Rolling out digital innovations...

... and preparing the future

Focusing on practical innovation to serve essential customer needs, in 2018 Orange Belgium nourished the Orange Fab network of innovative scale-ups and implemented the itsme® app, the secure digital ID developed by the Belgian Mobile ID consortium.

New innovations from Orange Fab

2018 marked the second season of Orange Fab, the exclusive accelerator network of scale-ups that are developing new innovative products and services – in sectors such as the Internet of Things, Big Data, Artificial Intelligence, and more – that will change the way we live and work tomorrow.

In the second season, 3 more scale-ups were selected to work with Orange:
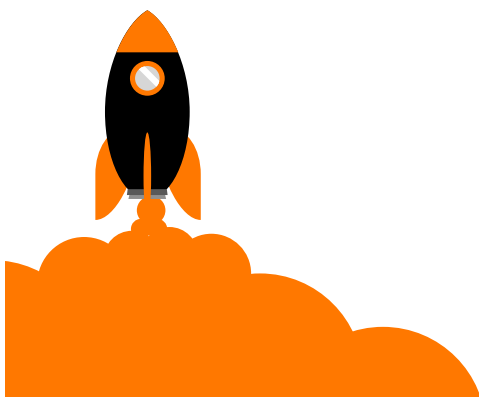
- **Chatlayer** developed a conversational engagement platform, using artificial intelligence to automate human conversations;

- **iReachm** transforms a voicemail into a Virtual Assistant who takes calls, schedules meeting requests into an agenda, and enriches data in the user's address book; and

- **Thingsplay** provides IoT solutions for industries, developing hardware and software for manufacturers who need connected devices.

Orange Fab's main objective is to create a win-win commercial partnership between the scale-ups and the Orange Belgium and Luxembourg business units. Thanks to Orange Fab, the selected start-ups are offered specific support to accelerate their own development – in Belgium and Luxembourg, as well as internationally – leveraging Orange's worldwide footprint of 29 countries with more than 250 million customers.

At the end of 2018, Orange Belgium decided to invest in previous Orange Fab winner CommuniThings, which developed smart-parking solutions on Orange's mobile Internet of Things network.

OZ - The employee innovation programme

In 2018, Orange Belgium launched OZ, a programme that stimulates innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship within the company. Orange Belgium launched 2 Innovation Challenges, whose aim is to draw creative ideas from our employees. An amazing number of ideas were received for the two subjects: Connected Home and Smart Business. The Innovation team will now look more deeply into this.

Orange Telephone

In 2018 Orange Belgium launched an application to take back control of the green button allowing users to easily and safely manage their calls. Orange Telephone protects Orange customers from malicious calls, displays the company's name for incoming calls and offers the best experience for Visual Voicemail.

itsme® – the digital ID

In 2017, the Belgian Mobile ID consortium launched 'itsme': a single secure digital ID that can be used for all digital transactions, from logging on or signing up to various websites, to making secure payments and validating contracts with the highest security standards, to booking a holiday.

Orange customers can easily download the itsme application and use it on every platform that has integrated the app. 2018 saw the number of itsme users approach 750,000. Orange Belgium team members use itsme for some of the latest internal systems, and Orange Belgium customers can use itsme to log in to the customer zone.

Fibre pilot project in Flanders

Orange Belgium is the first Belgian telecom operator to partner up with Fluvius – a public company created to manage energy networks in Flanders – on their fibre-optic pilot project. The project fits within the framework of the Flemish Government's superfast network goals for the future.

Looking ahead, a pilot will start in 5 cities and municipalities, aiming to connect 15,000 households in 2019. The city of Genk will be first in line to be connected.

The pilot's open model with access to a passive fibre infrastructure has been successfully used in other European countries. As several operators can use the shared infrastructure at a reasonable price, the model enables accelerated investment and lower prices for consumers. It also stimulates competition, as each service operator can use its own active equipment, allowing it to further differentiate on services and technological network innovation.