Advanced Technology Development Center's Industry Connect program successfully pairs major companies with startups

_ATDC’s Industry Connect is a catalyst for startups and large corporations. Corporations come to ATDC to meet those startups that help solve their challenges._

ATLANTA, Ga. (PRWEB) September 18, 2017 -- Starting in October 2017, a handful of Hilton kitchens and restaurants will serve as test sites using an intelligent network of sensors designed to help improve the monitoring of different systems such as refrigeration temperatures and learning about potential equipment failures before they occur.

VeriSolutions, a startup in the Advanced Technology Development Center’s ATDC Signature portfolio, offers a cloud-based data management platform for temperature, humidity, and task monitoring in the food service industry.

Through the test, Virginia-based Hilton, whose 14 brands include Embassy Suites, Hilton Garden Inn, and Waldorf Astoria, will see how the technology boosts staff efficiency by minimizing the need for manual checks of temperatures and other factors such as spoilage. If the results bear out, the two-year-old VeriSolutions could end up in the hotelier’s technology pipeline.

“They have a very interesting product solution we believe will add value in our kitchens and restaurants,” said Kerel Fryar, Hilton’s Director of Creative Product Innovation. “An easy plug and play solution to measure temperature and humidity for property refrigeration/freezer systems is a compelling test for our team to explore.”

The two companies met through ATDC’s Industry Connect program. The Industry Connect initiative pairs corporations that have technology and innovation needs with startups in ATDC’s portfolio that can solve those challenges. An economic development initiative of Georgia Institute of Technology, ATDC is Georgia’s technology startup incubator and works with entrepreneurs across the state.

“These introductions have been invaluable to us as a young company,” said Michael Crocker, VeriSolutions’ founder and CEO. In addition to the Hilton project, Dover Corp.’s refrigeration and food equipment unit also is evaluating VeriSolutions’ platform. “The ATDC Industry Connect program has been an incredible resource in facilitating high quality introductions to potential partners and customers.
ATDC’s Industry Connect is a catalyst for startups and large corporations.

“While many large enterprises devote resources to in-house product development, they also realize that to truly be at the forefront of innovation they need to be working with universities and research-connected incubators such as ATDC,” said ATDC Corporate Development Manager Corbett Gilliam, who runs Industry Connect.

“At ATDC, we’re always looking to add programming designed to help the startups in our Signature and Accelerate portfolios scale and grow,” he said. “Industry Connect is a key and unique offering because we’re connecting startups with companies they might not otherwise meet and with which they can establish a business relationship.”

Corporations come to ATDC to meet those startups that help solve their challenges, he added, explaining
ATDC conducts about five Industry Connect meetings per month and is on track to have more than 60 in 2017.

“These meetings can lead to beta test projects and strategic partnerships and maybe even a paying customer, which makes a huge difference not only in the startups’ success, but that of the larger enterprise, Gilliam said.

Fryar agreed, saying working with a university-affiliated incubator is an advantage in bringing innovative solutions to a large global company.

“Partnering with ATDC is a great value for our product innovation team. Not only does it enable us to establish relationships with ATDC sponsored startups, it also helps us keep a pulse on what technologies are out there.”

Among the companies that have already participated or are scheduled to attend Industry Connect presentations are Microsoft, Google, Siemens, Johnson & Johnson, LexisNexis, 3M, and Macy’s, among others.

“They represent a breadth of industries and while their individual needs are different, they’re coming to ATDC because of our startups, our focus on innovation, and our connection and access to the resources and research capabilities at Georgia Tech,” Gilliam said.

That’s what attracted Illinois-based Dover Corp. to Industry Connect in the spring of 2017, said Ken Durand, the company’s director of Dover’s newly formed Tech Square Ideation Center. The company met with six companies and, in addition to VeriSolutions, is in discussions with two other ATDC companies — Foundry 45 and Carbice — concerning other potential projects.

“ATDC has so many value adds; it’s the students, the research going at Tech, the startup community, and the professors. ATDC allows me to connect with a lot of other corporate entities in this ecosystem, whether it’s Delta, Southern Co., or Emerson,” Durand said. “Having the ATDC as the glue at Tech Square, while having its arms around the scope of things that are going on in technology, allows me to find the things that are relevant to us more quickly. Finding that relevance quickly is critical in this age of disruption.”

ABOUT ATDC:

The Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC), a program of the Georgia Institute of Technology, is the state of Georgia’s technology startup incubator. Founded in 1980 by the Georgia General Assembly which funds it each year, ATDC’s mission is to work with entrepreneurs in Georgia to help them learn, launch, scale, and succeed in the creation of viable, disruptive technology companies. Since its founding, ATDC has grown to become one of the longest running and most successful university-affiliated incubators in the United States, with its graduate startup companies raising $3 billion in investment financing and generating more than $12 billion in revenue in the state of Georgia. To learn more, visit atdc.org.
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