

Bright Idea: Let There Be Light. How Much Is Up to You and Your Data

General Electric



Millions of American families have already embraced connected devices like smart meters to control their electricity bills. Now San Diego will soon become the first U.S. city to link its street lights to the Industrial Internet via an “intelligent” lighting system called LightGrid. The new system, which was developed by GE Lighting, will replace 3,000 city lamps with LED lights equipped with GPS beacons and wireless controls technology to measure and manage energy usage.

The lights and sensors will feed data to a software and hardware system for analysis. LightGrid will allow workers to adjust brightness according to traffic, accurately measure the energy used by each light pole and pay for the energy they actually consumed. “Light controls are going to be a game changer for the city of San Diego,” said Todd Gloria, San Diego’s interim mayor. “This innovation will provide us with real-time data on lights that are malfunctioning or not working at all, so communities can feel safe with improved lighting while the historic look of the lights is preserved.”

The installation has already started and it will be finished this spring. GE estimates that San Diego could save more than \$250,000 annually with the new system.

GE opened its flagship software center in San Ramon, Calif. [two years ago](#) [1], and the company is investing \$1 billion in [Industrial Internet](#) [2] technologies and applications like LightGrid.

GE engineer Nick Holonyak Jr. also invented the [world’s first LED](#) [3] in 1962. “When I went in, I didn’t realize all that we were going to do,” says Holonyak, now 85 years old but still teaching engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. “As far as I am concerned, the modern LED starts at GE.”

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[1] <http://www.gereports.com/industrial-internet-reinventing-the-industrial-revolution/>

[2] <http://www.gereports.com/14-new-ge-industrial-internet-technologies-move-machines-closer-to-zero-unplanned-downtime/>

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