

Samsung and KT Complete Korea's First 5G SA and NSA Common Core Network Deployment



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Samsung Electronics and KT Corporation (KT) announced they have successfully deployed Korea's first 5G Standalone (SA) and Non-Standalone (NSA) common core in KT's commercial network. KT will commercially launch its SA network when 5G SA-capable devices become available in the market.

Samsung's common core will run in KT's Mobile Edge Computing (MEC) telecom centers across eight major Korean cities, building on a collaboration towards the full commercialization of 5G SA networks in Korea.

Samsung and KT have been collaborating since the development stage to deliver key 5G SA technologies on KT's NSA infrastructure, which incorporates Samsung's Control and User Plane Separation (CUPS) solution, edge traffic steering, and network slicing capabilities.

KT launched 5G commercial services in NSA mode last April, making them the only operator in Korea to adopt CUPS solution in its network. The CUPS architecture, defined in 3GPP standards, is a fundamental technology to 5G SA core that improves network scalability, flexibility and deployment by separating the control and user plane functions. CUPS also enables operators and enterprises to swiftly introduce 5G SA services through software upgrades, without the need to build a separate 5G SA core.

"By implementing CUPS since the initial phase of 5G commercialization, we have a competitive advantage in the market. With this advantage, we are able to rapidly and easily deploy 5G SA and NSA common core in our MEC centers

without additional core networks,” said Young-soo Seo, Senior Vice President and Head of Network Research Technology Unit at KT Corporation. “Having already achieved a number of milestones with Samsung, we are excited to collaborate again as we prepare for the launch of 5G SA networks in Korea. KT is proud to deliver innovative services to our users and to continue building a foundation for the 5G evolution and beyond.”

Samsung’s 5G common core can support 5G SA and NSA as well as 4G simultaneously, facilitating smooth evolution to 5G SA. This fully-integrated common core simplifies data packet flows, enabling users to experience stable, high-quality mobile services. Enterprises can also selectively adopt either SA and/or NSA networks to easily scale their business-specific services. In addition, 5G SA architecture does not rely on the existing 4G infrastructure and therefore, offers low-latency services and helps save mobile battery consumption for consumers.

“Our 5G common core is a powerful solution that brings unprecedented services closer to users and will unlock a new generation of enterprise applications. This collaboration with KT is a significant milestone in advancing towards the commercialization of nationwide 5G SA networks in Korea,” said Taiyeon Kim, Senior Vice President and Head of Global Technology Service, Networks Business at Samsung Electronics. “We look forward to continuing our work with KT to spur future achievements in 5G SA technology and advance Korea’s network landscape.”

Samsung is a pioneer in the successful delivery of 5G end-to-end solutions including chipsets, radios, and core network technologies. The company has been at the forefront of virtualized core (vCore) solution development for 4G and 5G, starting with the commercialization of 4G vCore in 2015 and 5G NSA vCore in 2018. Samsung is leading the path to commercialization of 5G SA core.

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