

MTN, Huawei launch smart water metering solution

MTN and Huawei have jointly launched the Smart Water Metering solution, "the first Narrowband Internet of Things (NB-IoT) solution in Africa". The solution is designed to help MTN develop their NB-IoT services to explore new markets.



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The Smart Water metering solution enables the automated collection of utility meter data, while manual meter reading leads to high labour costs and missing or inaccurate data. Through sensors installed in water meters, customers can identify water pipeline leakage earlier. Household water meters will automatically report data on a regular basis, reducing fault probabilities and the operating expense.

Powered by the NB-IoT technology by Huawei, the sensor array is designed to serve as a diagnostic spine that underpins network management. The data gathered can be used to control waste water flows from each property, identify faults across the network and improve health and safety outcomes.

NB-IoT is a new technology that will extend the utilisation of IoT by making it more efficient to connect objects requiring a long battery life and are located in hard to reach areas to the internet by ways of mobile connectivity. This Low Power Wide Area technology will connect more objects to the Internet of Things. The strong growth in the NB-IoT market has motivated many analyst firms to create forecasts showing the expected numbers of connections as well as the revenue potential. Generally, the global IoT market is expected to be worth trillions of dollars by 2020, and there will be a very promising market with 450 million cellular IoT connections needed in Africa.

A better connected Africa

Babak Fouladi, group chief technology and information officer, Interim SA CTO of MTN, commented: "NB-IoT is viewed by the industry as the answer for enterprise applications in a range of different areas, from utility meters to sensor monitoring to asset-tracking. In line with our strategy to explore new enterprise markets, MTN is glad to lead the application of this new technology in Africa. Now we've succeeded in the commercial trial of smart water metering, the first NB-IoT service in Africa, and looking forward, wildlife tracking, smart farm, and smart parking, etc., lots of services will be available to bring us a better connected Africa."

Jacky Chen, managing director of Huawei MTN Key Account Group, said: “The number of cellular IoT connections in Africa will grow seven-fold over the next three to four years, and NB-IoT will be a key driver for this trend.”

The Smart Water Metering service from MTN will be commercially deployed in 2017. MTN and Huawei will showcase a live Smart Water Metering Demo and other IoT services at AfricaCom 2016 in Cape Town, 15-17 November.

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