Understanding the ins and outs of the 5G Use Cases

Description: Unlike what occurred during the previous introductions of a new family of technologies, 3GPP has leveraged the work of the NGMN Alliance and other entities to define the Use Cases for 5G. Although the Use Cases are still in a state of flux, there is at least some initial insight to be gained regarding what is driving the 5G requirements and how the Use Cases will change the very nature of the industry.

Highlights of the Study include the following:

- We break out the 72 Use Cases into several distinct categories, based on their requirements, and discuss the scenarios they address as well as their subsequent requirements.

- Although eMBB (enhanced Mobile Broadband) gets all the buzz, the overwhelming majority of the Use Cases have very little to do with mobile broadband. Instead, their requirements include capabilities that we believe are more challenging than delivering a high bit rate, or the Use Case is extremely futuristic in terms of what 5G may be asked to do in the future.

- To us, Network Slicing is by far the most interesting Use Case. In addition to giving more power to third parties to specify and implement how the network will support their needs, Network Slicing introduces an entirely new paradigm, as well as creating the need for new business models / billing strategies that operators will need to pursue (if net neutrality doesn't get in the way).

- 5G could result in a bit of a land grab for the cellular industry. If nothing else, they will need to work more closely with other standards bodies and vertical markets who seek to benefit from the capabilities that 5G is supposed to deliver. Given the timing of the 5G core network relative to the 5G radio access network, it will be well into 2020 before the full vision of 5G is realized.

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Contents:

1. Executive Summary
2. Background
3. Interesting Use Cases
   - Broadband and Bandwidth
   - Robust and Reliable
   - Functional and Flexible
   - Connected and Carefree
   - Vertical Speaks Volumes
   - Out of the Box Mentality
4. What it all means
5. Final Thoughts

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