

Telefónica and Microsoft expand their collaboration to accelerate the adoption of Open Gateway in the industry by leveraging Kernel



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Telefónica and Microsoft extend the strategic collaboration they established five years ago with the launch of an innovation project focused on the development of new digital solutions based on Open Gateway, the GSMA-led initiative in the telco industry to transform communication networks into programmable platforms, through Kernel, Telefónica's core AI-driven platform to develop digital products and services.

Both companies will invest financial, technological and professional resources to work together to migrate Kernel's capacities to Azure as part of its SaaS offering. These capacities will help mobile operators simplify their complex digital transformation processes and accelerate the adoption of Open Gateway. The collaboration also encompasses a joint "Go-to-Market" strategy to make innovative digital services based on the Telefónica Kernel platform available to other operators, developers and telecommunications companies. These services will be incorporated into Microsoft's Azure Marketplace, an online store providing applications and services for use on Azure. In addition, Kernel will be part of Microsoft's offering to operators and other players in the telecommunications industry.

Paco Salcedo, president of Microsoft Spain, emphasizes:

We are thrilled to expand our collaboration with Telefónica to accelerate the adoption of Open Gateway and Kernel in the telecommunications industry. This partnership will enable us to leverage our combined expertise and innovative technologies to drive digital transformation and create new opportunities for operators, developers, and telecommunications companies.

Chema Alonso, Chief Digital Officer of Telefónica, said: “Kernel was first launched back in 2017 under the name of the Fourth Platform, when we had a very clear vision and a lot of challenges ahead. Today, we are very proud of what we have achieved, transforming ourselves internally and getting ready for the new opportunities like Open Gateway. That’s why we want to bring our platform into the Azure marketplace, enabling other companies to embrace its technology and reduce the time-to-market for the new plethora of digital services.

This advancement in the already consolidated alliance between Telefónica and Microsoft is the result of the announcement made last year at Mobile World Congress (MWC), where both companies shared their collaboration to integrate Azure AI Foundry (formerly Azure AI Studio) with Telefónica Kernel to extend its capabilities by applying generative AI to key workflows. At this year’s MWC, which takes place from 3 to 6 March in Barcelona, Chema Alonso will provide more details on the integration and accelerate the adoption of Open Gateway with Kernel in his presentation ‘Open collaboration to innovate’ on Monday at 10:45, where he will be joined on stage by Paco Salcedo.

Kernel to boost Generative AI and Advanced Analytics Capabilities

As part of Kernel’s evolution, Microsoft and Telefónica will also collaborate in the conceptualization, design, development and industrialization of new components and complete solutions of Kernel on Azure, based on Generative AI and Advanced Analytics capabilities to go beyond the scope and functionality of Telefónica’s platform, opening new advanced user experiences and augmented decision making.

This joint work will benefit the Open Gateway community, facilitating their access to Microsoft’s ecosystem of partners and developers, its network of Independent Software Vendors (ISVs), and the company’s innovation centers and research hubs around the world, to develop new capabilities and solutions.

Within the framework of their strategic collaboration, both companies will actively seek for further integration of technologies that might help on the data and analytics space, looking for an even simpler development of features for non-technical skills.

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