Award nomination guide

TM Forum’s Excellence Awards showcase members that are driving innovation in the rapidly evolving telecoms industry. Submit a nomination outlining your digital transformation business-case, with your commercial partner, before 16 April, 2021.

Official nominees will be announced in May 2021, followed by a maximum of five finalists from each of the six categories being announced in June 2021. Our writers will work with finalists to create compelling written case-studies before the end of August. Case studies are optional but will be considered in final judging scores.

A panel of judges will select Award winners based on the business impact of the case study, the degree of innovation and ingenuity shown, the measurable impact of the solution and the usage and value of TM Forum best practices and standards. Winners will be announced during Digital Transformation World in September 2021.

Award categories

**Autonomous operations**
This award will recognize companies that can demonstrate how they have overcome autonomous operations challenges and can demonstrate that their specific approach to automation resulted in tangible business improvements such as operational efficiency, improved customer experience, time to market and more.

**Cloud native IT & networks**
This award will recognize companies that can demonstrate how they have overcome either Cloud native IT or network challenges and can demonstrate how they made a tangible impact on their ability to leverage cloud native technology or how they have bridged the gap between IT and networks in their business. This award will have two winners, one for cloud native IT and one for networks.

**Digital experience & trust**
This award will recognize companies that can demonstrate how they have conquered digital experience and trust challenges and can prove a definite impact on digital experience metrics such as NPS, churn/loyalty, usage of digital touchpoints, ARPU uplift, or growth in market share.

**Beyond connectivity**
This award will recognize companies that can demonstrate how they have overcome beyond connectivity challenges and can demonstrate a quantifiable impact on their ability to develop new revenues and new lines of business beyond connectivity.

**AI, data & insights**
This award will recognize companies that can demonstrate how they have overcome AI, data and analytics challenges and can demonstrate a tangible impact on their ability to leverage advanced analytics and AI in customer experience with a specific focus on improving overall operational efficiency.

**The human factor**
This award will recognize companies that can demonstrate how they have solved a human factor challenge and can demonstrate how they have made a noticeable impact on culture, organizational structure, ways of working, employee wellbeing, or employee transparency.

Submitting an entry

To enter, use the online form here ([https://na.eventscloud.com/eSites/604094/Homepage](https://na.eventscloud.com/eSites/604094/Homepage)).
Key dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry forms open</td>
<td>March 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for all entries</td>
<td>April 16, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominees announced</td>
<td>May 18, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finalists announced</td>
<td>June 15, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study production &amp; promotion</td>
<td>June – August 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for case study production</td>
<td>August 20, 2021</td>
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</tbody>
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Winners will be announced during the Digital Transformation World Series in September 2021.

Judging criteria

There are five questions, each individually weighted, that the judges will consider when scoring your entry. The criteria match the questions in the online entry form, as detailed below.

1. **Give a brief overview of the entry and what makes your entry unique.** (100 words, weighted 15%)

2. **What was the business challenge you addressed?** (200 words, weighted 15%)

3. **How did you solve this business challenge and what innovation(s) did you use?** (500 words, weighted 30%)

4. **What was the measurable impact of your solution (see below detailed explanations requested by category)?** (400 words, weighted 20%)
   - **Digital experience & trust:** Explain how it made a tangible impact on digital experience metrics such as NPS, churn/loyalty, usage of digital touchpoints, ARPU uplift, growth in market share etc. (400 words)
   - **Human factor:** Explain how it made a tangible impact on culture, organizational structure, ways of working, employee wellbeing, transparency etc.
   - **AI, data & insights:** Explain how it made a tangible impact on your ability to leverage advanced analytics and AI in customer experience, operational efficiency, agility etc.
   - **Cloud native IT:** Explain how it made a tangible impact on your ability to leverage cloud native technology in the relevant aspects of your business (customer experience, operational efficiency, agility, time to market etc.)
   - **Networks:** Explain how it made a tangible impact on your ability to leverage cloud native technology in the relevant aspects of your business (customer experience, operational efficiency, agility, time to market etc.)
   - **Autonomous operations:** Explain how this specific approach to automation enabled you to bring about tangible business improvements (new revenues, improved customer experience, operational efficiency, agility, time to market etc.)
   - **Beyond connectivity:** Explain how it made a tangible impact on your ability to develop new revenues and new lines of business beyond connectivity (time to market, monetization, users, revenues, partner onboarding etc.)

5. **Describe how you used TM Forum assets to enable these achievements.** (200 words, weighted 20%)

Notes: The overview description provided in question 1 above will be used in marketing your entry should you successfully progress to nominee phase. Scoring is 1-10. We only accept electronic entries.
Selection of nominees and finalists

Official nominees will be announced in May 2021. Those nominees scoring the highest (up to five in each Award category – 30 in total), based on the weighting criteria explained above, will be announced as finalists in June 2021 and will have the option to work with the Forum to create a written case study. Finalists will be encouraged to work with the Forum to create a written case study; this will be optional but completed and ‘signed-off’ case studies produced before the middle of August will count as points towards the final judging scores.

Judging process

There will be two - three judges per category, who will judge the finalists on a combination of:

- The business impact of the case study
- The degree of innovation and ingenuity shown
- The measurable impact of the solution
- The usage and value of TM Forum best practices and standards

Note: Production of a published case study will count towards the final judging scores.

Tips & tricks for award submissions

- Read the Judging Criteria for the category you’d like to enter very carefully.
- The judges favor results over intentions – be sure to provide factual results which demonstrate the impact of your entry, and ensure those results can be verified.
- Be concise, factual and to the point – avoid ‘marketing speak’ and focus on what makes your entry unique and worthy of winning an award.

- Make sure the entry form is completed in full and easy to understand from somebody not involved in the project or initiative.
- Make sure your entry reflects every element of how you achieved your objectives.
- Prepare a 100-word summary of your entry, including main points and results written in 3rd person. This will be used used in marketing your entry should you successfully progress to nominee phase.

Tips for writing successful awards entries

When preparing your submission, below are a couple of tips to keep in mind to help you produce a winning submission.

Respect the deadlines.

| Do: Submit by 16th April at the latest, try to submit before the actual deadline to allow for a buffer in the event that additional information may be required to complete your entry. |
| Don’t: Leave it until the last minute to submit your entry; there may be additional information required to complete your entry once you have submitted online. |
Tips for writing successful awards entries

Tell a story.
Your submission is your opportunity to shine; be clear about the challenges faced, your achievements, and the impact they made. Tell your story in a way that others understand it, even if they are new to the project or initiative. People inherently love stories, so make them feel part of something great.

Example: “In the wake of digital disruption from smaller operators who could offer new propositions faster, with a better customer experience, this company realized that to remain relevant and achieve growth, they needed to realign their services and IT operations. At that time their Net Promoter (NPS) score and their customer trust was at an all-time low (+11). The specific challenges addressed were:....”

Example: “In 2020, this company overcame a multitude of challenges to achieve a successful customer experience transformation.”

Stay on topic.
Make sure you use short and clear expressions and focus on telling your story. Make your message memorable. Make it clear and focused at the start of your entry.

Example: “This company decided to overhaul the digital experience across all channels and adopt new ways of working. They leveraged cloud and microservices-based architecture with a new IT operating model. Most importantly, the team adopted a culture of innovation that embraced modern practices like DevOps and continuous integration, continuous deployment and continuous testing...”

Example: “Project X was this company’s overarching strategic initiative and the Marketing Service Application (MSA) supports 69,765 nationwide activities, supporting 2,190,000 gross impressions. The company overhauled digital experience across all channels and adopted a multi-layer optimization model to build a life-cycle customer experience management system compliant to measure 18.6.5 and integrating XYZ server architecture...”

Verify the facts.
Be honest with your achievements. Be sure to verify any facts (and quote any sources) you use in support of your entry.

Example:
- As per Frost and Sullivan, Digital Maturity of our business functions moved from evolving to driving stage with overall score of Digital capability maturity index increasing from 3.54 in 2018 to 4.07 2019 (on an overall scale of 5).
- We were classified as Digital Champions in McKenzie’s Digital Quotient (DQ), scoring 58 which put the company in the top quartile for telecom service providers globally.

Example:
- Digital capability maturity index increased from 3.54 to 4.07
- We were classified as Digital Champions in 2019
Tips for writing successful awards entries

Quantify the results.
One of the key criteria that the judges consider is your ability to provide measurable results. Quantifiable facts prove the value of your entry and help highlight the strength of your submission; include as many as you are able but aim for a minimum of five.

- Example: Mobile internet NPS improved by 7 points YoY, broadband NPS improved by 13.8 points YoY
- System costs reduced by US$14.3 million per year, from US$X to US$X
- Accumulated net profits up 458% in first year from US$X to US$X

- Massive increase in customer satisfaction
- Reduction in system costs
- Increase in profits

Answer every question completely.
Be sure to answer every question in full. Do not skip any questions and check that you are including the appropriate level of detail being requested for each answer. If you do not understand what is being asked of you, ask one of the awards team for help.

- Example: “TM Forum’s Open APIs and Business Process Management Framework enabled simplified and optimized adoption across the organization. The Business Process Management Framework helped define end-to-end business processes; we used it mainly in the services layer, where our workflow creation environment fits inside the eTOM model to speed up and simplify new business service launches by integrating with current IT systems.”

- Example: “Open APIs, Business Process Framework were used.”

Use evidence and supporting material to highlight your story.
If you have a video, a press release, testimonials, or other supporting material, be sure to include links to this within your entry. This helps to add colour and external advocacy to your story.

- Example: “Read more about our clients’ successes in this press release <<link>> and watch this video interview <<link>> with Fred Mercury, CTO of Queen Systems...”

- Example: “The response from our customers has been overwhelmingly positive.”

Ensure sign-off from all parties involved early on.
If you are submitting a joint entry, ensure that your commercial partner is aware of what is required of them in the entire process. For example, if you would like them to agree to work on a case study should you progress to the finalist stage, get prior approval for this to avoid any miscommunication or wasted effort.

For more information or help with your entry Please contact awards@tmforum.org with any questions you may have regarding the TM Forum Excellence Awards.
FAQ for award submissions

Do I need to be a member to enter the Awards?
Yes, only TM Forum members are eligible for Awards entry.

When should the business case have taken place in order to qualify for entry?
The business case being highlighted should have taken place between the start of 2020 to the current time to qualify for entry into the current awards cycle.

How are the nominees per category chosen?
There are three questions and two procedural criteria, each individually weighted, as detailed above. The five highest combined scores in each category will be declared official nominees.

Who will produce the written case study?
If you are chosen as a finalist, you will have the option to work with TM Forum on a written case study. If you wish to, we will assign a writer to work with you on this. All parties that are submitting the award MUST agree to be featured publicly in the write-up. Once the case study is complete, all involved will be given an opportunity for edits and final approval before any publication of the material.

What format is the written case study?
Click here for a sample of a previous case study.

What is involved in the production of the written case study?
The background you submit online as part of your award entry will provide initial detail for the writer. A few simple follow-up questions/clarifications and direct quotes will be taken before we come back with to get a draft case study for your edits and approval.

Is it optional to produce a written case study?
Yes. Production of a written business-case study is optional but will be considered in final judging scores.

Who are the judges?
Judges comprising senior industry executives from around the world assess the entries based on material submitted and determine the winners of each award. There will be two – three judges per award category.

When are the finalists chosen?
Finalists will be announced in June 2021.

The Final Winner
There will be seven final Winners, announced during Digital Transformation World. The judges will choose the winners based on the business impact of the case study, the degree of innovation and ingenuity shown, the measurable impact of the solution and the usage and value of TM Forum best practices and standards. Published case studies will also be taken into consideration.

Awards Promotion
TM Forum will promote the Awards nominees, finalists and winners in various ways:
• Through a press release naming them; entrants are encouraged to do the same.
• On TM Forum’s website, social media, Inform content channel, newsletter features, email marketing campaigns and other channels.
• Published case studies will be used as part of the event marketing campaign.
• Video interviews will be conducted with the winners.

Digital toolkits will be provided to entrants at each stage (including social banner, web banner, hashtag, internal and external email comms) to allow members to promote their status at each stage.