



ETRI's CDMA Commercialization Technology Honored as a 'Milestone' by IEEE

Co-listed with SK Telecom, Samsung Electronics, and LG Electronics as South Korea's first IEEE Milestone. Commemoration ceremony & Unveiling ceremony to celebrate the IEEE Milestone Recognition of CDMA Commercialization Technology (June 11).



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Credit: Electronics and Telecommunications Research Institute(ETRI)

ETRI CDMA



Newswise — Korean researchers announced that Korea's Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) commercialization technology, which was the world's first successfully commercialized CDMA technology in 1996, has been listed on the 'Milestones Program,' a world-renowned program hosted by the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE). As a result, it has become Korea's first technology to be recognized by a world-class association to contribute to the development of mankind and industrial innovation.

Electronics and Telecommunications Research Institute (ETRI) announced on June 11 that their 'CDMA Commercialization Technology' will be the first Korean technology to be listed as a part of IEEE's Milestone Program, along with other major Korean carriers SK Telecom, Samsung Electronics, and LG Electronics.

The IEEE Milestone Program is a well-renowned program that recognizes and celebrates meaningful technological feats that have made significant contributions to mankind in the fields of electricity, electronics, and computers. Applications can only be submitted after 25 years since the initial event has taken place. The listing of 'CDMA Commercialization Technology' is incredibly meaningful in that it is the first Korean technology to be added to the IEEE Milestone Program.

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Regarding the timeline of the development of the world's first commercialized CDMA technology, it all starts in the year 1986 when the Korean government developed its first Digital Electronic Switching System (TDX) through a government & ETRI-led project via the cooperation between multiple sectors within the industry, academia, and research institutions. Based on this experience, the government drew another plan in 1988 to develop a wireless communication system, which was carried out for four years until 1992, centered around ETRI.

As the importance of mobile communication gained more global attention during the early stages of development, the Korean government established the Digital Mobile Communication Development Project in 1989, promoting active R&D for seven years starting from 1990 to 1996.

Throughout this project, ETRI played a pivotal role as the main player of the plan. Following ETRI, other major Korean companies such as Samsung Electronics, Goldstar Communication (currently LG Electronics), Hyundai Electronics, Maxon Electronics have entered the consortium. As a telecommunication carrier, SKT was listed as a joint research institute. As such, the Digital Mobile Communication Project was a government-led project that garnered a lot of attention, carried out on a national level.

The impact of CDMA Commercialization Technology on the industry of Korea was huge. It literally pushed Korea into the center of the global mobile communication landscape after being irrelevant for years. In other words, after going through rough patches throughout the late 80s to early 90s, becoming the first country in the world to commercialize CDMA was the first huge step that led Korea to becoming the global IT powerhouse that it is today.

The commercialization of the 2nd-generation CDMA technology has laid a strong foundation for future success, leading to not only the successful commercialization of 3rd-generation, 4th-generation, and 5th-generation mobile communication, but also allowing Korea to be at the leading position even today where we are facing the dawn of 6th-generation wireless communication.

To celebrate this feat, ETRI held a ceremony on June 11, inviting current and former researchers who have participated in the development of CDMA technology.

Starting with ETRI President Bang Seung-chan's welcoming speech, the event was attended by a number of leading figures of the industry, including Yang Seung-taik (Former Minister of Information and Communication), Bahk Hang-gu (Chairperson of Soamsystel), and Professor Han Young-nam. The unveiling ceremony also took place at the 7th Building of ETRI (ETRI Hall of Fame) to commemorate the listing of CDMA Commercialization Technology to the IEEE Milestone Program.

The event was concluded with the participants visiting the ETRI History Hall, which was opened to the public first time in April this year. The commemorative copper plate received to celebrate the listing to the IEEE Milestone Program will be permanently preserved in the ETRI History Hall.

Bang Seung-chan, the President of ETRI, said, "This listing of the Commercialization of our CDMA Technology to the IEEE Milestone Program marks a monumental step forward where the efforts of our researchers have been recognized globally for the first time. It is an incredible feat that highlights the outstanding achievements and contributions our researchers have made to mankind and science."

ETRI is currently striving to make another huge step forward, focusing on the development of 6G wireless communication technology.

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ETRI is a non-profit government-funded research institute. Since its foundation in 1976, ETRI, a global ICT research institute, has been making its immense effort to provide Korea a remarkable growth in the field of ICT industry. ETRI delivers Korea as one of the top ICT nations in the World, by unceasingly developing world's first and best technologies.

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