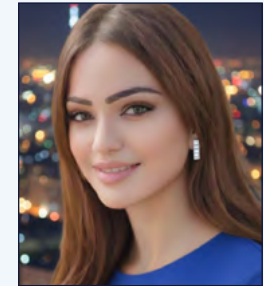
Natasha Davydova

Former CIO of AXA UK&I



Raquel Poncela

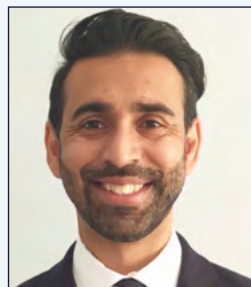
Director of Digital Services and Innovation, Spanish Royal Mint



Neha Donald

Senior Director of Global Strategy, Transformation and Innovation, PepsiCo

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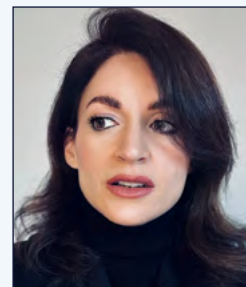
**Gurpreet
Muctor**

Chief Data & Technology Officer
at Westminster City Council



**Tanmay
Gupta**

Ex-Sales Director at AT&T



**Lidia
Stasolla**

Commercial Management
Director, Vodafone Business
in Italy

01

Growth partner: Enabling business outcomes beyond connectivity

Outcome-driven collaboration is the new benchmark for telcos

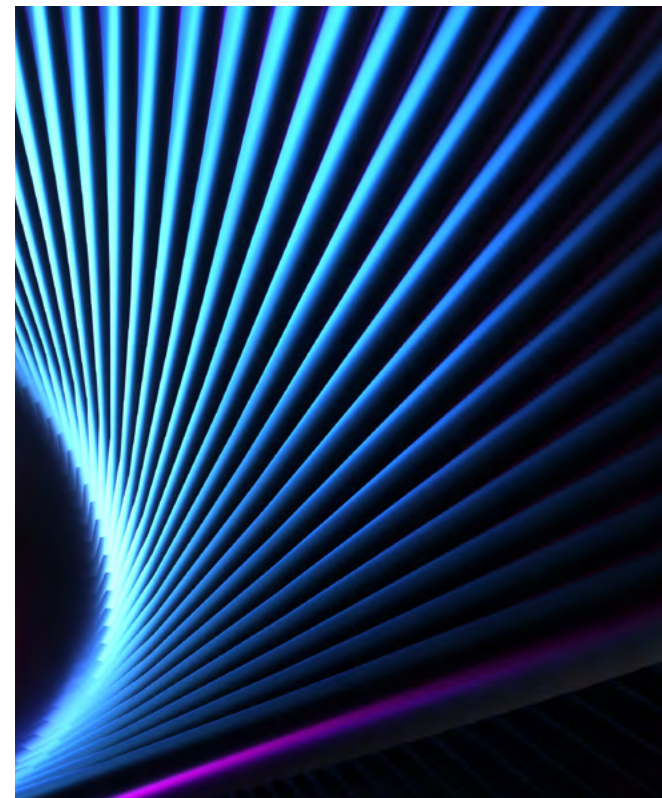
Increasingly, organizations expect telecom providers (telcos) to be more than simply network infrastructure vendors. Rather, they want strategic partners that deliver measurable business outcomes, from improved operational efficiency and cost optimization to accelerated digital transformation.

74%

of organizations want their telecom provider to drive measurable results, such as revenue growth and operational efficiency

As Figure 1 shows, 74% of organizations want their telecom provider to drive measurable results, such as revenue growth and operational efficiency. Telcos must demonstrate sector-specific expertise, quantify impact, and showcase how advanced technologies such as IoT, edge computing, and AI-driven analytics can deliver tangible outcomes. A senior executive at a European telco, agrees: *"Customers are increasingly looking beyond technical features and expecting telcos to deliver measurable business outcomes. The market is clearly shifting toward outcome-based, value-driven engagements, even if only a small share is fully mature today. Larger enterprises are leading this shift, and operators will need to rethink their models by pricing based on value created, engaging more deeply in customer operations, and moving from selling connectivity to enabling real impact."*

However, our research shows that only 39% of organizations say their telco currently drives top-line growth.



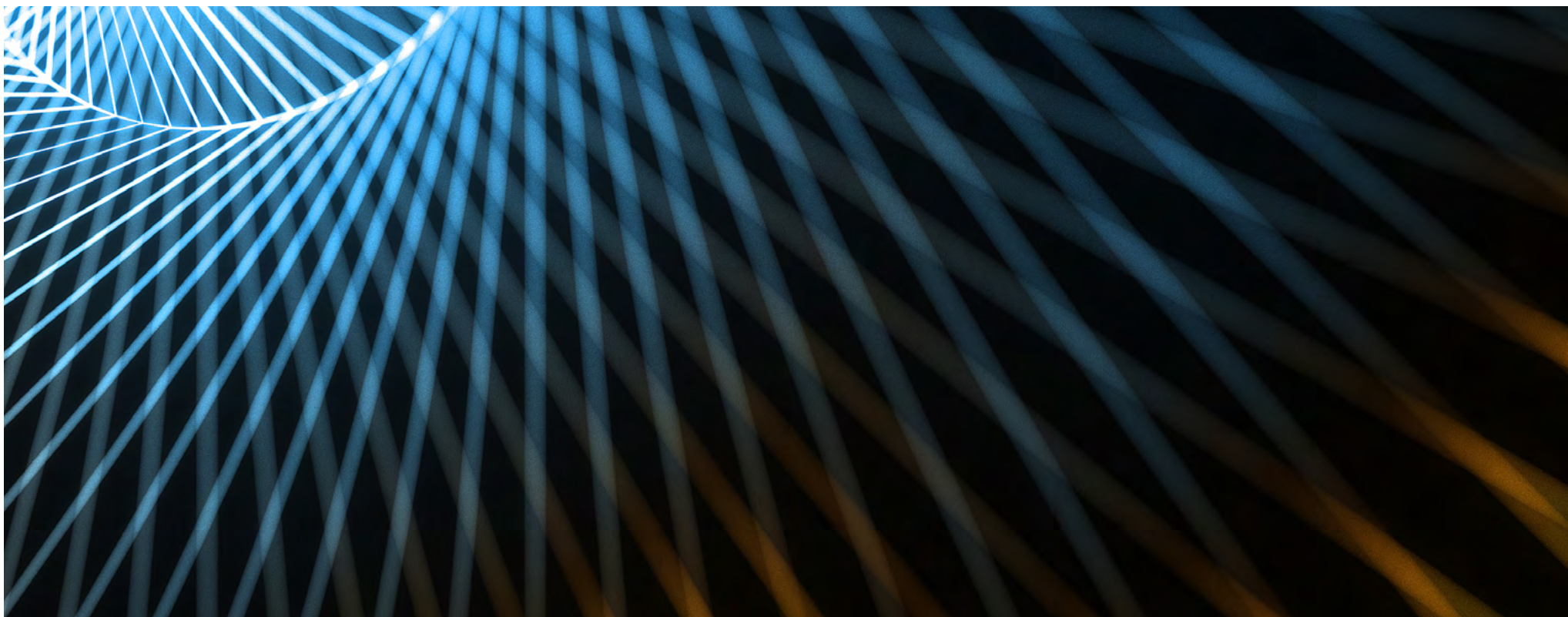
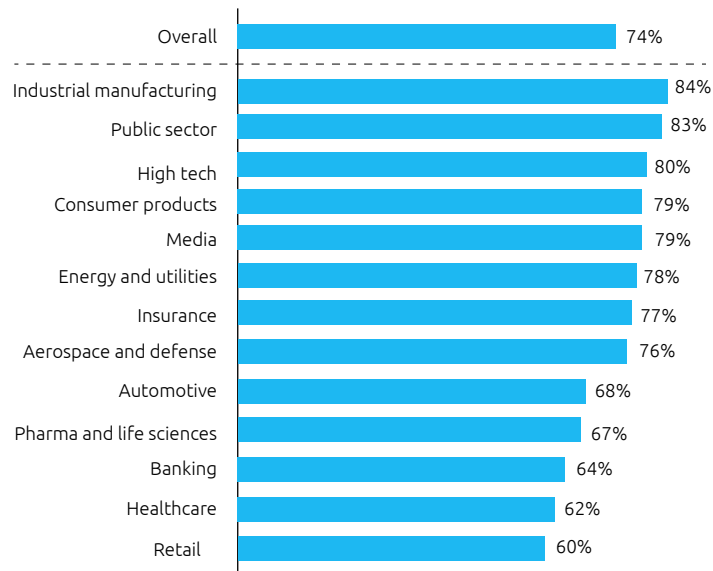


Figure 1.

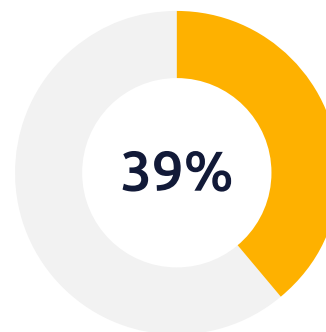
Three in four organizations expect telcos to drive business outcomes, while fewer than four in 10 say they deliver

Percentage of organizations that agree with the below statements (2025)

We expect our telco to be accountable for business outcomes



Our telco drives top-line results



Beyond connectivity: Customers want telcos to be strategic partners

Nearly three-quarters (74%) of organizations expect their telco to act as a strategic partner in their digital transformation journey. Moreover, 73% say they are willing to invest more in providers that deliver this level of strategic value.

Telcos also acknowledge this shift. A senior executive at a leading French telco says: *“Our enterprise clients are looking for more than just infrastructure; they require a strategic trusted partner capable of delivering comprehensive digital transformation. This includes a shift toward cloud-native architectures, robust cybersecurity, and advanced data/AI services. We are evolving into a digital and network integrator, leveraging a broad partner ecosystem to provide seamless, end-to-end solutions for global businesses.”*

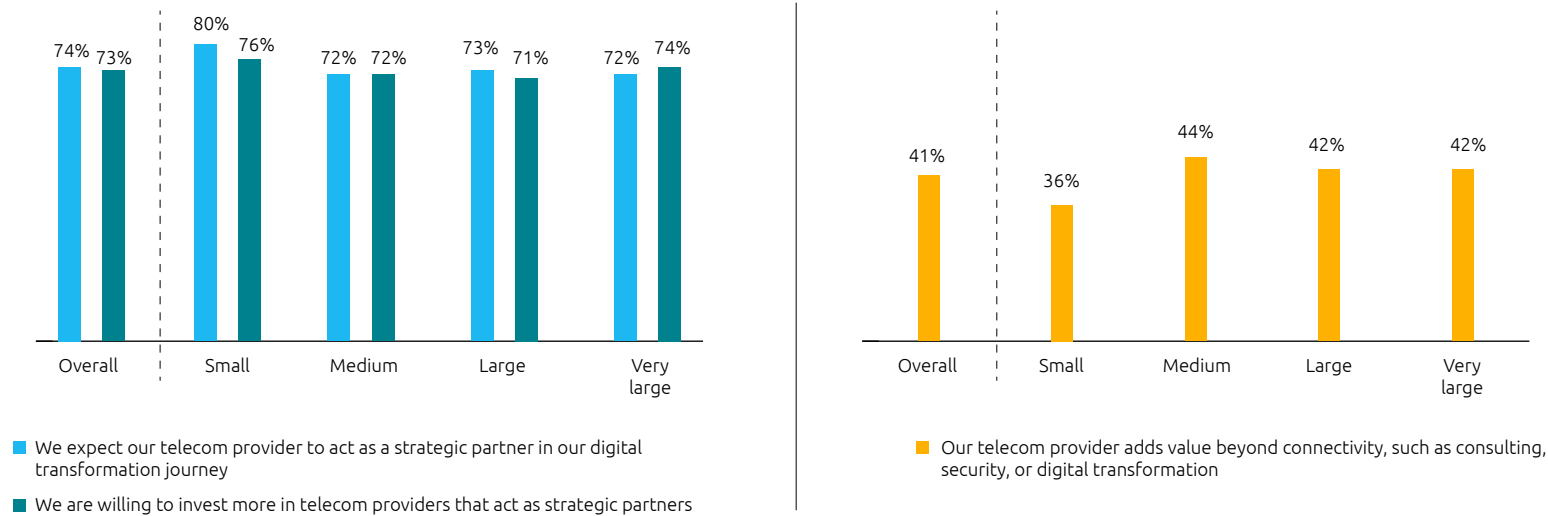
But only 41% of all organizations and just 36% of small organizations agree that their current telco adds value beyond connectivity. Further, only 44% of organizations perceive their telco as a comprehensive digital services enabler.

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Figure 2.

Nearly three in four organizations expect strategic partnership from telcos, while only 41% get it

Percentage of organizations that agree with the below statements (2025)



*Note: Organizations are categorized as small (50–100 employees), medium (100–999 employees), large (1,000–9,999 employees), and very large (10,000+ employees).
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Organizations also expect telcos to be an innovation partner. Our survey reveals that 71% of organizations expect their telcos to offer early access to new technologies – up from 62% in 2024 – while 65% seek collaboration on pilots and prototypes, a significant rise from 56% in 2024. For example, Verizon and auto-component supplier Valeo co-developed a 5G-V2X safety system that uses vehicle sensors, smart-intersection cameras, and Verizon's Hyper Precise Location to detect vulnerable road users such as cyclists, pedestrians, and children, with centimeter-level accuracy that triggers instant in-vehicle warnings or automated braking.¹

However, only 38% of organizations agree that their telco offers adequate support for their future growth and innovation plans (see Figure 3). Nick Giannakakis, Group CIO at Greece-based energy organization Motor Oil, says: *"At present, [telcos] operate in a reactive mode, rather than reaching out with industry-specific use cases that could enhance our current setup."*

38%

of organizations agree that their telco adequately supports their organization's future growth and innovation plans





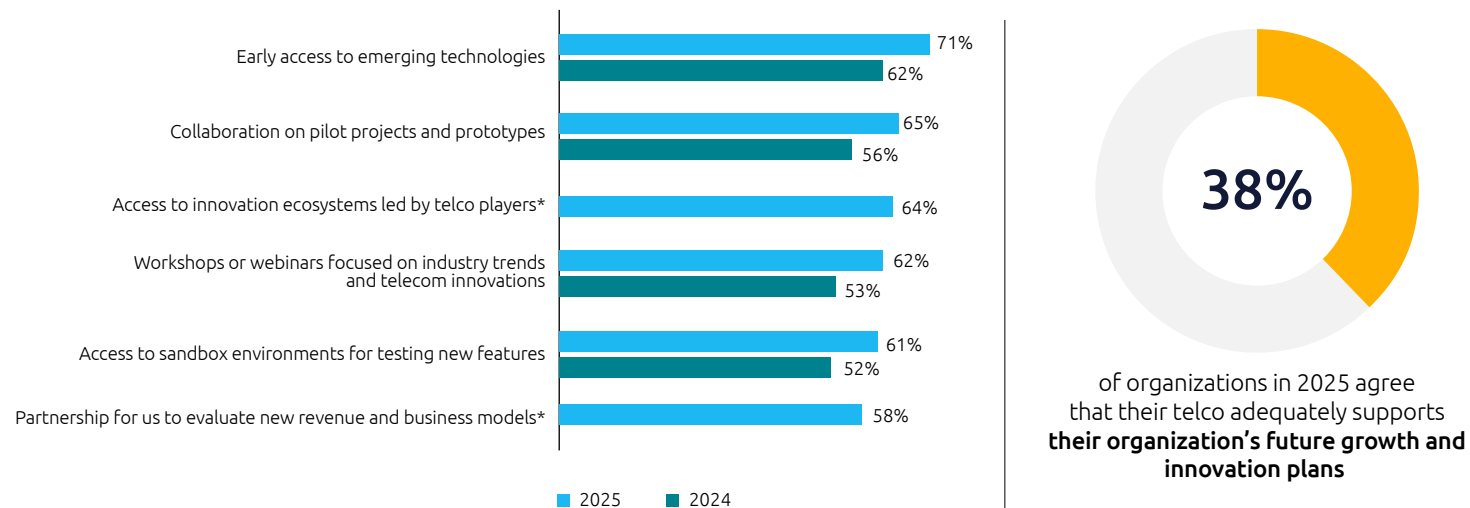
“At present, [telcos] operate in a reactive mode, rather than reaching out with industry-specific use cases that could enhance our current setup.”

Nick Giannakakis

Group CIO at Motor Oil

Figure 3.

Most organizations seek emerging technologies, co-innovation, and collaboration – but only a few say telcos deliver

Percentage of organizations that expect the following from their telco (2025)

*New additions in 2025 survey.

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations, Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 1st edition, December 2024–January 2025, N = 1,000 organizations.

Customers look to telcos for support in meeting their business needs

“The priority now for telcos is to act as strategic digital infrastructure providers, combining 5G, edge computing, cloud, and security into integrated solutions for core business domains such as underwriting, claims, distribution, and operations,” says Natasha Davydova, former CIO at AXA UK&I.

Consistent with 2025’s findings, nearly seven in 10 (69%) organizations expect tailored solutions, presenting a significant opportunity for differentiation and long-term strategic engagement. And 64% emphasize the importance of telcos’ demonstrating market understanding and industry-specific expertise.

Leading telcos are responding to these expectations:

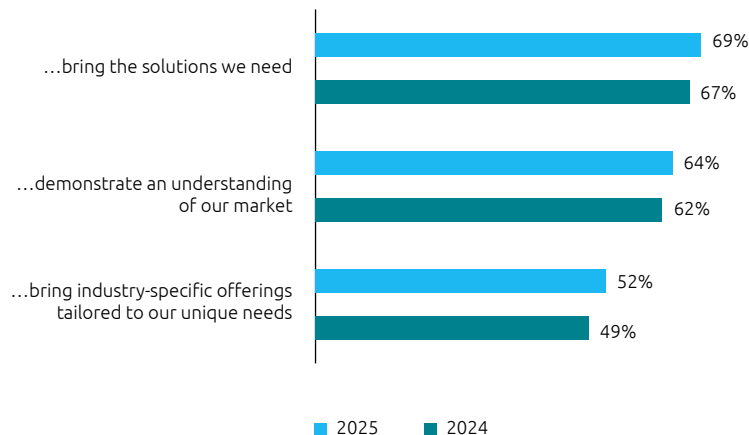
- In May 2025, Virgin Media O2 and Daisy Group announced a new B2B organization combining Virgin Media O2’s next-generation fixed and mobile infrastructure with Daisy’s digital-first IT and customer service platforms. The new organization will offer a broad suite of cloud communications, Internet of Things (IoT), 5G private

Figure 4.

Organizations expect telcos to bring industry-tailored solutions

Percentage of organizations who agree with the below statements

Our telco should ...



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations; Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 1st edition, December 2024–January 2025, N = 1,000 organizations.

networks, AI-powered services, and security solutions to UK businesses.²

- In July 2025, France-based Bouygues Telecom established a new digital services unit that focuses on cloud, data, and cybersecurity. Earlier in 2025, Bouygues's enterprise division launched two new B2B commercial brands: Bouygues Telecom Business, intended for mid-size organizations, larger corporations, administrations, and public bodies; and Bouygues Telecom Pro, which targets professionals and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).³

- In October 2025, Spanish telco MásOrange created an innovation hub unit, Digital+O, for B2B customers. Digital+O will provide advanced digital solutions in seven strategic areas: AI, cybersecurity, cloud, IoT, business apps, workplaces, and open application programming interfaces (APIs).⁴

More than three-quarters (77%) of organizations in our research believe telcos should demonstrate a strong understanding of the business and workflow challenges in their sector. This expectation is strongest among small businesses.

But only 37% of organizations say their telco consistently delivers the solutions they need. Smaller organizations (50–100 employees) report even greater dissatisfaction in this respect (see Figure 5).

Our survey also reveals that just 41% of organizations believe their telco offers the scalability needed to support evolving business demands and complex digital solutions.

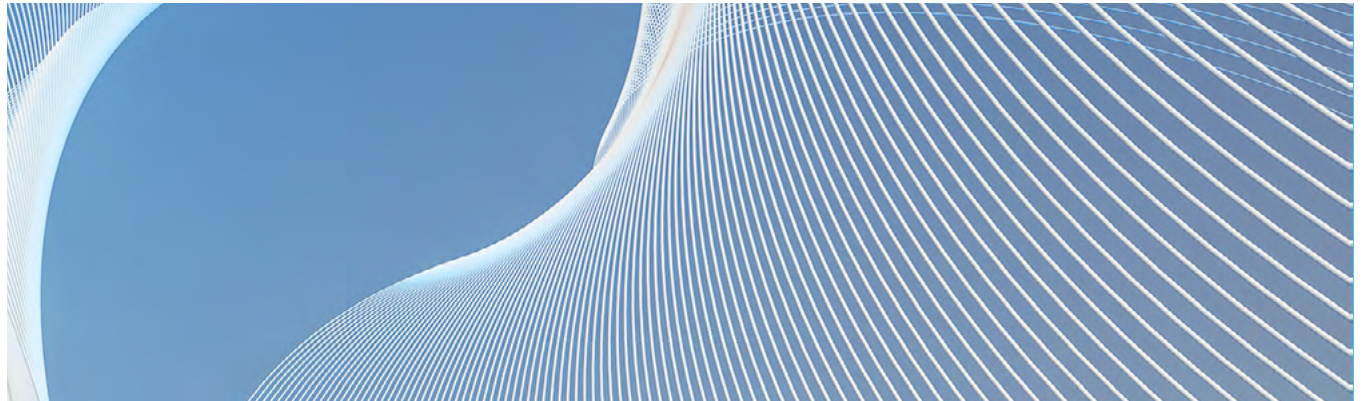
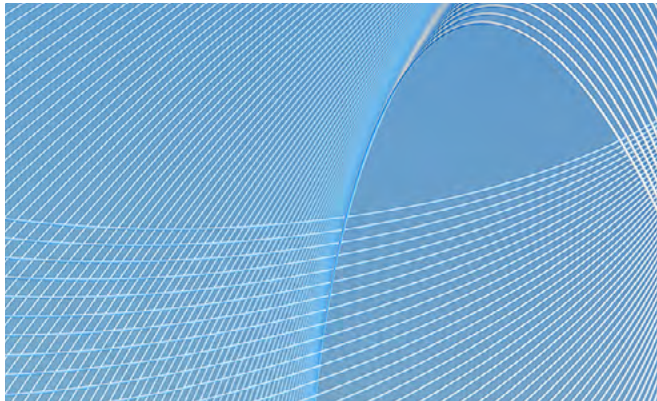
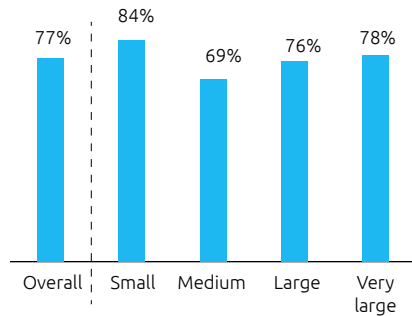


Figure 5.

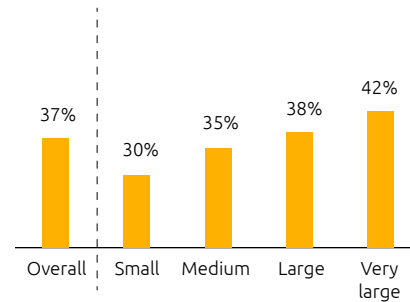
While 77% of organizations expect telcos to understand their business challenges, only 37% believe they do

Percentage of organizations that agree with the below statements (2025)

We prefer telcos that demonstrate a strong understanding of our business challenges and workflows



Our telco brings the solutions we need, rather than offering generic services



*Note: Organizations are categorized as small (50–100 employees), medium (100–999 employees), large (1,000–9,999 employees), and very large (10,000+ employees).

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Customers expect tailored services and strategic bundles

A growing proportion of customers are prepared to pay a premium for tailored services: 65% in 2025, up from 57% in 2024 (see Figure 6). Notably, demand for tailored services varies by region: over two-thirds (67%) of organizations in Europe want customization, even if this means paying more. Asia sees the highest year-on-year increase in demand for customization, up 12 percentage points from 2024, reflecting rapid digital adoption and competitive market dynamics.

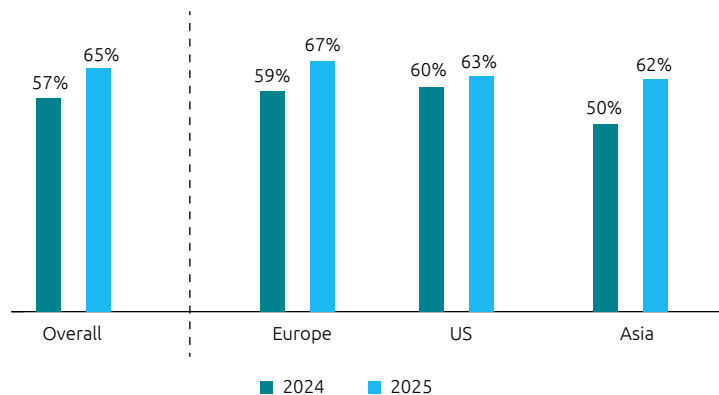
77%

of organizations believe telcos should demonstrate a strong understanding of the business and workflow challenges

Figure 6.

Almost two in three organizations prioritize customization over cost

Percentage of organizations who agree with the statement: "We prefer customized services over standard services, even if they come at a premium"



*In this research, Europe includes Denmark, Finland, Norway, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and the UK, while Asia includes Australia, India, and Saudi Arabia.

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations, Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 1st edition, December 2024–January 2025, N = 1,000 organizations.

"Telcos must move beyond standardized catalogues and offer truly tailored services. Unlike hyperscalers, who expect customers to adapt to fixed offerings, telecom providers have the ability – and the responsibility – to customize their solutions to the specific needs of governments and public-sector organizations," says Raquel Poncela, Director of Digital Services and Innovation at the Spanish Royal Mint.

Nearly eight in 10 (78%) organizations say bundled solutions⁵ are also emerging as a key expectation. **However, the reality falls short: only 34% of organizations believe their current telecom bundles address operational or strategic challenges effectively** (see Figure 7). Just 25% of healthcare, 29% of aerospace and defense, and 30% of retail organizations are happy with current bundled solutions from telcos.

This gap constitutes a major opportunity for telcos to rethink bundling strategies. Customers are not just looking for convenience; they want integrated solutions that improve performance and functionality across technology platforms. For example, bundling core connectivity with unified communications and collaboration (UCC) platforms can offer speed, reliability, and a single point of accountability. Our research suggests that within the next one to two years, a notable number of organizations are likely to purchase bundled services, including collaboration and productivity tools (61%) and unified communications (59%).



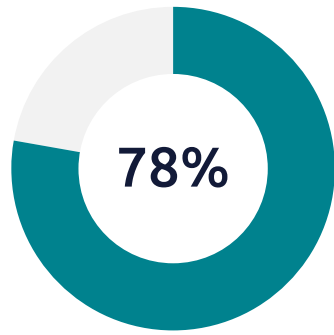
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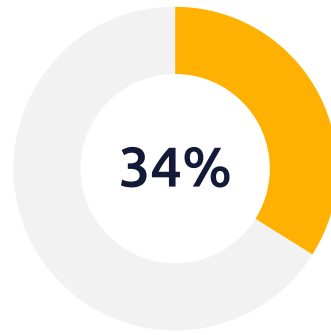
Director of Digital Services and Innovation at the Spanish Royal Mint

Figure 7.

Most organizations want value-driven bundles, but only 34% say current bundles are sufficient



of organizations in 2025 said
bundled services are a priority



of organizations in 2025 said
that the **service bundles from their telco**
solve operational or strategic challenges

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

A senior executive from a France-based telco sums it up: *"To effectively guide organizations through the complexities of their digital journeys, we must move beyond standard offerings toward three strategic pillars: the delivery of highly tailored solutions, the integration of bundled digital services, and a commitment to co-innovation alongside our clients."*

34%

of organizations believe their current
telecom bundles address operational
or strategic challenges effectively

02

Ecosystem orchestrator: Integrating across end-to- end technology ecosystems

Customers favor telcos that orchestrate ecosystem partnerships

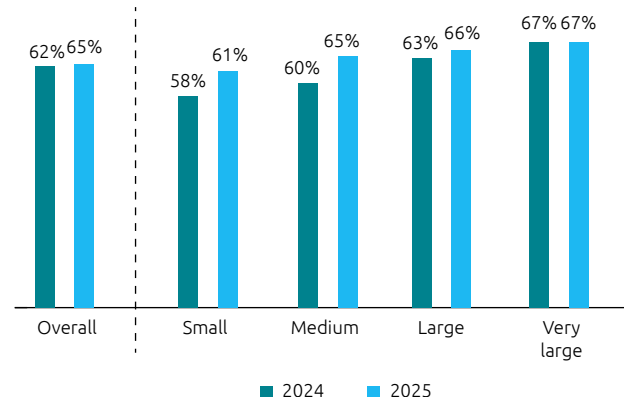
Recent GSMA Intelligence research indicates that organizations will allocate nearly 10% of their revenue to digital transformation in 2025–30,⁶ signaling a shift toward integrated, outcome-driven solutions. Increasingly, B2B customers expect telcos to act as “ecosystem orchestrators,” coordinating multi-vendor environments to deliver simplicity, agility, and measurable business impact.

Our research reinforces this expectation: 65% of organizations in 2025 believe their telco should orchestrate an ecosystem integrating IT, system support, and industry expertise, slightly up from 62% in 2024 (see Figure 8). Interestingly, this expectation intensifies with organizational scale – larger enterprises show a stronger preference for telcos as lead integrators.

Figure 8.

Almost seven in 10 large customers expect telcos to step up as ecosystem orchestrators

Percentage of organizations who agree with the statement: "Our telco should orchestrate an ecosystem, integrating IT, system support, and industry expertise"



*Note: Organizations are categorized as small (50–100 employees), medium (100–999 employees), large (1,000–9,999 employees), and very large (10,000+ employees).

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations, Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 1st edition, December 2024–January 2025, N = 1,000 organizations.

Consistent with the 2024 trend, in 2025, two in five organizations (39%) prefer a single service provider for all their needs. However, very large enterprises are more cautious, with only about 20% favoring a single-provider approach. This underscores the growing need for telcos to act as ecosystem orchestrators.

Orchestration requires collaboration

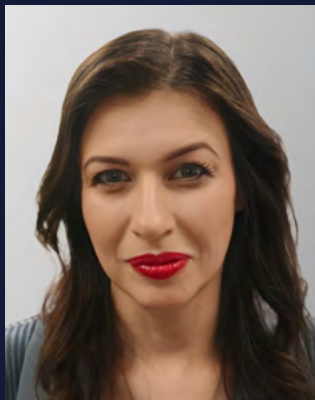
This orchestration model requires telcos to move beyond siloed operations and embrace partnerships across the digital stack: hyperscalers, software vendors, SIs, and original equipment manufacturers (OEMs). These alliances must go beyond connectivity, enabling co-development of industry-specific platforms, joint innovation labs for 5G, edge, and AI use cases, and collaborative go-to-market strategies that accelerate adoption. *“We expect telcos to deliver integrated cloud and AI capabilities through tight collaboration with hyperscalers and edge platforms, ensuring that 5G and edge are part of a unified end-to-end stack for analytics, automation, and AI,”* adds AXA’s former CIO, Natasha Davydova.

As Figure 9 shows:

- 70% of organizations expect telcos to **innovate and collaborate – rather than compete** – with hyperscalers, SIs, OEMs, and product organizations. Telefónica’s partnership with AWS to launch an innovation center for software-as-a service (SaaS) products based on Open Gateway APIs exemplifies how telcos can use hyperscaler capabilities to deliver new services.⁷
- Two-thirds (67%) of organizations believe **telcos must partner with cloud providers, aggregators, and software vendors to build a scalable and effective API ecosystem**. Aduna exemplifies this approach by providing network APIs to developer ecosystems across hyperscalers, communications-platform-as-a-service (CPaaS) providers, system integrators (SIs), and independent software vendors (ISVs), based on industry-standard CAMARA APIs. Organizations including Vonage and Google Cloud will bring access to their large developer bases and partner networks, expanding reach and accelerating adoption.⁸
- 61% of organizations expect telcos to **collaborate with partners specifically for AI services**. Deutsche Telekom’s

collaboration with NVIDIA to create an Industrial AI Cloud – a sovereign, enterprise-grade platform set to go live in early 2026 – also highlights the transformative potential of ecosystem-driven innovation. This infrastructure will enable industry-specific AI solutions such as digital twins, robotics, predictive maintenance, and training of next-generation foundation models using real production data.⁹

70% of organizations expect telcos to **innovate and collaborate – rather than compete** – with hyperscalers, SIs, OEMs, and product organizations.



"We expect telcos to deliver integrated cloud and AI capabilities through tight collaboration with hyperscalers and edge platforms, ensuring that 5G and edge are part of a unified end-to-end stack for analytics, automation, and AI,"

Natasha Davydova,

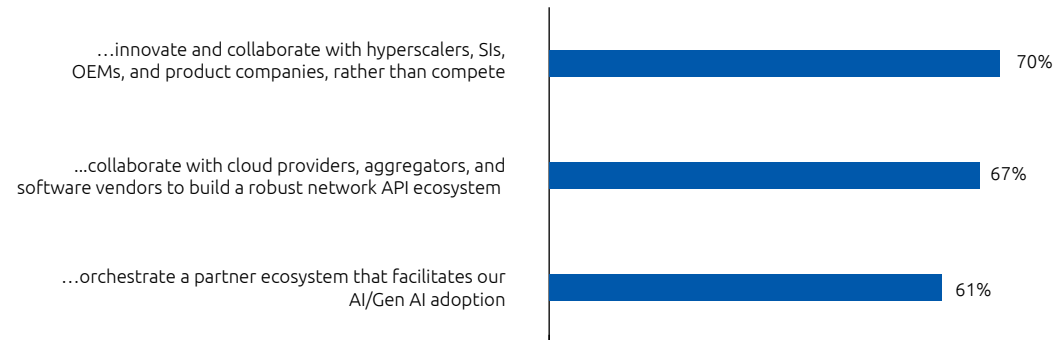
AXA's former CIO

Figure 9.

Most organizations want telcos to partner with cloud providers and software vendors

Percentage of organizations that agree with the below statements (2025)

Our telco should ...



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

But execution falls short

Only one-third of organizations say their telco partner currently acts as an ecosystem orchestrator delivering end-to-end solutions. As Figure 10 shows, just four in 10 executives from the high-tech, automotive, and healthcare sectors are satisfied with their telco's ecosystem orchestration capabilities, with even lower satisfaction in retail and the public sector.

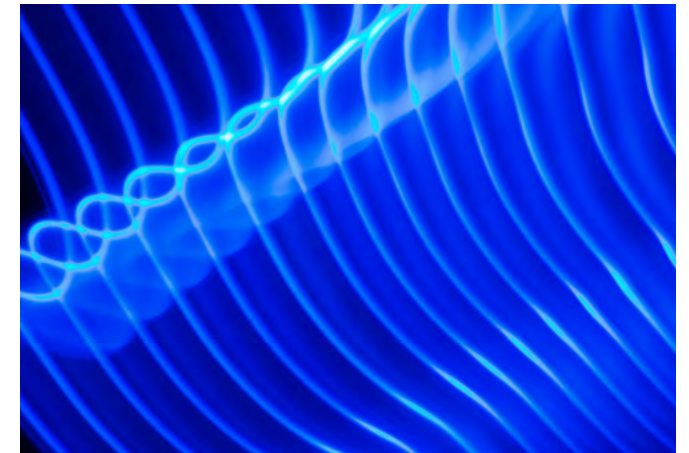
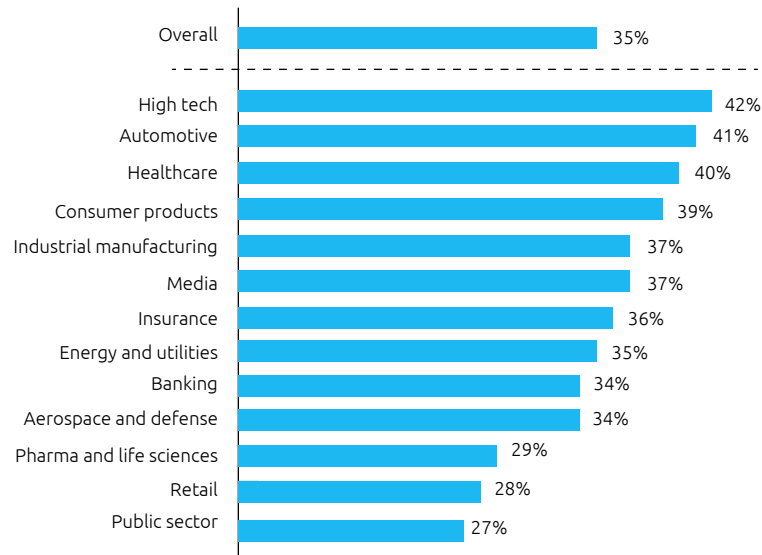


Figure 10.

Only one-third of organizations see their telcos as true orchestrators

Percentage of organizations that agree with the statement: "Our telco partner acts as an ecosystem orchestrator, ensuring end-to-end solutions" (2025)



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

78%

of organizations expect telco solutions to be seamlessly integrated across connectivity, cloud, edge, and AI, without bolt-ons or custom workarounds.

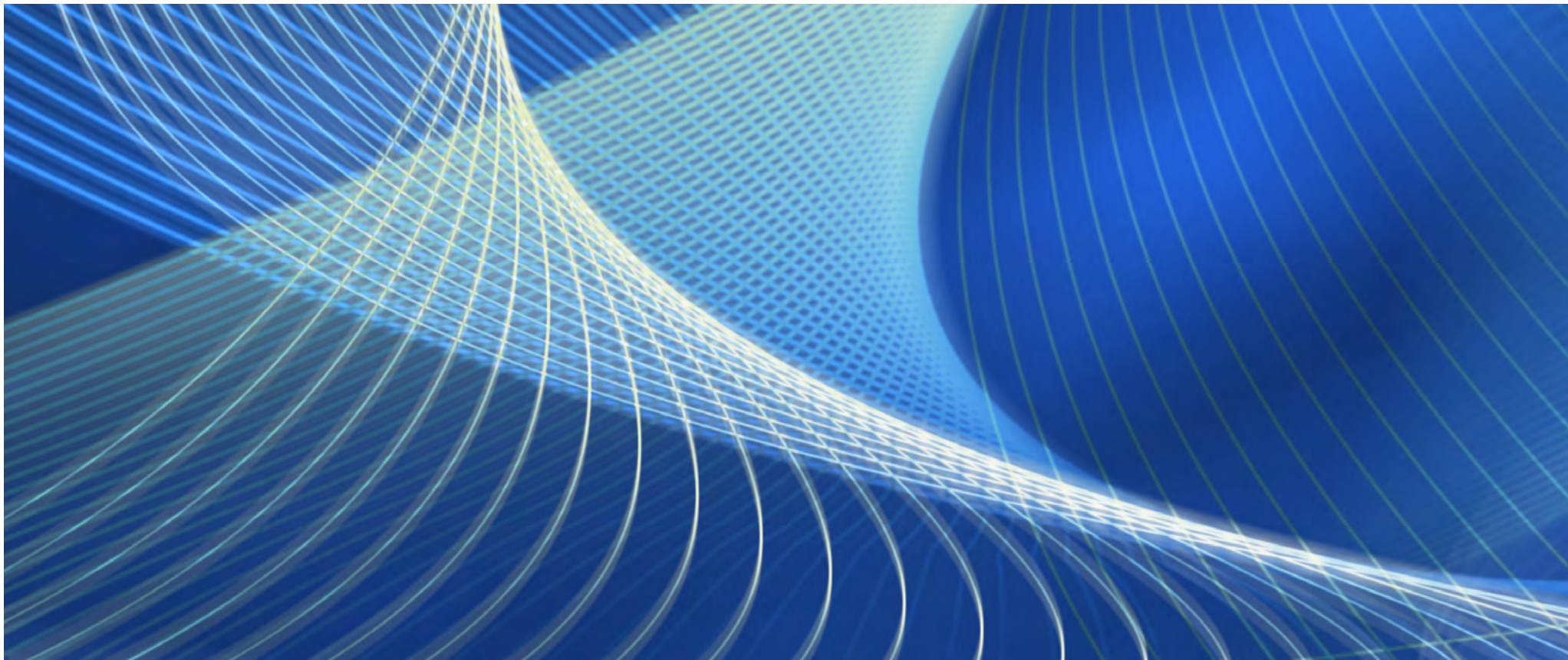
Our research shows that 78% of customers expect telco solutions to be seamlessly integrated across connectivity, cloud, edge, and AI, without bolt-ons or custom workarounds. However, **six in 10 organizations report that native, low-friction integration remains a critical weakness.**



“Customers are clearly asking for one accountable partner who can integrate multiple vendors into a coherent end-to-end experience. Telcos should step into this role by operationalizing ecosystem orchestration, building deep partnerships, shared governance, and repeatable integration models that eliminate friction for the enterprise.”

Frédéric Vander Sande,

Global Head of Telecom, Media and Tech, Capgemini Invent





03

Network innovation architect: Unlocking network intelligence and next-gen capabilities

Customers look to NTN for global reach and resilient remote operations

What are non-terrestrial networks?

Non-terrestrial networks (NTNs) are wireless communication systems that operate above Earth's surface. They use satellites in low Earth orbit (LEO), medium Earth orbit (MEO), geostationary orbit (GEO), high-altitude platforms (HAPS), and drones to provide seamless coverage of remote areas not covered by traditional networks. They enable direct device-to-satellite links for seamless service, supporting IoT, emergency comms, and mobile users.

Organizations see NTNs as a way to scale services and expand their reach

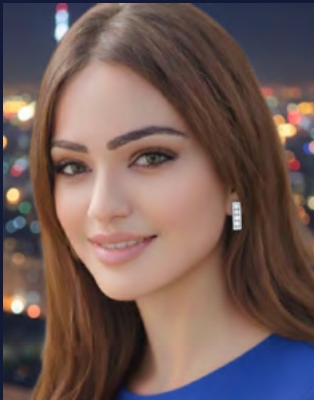
NTNs are redefining the boundaries of connectivity. Neha Donald, Senior Director of Global Strategy, Transformation and Innovation at PepsiCo, says, *"NTN is emerging as a strategic enabler for remote agriculture zones, logistics routes, and rural manufacturing, acting as a resilience and coverage layer where traditional networks cannot reach. Satellite IoT powers precision-farming use cases such as soil and crop sensing, irrigation management, and cold-chain visibility where cellular networks are weak."*

Over half of the organizations surveyed (54%) see potential for NTNs to power IoT ecosystems, machine-to-machine (M2M) communication, and asset tracking.

- LG demonstrated voice-capable IoT over NTN in vehicles, ensuring seamless emergency communication via satellite when terrestrial signals fail.¹⁰
- One NZ has become the first mobile carrier globally to deliver Starlink-powered cellular connectivity using the satellite network to link IoT devices in remote areas. In collaboration with local tech firm APIS Solutions, One NZ has launched what it calls the world's first Starlink Direct-to-Cell IoT network, initially focused on beehive monitoring.¹¹

A significant 61% of organizations recognize the role of NTNs in unlocking new geographic markets and expanding service footprints. Our survey reveals that large (69%) and very large enterprises (63%) are more likely to share this perspective. A senior executive at a large Indian bank comments: *"Non-terrestrial networks are very relevant for us. The government wants banks to expand our branch network into tier-3 and tier-4 cities, but we can't operate effectively there because there are connectivity issues. Starlink, coming in through Jio, can give us the coverage we need to support rural banking."*

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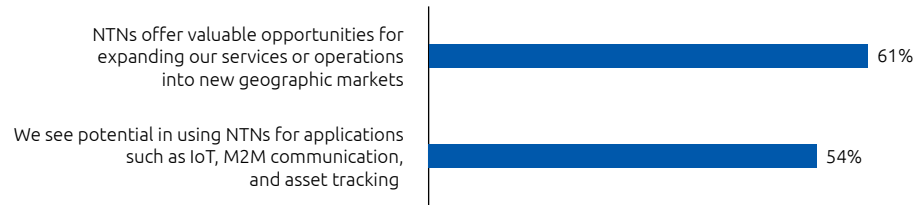
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Neha Donald,

Senior Director of Global Strategy, Transformation and Innovation at PepsiCo

Figure 11.

Organizations see NTN as a pathway to geographic expansion and next-gen IoT applications

Percentage of organizations who agree with the below statements (2025)

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

As a result, 55% of organizations say they are actively exploring NTN-based connectivity solutions. As Figure 12 shows, very large (60%) and large organizations (58%) show the strongest intent. Regionally, a considerably higher proportion of US-based organizations (66%) are pursuing NTN-based connectivity, followed by those in Asia (55%) and Europe (52%).

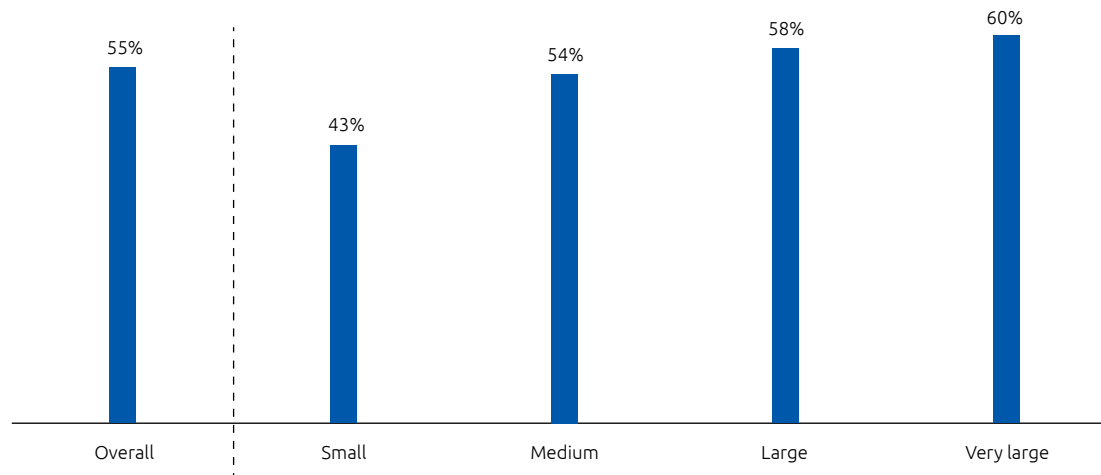
55%

of organizations say they are actively exploring NTN-based connectivity solutions

Figure 12.

More than half of organizations surveyed are actively exploring or planning to adopt NTN-based connectivity solutions

Percentage of organizations who are actively exploring or planning to adopt NTN-based connectivity solutions (2025)



*Note: Organizations are categorized as small (50–100 employees), medium (100–999 employees), large (1,000–9,999 employees), and very large (10,000+ employees).

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Widespread adoption of telcos as NTN service providers still faces significant hurdles

There is a growing momentum in this space. By August 2025, there were 170 publicly announced operator–satellite partnerships in 80 countries and territories, with 34 operators in 25 markets having launched commercial services.¹²

- In June 2025, Orange signed a multi-year LEO satellite agreement with Eutelsat, harnessing OneWeb’s constellation to enhance its connectivity offerings for enterprise and government clients. This collaboration supports high-throughput, low-latency service and robust security features, enabling business continuity and mobile backhaul capabilities in remote or underserved regions.¹³
- In October 2025, AST SpaceMobile entered into a deal with Verizon to deliver direct-to-service cellular connectivity via its BlueBird LEO satellite network.¹⁴ This enterprise-use agreement will enhance Verizon’s low-band 850-MHz coverage in remote regions, ensuring uninterrupted broadband access for both commercial and government users through standard smartphones.¹⁵
- In November 2025, Vodafone IoT partnered with Iridium to integrate Iridium NTN Direct, a 3GPP-compliant NB-IoT solution, into its enterprise offering. Tailored for industrial use cases, this extension ensures reliable data messaging, asset tracking, and remote monitoring for wind farms, oil

pipelines, shipping, and emergency services. The solution, which is set to launch commercially in 2026, targets authentically global coverage (improving on the reach of current terrestrial networks).¹⁶

- In December 2025, Rogers introduced Rogers Satellite, Canada's first satellite-to-mobile IoT service for businesses. Applications include fleet and asset tracking along remote highways and rail corridors, as well as powering automated sensors for sectors such as forestry and mining.¹⁷

However, among customers, major awareness gaps persist:

- While 53% of organizations say they would consider partnering with telcos that offer NTN services, only 17% report that their current telco provides them. Nearly half (49%) say their telco does not offer NTN capabilities, and a further 34% are unsure whether such telco-provided services exist at all.
- This lack of visibility and availability reinforces the perception among 66% of organizations that telcos still have limited NTN maturity, a sentiment even stronger among large organizations (73%).
- Beyond availability, adoption hurdles persist: 64% of organizations are concerned about cost implications, and 60% cite technical or regulatory challenges as major barriers.

Organizations accelerate their adoption of advanced network services

The race to build future-ready networks is heating up. Already, over half (53%) of organizations have plugged into advanced network and connectivity services such as SD-WAN, private 5G, network as a service, network APIs, and network slicing. Adoption is even higher in the banking (79%) and high-tech (74%) sectors. This approach can pay off handsomely. For example, Vi Business's managed SD-WAN solution supported a regional cooperative bank in India to replace aging legacy infrastructure across its branches.¹⁸

Demand is also rising for adjacent, connectivity-driven technologies such as IoT, an area that depends heavily on robust and programmable network foundations. While 58% of organizations expressed intent to invest in end-to-end IoT services in 2024, by 2025, 40% had already made this shift.

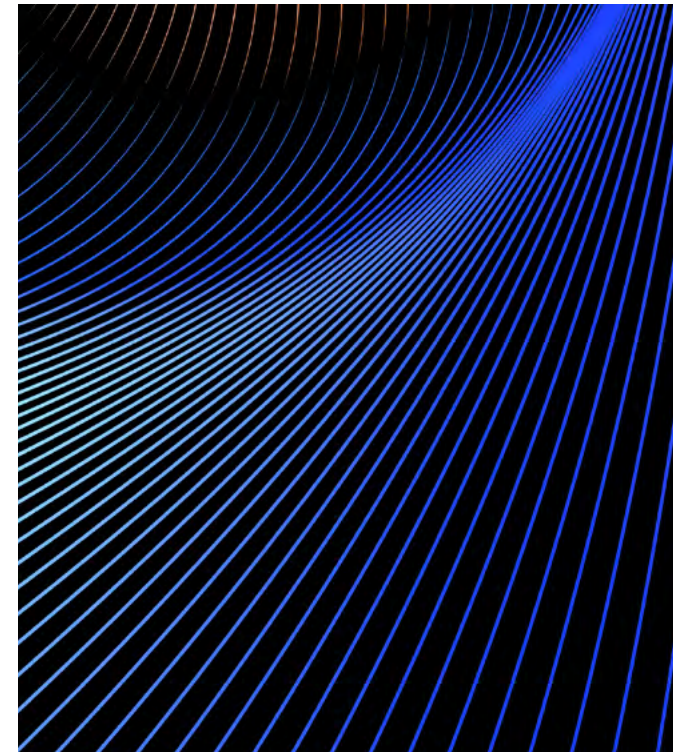
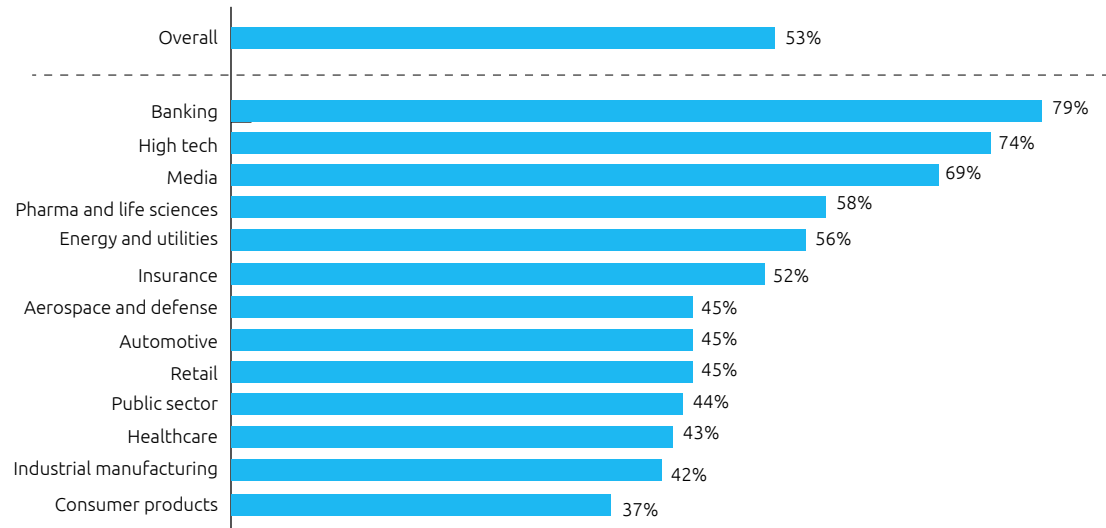


Figure 13.

More than half of organizations use advanced network and connectivity services

Percentage of organizations currently using advanced network and connectivity services (2025)



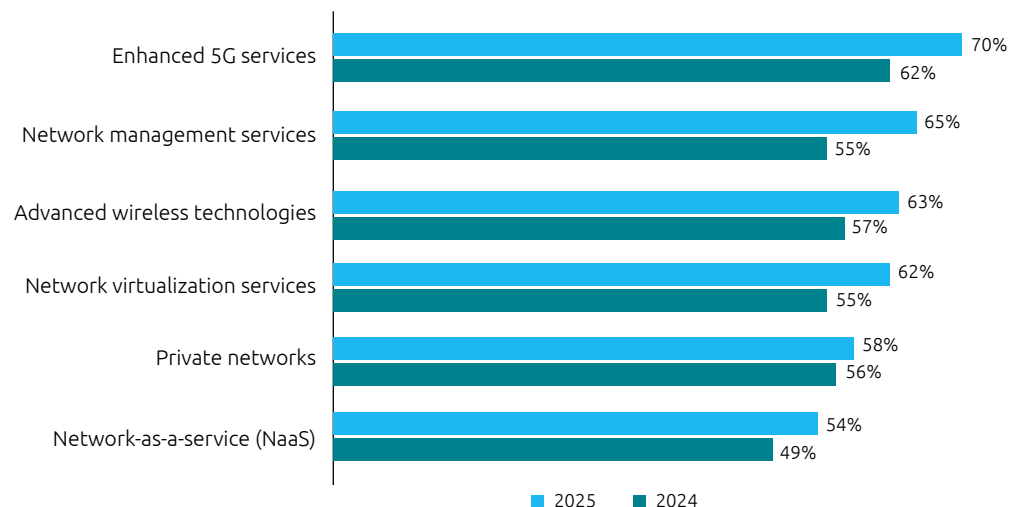
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Building on this momentum, organizations are prioritizing advanced network and connectivity services to deliver agility, security, and performance at scale. Our research shows that enhanced 5G capabilities such as network slicing and ultra-reliable low-latency communications are leading this push, with 70% planning investments in these in the next one to two years, up from 62% in 2024. Aerospace and defense organizations show the strongest intent, with 81% planning to invest, while large (68%) and very large organizations (76%) also demonstrate heightened readiness. Regionally, the US leads this momentum in enhanced 5G investments at 77%, followed by Asia at 69% and Europe at 68%.

Close behind are network management solutions (65%) and advanced wireless technologies (63%), followed by network virtualization (62%) and private 5G networks (58%). Collectively, these investments signal a decisive shift toward intelligent, high-performance next-gen network infrastructure. Natasha Davydova, former CIO at AXA UK&I, adds: *"We expect telcos to deliver edge-enabled use cases such as private 5G and network edge services that process data close to the source. Local data processing is essential where regulatory, privacy, and critical infrastructure requirements apply, making this a top priority for us."*

Figure 14.

Enhanced 5G services are attracting investment

Percentage of organizations likely to invest in the below advanced network and connectivity services over the next 1–2 years

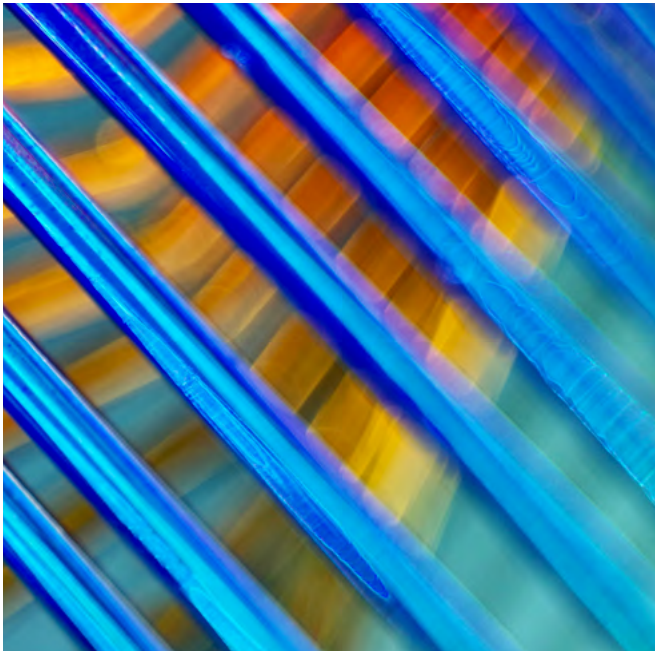
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations, Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 1st edition, December 2024–January 2025, N = 1,000 organizations.

Network APIs and slicing are key enablers of differentiated and high-value network capabilities

While foundational virtualization technologies such as SD-WAN and software-defined networking (SDN) continue to dominate current deployments, the next wave of innovation will showcase intelligence and service differentiation. Network APIs, orchestration and management systems, and network slicing enable organizations to unlock dynamic, on-demand network services and tailor connectivity to specific applications.

Organizations view network APIs as a pathway to new revenue streams

Network APIs are rapidly evolving into a strategic business accelerator. Of the organizations implementing or planning to implement network APIs, nearly seven in 10 now view them as enabling monetization opportunities and supporting expansion into new digital services. *“Network APIs shift us from static connectivity to programmable, application-aware networks where applications can dynamically request bandwidth, latency, or prioritization,”* adds Neha Donald from PepsiCo.



Telefónica's Scam Signal API is a strong example. It helps businesses detect and block phishing attempts before customers are exposed. Early deployments, including by several UK banks, report up to a 41% reduction in live scams, 44% fewer fraud losses, and significantly accelerated protection at scale.¹⁹

As Figure 15 illustrates, organizations are showing most interest in network APIs such as number verification, OTP validation, and SIM swap for current use or future adoption. Early traction for network APIs is strongest in APIs related to device status and security, particularly those focused on fraud prevention. Looking ahead, the market is expected to shift toward service bundle-based network APIs that combine capabilities – such as quality on demand (QoD) APIs with other categories – to enable more advanced and application specific use cases.

A few notable developments from telcos have emerged in this space:

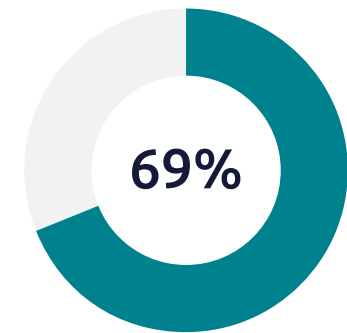
- According to GSMA, the Open Gateway program is now supported by more than 79 mobile operator groups

representing 291 networks that deliver services to almost 80% of the world's mobile connections.²⁰

- AT&T, T-Mobile, and Verizon have partnered to launch the first standardized 5G network APIs in the US using Aduna.²¹ The initial rollout includes Number Verification and SIM Swap APIs, designed to enhance security, reduce fraud, and improve user experience (UX) for developers and businesses.²²
- CAMARA's third meta-release combines stable APIs such as OTP and Number Verification with new features such as Verified Caller and SIM Swap. These capabilities help enterprises boost consumer trust and deliver next-generation services with QoS and Edge Discovery.²³
- Globe Telecom and Nokia have collaborated on network APIs to provide banks with enhanced security.²⁴
- Orange has launched Orange LiveNet, a dedicated business unit aimed at marketing network APIs.²⁵
- Through its India R&D centers, Ericsson is intensifying its focus on network APIs. It has announced a new venture with service providers Bharti Airtel and Reliance Jio, aimed at accelerating innovation in digital services by jointly developing, combining, and selling APIs globally.²⁶

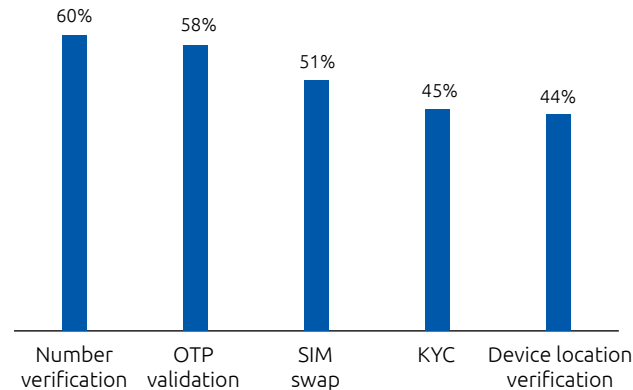
Figure 15.

Network APIs gain momentum among organizations as revenue enablers



of organizations in 2025 believe network APIs could unlock new revenue opportunities

Percentage of organizations that are using/planning to use the below network APIs in the next 1–2 years (2025)



As organizations move toward this programmable, API-driven future, their expectations of telcos are becoming clearer:

- Operating across multi-cloud and hybrid environments, **organizations require APIs that integrate seamlessly with existing systems**, ensuring simplicity, flexibility across operators and geographies, and automation, as confirmed by nearly 60% of organizations using or planning to use network APIs. Industry initiatives such as the CAMARA open source project are addressing this need.²⁷
- This shift goes beyond technical integration, as **65% of organizations using or planning to use network APIs seek explicit guidance from telcos on compliance, security, and data privacy**, emphasizing the need for trust, governance, and regulatory alignment.

Organizations prioritize network slicing to unlock advanced 5G capabilities

Omdia forecasts the global network slicing market will surge from near-zero in 2025 to \$12.5 billion by 2030, driven by 5G Standalone (SA) deployments, with mobile SIM slicing leading at \$7 billion and campus slicing at \$5.3 billion.²⁸

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 623 organizations presently using or planning to use network APIs.

B2B customers are increasingly viewing network slicing as a cornerstone of their advanced 5G strategies. Of the organizations implementing or planning to implement network slicing, 69% believe it will enhance operational efficiency, strengthen security, and enable service customization across business units. This belief is more commonly held among very large organizations (74%). Among sectors, 83% of high-tech, 78% of banking, and 77% of aerospace and defense organizations agree (see Figure 16).

The Port of Hamburg tested network slicing as part of the 5G-MoNArch project in a Deutsche Telekom–Nokia collaboration. The 8,000-hectare port deployed specialized slices for automated vehicles, remote operations, and other industrial applications, all operating over a shared 5G infrastructure. The result: improved resource utilization, operational flexibility, and support for mission-critical processes.²⁹

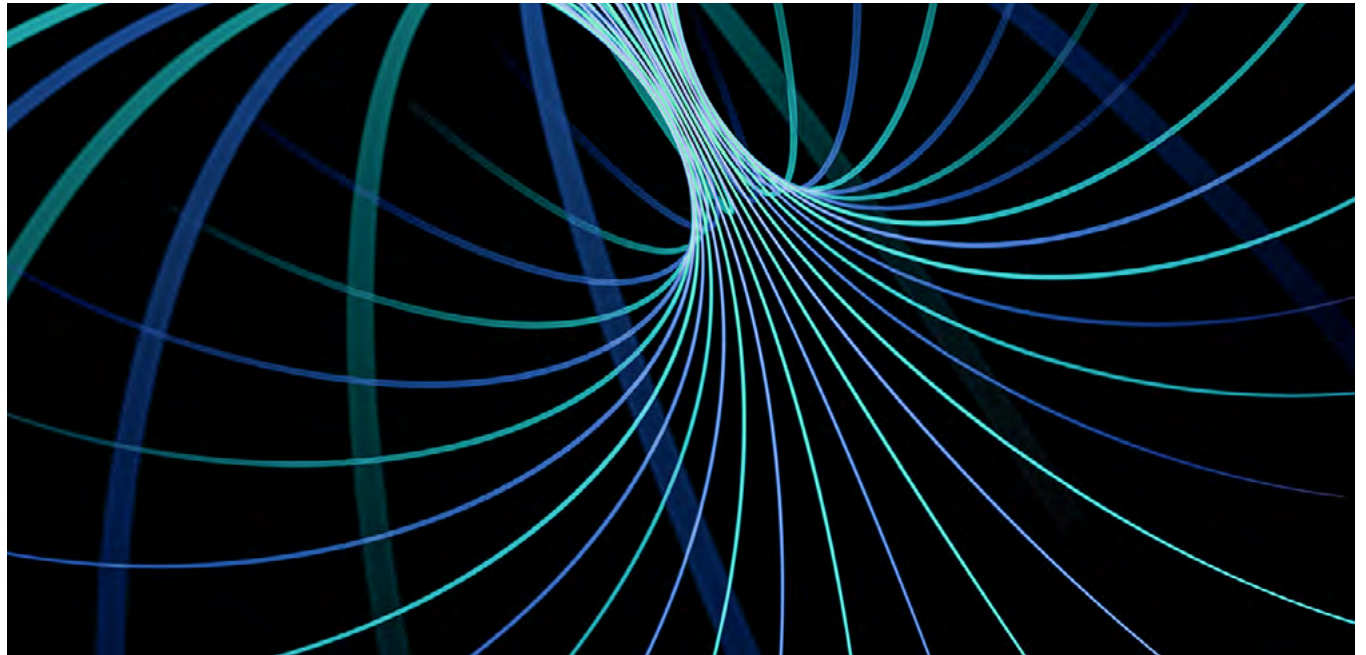
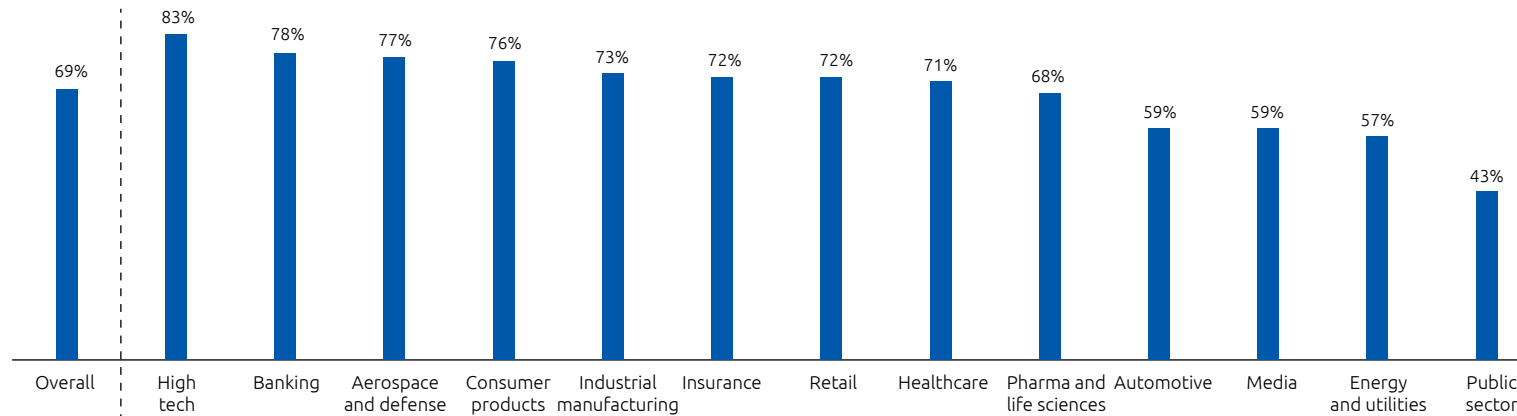


Figure 16.

Organizations expect network slicing to boost efficiency, security, and customization

Percentage of organizations that expect network slicing to enhance operational efficiency, security, and service customization (2025)



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 616 organizations presently using or planning to use network slicing.

A few examples emerge from telcos in this space:

- T-Mobile's T-Priority is the world's first commercially launched 5G network slice dedicated to public safety, providing first responders with prioritized access, increased capacity, and faster speeds, even during extreme network congestion.³⁰
- SailGP,³¹ in partnership with BT and Ericsson, deployed 5G standalone network slicing at the Emirates Great Britain Sail Grand Prix in Portsmouth, enabling real-time communications, live video, and telemetry for high-speed racing scenarios.³²
- Bordeaux University Hospital, in collaboration with Bouygues Telecom Business and Ericsson, has launched the SMART HO5PITAL initiative, one of France's first 5G-enabled smart hospitals using network slicing and edge computing to enhance care quality, patient pathways, and operational efficiency.³³

- Siemens and O2 Telefónica Germany launched the first fully integrated connectivity solution based on 5G network slicing, designed for Siemens' automation applications. The product is available for water utilities and wastewater treatment organizations in Germany.³⁴
- e& UAE also launched a commercial 5G network slicing product in the MENA region for business customers on its standalone 5G network.³⁵

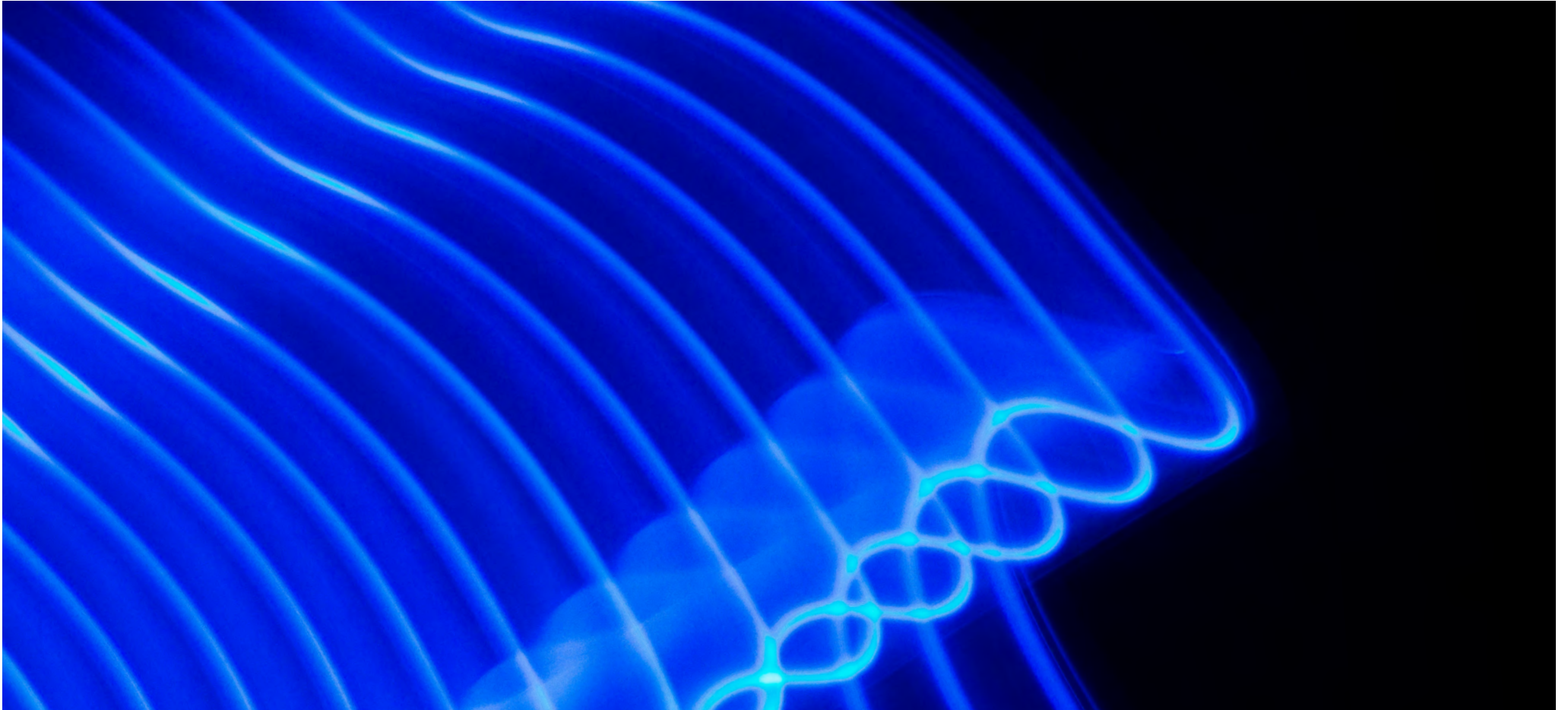
As organizations look to operationalize slicing, expectations from telcos are rising:

- 60% of organizations implementing or planning to implement network slicing want **slicing embedded directly into enterprise connectivity solutions.**
- 62% of organizations implementing or planning to implement network slicing **seek consultative guidance to identify high-value use cases** and ensure effective implementation.

Abid Shah, Vice President, Corporate IT at Mercedes-Benz AG, says, *"The concept of network slicing is very powerful and attractive, especially for use cases around safety-critical vehicle communications, real-time factory control, and autonomous driving data streams. But the real large-scale commercial deployments are not there yet. They are still at a relatively early stage, and although standardization and operational maturity are evolving, they have not reached a mature state."*

69%

of the organizations implementing or planning to implement network slicing, believe that it will enhance operational efficiency, strengthen security, and enable service customization across business units.



04

AI transformation engine: Scaling industrialized AI solutions and platforms

As organizations move beyond experimentation, they are committing investments to AI-driven capabilities that drive efficiency, innovation, and growth. Our survey suggests that organizations will spend 11% of their IT/tech budget on AI/generative AI (Gen AI) in the next one to two years. According to IDC, organizations will spend more than \$30 billion on AI-driven customer experience (CX) optimization by 2027.³⁶

AI/Gen AI and data analytics are priority investment areas for organizations

- **AI and ML services and data analytics services** are clear investment priorities, with 84% and 81% of organizations, respectively, likely to invest in each over the next one to two years. In 2024, these percentages stood at 59% and 58%, respectively. Reliance Industries announced a ₹7 trillion (\$77 billion) investment in Gujarat over five

years, including building India's largest AI-ready data center in Jamnagar, which will allow citizens to access services in their own languages.³⁷ General Motors (GM) and NVIDIA have agreed to a strategic collaboration that includes the automaker using several products and AI services from the tech giant for its next-generation vehicles, advanced driver-assistance systems, and factories.³⁸

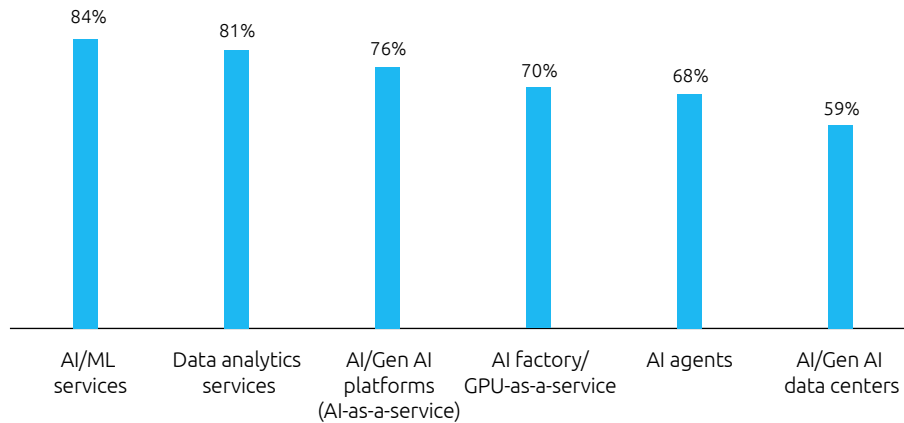
- Expected investment in **AI/Gen AI platforms and solutions (AI as a service)** is also significant, at 76%, signaling a shift toward scalable, on-demand AI capabilities. For example, Insilico Medicine is accelerating drug discovery through its ML platform, Pharma.AI.³⁹ Jio developed the JioBrain AI platform, which offers organizations a range of AI tools, including Gen AI capabilities.⁴⁰
- 70% expect to invest in **AI factory or GPU as a service (GPUaaS)**. Siemens and NVIDIA are using AI to transform the entire industrial value chain. Together, they are pioneering the next generation of AI-powered factories.⁴¹



Figure 17.

Most organizations will invest in AI and data-related services in the next one to two years

Percentage of organizations likely to invest in the following data and AI services in the next 1–2 years (2025)



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Customers expect telcos to play a strategic role in enabling their AI ambitions

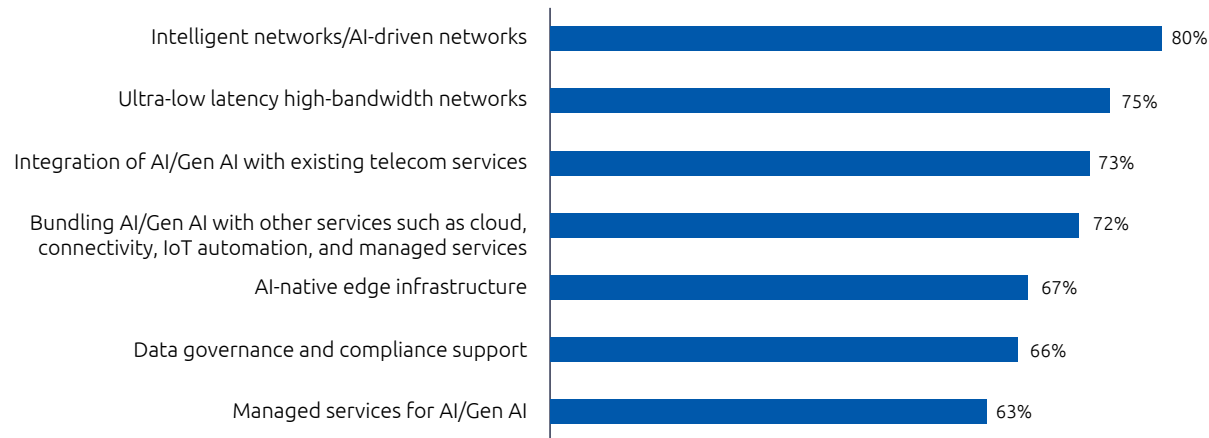
Organizations expect telcos to play a pivotal role in enabling AI and Gen AI adoption:

- Intelligent, AI-driven networks (expected by 80%) and ultra-low latency, high-bandwidth connectivity (expected by 75%) form the foundation for real-time AI applications. For example, AT&T's Express Waves delivers 100 G or 400 G per fiber wavelength with ultra-low latency, enabling rapid deployment (24 hours across metros or 15 days locally) for AI, cloud, and edge analytics workloads.
- Beyond connectivity, 73% of organizations seek deeper integration of AI with existing telecom services. Singtel's Paragon, for example, offers an all-in-one orchestration platform for 5G network, edge computing, cloud, and services.⁴²
- There is also strong demand for AI-native edge infrastructure, robust data governance and compliance support (66%), and managed services for AI/Gen AI (63%) to simplify deployment and ensure trust. Ericsson, for example, uses Google Cloud's Dataplex to unify data governance across on-premises and cloud environments, at scale, ensuring trust and regulatory alignment.⁴³

Figure 18.

Organizations expect intelligent networks and ultra-low latency, high-bandwidth connectivity as enablers and capabilities for AI and Gen AI adoption

Percentage of organizations that expect the below enablers and capabilities from their telcos (2025)



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Additionally:

- 71% say that they value access to facilities such as **AI contact centers**.
- Almost three in five (57%) say that they value **telecom AI factories** offering compute, models, and integrated AI services.

But telcos are struggling to match hyperscalers in AI and cloud capabilities

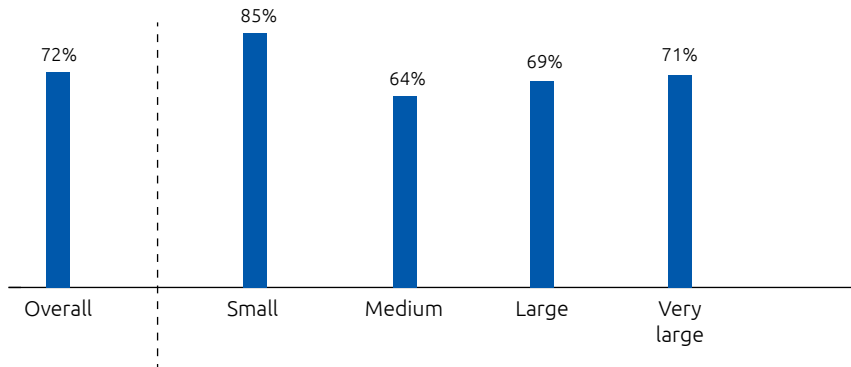
Nearly three-quarters (72%) of organizations say that their telco lags in AI and cloud services offerings compared with hyperscalers/tech-native firms.

This sentiment is even more pronounced among small organizations, where 85% share this concern. This reinforces the need for telcos to strengthen collaboration with technology partners to bridge capability gaps and deliver competitive AI and cloud services.

Figure 19.

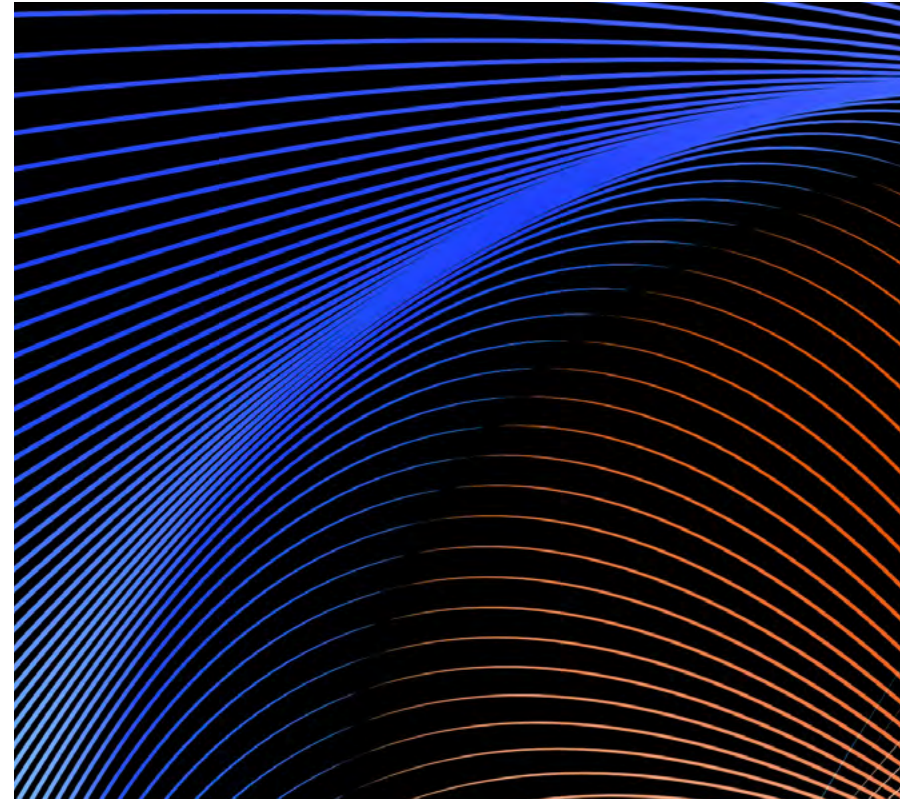
Most organizations say telcos lag behind hyperscalers in AI and cloud services

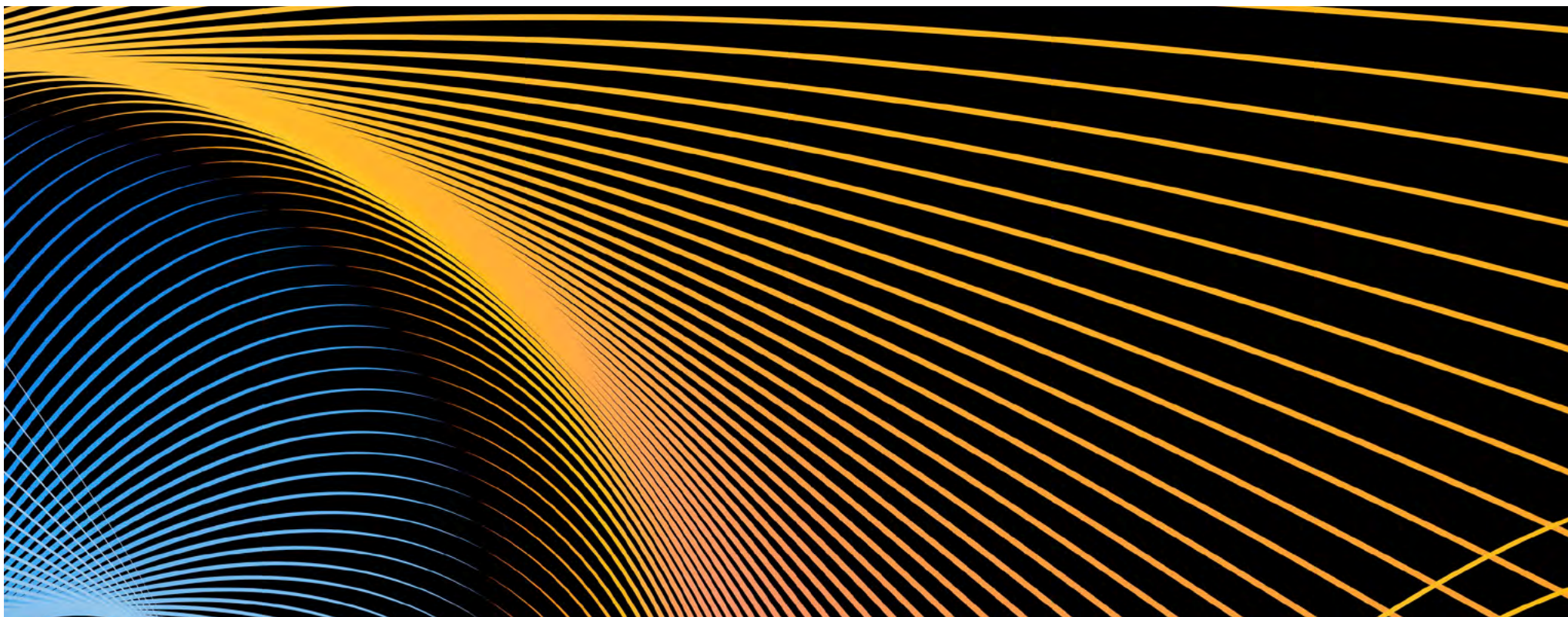
Percentage of organizations who agree with the statement: "Our telco lags behind hyperscalers/tech-native firms in AI and cloud services" (2025)



*Note: Organizations are categorized as small (50–100 employees), medium (100–999 employees), large (1,000–9,999 employees), and very large (10,000+ employees).

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.





The background of the slide features a series of vibrant, multi-colored light rays (blue, green, yellow, and red) that originate from the top left and fan out across the dark background, creating a sense of dynamic energy and connectivity.

05

Trusted ally: Ensuring sovereignty, compliance, control, and security

Sovereignty is rising in importance, with organizations looking to telcos they can trust

Sovereignty is a critical factor in telco selection

Organizations view sovereignty as a critical factor in maintaining control over sensitive information, ensuring

86%

of organizations consider country of origin of importance when selecting a network provider

compliance with local laws and regulations on data storage, processing, and access, and strengthening resilience against geopolitical uncertainties. Businesses are scrutinizing where their cloud data lives and which jurisdiction governs it.

As Figure 20 shows, 86% of organizations consider country of origin of importance when selecting a network provider. Two-thirds (67%) view sovereignty as the principal reason for preferring telcos over hyperscalers for cloud and AI solutions.

Digital sovereignty is now both a regulatory imperative and a strategic business priority, especially in highly regulated industries such as aerospace, banking, and insurance, where data sensitivity and operational continuity are critical. In our research, 74% of aerospace and defense executives, 71% in banking, and 65% in insurance cite sovereignty as a critical factor raising telcos above hyperscalers.

Nearly seven in 10 (69%) European organizations, compared with 61% of US-based organizations, say that sovereignty is a key factor in choosing telcos over hyperscalers.

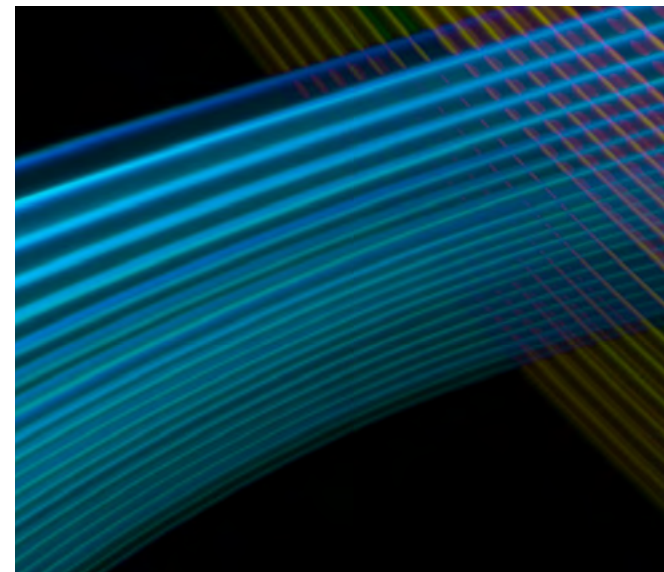
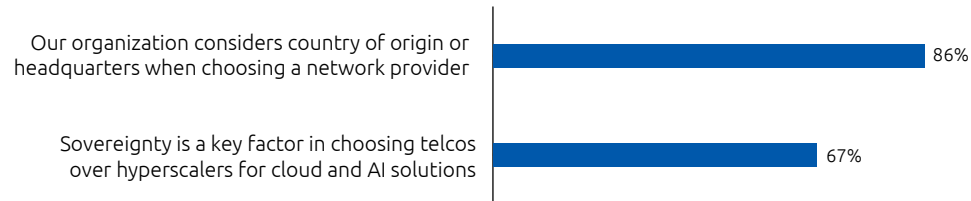


Figure 20.

Almost nine in 10 organizations consider a telco's home country when choosing a network partner

Percentage of organizations that agree with the below statements (2025)


Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Organizations are ramping up investments in sovereign cloud and AI and prefer telcos as trusted partners

Organizations are actively investing in sovereign cloud solutions to address regulatory pressures, geopolitical risks, and the need for greater control over sensitive data and AI workloads.

IDC estimates that, by 2030, global spending on sovereign cloud will surpass \$400 billion.⁴⁴ Our previous research⁴⁵ highlights that 46% of organizations already prioritize cloud sovereignty (up from 31% in 2022)⁴⁶ and 21% expect to start in the next 12 months. These numbers are even higher for Europe, where 50% of organizations say they either have or are currently working on a sovereign cloud strategy.

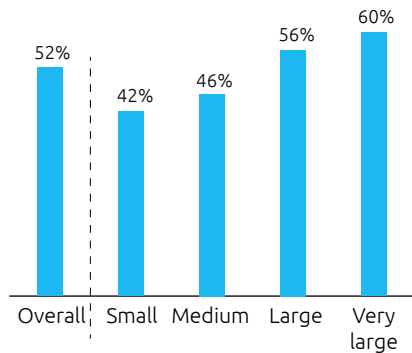
In this research as well, more than half (52%) of organizations say they will invest in sovereign cloud and 42% say they will invest in sovereign AI solutions in the next one to two years (see Figure 21). Very large organizations are ramping up investments in sovereign cloud and AI solutions. Our previous research also revealed that more than four in 10 executives are willing to pay a premium for sovereign cloud, of 11% on average.⁴⁷

Figure 21.

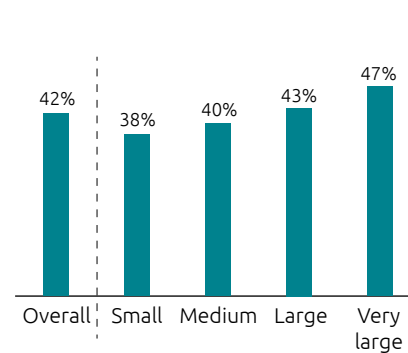
Organizations are planning sovereign cloud and AI investments to strengthen digital sovereignty

Percentage of organizations that agree with the below statements (2025)

We plan to invest in sovereign cloud in the next 1–2 years



We plan to invest in sovereign AI and infrastructure solutions in the next 1–2 years



*Note: Organizations are categorized as small (50–100 employees), medium (100–999 employees), large (1,000–9,999 employees), and very large (10,000+ employees).

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Our research reveals that more than 60% of organizations globally consider telcos their preferred partners for sovereign cloud and AI within their region or country. This preference is even stronger (71%) in highly regulated and critical sectors such as banking and aerospace (see Figure 22). However, according to our survey data, system integrators are a preferred channel for procuring sovereign AI and infrastructure services for healthcare and public sector respondents. Gurpreet Muctor, Chief Data & Technology Officer at Westminster City Council, says, *“A couple of years ago, sovereignty requirements were less of an issue, but now they are coming up much more, especially with the current geopolitical landscape. At the same time, I have not seen telecom operators stand up to sovereignty expectations and there remains a disconnect between hyperscalers, cloud providers, and telecom organizations. Telecom providers have a real opportunity here to evolve their role and actively bridge that gap, because without them, the sovereignty conversation cannot move forward in a meaningful way.”*

Telcos are uniquely positioned as preferred partners for sovereign AI services owing to their existing infrastructure (data centers, fiber networks, and computing infrastructure), data governance expertise, and their edge computing



"A couple of years ago, sovereignty requirements were less of an issue, but now they are coming up much more, especially with the current geopolitical landscape. At the same time, I have not seen telecom operators stand up to sovereignty expectations and there remains a disconnect between hyperscalers, cloud providers, and telecom organizations. Telecom providers have a real opportunity here to evolve their role and actively bridge that gap, because without them, the sovereignty conversation cannot move forward in a meaningful way."

Gurpreet Muctor

Chief Data & Technology Officer at Westminster City Council

capabilities. At NVIDIA's GTC (GPU Technology Conference) event in Paris in June 2025, Espen Halvorsen, VP Partnership Strategy – Technology Strategy and Partnership Ecosystem at Telenor, highlighted telcos' unique role in the sovereign AI space, starting with their long history of operating national infrastructure. He added: *"We own the core infrastructure of the nation and, sometimes, we are the resilience of the nation... And we know how to work with regulators... and that's a key asset."*⁴⁸

Organizations expect telcos to take the lead in the sovereign AI space:

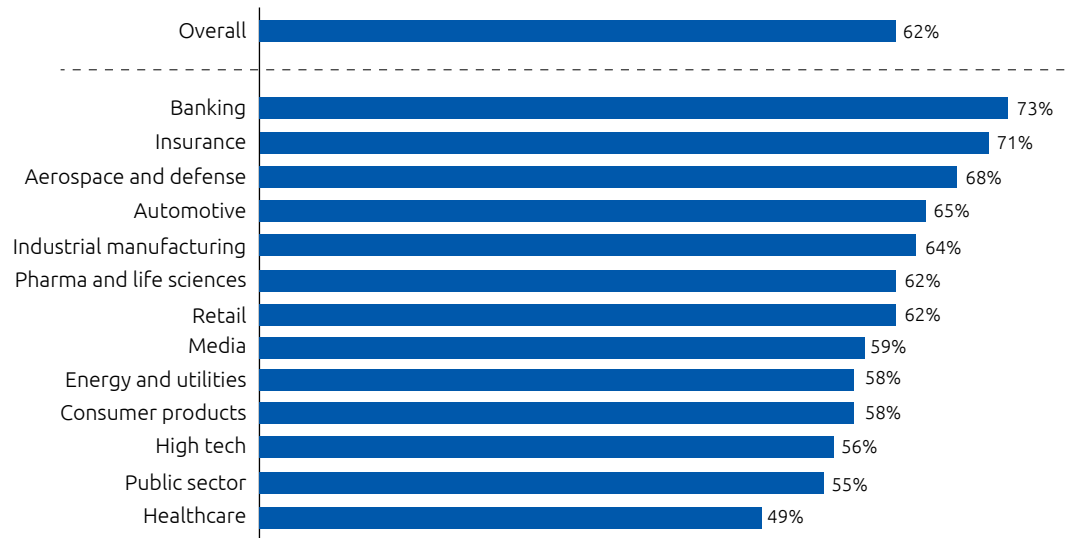
- 77% expect telcos to deliver AI services hosted and managed within national borders.
- 74% want telcos to invest in AI-dedicated infrastructure to support enterprise-grade sovereign AI applications.
- 72% demand end-to-end sovereign AI solutions, including consulting, integration, and managed services.

62% of organizations view telcos as their preferred partners for sovereign cloud and AI solutions

Figure 22.

More than 60% of organizations view telcos as their preferred partners for sovereign cloud and AI solutions

Percentage of organizations who agree with the statement: "We see telcos as our preferred partner for sovereign cloud/AI in our region/country" (2025)



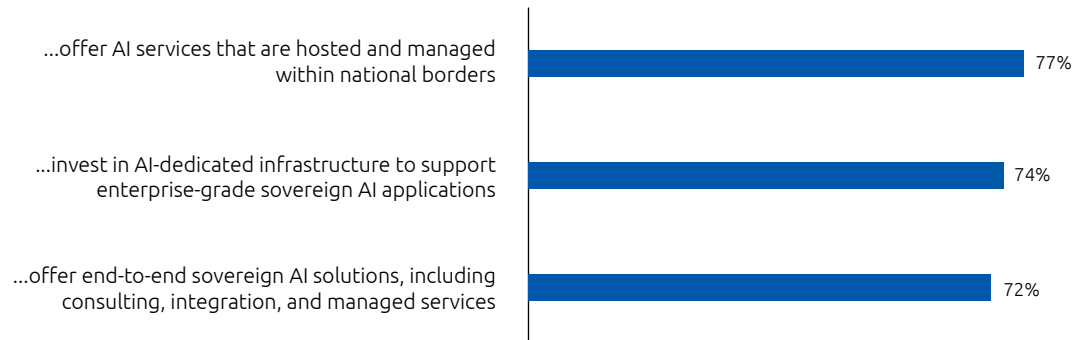
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Figure 23.

Almost eight in 10 organizations expect telcos to deliver fully integrated sovereign AI solutions

Percentage of organizations who agree with the below statements (2025)

Our telco should ...



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

As telcos take responsibility for delivering sovereignty assurances, they are investing in sovereign cloud and AI and forging strategic alliances with tech organizations. Many examples emerged in 2025:

- In May, FastWeb + Vodafone, part of Swisscom Group, launched sovereign Gen AI services for businesses and the public sector, called FastwebAI Suite, which run on end-to-end infrastructure located in Italy.⁴⁹
- In July, Bell Canada and Cohere announced a strategic partnership to provide full-stack sovereign AI solutions for government and enterprise customers across Canada, and to deploy proprietary, secure AI solutions internally to the business.⁵⁰
- In August, India's second-largest telecom services provider, Bharti Airtel, launched a sovereign, telecoms-grade cloud platform, Airtel Cloud, to help Indian organizations reduce their cloud expenditure while ensuring domestic data security. Bharti Airtel will offer the platform through its subsidiary, Xtelify, providing the service to other telecom operators via a platform-as-a-service (PaaS) model.⁵¹
- In November 2025, Deutsche Telekom, in collaboration with NVIDIA, announced a €1 billion (\$1.16 billion) partnership to construct the world's first Industrial AI Cloud. Planned to go live in the first quarter of 2026, this AI factory will enable German organizations to develop, train, and use AI models and applications with their proprietary data.⁵²

- In November 2025, Orange Business announced the migration of 70% of its IT infrastructure to Bleu, a joint venture between Orange and Capgemini. Bleu, which has attained Milestone 1 in the SecNumCloud 3.2 qualification, provides Microsoft 365 and Microsoft Azure services exclusively to the French market.⁵³

Customers seek next-gen cybersecurity from telecom providers

Organizations will continue to look to telcos for cybersecurity

Our previous research highlights that 99% of organizations have had at least one cybersecurity breach in the past three

years.⁵⁴ Global cyberattacks are rising by 4%, year on year. In November 2025, organizations faced an average of around 2,000 cyberattacks per week.⁵⁵ By 2026, global spending on cybersecurity is expected to reach \$240 billion, following \$213 billion in 2025, and \$193 billion in 2024.⁵⁶ Customers today expect their telcos to focus on strategies to protect sensitive data, ensure operational resilience, and maintain trust.

Most organizations say they will continue to build on 2025's momentum by purchasing security solutions such as data security, fraud protection, network security, and mobile security from telcos (see Figure 24). A CTO at a US-based healthcare organization says: *"In healthcare, reliability is non-negotiable. We expect favorable pricing, robust security against DDoS [distributed denial of service] and malware, and strict SLAs."*

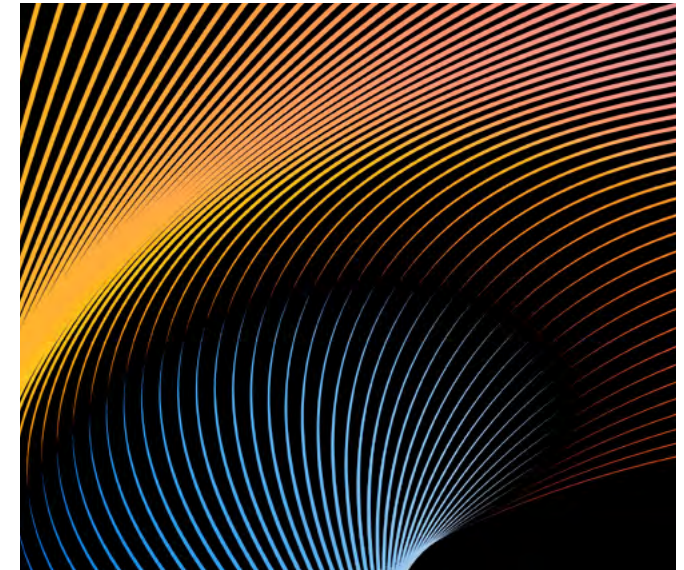
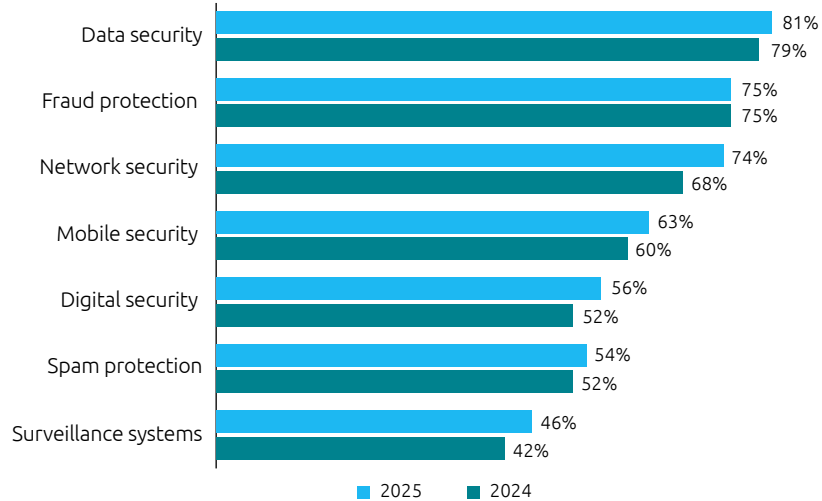


Figure 24.

Businesses are consistently investing in telcos to address their security needs

Percentage of organizations that are planning to use the below security offerings from telcos



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 625 organizations that do not plan to leverage managed security services in the next 1–2 years; Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 742 organizations.

While all organizations are susceptible to cyber threats, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) face greater challenges. According to the Verizon 2025 *Mobile Security Index* (MSI), 57% of SMEs lack the resources to respond effectively to a cyberattack. Additionally, 54% believe a security breach would be more detrimental to them than to larger enterprises.⁵⁷ Our research data reflects this: 30% of small organizations (organizations with 50–100 employees) say they procure managed security services from telcos, and 45% plan to do so in the next one to two years.

AI and quantum advancements intensify cybersecurity risks

AI is reshaping cybersecurity, but it is also augmenting cybercriminal capabilities. The advent of quantum computing will only intensify the threat.

- Our previous research found that 97% of organizations encountered breaches or security issues related to the use of Gen AI in the past year.⁵⁸ Gartner forecasts that, by 2027, 17% of total cyberattacks will involve Gen AI.⁵⁹ According to the Verizon 2025 MSI, only 17% of businesses have specific security measures against AI-assisted attacks.⁶⁰
- Nokia's 2025 *Threat Intelligence Report* found that quantum risk ranks second to last among concerns for network security professionals.⁶¹ Our previous research revealed that 70% of organizations are either working on or

planning to implement quantum-safe solutions within the next five years.⁶²

The research shows that AI-driven security investment plans are the top priority, with 76% of organizations planning to invest in the next one to two years (see Figure 25).

Customers now look to telcos for AI-driven and quantum-safe cybersecurity

“One of the most important priorities for us is real-time monitoring of cyber threats; for example, intrusion detection and overall security – especially with AI-powered bots or agents that can monitor network traffic in real time. We expect telcos to proactively monitor our services and stop threats at the earliest stage using AI,” says Alfonso Antolínez, CIO at Germany-based media organization Bertelsmann.

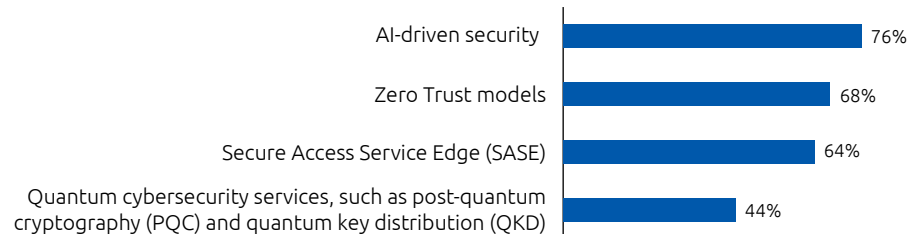
Organizational expectations of telcos are rising (see Figure 26)

- 65% of all organizations and 79% of small organizations want telcos to proactively implement quantum-resistant encryption and cybersecurity protocols.
- 63% expect telcos to offer AI-powered cybersecurity and threat-detection solutions, rising to 83% among energy and utility organizations.
- 60% expect telcos to identify the products and services most vulnerable to quantum-based attacks. This trend is even more pronounced in the consumer products (77%) and insurance (74%) industries.

Figure 25.

Over three-quarters of organizations intend to invest in AI-powered security solutions in the next 1–2 years

Percentage of organizations that are likely to invest in the following cybersecurity solutions over the next 1–2 years (2025)



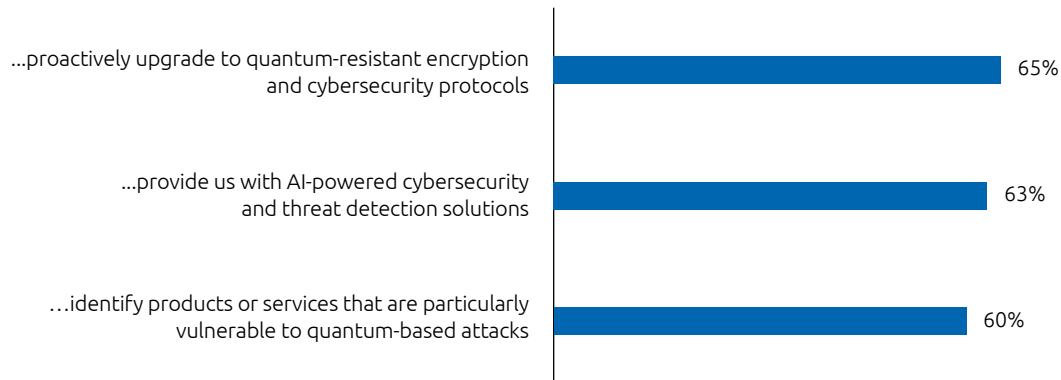
1. Zero Trust is a “never trust, always verify” approach that continuously validates every access to protect data across all environments using identity, policy, and segmentation.
2. Secure Access Service Edge (SASE) is a cloud-based architecture that converges network connectivity and comprehensive security functions into a single, unified service platform.
3. PQC is a set of cryptographic algorithms that are designed to resist attack by quantum computers.
4. QKD is a technique that uses the entanglement of quantum particles, allowing for uncrackable keys to be shared.

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Figure 26.

Organizations expect resilient security measures to counter AI and quantum-based cyber risks from telcos

Percentage of organizations who agree with the below statements (2025)



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

“We need telcos to deliver stronger AI-based cybersecurity solutions capable of automatically detecting fraud, blocking suspicious calls before they reach our customers, and enhancing the protection of our data,” says a senior executive from a large India-based bank.

Telcos are making significant investments in AI-based security solutions for B2B customers. Driven by escalating cyber risks, telcos plan to invest over \$17 billion in AI-enabled network security by 2029, nearly doubling annual spending from \$2.5 billion in 2025 to \$4.6 billion.⁶³ Additionally, telcos are collaborating with hyperscalers and security-focused technology organizations to deliver more advanced and robust security solutions:

- Orange Business and Toshiba Europe have launched Orange Quantum Defender, the first quantum-safe networking service in France. By combining quantum key distribution (QKD) with post-quantum cryptography (PQC), the service equips enterprises in the Paris area with advanced, future-proof protection for their most sensitive data.⁶⁴
- Telefónica made quantum security a major focus at MWC Barcelona 2025, showcasing three PQC-based demos: securing VPN communications using NIST-approved algorithms (including remote virtual reality [VR] submarine control from Gran Canaria); updating an IoT device via eSIM to enable NIST-compliant post-quantum encryption; and applying PQC to Halotech smart devices in critical environments such as mines through its Kite IoT platform.⁶⁵

- Sparkle, the global operator of Telecom Italia and Italy's leading international service provider, has recently announced that its "Quantum Safe over Internet" (QSI) solution is now available to Amazon Web Services (AWS) customers. Launched in December 2024, QSI enables enterprises to access Sparkle's network, establish secure connections between their offices, and utilize cloud resources with assurance against quantum attacks.⁶⁶
- Vendors are getting in on the game as well. Nokia, together with Colt and Honeywell, is developing satellite-based QKD to overcome the ~100 km distance limits of fiber QKD, with trials planned for 2026 and commercial satellite QKD services expected in 2027. The idea is to create a "one-stop shop" for organizations wishing to protect in-transfer data.⁶⁷
- Orange Cyberdefense, the cybersecurity arm of Orange Group, has partnered with Qevlar AI to enhance its advanced detection services. By integrating its Cyber Threat Intelligence database with Qevlar's AI technology, Orange Cyberdefense is boosting detection and remediation capabilities, enabling faster and more effective responses to increasingly sophisticated attacks.⁶⁸

While new telco services are emerging, a clear gap remains between what organizations expect and what telcos deliver. As Figure 27 shows, just 51% are satisfied with telcos' AI/Gen AI-driven cybersecurity, which suggests a gap of 31pp from 82% expecting the same. Satisfaction is even lower in healthcare (43%) and the public sector (46%).

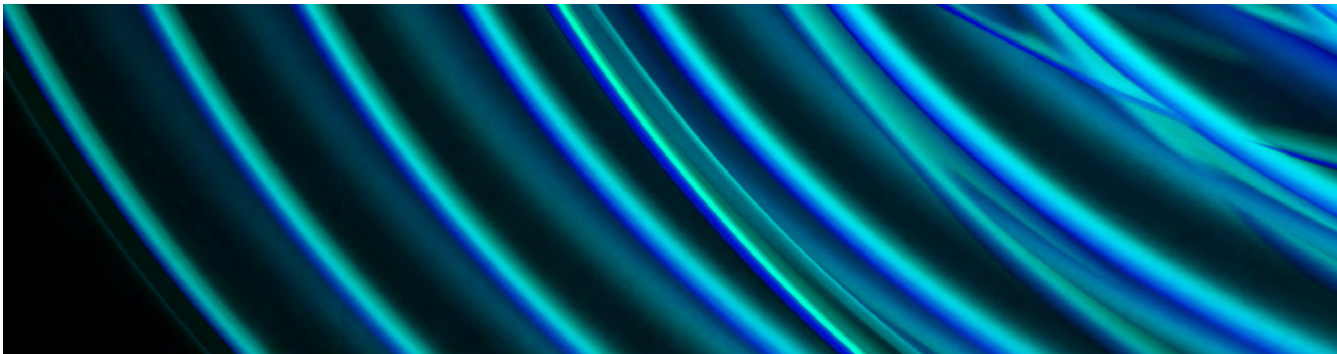
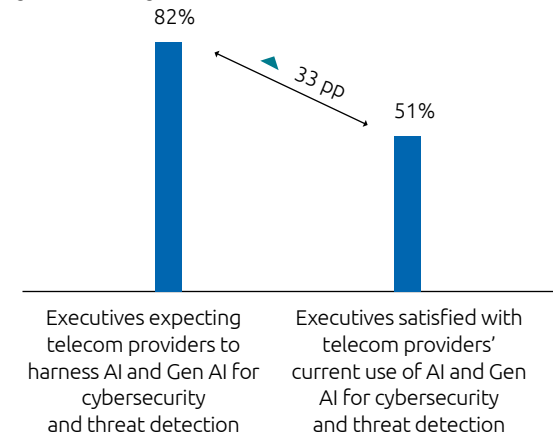


Figure 27.

Only half of organizations are satisfied with telcos' AI/Gen AI use in cybersecurity

Gap between organizations' expectations and satisfaction with telcos' use of AI/Gen AI in cybersecurity and threat detection



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.



06

**Personalized and simplified
experience provider:
Creating frictionless
engagement**

Organizations demand a seamless customer experience from telcos

Customer experience (CX) remains a defining driver of retention, renewals, and growth in the B2B telecom market. As customers shift from buying basic connectivity to seeking integrated, outcome-oriented solutions, they increasingly expect frictionless digital buying journeys, transparent pricing, and seamless, end-to-end engagement across the contract lifecycle.

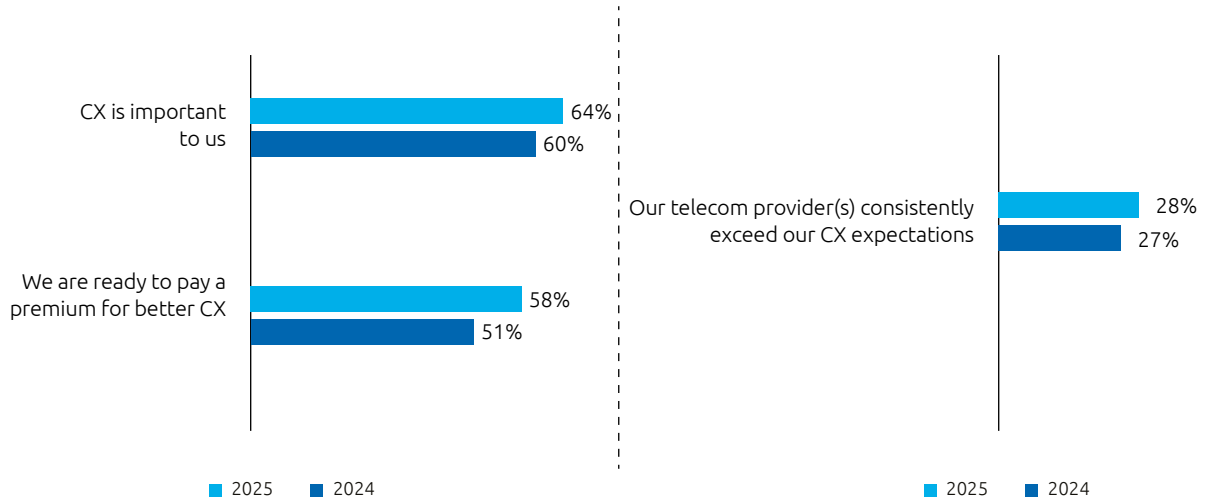
As Figure 28 shows:

- Organizations clearly recognize the strategic relevance of CX: 64% identify it as important, consistent with 60% in 2024, and 58% are willing to pay a premium for superior CX, rising to 65% among smaller organizations.
- However, organizations' expectations for exceptional CX are rising faster than telco delivery. **Only 28% of customers say their provider consistently exceeds CX expectations, with similar levels (27%) reported in 2024.** The expectation gap is even clearer in key industries: In media, just 22% rate their CX as exceptional, despite 69% being willing to pay more for it. In the public sector, only 25% report exceptional CX, while 67% would pay a premium.

Figure 28.

Organizations want better CX from telcos, but just one in four deliver

Percentage of organizations that agree with the below statements



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations, Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 1st edition, December 2024–January 2025, N = 1,000 organizations.



“Customers no longer measure their experience in megabits per second – they measure it in moments: seamless, personalized, secure, and shareable. Meeting these expectations requires telcos to evolve from infrastructure providers into orchestrators of digital experiences. That evolution demands not only bold investment, but the right blend of technical insight and strategic vision.”

Anne-Flore Agard,

Global Head of Telecom Industry, Capgemini Engineering

Operational responsiveness is another pain point. Only 24% of organizations are satisfied with their telco's lead times, falling to just 11% among very large enterprises. This stagnation signals that providers are failing to differentiate on CX, leaving them at risk of customer churn.

A simplified digital buying process is becoming critical

The buying process has emerged as another significant friction point in the B2B telecom customer journey. **Most (65%) organizations now find the buying process overly complex**, up sharply from 51% in 2024, with seven in 10 small businesses voicing this concern. Bertelsmann's Antolínez says: *"Simplifying the catalogue of products, bundles, and services would reduce confusion, save time, and accelerate the buying process."*

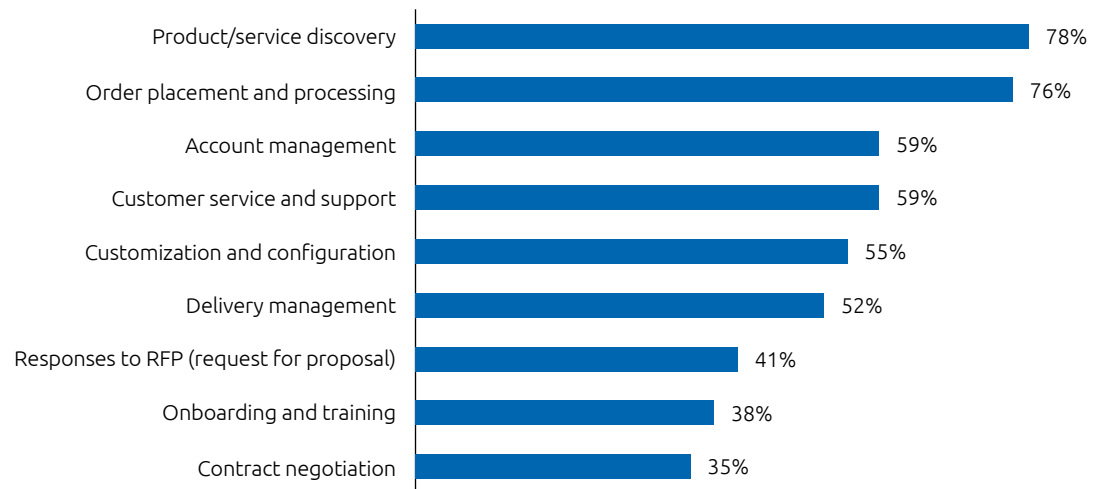
Simple, transparent billing remains the biggest area for improvement in contract and billing management, cited by 65% of organizations, compared with 60% in the previous edition. Among smaller organizations, the issue is even more pronounced, with nearly three out of four (74%) calling for greater clarity and simplicity in billing.

Customers are clear: the B2B buying process must be fully digital and intuitive, with self-service experiences that give them control. As Figure 29 shows:

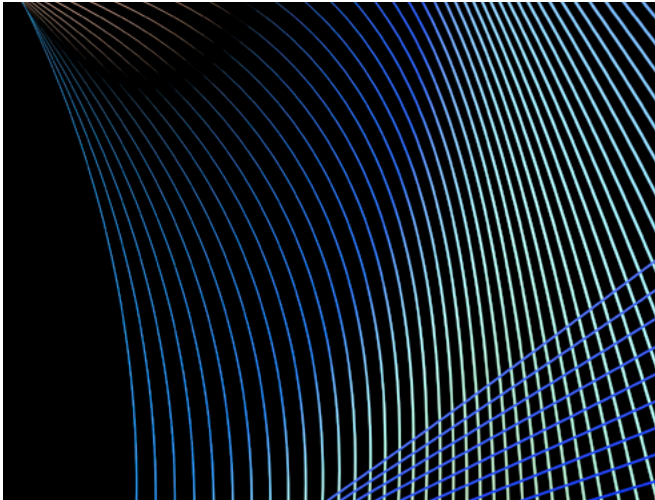
Figure 29.

Organizations favor product/service discovery and order placement and processing for digitalization

Percentage of organizations that believe the below processes should be digitalized



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.



- Demand for digitalization remains strongest for frictionless product and service discovery (78%) and order placement and processing (76%), underscoring the need for intuitive platforms that simplify engagement and accelerate transactions.
- Organizations also expect digital capabilities across customer service and support (59%), account management (59%), and customization (55%), reflecting a growing desire for seamless, personalized interactions throughout the relationship. Leading telcos are already focusing on such digitalization initiatives:
- AT&T Business provides multiple online portals, such as MyAT&T, Premier, Business Center, and BusinessDirect, offering detailed billing views, customizable reports, usage history, invoice downloads, and alerts for upcoming charges.⁶⁹ AT&T and Ericsson have launched an end-to-end

IoT Marketplace built on Ericsson's Digital Experience Platform and hosted on Azure. The marketplace enables enterprises to browse catalogs digitally, configure services, place orders, and manage billing for IoT connectivity through a unified digital interface.⁷⁰

- Verizon Enterprise Center (VEC) serves as Verizon Business's centralized, cross-device portal allowing customers to order services, compare pricing, check availability, track orders and installations, and manage billing and repair tickets, fully digitalizing purchasing and post-purchase workflows.⁷¹
- Orange Business's My Service Space provides a digital portal where customers can manage quotes and orders, set up approval workflows, and gain visibility from request to delivery.⁷²

Organizations prioritize solution-led account management

Customers' desire for a seamless, intelligent, and consultative buying experience is evident in the fact that nearly seven in 10 (68%) want telecom sales teams to sell integrated solutions, rather than standalone offerings. A similar pattern appears across key sectors: 83% of public sector, and 76% of energy and utility and 71% of banking and insurance organizations expect telco sales teams to be fully prepared to deliver integrated solutions.

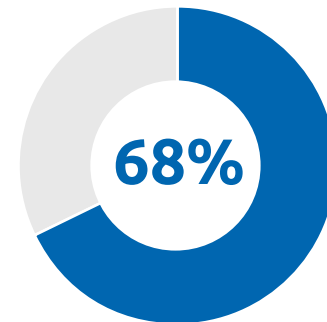
Less than half (46%) of organizations believe their provider's sales representatives demonstrate sufficient industry and technical expertise to meet these expectations. Confidence among smaller businesses is even lower, at 38%, signaling a need for stronger enablement and knowledge-building (see Figure 30).

When asked about the highest account-management priorities for telcos, customers consistently highlight three areas:

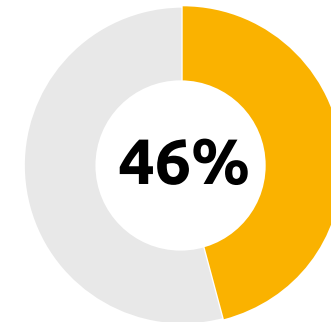
- Stronger understanding of their business and industry-specific needs (57%)

Figure 30.

Nearly seven in 10 organizations expect sales team to be equipped for integrated-solution sales, but less than half feel this is happening



of organizations **expect telco's sales team to be equipped to sell integrated solutions, rather than standalone products**



of organizations say their **telco's sales team demonstrates deep understanding of customer's industry and technical needs**

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

- Greater responsiveness from dedicated account managers (51%)
- More transparent, proactive communication about issues, disruptions, and outages (49%)

These expectations remain largely unchanged from 2024, underscoring a persistent need for telcos to develop relationship-driven, consultative engagement.

Organizations expect more responsive, dedicated, and intelligent customer support

Expectations of post-sales support are rising, particularly as more organizations adopt complex, integrated solutions. Yet, **61% say they are unhappy with telcos' post-sales support on integrated solutions.**

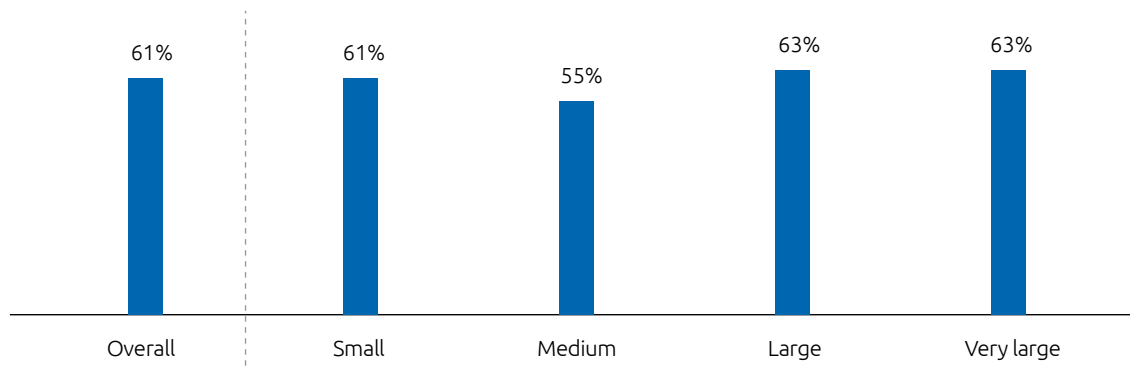
Telcos have invested in digital tools and automation, but the reality is that **customer expectations of responsiveness and proactive engagement are still unmet.** As Figure 32 highlights:

- **Round-the-clock availability of live agents** continues to be a critical gap, as cited by 72% of organizations in 2025. While chatbots now take up some of the slack, customers still expect human intervention for complex queries, and

Figure 31.

More than three in five organizations are unhappy with post-sales support on integrated solutions

Percentage of organizations who agree with the statement: "We are not happy with our telco's post-sales support, specifically for complex, integrated solutions"



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

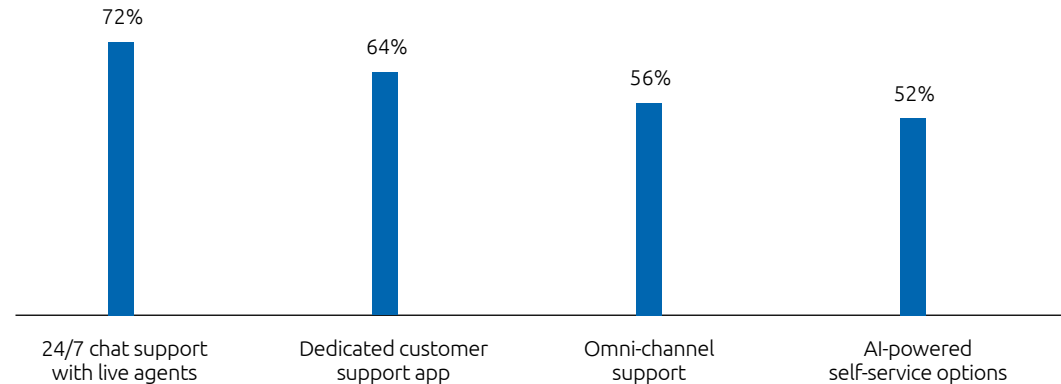
the inability to deliver this consistently undermines trust and satisfaction.

- **Digital convenience** remains another key unmet expectation of organizations: Most (64%) cite the need for a dedicated customer support app. Vodafone Business, for example, provides an app for single point of contact (SPOC) users to manage enterprise accounts: view bills, request new lines/SIM swaps, manage user bundles, activate services, and access promotions.
- More than half (56%) of organizations identify **omni-channel support** as a top improvement area. Moreover, just 38% report frictionless interactions across all channels, from self-service portals to partner networks, highlighting persistent complexity in the buying journey.
- Beyond responsiveness, customers increasingly expect proactive communication and **intelligent self-service powered by AI**. As Figure 36 shows, 52% of organizations say AI-powered self-service options need improvement. Moreover, just 30% of organizations say their telco provides proactive, personalized insights, despite AI's potential to recommend actions based on usage patterns or predict service disruptions. Partnerships such as Vodafone Business and ServiceNow, which deliver AI-powered service automation and unified visibility across networks and applications, illustrate the direction in which customers expect providers to move.⁷³

Figure 32.

Nearly three in four organizations cite 24/7 assistance as a key area for improvement

Percentage of organizations that list the below customer service aspects as pressing issues that require improvement



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

The background of the slide features a series of dynamic, flowing lines in shades of blue and green, creating a sense of motion and energy. These lines curve and sweep across the frame, with some appearing as bright, glowing streaks and others as softer, more diffused bands. The overall effect is a high-tech, futuristic aesthetic.

07

The telco playbook for accelerated B2B growth

Telcos stand at a strategic inflection point. As highlighted earlier in this report, a significant gap persists between what business customers expect and what telcos currently deliver – and declining satisfaction levels are widening this divide. Telcos must make a strategic choice with two paths ahead:

Path 1: Continue as a traditional connectivity provider

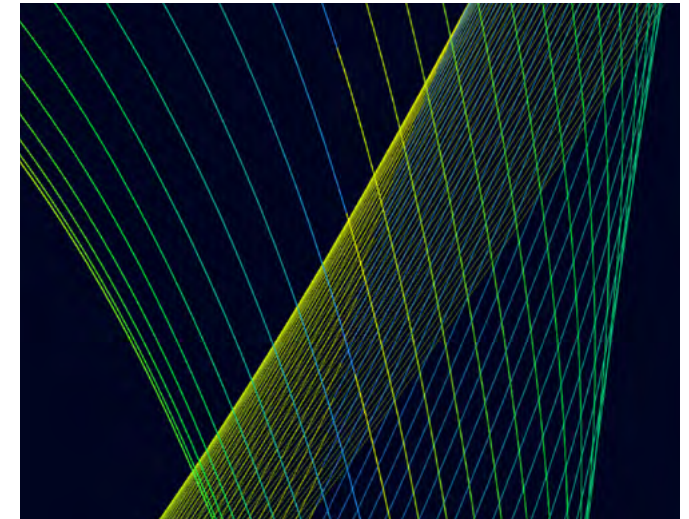
Remain a traditional connectivity provider – focused on standard service bundles, competing on price and coverage. Revenue will remain tied to subscriber count and data usage. The goal here will be to become a lean and efficient optimizer.

Path 2: Evolve into a digital powerhouse

Transform into an integrated digital service provider that creates differentiated experiences and value across industries. By leveraging existing infrastructure as a strategic asset and investing in next-generation technologies – AI,

cloud, edge computing, quantum, and 6G – telcos can co-create new services through ecosystem partnerships and targeted M&A. This enables monetization beyond traditional average revenue per user (ARPU) through outcome-based models, subscriptions, and API-driven revenue streams.

As telcos navigate this transition, differentiated go-to-market approaches can help address varied customer expectations while preparing for a clear strategic direction. The choice is clear: pick a lane and match your investments to your strategy. Those who stay stuck in the middle will lose relevance and market share. Ultimately, the path telcos choose will define their future role, influence, and ability to capture enterprise value.





“The B2B shift demands more than optimized connectivity: enterprises now expect intelligence, partnership, and industry-specific value. The telcos that win will be those that choose their battlegrounds, co-create across ecosystems, embed AI at the core of their value-creation model, build sovereign and trusted solutions, and nurture future-ready talent.”

Praveen Shankar,

Global Telecom Industry Leader, Capgemini

To unlock differentiated enterprise growth, telcos must take action across the following areas:

Figure 33.

Recommendations for the telecom sector



Source: Capgemini Research Institute analysis.

1. Choose your battleground: Prioritize high-value “plays” aligned to your customers and core advantages

Telecom providers should resist the urge to chase being both a lean connectivity provider and digital services powerhouse at once. Instead, they must adopt a selective, strengths-led approach that targets opportunities aligned with their network capabilities, customer relevance, and growth ambition.

This matters even more now as enterprise demand for industry specialization continues to rise, with:

- 64% of organizations planning to invest in industry-specific solutions in the next one to two years, up from 58% in 2024
- 72% expecting their telecom provider to have a dedicated unit focused on their industry.

To capture this rising demand in a meaningful and sustainable way, telcos must:

a. Prioritize the domains where they can truly differentiate

Winning as a lean connectivity provider starts with disciplined execution over competitive pricing, reliable performance, and superior coverage. This strong foundation creates the headroom for telcos to enhance/expand into advanced connectivity solutions such as private 5G, IoT, etc., where operational excellence is a differentiator.

In digital services, trying to do everything often dilutes impact. Telcos need to narrow their focus to the digital-service (such as network-API-driven services, sector-specific platforms, data and analytics products, or edge-enabled applications) and industry domains where they can build meaningful differentiation. This sharper focus enables them to deepen expertise, build scale, and strengthen enterprise trust.

A selective approach also enables the creation of industry blueprints that integrate common use cases, reference architectures, compliance needs, and partner ecosystems for priority sectors, thus avoiding fragmented one-off solutions and ensuring solutions can scale consistently across customers. This requires a shift from rigid, legacy systems to modern, flexible, and cost-effective architectures.

b. Rearchitect the telco B2B operating model

To build on this prioritization, telcos must redefine their operating model.

A lean connectivity provider requires an operating model that is built around scale, consistency, and low cost. This involves the below considerations in their operating model:

- **Radical product simplification:** Streamline the portfolio into a small set of standardized service bundles that reduce complexity and improve margin visibility.
- **Standardized network operations:** Run networks through highly repeatable, industrialized workflows that ensure reliability, predictable performance, and efficient use of network assets.

For digital-service ambitions, the operating model should shift from being centered purely on offering generic connectivity to one designed for delivering industry-specific, outcome-based solutions. For example, Orange Business announced the launch of Direction Défense & Sécurité (DD&S) in June 2025, a unit dedicated to the digital transformation of ministries, operators, and organizations in the defense

and homeland security sector. This unit aims to cater to deployment of resilient connectivity solutions, hybridization of civilian and military networks, hosting of sensitive data, emergency communication systems, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity.⁷⁴

This shift requires real alignment between strategy, investment, and execution:

- **Industry-led verticalization**
 - Establish dedicated business units for priority sectors (e.g., manufacturing, healthcare, transportation).
 - Build cross-functional industry squads comprising consulting, solutioning, architecture, and delivery talent.
- **Shared horizontal capability platforms**
 - Create reusable, scalable platforms for AI, data, network APIs, security, and edge computing.
 - Ensure these platforms operate as shared assets that any vertical can rapidly assemble into solutions.
- **Integrated governance across vertical and horizontal teams**
 - Align roadmaps, funding, and KPIs to ensure verticals shape demand while horizontals supply scalable capabilities.
 - Implement joint accountability for customer outcomes, not just product launches.

The result is a blended horizontal-vertical model that enables telcos to move beyond one-size-fits-all services and create differentiated, enterprise-relevant offerings at scale.

AI-powered automation underpins both operating-model approaches (lean connectivity provider and digital services powerhouse) by enabling smarter, faster, and more resilient operations. It enables the development of applications that improve service delivery, quality, and network availability, while also enhancing workforce effectiveness.

c. Adopt a co-creation mindset

No operator can meet the advanced connectivity requirements or the full breadth of industry-specific needs alone, so this requires a collaborative mindset. By working closely with anchor customers and ecosystem partners, telcos can validate real use cases, sharpen their value propositions, and build early proof points that speed up enterprise adoption and quantify benefits against the use cases. This collaboration also helps clarify which capabilities to build internally, which to acquire, and where partnerships are the better route.

d. Build enterprise awareness

Telcos should help enterprise customers understand how digital and industry-specific offerings translate into real business value. This involves showcasing industry-relevant use cases, quantifying ROI, and providing proof points that reflect real-world impact, helping enterprises understand what these solutions can do, why they matter for their sector, and how they can accelerate transformation.

Anchoring connectivity and digital-services investments to a clear, winnable market position ensures telcos avoid spreading resources thin, and instead focus where they can lead, differentiate, and deliver tangible enterprise outcomes.

2. Foster partnerships across the value chain: Shift from vendor management to co-creation with partners

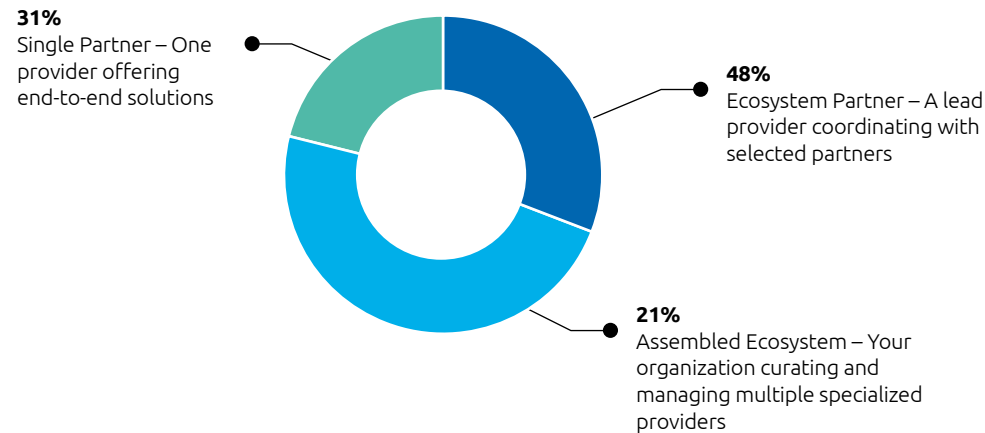
Telcos struggle to deliver advanced connectivity and end-to-end enterprise solutions on their own, making **partnerships no longer optional, but existential** to maintain their relevance beyond connectivity services. They must build, orchestrate, and scale strategic partnerships with infrastructure providers, hyperscalers, independent software vendors (ISVs), system integrators (SIs), and OEMs to accelerate industry-specific innovation while unlocking new revenue streams beyond connectivity. Our research indicates that 72% of organizations value telecom providers who collaborate with their vendors/partners for seamless integration. As Figure 34 shows, nearly half (48%) of organizations expect a coordinated ecosystem, rather than a single-vendor approach (31%) or managing multiple providers themselves (21%).

But simply growing a partner ecosystem won't deliver B2B growth. To realize the true benefits of partnerships, telcos must revolutionize the mechanisms for orchestrating partnerships, growing solutions portfolios, and accelerating commercialization. They need to shift to a **customer-centric, platform-oriented model** that positions them as ecosystem orchestrators. Telcos should:

Figure 34.

Nearly half of organizations prefer a lead ecosystem partner

What type of partnership model would best meet your organization's technology and telecom needs?



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

a. Shift from a vendor mindset to a collaborative mindset

Telcos should abandon vendor-style, transactional relationships and embrace co-innovation with shared investments, shared risk, and shared rewards. As ecosystem-driven partnerships expand, telcos will need stronger governance frameworks that clearly define KPIs, leadership responsibilities, and cross-organizational support mechanisms to maintain alignment and ensure accountability. Treat partners as an extension of the business, co-designing differentiated solutions, building reusable IP together, and aligning roadmaps, so collaboration becomes the core growth engine rather than an adjunct activity. A few telcos are already moving in this direction. For example, BT Group has partnered with data-center providers Equinix and Digital Realty to power its Global Fabric – an advanced network-as-a-service (NaaS) platform designed to help multinational enterprises modernize and streamline interconnectivity across their digital value chains. Through this collaboration, customers gain secure, high-bandwidth, AI-ready connectivity across more than 140 global locations, enabling faster innovation and improved business outcomes.⁷⁵

b. Create joint go-to-market (GTM) and co-delivery constructs

Telcos should establish integrated go-to-market and co-delivery constructs with shared SLAs, unified support, standardized packaging, a single front-door CX, and clear operating and value-sharing models.

c. Build a simple, open platform for easy partner collaboration

Adopt open, modular, and interoperable architectures with clear certification gates (performance, sovereignty, security) to ensure partner solutions plug in seamlessly across cloud, edge, network, and data layers. Implement unified data-exchange and API monetization layers that enable secure cross-partner data sharing and standardized exposure of network capabilities.

d. Adopt a “copete” (cooperate and compete) strategy for shared infrastructure in underserved markets

Telcos should adopt a “copete” strategy – cooperating where it drives efficiency while still competing on

differentiated value – to overcome rising costs and the pressure for rapid network expansion. This could include shared risk and investment structures, such as joint ventures or virtual organizations.

Sharing towers and fiber infrastructure can significantly reduce CAPEX and OPEX while accelerating 4G and 5G rollout. Telcos should replicate similar models in their own low-footprint markets to unlock scale benefits while maintaining a competitive edge. A recent infrastructure sharing deal between MTN Group and Airtel Africa in Uganda and Nigeria marks a major shift from competition to collaboration. The partnership aims to do more than cut costs: by sharing towers, base stations, and fiber, it expands coverage in underserved areas and strengthens investment efficiency amid currency pressures and rising operating costs. Airtel Africa Chief Executive Officer Sunil Taldar says: *“As we compete fiercely in the market on the strength of our brand, services, and our offerings, we are building common infrastructure within the permissible regulatory framework, to provide a more robust and extensive digital highway to drive digital and financial inclusion, while at the same time avoiding duplication of expensive infrastructure to drive operational efficiencies and benefits for our customers.”*⁷⁶

3. Strengthen trust as a differentiating advantage: Provide sovereign and secure digital solutions

Data sovereignty is emerging as a critical priority amid broad macroeconomic and geopolitical shifts. Our recent research highlights that more than half (54%) of organizations now prioritize data sovereignty, ensuring that sensitive or regulated data remains under their control, even when used with external AI models or platforms.⁷⁷ Building on this, AI sovereignty is gaining importance as organizations seek greater control over the models shaping critical business decisions.

With trusted national infrastructure, geographically distributed data centers at both the core and edge, extensive fiber and wireline networks, and strong privacy and security compliance, telcos are uniquely positioned to deliver sovereign AI platforms and services. By leading with trust and positioning themselves as sovereign AI infrastructure and services providers, telcos can unlock new revenue pathways beyond connectivity.

a. Monetize AI with GPUaaS, sovereign AI, and AlaaS

Market reports estimate that telcos worldwide could generate \$21 billion in GPUaaS revenue by 2030.⁷⁸ GPUaaS not only unlocks a high-value, scalable revenue stream for telcos but also strengthens long-term enterprise relationships. Currently, 17 telcos worldwide are building AI factories using Nvidia GPUs.⁷⁹ Kim Myoung Gook, Head of the GPUaaS Business Office at SK Telecom, says: *“GPUaaS will serve as a catalyst for enhancing both customer and national AI competitiveness. As an AI infrastructure provider, we are committed to building the nation’s AI superhighway.”*⁸⁰

However, telcos must take a disciplined, ROI-driven approach toward GPUaaS investments, focusing on areas where their network advantages and trusted local position create defensible value – such as sovereign AI, regulated-industry cloud, and vertically integrated AI solutions.

Building AI-as-a-service (AlaaS) capabilities will also significantly enhance telcos’ value proposition compared with those of traditional cloud providers, particularly in highly regulated and sovereignty-sensitive sectors in regional markets. This approach aligns with growing customer demand for one-stop, end-to-end solutions.

b. Co-create industry-specific sovereign AI solutions with ecosystem players

By partnering with cloud providers, neocloud⁸¹ organizations, and AI specialists, telcos can host and run partners’ full hardware and software stacks within their own facilities, unlocking new, higher-value AI infrastructure opportunities. This model will earn stable, high-margin infrastructure-hosting revenue while avoiding the heavy software R&D burden.

While the sovereign AI opportunity is significant, telcos will need to navigate several structural and operational challenges to realize its full potential – including rapid AI evolution, high investment needs, technical and infrastructure complexity, supply-chain risks, and intensifying reliability expectations. Through sustained innovation, ecosystem partnerships, and collaborative models with hyperscalers and ecosystem players, telcos can strengthen their role in the AI value chain, unlock new growth avenues, and deliver secure, sovereign AI capabilities at scale.

c. Enhance cybersecurity posture with AI-driven protection

Consistent with the 2024 findings (72%), 74% of organizations continue to prioritize cybersecurity in telecom services, while 62% expect telcos to ensure

robust protection of data and communications in future offerings (61% in 2024). Three-quarters (75%) of organizations consider cybersecurity an important factor in selecting or switching telcos.

Telecom providers must reposition themselves as AI-driven cybersecurity partners, not just connectivity enablers, as enterprise expectations surge. They should use real time anomaly detection and autonomous response to counter fast evolving AI led attacks. For example, BT and CrowdStrike have launched an AI-powered cybersecurity service for UK SMEs. Built on CrowdStrike Falcon Go, BT’s Detect and Respond solution delivers enterprise-grade protection to close critical security gaps and strengthen SME resilience against evolving threats.⁸²

Asian operators are also heavily involved in quantum projects. KT Corp, for example, launched a hybrid quantum-secure network combining QKD with PQC across 15+ nodes of its 5G network.⁸³ Singtel followed, with Southeast Asia’s first hybrid quantum-safe network (combining QKD and PQC), targeting financial services, healthcare, and critical infrastructure as major initial markets.⁸⁴

4. Make AI the center of your operating and value creation model: Embed intelligence across operations and customer experience

In this entire picture of evolving enterprise expectations and expanding digital opportunities, AI must serve as the core, and not an optional layer. Telcos should embed AI at the heart of their operating model to drive intelligent automation,

78% of organizations expect telcos to take a proactive role in delivering AI-driven networks

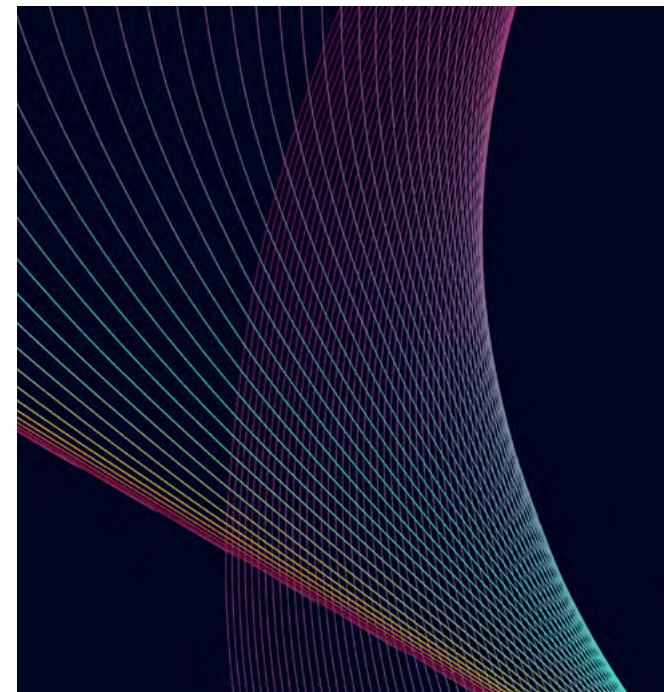
elevate responsiveness for enterprise customers, and unlock new pathways for value creation and revenue growth.

To embed AI at the heart of value creation, telcos must advance on two critical fronts:

a. Operationalize autonomous networks

More than three-quarters of organizations expect telcos to take a proactive role in delivering AI-driven networks and providing predictive insights such as usage trends and cost optimization. Tanmay Gupta, Ex-Sales Director at AT&T, says, *"Today's customers demand secure, reliable, high-speed, and seamless connectivity that is always available at an affordable cost. If I have to provide greater security, it is only possible through better use of AI integrated into the network fabric."*

To meet these expectations, telcos need a unified technology and innovation strategy that includes strengthening the foundational network stack, operationalizing AI at scale across real-world use cases, and, increasingly, deploying agentic AI systems that can autonomously analyze network conditions, recommend actions, and execute changes with minimal human intervention.





"Today's customers demand secure, reliable, high-speed, and seamless connectivity that is always available at an affordable cost. If I have to provide greater security, it is only possible through better use of AI integrated into the network fabric."

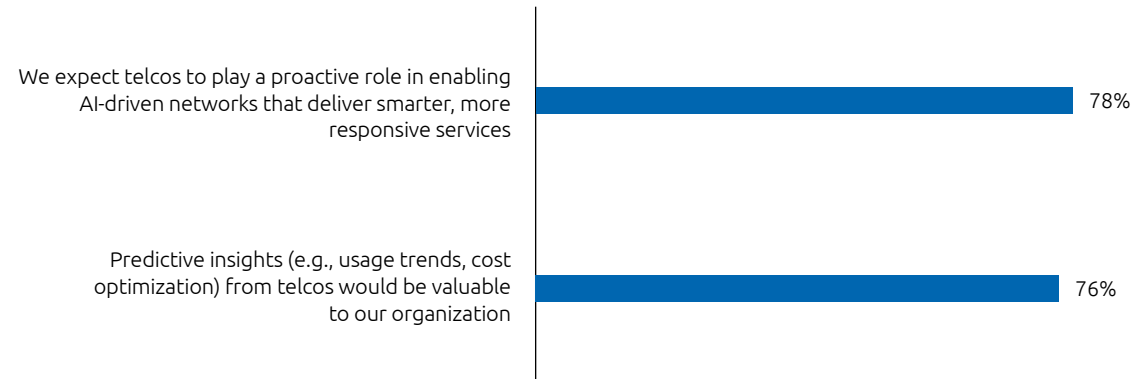
Tanmay Gupta,

Ex-Sales Director at AT&T

Figure 35.

Organizations expect AI-driven networks and predictive insights from telcos

Percentage of organizations who agree with the below statements



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

For example:

- AT&T combines ML and predictive analytics to enable rapid and effective network self-healing, optimal configuration of complex network environments, and near-real-time allocation of network capacity to enhance CX.⁸⁵
- In June 2025, Ericsson and AWS partnered to build AI-powered self-healing networks, enabling more autonomous (L4 and L5), intent-based network operations for telecom providers.⁸⁶
- The Vodafone Analytics platform enables enterprises, especially SMEs, to obtain anonymized mobility and behavioral data (footfall trends, peak hours, origin flows) across geographies. This empowers businesses to make data-driven location planning, staffing, and marketing decisions.⁸⁷
- In a B2C context, Deutsche Telekom has activated its AI-powered RAN Guardian Agent, which autonomously analyzes radio access network (RAN) performance, detects anomalies, and executes network optimizations. The solution dramatically speeds up event-driven network tuning, cutting processes to just minutes, marking a major step toward autonomous, self-healing mobile networks.⁸⁸
- Capgemini, in collaboration with Salesforce, EXFO, and Blue Planet, delivers an end-to-end AI-powered

ecosystem that addresses autonomous network operations – referred to as “Southbound AI.” This solution enables a fully autonomous network operations center (NOC). Southbound AI uses AI agents to interface directly with network elements, enabling real-time configuration, fault correction, and closed-loop automation without human intervention. Capgemini’s Dark NOC offer extends this by operating network control centers with minimal or zero human touch, allowing autonomous monitoring, self-healing, and performance optimization across multi-vendor, multi-cloud networks.⁸⁹

To operationalize AI at scale and let enterprises consume network intelligence predictably, telecom providers should prioritize the following architectural moves:

- **Cloud-native architectures** to improve agility, scalability, and speed of service delivery
- **Edge computing** to support ultra-low-latency, real-time enterprise applications
- **Network APIs** to give enterprises greater control, programmability, and visibility of network performance
- **Agentic AI frameworks** that embed into network operations agents that can continuously monitor performance, detect anomalies, optimize resource use, enforce policies, and coordinate across network and cloud domains without manual workflows; these

agents will become the core engine of next-gen autonomous networks.

b. Deploy AI-enabled customer experience engines

Enterprises expect telcos to deliver seamless, transparent, and proactive CX, which eliminates buying-journey friction, strengthens responsiveness, and builds trust. Initiatives that can help achieve this are:

- Deploying **AI-powered and human-in-the-loop omni-channel support** to provide consistent and faster resolution
- Using **AI** to curate the most relevant **bundle** for every customer
- **Agentic AI/ AI agents** that can autonomously handle routine B2B queries, orchestrate multi-step tasks, and proactively guide customers through complex journeys with always-on support, accelerating issue resolution
- Using **predictive analytics**, along with AI, to anticipate and mitigate issues before they disrupt business operations
- Using **unified customer data platforms** to support AI-use cases and enable context-aware, personalized interactions across touchpoints.

Examples of telcos already advancing this vision include:

- Orange Business, which is re-architecting customer journeys through a greenfield IT ecosystem, delivering fully digital-native and AI-powered experiences. To simplify the quote-to-cash process, CSG’s catalog-driven configure, price, quote (CPQ) solution, CSG Quote & Order, enables faster, error-free product configuration and order fulfillment.⁹⁰
- TM Forum’s “Growing B2B with autonomous agents” catalyst project focuses on transforming mid-market B2B sales by replacing human-led processes with Gen AI-powered autonomous agents that handle the entire lead-to-care journey. It aims to help cloud service providers (CSPs) scale B2B growth through flexible quoting, customer-led commerce, and an open digital architecture (ODA)-aligned, AI-driven platform.⁹¹
- Co-developed by AT&T’s Business and Technology teams, AI agents can handle service-update requests, sync data across systems, and auto-populate information in real time, reducing wait times and improving CX, while freeing employees for higher-value tasks. A human supervisor oversees the workflow checkpoints.

These agents operate securely within AT&T’s ecosystem, drawing on proprietary Gen AI tools such as Ask Docs and Ask Data for accurate, context-rich insights. Every action is logged, and strict data-isolation, retention, and role-based access controls are applied at each handoff to ensure privacy and compliance.⁹²



“In an industry defined by constant disruption, the smartest investment is empowering teams who can shape solutions faster than the market shifts. When they are equipped to innovate across the full breadth of ICT services and orchestrate that innovation within a broader ecosystem of solutions that deliver meaningful outcomes for end customers, they become the engine that differentiates your enterprise in an increasingly crowded market.”

Aurélie Lesouef,

Vice President, Capgemini Invent

5. Build future-ready talent and culture: Equip your workforce for a solution-oriented mindset

To lead in the B2B space, telcos need to undergo a significant cultural and talent reset. Telcos need to embrace new ways of working, such as agile methodologies, rapid prototyping, and a fail-fast approach. These practices enable organizations to quickly adapt to evolving client needs and enhance responsiveness in dynamic markets.

a. Shift to a solution-oriented mindset

Sales teams need to understand customers' existing IT infrastructure, business goals, and pain points to recommend and provide the most suitable solutions. This demands moving to consultative selling, where teams co-design solutions with customers rather than pushing pre-defined offers.

The focus on digital services requires telcos to shift from a legacy, connectivity-centric mindset to a more holistic solution-oriented approach. Enterprises demand clear business outcomes, and telcos need the capabilities to reliably commit to and deliver them. As mentioned

previously, 68% of organizations expect telco sales teams to be equipped to sell integrated solutions rather than standalone products. Yet most telcos still operate with product-led sales cultures that are ill-suited for beyond-connectivity solutions.

Internally, processes must evolve to support cross-functional teaming, faster innovation cycles, iterative delivery, and shared accountability for business outcomes – not product quotas.

b. Rebalance your skills portfolio

Selling and delivering beyond-connectivity solutions requires an entirely new skills mix – spanning solution consulting, enterprise architecture, cloud integration, cybersecurity, AI engineering, software development, data analytics, and deep sector-specific expertise – skills that are scarce and heavily contested across industries.

To close this gap, telcos must blend upskilling and reskilling with targeted hiring from adjacent tech sectors. Equally important is refreshing leadership and talent models to mirror tech-industry ways of working: greater ownership, outcome-based performance, agile teaming, and a culture that encourages innovation.

c. Embrace a culture of continuous learning

Telcos must build continuous learning cultures that help employees stay ahead of customer needs and emerging technologies. This means institutionalizing structured learning pathways, certifications, and hands-on capability development programs. It also requires creating environments that reward innovation, encourage cross-functional collaboration, and reduce the fear of failure.

Lidia Stasolla, Commercial Management Director at Vodafone Business in Italy, shares how they navigated this shift from a traditional telco mindset to a tech-provider culture. She says, *“When we introduced a model where every account manager works hand-in-hand with a dedicated solution specialist, it initially met strong resistance. People were protective of ‘their’ customer relationships. Through extensive training, redesigned selling frameworks, and incentive structures that reward collaboration, we helped teams embrace this shared-ownership approach.”*

This transformation in culture, mindset, and skills is no longer optional; it is the foundation required for telcos to build differentiated enterprise solutions, operate as digital service providers, and capture sustained growth in the B2B space.



“When we introduced a model where every account manager works hand-in-hand with a dedicated solution specialist, it initially met strong resistance. People were protective of ‘their’ customer relationships. Through extensive training, redesigned selling frameworks, and incentive structures that reward collaboration, we helped teams embrace this shared-ownership approach.”

Lidia Stasolla,

Commercial Management Director at Vodafone Business in Italy

Conclusion

The B2B landscape has shifted decisively, and enterprise expectations are rising faster than ever. Customers now demand strategic partnership, industry-specific expertise, seamless digital experiences, intelligent networks, and trusted infrastructure – yet telcos fall short across these dimensions.

This widening expectation gap forces telcos to make a defining strategic choice: continue operating as optimized connectivity providers or transform into integrated digital partners that create differentiated value across industries. Those that hesitate or attempt to balance both models risk losing relevance as the market moves ahead.

The opportunity, however, is substantial for telcos ready to focus their investments and reinvent how they operate. By choosing their battlegrounds, co-creating across ecosystems, strengthening trust through sovereign and secure solutions, embedding AI at the center of their operating and value creation model, and building future-ready talent, skills, and mindsets, telcos can redefine their role in the B2B ecosystem. Those that act now will define the future of enterprise connectivity and digital transformation.

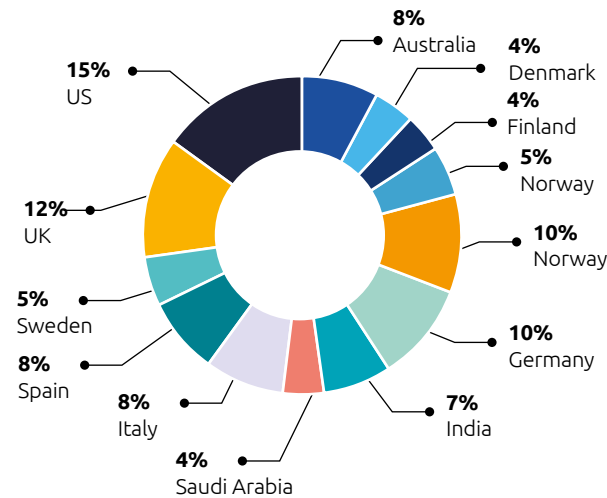


Research methodology

The research methodology is structured in two parts.

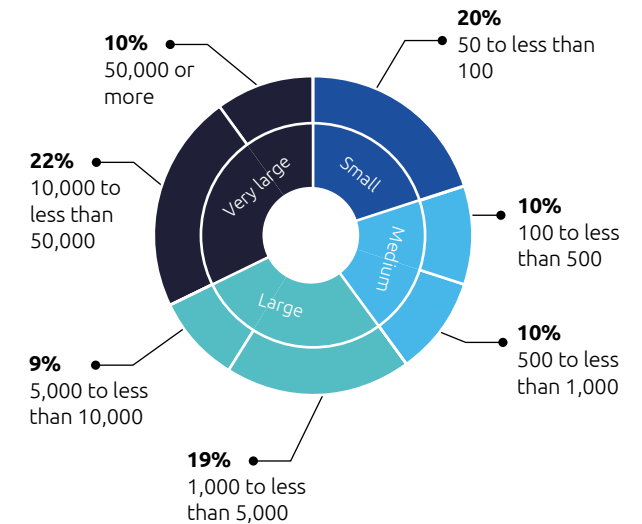
1. We surveyed 1,100 executives at director level or above, from business customers across 13 countries in Europe, North America, and Asia-Pacific. We carried out a global survey in November and December 2025. We provide the distribution of these respondents and their organizations as shown in the charts
2. To complement the survey findings, we conducted in-depth discussions with 15 executives from the customer industries and the telecom industry.

Organizations by location of headquarters



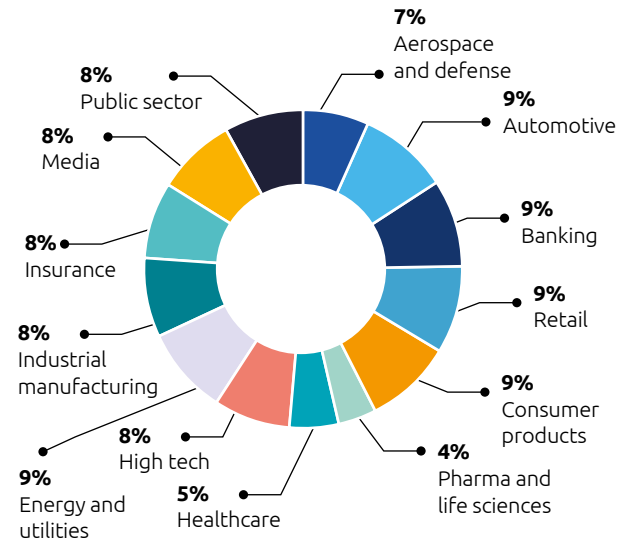
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Organizations by number of employees



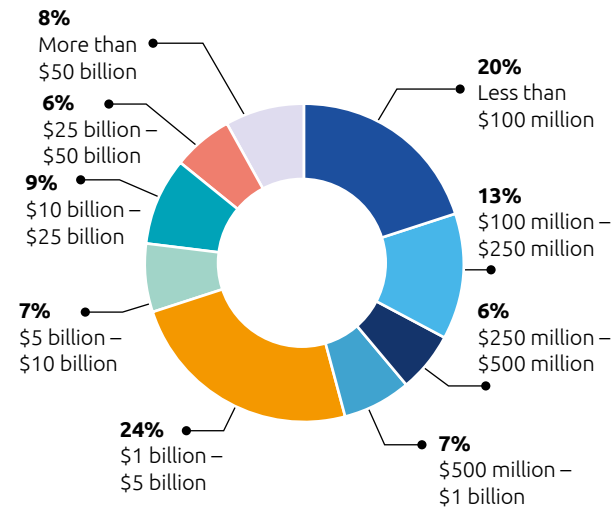
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Organizations by industry



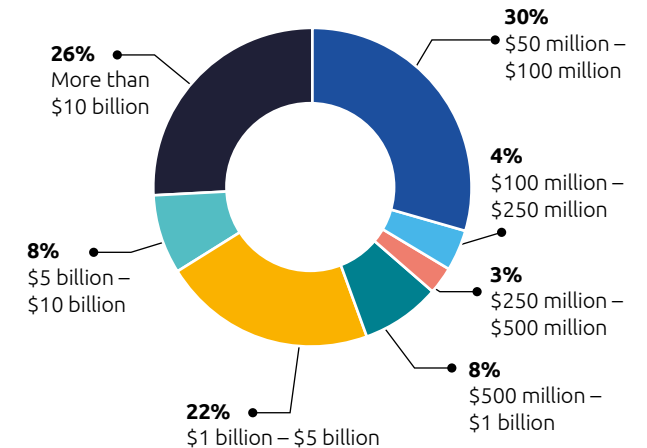
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Organizations by revenue (excl. public sector)



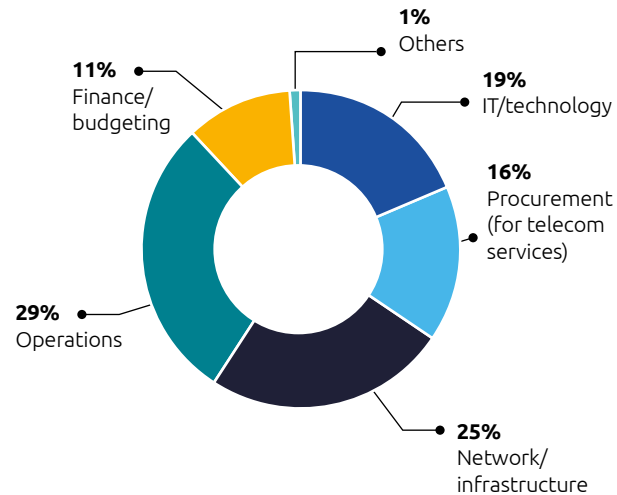
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Public sector organizations by annual budget



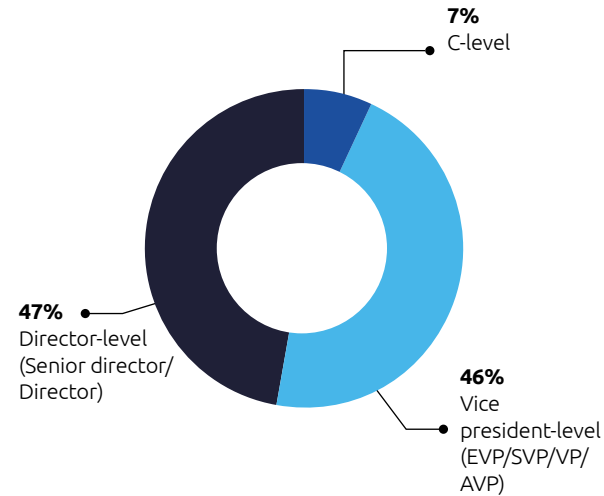
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 93 public sector organizations.

Executives by function



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

Executives by job title



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Telco business customers survey – 2nd edition, November–December 2025, N = 1,100 organizations.

The study findings reflect the views of the respondents to our online questionnaire for this research and are intended to provide directional guidance. Please contact one of the Capgemini experts listed at the end of the report to discuss specific implications.

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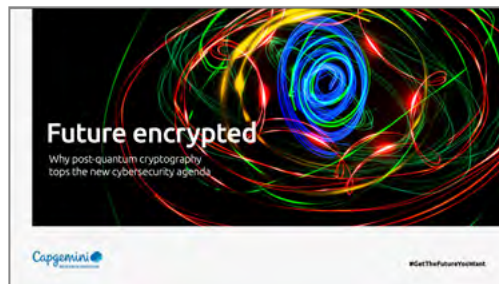
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