Orange announces the opening of nine Orange 5G Labs to enable economic players to bring 5G uses to life

According to an Orange study conducted with GlobalWebIndex, 72% of companies currently say they expect their operator to provide support regarding 5G to test, experiment and develop ahead of time. The Orange 5G Labs initiative meets this demand and aims to help economic players to better understand the opportunities, value and utility of 5G. There, they will be able to test their current solutions and services and think about new uses while taking advantage of an ecosystem to co-innovate and already start changing their business model and processes.

"We believe that 5G will drive business competition and regional development. This is why Orange is involved in a co-innovation approach focused on 5G to create the uses of the future. Having a local presence close to these players is a key part of the Orange 5G Labs initiative, to support the digital transformation of economic players and to help everyone take advantage of 5G's potential," said Michäel Trabbia, Chief Technology and Innovation Officer at Orange.

Orange 5G Lab - sites close to local ecosystems

Orange is launching this initiative by opening a real network of Orange 5G Lab sites in France and abroad in 2021. It will be deployed in the regions to best meet the needs of local authorities and companies - start-ups, SMEs, big companies - regardless of their sector.

In France, seven sites will host all the companies and local authorities, regardless of their sector. The Orange 5G Lab site in Châtillon (Paris region) is opening today. The others will gradually open in six other French towns: Lille, Lyon-Charbonnières, Marseille, Paris-La Défense, Rennes and Toulouse.

Certain sites will specialise in a specific field but will not be devoted exclusively to this area. For example, the Lyon lab, located at the Campus Région du Numérique at Charbonnières-les-Bains, will be focused on Industry 4.0, and the Cœur Défense site in the Customer Innovation Centre will be more focused on Orange Business Services' major clients.

The initiative will also be rolled out in European countries where the Group has a presence during the first half of 2021. An Orange 5G Lab will open in Bucharest in Romania in partnership with the University Politehnica of Bucharest to foster the development of commercial projects, research and innovation. In Belgium, the lab will be located near the Orange Industry 4.0 campus in the Port of Antwerp. In this Orange 5G Lab, different use cases that have already been developed in collaboration with industrial partners in the port will be demonstrated, such as the augmented worker or critical communication systems.

In addition, a 5G challenge for start-ups and developers will start in Spain at the end of February to develop new applications. The winners will be supported by the Orange 5G Lab initiative, including access to experts and 5G equipment in France.

Services and support provided to economic players

The services provided are based on:

- a programme to learn about 5G and the uses made possible through demonstrations and activities. It is supplemented by a website - 5glab.orange.com and a series of thematic and educational webinars.
- the opportunity for the players involved to test their products and services in a 5G environment ahead of their deployment or on the commercial network, under real conditions. They will be able to rely on 5G equipment of the future (augmented reality glasses, virtual reality headsets, routers, 5G devices, 5G modules). In addition to the 5G environment, Edge computing functionalities will also be provided in some Orange 5G Labs to test services requiring a shorter response time for instance.

The companies will be supported by Orange technical, network and product experts and the entire Orange 5G Lab ecosystem providing synergies and additional resources. In addition to the 'bricks-and-mortar' sites, virtual digital access will also be set up to enable all relevant players to effectively collaborate remotely.

Companies that are interested, regardless of whether they are Orange customers or not, can talk to their preferred contact or identify themselves on the 5glab.orange.com site.

The Orange 5G Lab initiative is a concrete illustration of the 5G communication campaign Orange has just launched: 'The most innovative thing about 5G is what we'll do with it'.

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