AT&T, GE Team to Connect Engines, Industrial Machines

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AT&T and GE today annnounced a new agreement to enabled things like jet engines, locomatives and other industrial machines with wireless capabilities.

According to a press release, the companies plan to develop offerings that meld AT&T network technologies with industrial products like electric vehicle chargers, lighting and engines.

The companies also said they plan to collaborate in AT&T's new Foundry innovation center to build M2M solutions for GE's software platform Predix that can proactively maintain and remotely control industrial machines.

To frame the project, AT&T's Andy Geisse, CEO of AT&T business solutions, said in a statement that the partnership could result in things like an airline that can remotely monitor, diagnose and resolve issues with its fleet engines virtually anywhere in the world.

"GE's vision of the Industrial Internet combined with our global network and leadership in machine-to-machine solutions are a powerful combination to help businesses realize the benefits of connected machines," Geisse said.

Morgan Mullooly, analyst at Analysys Mason, called the move "hugely significant".

"We expect a tremendous number of M2M connections to be activated in the next 2–3 years, as millions of industrial components roll off GE production lines fitted with embedded M2M modules and will be dispersed around the globe," Mullooly said. "Consequently, we expect the deal will strengthen AT&T’s position as the leading US M2M service provider by number of connections.”

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