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Investing in Scotland's Digital Future £6 million digital network launched.

Businesses in Scotland are to benefit from the most advanced 'Internet of Things' (IoT) network in the UK as part of a £6 million project.

The new network, called IoT Scotland, will provide a wireless sensor network for applications and services to collect data from devices and send that data without the need for 3G/4G or Wi-Fi, supporting businesses develop new and innovative applications, changing the way they work.

The network will enable all businesses to have the ability to monitor the efficiency and productivity of their assets, equipment, scheduling maintenance and improving production. For example, IoT Scotland could support wider use of smart bins that wirelessly inform local authorities when they require emptying, ensuring best use of bin lorries but also helping to reduce carbon emissions. Similarly, the network could monitor office environments to lower costs by saving energy, while reducing carbon footprints of buildings.

The three year project includes investment from the public and private sector with the Scottish Government investing £2.7 million, with the remaining investment coming from Boston Networks, a £113,000 contribution from Scottish Enterprise and £30,000 from Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy, Kate Forbes said:

"The Internet of Things is set to transform every sector of our economy, from manufacturing to agriculture and presents an exciting opportunity to revolutionize the way businesses and the public sector across Scotland work.

"Our £2.7 million investment in this project underpins our vision of a Scotland that stimulates innovation, welcomes investment and promotes its digital industries. We want Scotland to be recognised internationally as a natural test bed for innovation in connectivity which is why we are investing in our digital infrastructure.

"As the network is rolled out across the country, it will enable companies to innovate, providing low-cost access to next-generation connectivity, helping organisations develop new solutions and devices with global export potential.

“We made a commitment in the 2017/18 Programme for Government to invest in a new wireless sensor network. This network supports full commercial use of IoT in Scotland and will help transform the potential for businesses and the public sector to explore sensor and imaging applications, to pilot their ideas and then launch proven, sustainable products and services into the global market.”

Falk Bleyl, Chief Technology Officer, Boston Networks stated:

“Boston Networks is excited to be leading the pioneering project to build and operate the IoT network which will drive the commercialisation of the Internet of Things across Scotland.

The wide reaching network, which will be the most advanced in the UK, has the potential to revolutionise the use of smart technologies and will be rolled out in cities, towns and rural areas across the country. The network will allow a wide range of users, from small IoT start-ups to multinationals to focus on the deployment of sensors and applications, rather than network build.”

Ian Reid, CENSIS CEO commented:

“It is forecast that there will be 25 billion IoT devices connected by 2025 and only a small number will be connected to the internet using 3G, 4G or WiFi. Low power wide area networks like IoT Scotland are going to become increasingly important – they have the potential to be as disruptive to businesses as the internet has been already to our daily lives.”

Linda Hanna, Managing Director at Scottish Enterprise, commented:

“We’re delighted to be working with Boston Networks and our partners to deliver IoT Scotland. For the first time, Scottish companies will have access to a network where they can capture and analyse business and customer data at the cost of a few pence per month. It’s vitally important that we invest in assets like this so businesses can reap the benefits and we can continue to attract world leading data companies to locate in Scotland.

“By using data to inform business decisions, companies are in a stronger position to innovate products and services, generate new revenue streams and increase efficiencies. Our Data Advisory Service is helping many businesses understand how they can get the most out of their data to accelerate growth and we’re keen to work with even more that could benefit from the IoT Scotland network.”

Background

The Internet of Things is an ‘ecosystem’ that provides a route for applications and services to be driven by sensors that collect data from devices that sense and interface with the physical world, such as smart refuse bins that can send an alert to say they needed emptied, or smart metering that automates meter readings without the need to be read manually.

LoRa is the main technology used for building IoT networks worldwide and offers low cost, low power, low bandwidth, long-range data transmission capability.

Boston Networks will design, implement and support the network infrastructure and the company is expected to create six new high value jobs as a result of the project and are fully committed to providing the greatest possible coverage throughout Scotland.

Initial network deployment that will cover Glasgow, Inverness, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Dundee, Perth, and Stirling with the objective of enabling the smart cities to be developed throughout Scotland.

Background information on CENSIS

As the industry-led centre of excellence for Sensor and Imaging Systems (SIS) and the Internet of Things (IoT), CENSIS plays a key part of the innovation landscape in Scotland. It is funded by the Scottish Funding Council, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. CENSIS's mission is to create sustainable economic value from technological innovation in SIS and IoT, through their application in new products, services and sectors.

Background information on Boston Networks

Boston Networks is a UK leader in the design, installation and support of high-performance Smart Building, Smart Campus and Smart City solutions. Founded in 2000, with the objective of creating an innovative turnkey business to design, deliver, manage and maintain the 4th utility within a building – the network, Boston Networks offer best of breed technologies to deliver multi-site, multi-service infrastructures to connect people, places and devices. As a networking and integrated life safety and security specialist, Boston Networks help businesses and the public sector to improve performance, maximise budgets, and deliver the multiple benefits of technology to employees, stakeholders and buildings