



Itron Unveils New Automation to Increase its Smart Meter Production Capacity

Innovative Robotic Technology to Help Itron Meet Increased Demand for OpenWay^(R) CENTRON^(R) Smart Meters

WEST UNION, S.C., Aug 11, 2009 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Itron Inc. (NASDAQ:ITRI) has unveiled the state-of-the-art automation technology behind its plans to rev up production capacity of its OpenWay CENTRON smart meters at its Oconee Manufacturing Facility in West Union, S.C.

Said Malcolm Unsworth, Itron president and chief executive officer, "OpenWay has been specifically designed to offer robust data collection, customer empowerment and smart grid realization--it's part of our commitment to bringing to market the very best in smart metering technology. Our new automation system and enhanced manufacturing strategies further reflect this commitment."

The equipment was revealed at an open house held Wednesday in West Union. The event brought together representatives from electric, gas and water utilities throughout North America, as well as local elected officials and Itron partners. Itron executives including Unsworth, and Itron North America senior vice president and chief operating officer, Philip Mezey, were on hand to introduce attendees to the newly automated line.

An entirely new assembly operation methodology was required to make the next-generation robotic technology integration a success. Itron teams identified a new manufacturing production technique using the application of lean manufacturing principles that offer improvements in productivity, thereby strengthening the competitive position of the business.

The new automation will help ensure Itron can meet demand for its advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) system, OpenWay. Itron holds a leading position in contracted market share for smart grid AMI implementations in North America.

Itron is also expecting increased demand from smart grid initiatives outlined in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Advanced metering, or smart meters, is one of the key technologies required to enable several of the smart grid characteristics identified by a Department of Energy task force.

On Wednesday, Itron was also honored by Frost & Sullivan with its 2009 North American AMI Implementation Product Quality Leadership of the Year Award. The award recognizes Itron's best-in-class approach to smart metering and the smart grid. You can access more information about the award on itron.com by clicking [here](#). Wednesday's events also included a ribbon-cutting ceremony, facility tours and an interactive demonstration of the OpenWay system.

Itron's Oconee Manufacturing Facility is the third-largest employer in Oconee County with approximately 600 full- and part-time employees. Oconee houses the research and development, engineering, product marketing and production of several lines of electricity meters. The Oconee facility encompasses 317,000 square feet of manufacturing and office space. It's highly automated, flexible and scaleable to meet future needs.

About Itron:

Itron Inc. is a leading technology provider to the global energy and water industries. Our company is the world's leading provider of intelligent metering, data collection and utility software solutions, with nearly 8,000 utilities worldwide relying on our technology to optimize the delivery and use of energy and water. Our products include electricity, gas, water and heat meters, data collection and communication systems, including automated meter reading (AMR) and advanced metering infrastructure (AMI); meter data management and related software applications; as well as project management, installation, and consulting services. To know more, start here: www.itron.com.

Photos/Multimedia Gallery Available: <http://www.businesswire.com/cgi-bin/mmg.cgi?eid=6027412&lang=en>

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