



CASE STUDY

New SHIFTphone 8 plugs into the eSIM era



The eSIM is reshaping the connectivity landscape

The eSIM (embedded SIM) is transforming mobile connectivity. Across both consumer and industrial markets, an increasing number of OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers), telecom operators and consumers are embracing the benefits of this compelling technology.

According to Juniper Research, an estimated 3.4 billion devices will feature an eSIM by 2025¹. In the consumer market, high end eSIM-only handsets such as the US versions of the iPhone 14, 15 and now 16 are leading the way. Indeed, the latest GSMA survey shows that 64% of smartphone OEMs plan widespread eSIM integration within the next two years². The eSIM is also an increasingly familiar feature of tablets and PCs, as well as a new generation of smartwatches and other wearables.

Key advantages of the eSIM include effortless remote activation and management of mobile subscriptions throughout the entire lifecycle of a connected device. As a result, a growing number of telecom operators are launching innovative eSIM-based subscription deals to attract new customers. These include convenient 'eSIM for overseas roaming' deals enabling travellers to use local connectivity services while abroad. The ability of the eSIM to store multiple different profiles also makes it possible to offer users the option of switching easily between business and personal subscriptions on the same phone. Moreover, several mobile operators are now taking advantage of this additional flexibility by running 'Try before you buy' promotions. Customers can 'test drive' a mobile network via their device's eSIM, without having to cancel their existing subscription.

With novel eSIM use cases flourishing, a number of OEMs are adopting similarly imaginative approaches to integrating eSIM technology into their product design strategies.

1 <https://www.juniperresearch.com/press/esim-device-installations-to-reach-3-4-billion/>

2 2023 GSMA Survey Report: "Measuring the Importance of the eSIM in the Mobile Market"

Building on principles: SHIFT takes an ethical approach to smart- phone manufacturing



SHIFT, a German-based electronics manufacturer, will launch a new version of its smart-phone in early 2025. For the first time, the SHIFTPhone will support eSIM capability, enabled by an innovative removable eSIM solution from Thales.

SHIFT's approach to the design, manufacture and sale of consumer electronic devices is rooted in ethical and sustainable principles. Furthermore, SHIFT does not have conventional investors. Instead, its products are effectively crowdfunded by customers who preorder while devices are still under development.

All of SHIFT's products, which also include detachable notebooks, a wireless speaker and an electric bicycle, are designed to offer the longest possible working life. Modular design principles are applied throughout, ensuring that SHIFT devices can be repaired, and ultimately recycled or reused, as easily as possible.

To support the principles of sustainability and longevity, SHIFT's design team wanted to incorporate future-proof functionality, including 5G and eSIM, into the new smartphone. At the same time, they needed to retain the handset's simple modular structure and minimise costly and time-consuming changes to the hardware design.



Thales enables plug-and-play eSIM capability

Thales's removable eSIM provides a straightforward answer to these challenges. Crucially, the Thales solution offers full eSIM functionality, but in the form factor of a conventional SIM card that plugs directly into a standard SIM slot. This approach offers a fast and simple route to offering eSIM functionality in an existing handset design, while eliminating complexity and cutting costs and time to market for the manufacturer.



The SHIFTPhone 8 also optimises choice and flexibility for users. The new model incorporates two standard SIM slots, providing customers with the freedom to use either a standard SIM, a detachable eSIM, or both. SHIFTPhone 8 users can therefore take full advantage of the rapidly growing number of attractive eSIM-based offers being launched by telecom providers.

Making eSIM easy for everyone

The SHIFTPhone 8 demonstrates how quickly and easily eSIM capability can be deployed, regardless of a device's value or production volumes. Moreover, the accessibility offered by removable eSIM technology is not limited to OEMs. Thales's solution also enables existing devices with a standard SIM slot to be retro-fitted with eSIM functionality. In the years ahead, telecom and connectivity service providers will instantly be able to introduce the benefits of eSIM capability

to a far wider range of devices, both new and legacy, welcoming millions more end users into a new era in flexible mobile connectivity.



Since we formed in 2014, SHIFT has pursued a truly distinctive approach to designing, manufacturing and selling consumer electronics. The integration of eSIM capability into our new SHIFTphone 8 very much reflects and embodies our values. Thanks to Thales's detachable eSIM solution, we can offer customers future-proof functionality and flexibility, while staying true to SHIFT's commitment to modular, repairable, and sustainable products.

Ben Harder,
CTO for SHIFT



We are proud to support SHIFT in transforming their smartphones with our programmable ecoSIM technology. This collaboration demonstrates how advanced connectivity solutions can align seamlessly with responsible goals. This collaboration positions SHIFT as a new player in the growing eSIM market, allowing them to test demand for eSIM-enabled smartphones while maintaining their sustainable ethos.

Eva Rudin,
VP Mobile Connectivity Solutions for Thales



thalesgroup.com

