RAN Power Savings:

Practical Considerations for Leveraging AI to Automate Energy-Saving Features in Telecom RAN Networks



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01 INTRODUCTION

The Telecom Industry's Shift Towards Energy Efficiency

The telecommunications industry has reached a pivotal moment where the demands for **innovation**, **sustainability**, **and operational efficiency** are converging. The rapid expansion of mobile networks, driven by the rollout of **5G technology** and the surge in data-hungry applications, has placed immense pressure on telecom operators to manage their energy consumption. This is no small task, as the telecom sector faces rising operational costs alongside growing environmental scrutiny. Balancing these competing pressures has become a top priority, especially for **Radio Access Network (RAN)** operations, which account for the **biggest share of a network's energy usage.**

Energy consumption is a key driver of operational expenditures, comprising between 20% and 40% of the overall OPEX for telecom operators. This figure becomes even more significant when considering RAN networks, where up to 70% of site-level energy is consumed by active equipment such as antennas, radios, and baseband units. The ongoing deployment of 5G, with its enhanced bandwidth capabilities and extensive infrastructure requirements, has only increased the energy demands of telecom networks. In fact, with each new layer of 5G and densified deployments, energy costs are expected to rise even further unless proactive measures are taken.

This reliance on energy-intensive operations creates a compelling case for telecom operators to prioritize sustainability initiatives. Beyond reducing costs, operators are under increasing pressure from regulators, investors, and consumers to meet stringent environmental goals. Governments worldwide are introducing carbon reduction mandates, while enterprises and end-users alike demand greener, more environmentally responsible services. Telecom operators now face a dual challenge: maintaining high network performance while minimizing their ecological footprint. However, traditional approaches to energy management, such as vendor-specific power-saving features (PSFs) and static shutdown protocols, are proving insufficient in the face of dynamic network conditions and increasingly complex demands.

While these traditional methods have yielded **incremental improvements in energy efficiency**—such as reducing kilowatt-hours per gigabyte consumed—significant opportunities for optimization remain untapped. Static PSFs, for example, rely on pre-configured schedules that fail to account for real-time fluctuations in traffic or localized usage patterns. The result is a suboptimal use of resources, particularly during off-peak hours when energy savings could be maximized without compromising performance. To overcome these limitations, the telecom industry must embrace new, more flexible approaches.

Artificial intelligence (AI) represents a paradigm shift in how energy is managed within telecom networks. By leveraging advanced machine learning algorithms, Aldriven solutions can dynamically adapt to changing network conditions, enabling cell-level optimization and real-time decision-making. This technological innovation offers telecom operators the opportunity to reduce energy consumption by 15-20% without compromising network quality or customer experience. In doing so, AI not only addresses the immediate need for cost savings but also paves the way for long-term sustainability in the telecom sector.

02 CHALLENGES WITH CURRENT POWER-SAVING FEATURES



Despite the availability of **power-saving features** in modern telecom networks, these tools remain constrained by a range of **technical and operational limitations**. Chief among these is the reliance on static configurations, which are inherently inflexible and unable to adapt to the dynamic demands of contemporary networks. Traditional PSFs, for instance, operate based on predefined rules or schedules, such as shutting down specific cells during predetermined low-traffic periods. While effective in theory, these static approaches often **fail to account for real-world variability**, such as sudden surges in traffic due to unexpected events or changes in user behavior.

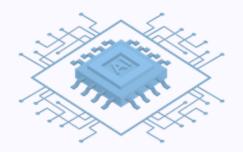
Another significant challenge lies in the labor-intensive nature of power-saving configuration and optimization. Engineers are required to manually analyze traffic data, performance metrics, and geographic usage patterns to determine the most effective energy-saving strategies. This process is not only time-consuming but also prone to human error, particularly as networks grow increasingly complex with the addition of new frequency bands and multi-layered infrastructure. In large-scale deployments involving tens of thousands of cells, manual configuration becomes unsustainable, creating bottlenecks that hinder overall network performance.

The complexity of multi-vendor environments further complicates energy-saving efforts. Most telecom operators rely on equipment and software from multiple vendors, each of which offers proprietary protocols for implementing PSFs. This lack of standardization makes it difficult to orchestrate cohesive energy-saving measures across the network, leading to inefficiencies and operational silos. Engineers must navigate disparate tools and interfaces, which not only increases the likelihood of misconfigurations but also limits the scalability of energy-saving initiatives.

Quality of Experience (QoE) considerations add another layer of complexity. Static power-saving measures often result in trade-offs between energy efficiency and network performance. For example, shutting down network elements during off-peak hours may save energy but can degrade user experience by increasing time to content, reducing signal strength, or even causing service interruptions. These performance issues are particularly problematic in areas where coverage is already limited, such as rural regions or underserved communities.

Finally, traditional power-saving methods lack predictive capabilities, relying instead on reactive approaches that address inefficiencies after they occur. This limits the ability of operators to anticipate and prepare for fluctuations in traffic demand, particularly in high-density urban environments where usage patterns can be highly variable. Without the ability to proactively manage energy resources, operators risk missing opportunities for optimization and incurring unnecessary costs.

03 ROLE OF ALIN ACHIEVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY



Al introduces a transformative approach to energy management in telecom networks, offering solutions to many of the challenges outlined above. By leveraging real-time data and predictive analytics, Al-driven platforms enable dynamic optimization of energy usage, ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently without compromising network performance.

One of the most significant advantages of AI is its ability to adapt to changing network conditions in real time. Unlike static PSFs, which rely on fixed schedules and thresholds, AI algorithms continuously monitor traffic loads, signal quality, and user density to identify opportunities for energy savings. For example, during periods of low traffic, AI can define the ideal moment to deactivate underutilized cells while redistributing traffic to adjacent cells that remain active.

Predictive analytics further enhance the capabilities of Al-driven energy management. By analyzing historical traffic patterns, machine learning models can forecast future usage trends and proactively allocate resources accordingly. For instance, in a metropolitan area with recurring rush-hour traffic, Al can anticipate surges in demand and preemptively adjust energy settings to maintain performance. Conversely, during predictable low-demand periods, such as late at night, **Al can implement more aggressive energy-saving measures without risking service degradation.**

Another key feature of an advanced AI based solution is the **ability to execute the decisions and corresponding network changes autonomously.** In such **closed-loop configurations**, AI platforms can implement energy-saving actions without manual intervention, streamlining operations and reducing the risk of human error. This level of automation is particularly valuable in large-scale networks, where manual management would be prohibitively time-consuming and resource-intensive.

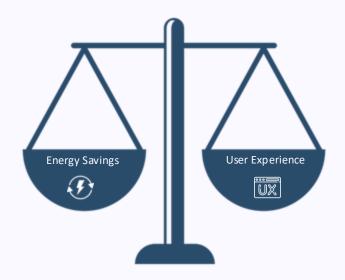
Al also addresses the challenges posed by multi-vendor environments by providing a unified platform for energy management. Through advanced integration capabilities, Al-driven solutions can bridge the gaps between proprietary vendor protocols, enabling seamless coordination of power-saving measures across heterogeneous networks. This interoperability simplifies network management and ensures consistent implementation of energy-saving strategies.

04 SUSTAINABILITY AND NETWORK PERFORMANCE: BALANCING PRIORITIES

As mentioned in the previous chapter, it is of utmost importance that the network performance is not compromised when energy saving strategies are implemented.

Balancing the dual priorities of **sustainability and network performance** requires a nuanced approach, particularly in the context of Al-driven energy management. All empowers telecom operators to strike a balance between sustainability and network performance by intelligently prioritizing energy-saving actions based on real-time conditions. This flexibility is critical for maintaining QoE while maximizing the benefits of energy efficiency.

This balancing act is made possible thanks to advanced metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) that provide granular insights into network performance, end user experience and energy consumption. Furthermore, it allows to consider new metrics within the ML model to make decisions, that is, any measurable metric could be incorporated in the decision making



05 AI-Enabled Energy-Saving Strategies

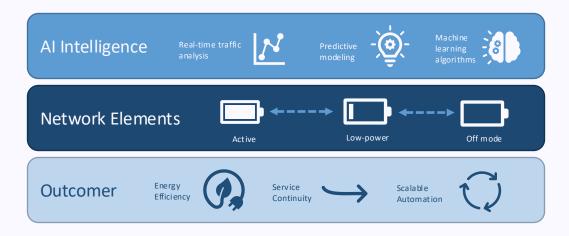
As already stated, the introduction of AI into energy management strategies allows telecom operators to move beyond static, one-size-fits-all solutions toward dynamic and context-aware approaches. Al-enabled energy-saving strategies leverage real-time network insights and machine learning algorithms to deliver scalable, adaptive, and proactive solutions. This section explores several key strategies and their technical underpinnings.

5.1. Dynamic Control Of Transmitted Power For Network Elements

One of the most transformative applications of AI in energy management is its ability to implement dynamic control of transmitted power for underutilized network elements. Unlike traditional methods that rely on rigid schedules, AI-driven systems can analyze real-time traffic data to determine which cells or equipment can be temporarily powered down without compromising network performance.

For example, during off-peak hours, such as late at night, Al algorithms can identify specific cells in suburban or rural areas where traffic is minimal. These cells can then enter low-power states, effectively reducing energy consumption. However, unlike static configurations, Al systems are capable of changing cells to full power mode immediately when demand increases, ensuring that users do not experience degraded service. This real-time adaptability eliminates the inefficiencies of static policies, which often fail to capture the nuances of varying traffic patterns.

Moreover, dynamic control of transmitted power extends beyond individual cells to encompass larger network elements, such as baseband units and antenna arrays. Al-driven systems can coordinate power-saving measures across multiple layers of the network, ensuring that energy savings at one level do not inadvertently introduce inefficiencies elsewhere.



5.2. Traffic Steering and Load Balancing

Al-enabled traffic steering is another powerful tool for **optimizing energy use.** By **intelligently redistributing traffic** across the network, Al systems can consolidate activity into fewer active cells during periods of low demand. This allows other cells to enter **power-saving states**, significantly **reducing overall energy consumption.**

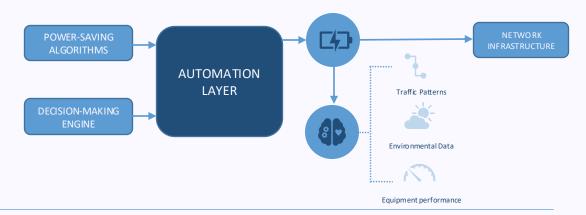
For instance, in **urban environments with overlapping coverage**, AI algorithms can route traffic from underutilized small cells to nearby macro cells that remain active. This approach not only **minimizes energy use** but also **simplifies network management** by reducing the number of active elements that require monitoring and maintenance.

Traffic steering also plays a crucial role in managing peak-hour demands. During times of high traffic, AI systems can balance loads across multiple cells to prevent overloading and ensure consistent performance. This dual capability—reducing energy consumption during low-demand periods and optimizing resource utilization during peak hours—demonstrates the versatility of AI in addressing complex network challenges.

5.3. Al-Driven Automation Layers

In many telecom networks, existing **power-saving features** provided by vendors operate in isolation, with limited integration across different layers of the network. **Al addresses this limitation** by introducing **automation layers** that **unify and enhance** these disparate features. These **automation layers** serve as an **intermediary** between the **network infrastructure** and the **power-saving algorithms**, enabling **seamless coordination and optimization**. By integra-ting data from multiple sources, these systems can make informed decisions that account for **traffic patterns**, **environmental conditions**, **and equipment performance**.

Automation layers also support the deployment of advanced power-saving techniques, such as adaptive modulation and coding. By dynamically adjusting the transmission parameters based on traffic demand and signal quality, Al-driven systems can further reduce energy consumption without sacrificing QoE.



5.4. Vendor-Agnostic Energy Optimization

The heterogeneity of telecom networks, with equipment sourced from multiple vendors, often creates challenges for energy management. Al-driven solutions address this issue by offering vendor-agnostic platforms that can integrate with a wide range of hardware and software environments. This interoperability ensures that power-saving strategies can be implemented consistently across the network, regardless of the underlying infrastructure.

For example, AI platforms can **normalize data from different vendor-specific systems**, creating a unified framework for analyzing energy usage and identifying inefficiencies. This capability not only **simplifies network management** but also **enables operators to benchmark the performance** of different vendors' equipment, driving **continuous improvement and innovation.**

5.5. Proactive Monitoring and Maintenance

Al-powered energy management systems go beyond **reactive optimization** by introducing **proactive monitoring** and **maintenance capabilities**. Through **advanced predictive analytics**, these systems can **identify potential issues**, such as equipment **malfunctions** or **traffic anomalies**, before they impact network performance or energy efficiency.

For instance, an **AI system** might detect that a particular **cell is consuming more energy than expected** due to **hardware degradation**. By alerting operators to this issue in advance, the system enables **timely maintenance or replacement**, preventing further inefficiencies. This **proactive** approach not only **reduces energy costs** but also **enhances the reliability and longevity** of network infrastructure.

5.6. Continuous Learning and Improvement

One of the most significant advantages of AI is its ability to learn and improve over time. By analyzing historical data and incorporating feedback from network operations, AI systems can refine their algorithms to deliver even greater energy savings. This continuous learning capability ensures that power-saving strategies remain effective as network demands evolve, particularly in the context of emerging technologies such as 5G and beyond.

For example, an **AI system** deployed in a **dense urban network** might initially focus on **optimizing small-cell deployments**. Over time, as new usage patterns emerge, the system can adapt its strategies to account for changes in traffic distribution, user behavior, and environmental factors. This **iterative process** ensures that telecom operators can **maintain a high level of energy efficiency** while keeping pace with the rapidly changing landscape of the industry.

06 THE TUPL APROACH

Tupl's **Power Savings Advisor (PSA)** is an innovative solution that embodies how artificial intelligence (AI) can redefine energy management in telecom networks. With a focus on **automation**, **scalability**, **and precision**, Tupl PSA integrates seamlessly into multi-vendor, multi-technology environments, addressing the complexities of modern Radio Access Networks (RAN).

6.1. Technical Capabilities

Tupl's Power Savings Advisor (PSA) features adaptative monitoring and response and is designed for seamless integration into complex, multi-vendor, multi-technology environments; it addresses the challenges of modern Radio Access Networks (RAN) with a focus on automation, scalability, and precision. By leveraging granular data and dynamic adjustments, Tupl PSA sets a benchmark for Al-driven energy optimization.

Cell-Level Optimization: Tailored Energy Savings

Tupl PSA's ability to perform cell-level optimization is one of its defining features. **Unlike traditional power-saving methods** that apply **blanket policies** across entire regions or network segments, **Tupl PSA analyzes data at the granularity of individual cells**. This enables the system to identify and exploit localized opportunities for energy savings.

For example, in suburban areas with low late-night traffic, **Tupl PSA** can **selectively deactivate underutilized cells without compromising coverage.** Similarly, in **urban environments with overlapping coverage**, it dynamically **adjusts cell settings based on real-time traffic patterns**, optimizing energy use and ensuring user satisfaction. Operators retain **full control**, setting thresholds and constraints to align with metrics such as the **Customer Experience Index (CEI)**.

No "One-Size-Fits-All" Approach

A key principle of Tupl PSA is its rejection of a one-size-fits-all approach to energy management. Instead, the system employs adaptive monitoring to tailor its recommendations and actions to the unique characteristics of each site, cell, or region. Tupl PSA's adaptability is crucial for diverse network scenarios. For instance, in scenarios where power-saving measures might risk degrading network performance or end user experience, Tupl PSA incorporates safeguards to prevent widespread service disruptions. By continuously monitoring key performance indicators (KPIs) such as signal quality, user experience, and traffic throughput, the system can detect and address potential issues before they escalate

This level of **precision** not only **maximizes energy efficiency** but also **ensures** that the operator retains **full control over network performance**. Operators can set thresholds and constraints within the system to prioritize practically any measurable performance metric, such as those related to Customer Experience Index (CEI).

Open and Closed-loop Operation

At the heart of Tupl PSA's effectiveness lies its ability to operate in both **open-loop** and closed-loop configurations. These modes provide operators with the **flexibility** to tailor the solution to their **operational preferences** and **technological maturity**.

In open-loop mode, Tupl PSA generates actionable recommendations based on realtime network data and advanced analytics. Operators can review these insights and manually implement the suggested power-saving measures. This mode is particularly beneficial for organizations that are transitioning to Al-driven management or that prefer human oversight in critical decision-making processes.

Closed-loop mode, on the other hand, allows Tupl PSA to autonomously execute energy-saving actions without requiring operator intervention. By directly interfacing with network infrastructure, the system can implement adjustments in real-time, such as activating dynamic sleep modes or redistributing traffic loads. This capability not only reduces the time required to realize energy savings but also minimizes the risk of human error, making it ideal for large-scale deployments.

Advanced Analytics for Benchmarking and Continuous Improvement

Tupl PSA goes beyond immediate energy optimization by incorporating **advanced analytics** to **benchmark the performance** of power-saving features. By comparing the efficiency of vendor-specific features across different technologies and regions, the system **establishes a baseline for continuous improvement.** This benchmarking capability not only identifies **best practices** but also **drives innovation** by highlighting areas where additional gains can be achieved.

For example, **Tupl PSA can analyze the effectiveness of sleep mode** implementations across different types of cells **(e.g., macro cells, small cells)** and provide insights into how these features can be refined. Over time, this iterative process enables operators to fine-tune their energy management strategies, ensuring that they remain effective in the face of evolving network demands.

6.2. Real-World Impact and Success Stories

Tupl PSA has demonstrated its efficacy in a variety of real-world deployments, delivering substantial energy savings while maintaining or even enhancing network performance. One notable success story comes from its implementation in Kyivstar's network, where the solution achieved an annual energy savings of approximately 9.1 GWh. This translated to a 25% reduction in energy consumption across targeted sites.

The impact of Tupl PSA extends beyond energy savings to include **operational efficiency and financial ROI.** By **automating power-saving measures**, the solution **reduces** the need for **manual intervention**, freeing up valuable engineering resources. Additionally, the **rapid implementation** of Al-driven strategies ensures that operators can realize **cost savings** within months of deployment, making Tupl PSA a compelling investment for organizations **seeking to align their financial and environmental goals**.

Another example of **Tupl PSA's versatility** is its deployment in a **multi-vendor network environment,** where it delivered consistent **energy savings of up to 60%** in certain cells. By **integrating** with diverse **vendor protocols and leveraging advanced analytics**, the system identified previously untapped opportunities for optimization. This capability underscores the solution's ability to **adapt to complex network architectures and deliver measurable results.**

Even more interesting is the **overall saving view**. In one notable case, a major telecom operator implemented Al-driven traffic steering and dynamic sleep modes across its network, achieving a **20% reduction*** in RAN **energy consumption**. This translated to millions of dollars in annual cost savings while **also reducing** the operator's **carbon footprint** by thousands of metric tons.

A final example comes from the deployment of **AI automation layers** in a multivendor network environment. By **integrating power-saving features from different vendors into a cohesive system,** the operator was able to achieve consistent **energy savings of 15-18%** across* all regions, demonstrating the scalability and versatility of AI-driven solutions.

07 RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP



As telecom operators navigate the transition toward Al-driven energy management, a well-structured implementation strategy is essential to maximize the benefits of solutions like Tupl's Power Savings Advisor (PSA). This section outlines practical recommendations and a step-by-step roadmap to guide operators in adopting Alenabled energy-saving practices. By aligning technological capabilities with operational goals, these recommendations aim to achieve measurable energy efficiency gains while maintaining network performance and quality.

7.1. Adopting a Holistic AI Framework

The first step in realizing the **full potential of Al-driven energy optimization** is to adopt a **holistic framework** that spans the entire network infrastructure. **Telecom networks** are multifaceted systems composed of **core networks, transport layers, and RAN components,** with RAN consuming over 73% of total energy consumption. (**) . To achieve **consistent energy savings**, operators must integrate **Al solutions across these layers** or at least focus on the highest-energy consumption piece.

A holistic approach also involves aligning Al-driven initiatives with broader business objectives, such as cost reduction, sustainability targets, and enhanced Quality of Experience (QoE). For instance, Al systems can be configured to prioritize specific KPIs, such as energy savings per gigabyte of data or reductions in carbon emissions. By embedding these goals into the framework, operators can ensure that energy management efforts contribute directly to their strategic vision.

7.2. Building a Strong Data Foundation

Al-driven energy optimization relies on accurate, real-time data to make informed decisions. To support this, robust data collection and processing capabilities are required. This could include deploying sensors, telemetry systems, and advanced monitoring tools to gather traffic patterns, energy usage metrics, and performance indicators across the network.

Equally important is the establishment of a **centralized data repository** that consolidates information from **diverse sources**, including **vendor-specific systems** and **legacy infrastructure**. This repository serves as the backbone for AI analytics, enabling the system to **identify inefficiencies**, **predict usage trends**, and **recommend targeted interventions**. Operators should also ensure that **data governance policies** are in place to maintain the **integrity**, **security**, **and accessibility** of this information.

7.4. Leveraging Predictive and Proactive Capabilities

One of the most **significant advantages** of Al-driven energy management is its ability to **predict and proactively address network inefficiencies**. To fully leverage this capability, operators should focus on **integrating predictive analytics into their operational workflows**.

For instance, AI systems can forecast traffic surges based on historical data, enabling operators to preemptively allocate resources and adjust power-saving measures. Similarly, **predictive maintenance tools** can identify equipment failures or anomalies that might lead to energy wastage, allowing operators to address these issues **before** they impact performance.

Proactive capabilities also extend to seasonal and geographic variations in network demand. By analyzing long-term trends, AI systems can recommend strategic adjustments to network configurations, such as shifting resources between regions or modifying infrastructure deployments to **optimize energy use.**

PREDICTIVE AND PROACTIVE CAPABILITIES WITH AI



PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS



Traffic Forecasting



Historical Data



Resource Planning

PROACTIVE MAINTENANCE



Anomaly Detection



Equipment Health



Alerts

SEASONAL AND GEOGRAPHIC OPTIMIZATION

7.5. Ensuring Continuous Improvement Through Feedback Loops

The dynamic nature of telecom networks requires **continuous refinement of energy-saving strategies.** Operators should establish **feedback loops** that enable AI systems to **learn** from **past actions**, incorporate **new data**, and **adapt to changing conditions**.

For example, Al-driven solutions like **Tupl PSA** can **monitor the outcomes** of implemented measures and **compare** them against expected results. If a particular strategy does not deliver the anticipated energy savings, **the system can adjust** its algorithms to **improve performance in future scenarios**. This iterative process ensures that Al solutions remain effective and relevant over time.

Regular performance **reviews**, **audits**, **and updates** to AI systems are also critical for maintaining their efficacy. By incorporating feedback from network operators and engineers, these reviews can help **identify areas for improvement** and **drive ongoing innovation**.

7.6. Aligning Al-Driven Solutions with Sustainability Goals

In addition to operational benefits, **Al-driven energy management** contributes to broader **sustainability initiatives**. Operators should align their Al deployments with environmental goals, such as **achieving carbon neutrality** or increasing the share of **renewable energy** in their operations.

For example, Al systems can be used to coordinate energy-saving measures with the availability of renewable energy sources. During periods of high renewable generation, such as sunny or windy days, Al could prioritize the use of green energy to power network operations. Conversely, during periods of low renewable availability, the system can implement more aggressive power-saving measures to reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

Transparent reporting of these efforts is essential for building stakeholder trust and demonstrating progress toward sustainability goals. **Operators** should publish **regular updates on their energy efficiency achievements**, highlighting the role of Al-driven solutions in reducing their environmental impact.

08 CONCLUSION

The telecommunications industry is at a critical juncture, where the demand for **expanded network capacity and advanced connectivity** must align with growing pressures to improve energy efficiency and reduce environmental impact. **This whitepaper** has highlighted how Al-driven energy management solutions, such as **Tupl's Power Savings Advisor (PSA)**, present a **transformative opportunity** for telecom operators to address these challenges head-on.

As outlined, the operational complexities of modern Radio Access Networks (RAN), compounded by the energy demands of 5G deployments, have made traditional power-saving approaches increasingly inadequate.

Al-driven solutions enable real-time, dynamic, and predictive energy management capabilities that go beyond the limitations of conventional approaches. By leveraging machine learning algorithms, Al systems analyze traffic patterns, anticipate demand fluctuations, and autonomously adjust network configurations to optimize energy use. This level of precision ensures that operators can achieve substantial energy savings—up to 20% or more—without compromising Quality of Experience (QoE) for end-users. The ability to balance sustainability and performance is a critical advantage that Al brings to the table, redefining what it means to operate a "best-inclass" network.

The real-world applications of these solutions, as demonstrated by Tupl PSA, underscore their practicality and impact. By enabling cell-level optimization, integrating advanced analytics, and operating in both open-loop and closed-loop modes, Tupl PSA provides a versatile and scalable platform for energy savings. Success stories, such as the deployment in Kyivstar's network, illustrate how Aldriven strategies can deliver measurable outcomes, including millions of kilowatthours in energy savings and significant reductions in carbon emissions. These achievements align with both financial objectives and broader environmental goals, positioning telecom operators as leaders in sustainable innovation.

The path to adopting Al-driven energy management, however, requires a **structured and strategic approach.** Looking ahead, the integration of Al into energy management will become increasingly indispensable as networks continue to evolve. Emerging technologies such as **6G**, **edge computing**, **and IoT** will introduce **new challenges** and **opportunities** for energy optimization, further emphasizing the need for intelligent, adaptive solutions. By investing in Al-driven systems today, telecom operators can future-proof their networks, enhance operational efficiency, and solidify their commitment to sustainability.

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