

The technical challenges are well understood, such as maintaining high level Quality-of-Service (QoS) or ensuring interoperability with the existing infrastructure so that handover issues do not arise between the LTE and legacy UMTS/GSM networks. Little consideration has been given so far to other factors though. Advanced network testing equipment is required for these projects, and finding the budget to acquire such high value items could prove difficult for contractors charged with carrying out LTE deployment. Also there will be further modifications to technology standards as true 4G mobile communication emerges.

By renting test equipment rather than following the tradition route of direct purchase, it is possible to avoid the need heavy capital expenditure on LTE test equipment. This means that the costs associated with test hardware can be more closely matched to its use, and it is not a drain on resources the rest of the time. This approach also allows a greater degree of flexibility, so that future changes in wireless standards can be adopted without additional outlay.

In order to address these issues Livingston has put in place a range of different rental/leasing options so that specific sourcing needs are catered for. It has also made heavy investment into state-of-the-art test equipment from the world's leading suppliers.

The products of available include:

- The Anritsu S820D tester, which is designed for installation, verification, troubleshooting and maintenance of next generation wireless infrastructure. This supports frequencies from 25MHz-20GHz (with 10kHz resolution) and has a dynamic range of 60dB. The vector error correction features allows high accuracy measurements to be taken, and the lightweight rugged design means that it is highly suited to use in the field.
- The Aeroflex 7100, which offers a comprehensive range of testing functions for mobile handsets supporting LTE. This touchscreen operated, 6GHz frequency range bench-top tester incorporates a fully integrated RF interface, baseband and protocol stack. It allows handset manufacturers, application software developers and designers of communication chipsets to bring their products to market quicker, thus benefiting fully from the commercial opportunities LTE holds.
- The Agilent Technologies N9010A-526 signal analyzer, which can carry out detailed examinations in the LTE, W-CDMA, and HSDPA/HSUPA spectrums. This system has a 9kHz-26.5GHz frequency range, and delivers an absolute amplitude accuracy of 0.27dB. It possesses a 3.6GHz internal preamplifier, a 75ms measurement/mode switching speed and an intuitive Windows-based user interface.
- The Anritsu MD8430A signalling tester, which serves as a base station simulator for the conformance testing LTE-based chip-sets and handsets. It has a 100Mbps data rate, a 350Hz-3000MHz frequency range (with 100kHz resolution), and supports 2x2 MIMO transmission.
- The ASCOM TEMS Investigation test tool.
- Drive test solutions, for conducting site surveys, from major manufacturers such as Anite, ASCOM, Rohde & Schwarz, and Swissqual.

About Livingston:

Livingston provides and manages test equipment for companies in more than 100 countries worldwide, giving them access to leading edge products regardless of their budget constraints. Founded over forty years ago, the company has built up a highly experienced team of engineering and supply chain professionals. Its services include rental, calibration management, and inventory management. Partnering with Livingston allows companies to optimise their capital expenditure, bringing greater return on investment, as well as generating cash for unused or underused assets through its equipment disposal and redeployment activities.

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