

Durban July to be live streamed in 4K using 5G

Vodacom has partnered up with Nokia to showcase the high speed and low latency capabilities of 5G and will use 4K video cameras to record and stream live, immersive footage from two different positions at this year's Durban July.



The cameras will broadcast a live, 360-degree feed over 5G back to the Vodacom hospitality suite, where guests can experience the feeds from the racecourse through VR headsets, and be virtually transported into the live scenes from the day's races. The stream won't be available online.



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The first camera has been positioned in the Parade Ring, which will enable guests at the hospitality suite to have a live, virtual view of the horses as they are paraded before each race.

The second camera has been positioned at the finish line, and will enable guests to watch the action-packed finish of each race in VR.

The images from the cameras will be streamed in real time over a Nokia Airscale 5G base station and uses 100 MHz of Vodacom's own spectrum in the 28 GHz frequency band.

A second 5G-enabled related VR experience will also be demonstrated in the form of a VR penalty shootout, where high speeds and super-low latency are both critical to the reality of the experience. The VR penalty shootout experience will enable participants to 'feel' the difference between the different latencies which are typical of 4G and 5G networks, by introducing different reaction times.



Andries Delpont, chief technology officer at Vodacom says: "Our future will be characterised by a range of new technologies that are fusing our physical and digital worlds. Robotics and super-realistic virtual and augmented reality are characteristic of this era. These new technologies require the high speed and low latency that only a 5G network can deliver."

Mobile networks such as 5G and beyond will become the basis of how people, vehicles and homes will communicate. This is why Vodacom has embarked on ensuring its mobile network is ready and available to support this technology, when we are allocated the necessary spectrum by government," says Delpont.



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Vodacom's 5G VR showcases at the Vodacom Durban July illustrate the opportunities and use cases which could be made available through a 5G network. Two of the major advances which 5G networks will bring over existing 4G technology is higher speeds and reduced latency or responsiveness.

Latency is the time gap that exists between a request and a response in a system, which is typically around 20ms on a 4G network. On a 5G network, this is reduced to less than 5ms, which means that the request-response between connections is almost real-time. This could enable 5G applications being extended to mission-critical control of remote applications (e.g. industrial automation in factories, remote robotic surgery etc.) as well as smart vehicles and transportation systems, which require ultra-reliable and low latency communications.

The annual Vodacom Durban July horserace will take place on Saturday, 7 July 2018 and is expected to exceed 50,000 visitors.

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