There is — perhaps, was — the Internet of Things. Now, as we enter into the age of the Internet of Everything (IoE), it’s all about bringing connectivity and intelligence to everything, about making everything smart. The networking solutions and services provider Cisco has chosen Korea, a country this year ranked the most innovative in the world on the Bloomberg Innovation Index, as the place to do just that.

Opened last year in Songdo, Incheon, Cisco’s Global Center of Excellence (GCoE) aims to work closely with local partners to develop smart city solutions. It is an innovation center for research and development and founded on Korea’s well-developed information technology (IT) infrastructure as well as skilled IT experts.

“Korea is definitely a strategic partner country where Cisco can find many opportunities to collaborate in co-developing IT solutions in preparation for the upcoming IoE era,” said Kyung-Won Chong, President of Cisco Korea. “Cisco therefore looks forward to developing practical solutions that will play an important role in realizing the smart city vision in Songdo, and ultimately around the world, through this partnership.”

The GCoE is one of the California-based Cisco’s 10 innovation centers worldwide and located in the Incheon Free Economic Zone (IFEZ), where foreign-invested companies can receive a variety of incentives. Though the center is less than a year old, Cisco’s Korea connection stems back to 1994, when it opened Cisco Korea in Seoul.

Cisco has been collaborating with IFEZ to build the area into a high-tech, globally competitive and environmentally sustainable smart connected city — and supporting continued innovation in Korea — since 2009. Through the center, the company aims to develop Smart Connected Communities (S+CC) solutions to support connected real estate, the public sector and public services, to provide a state-of-the-art experience center for S+CC solutions, to collaborate with partners and more. Locating the GCoE in Songdo, a “smart city” built on reclaimed land, allows Cisco to localize and formalize large strategic agreements with key local partners.

One such agreement was forged even before the GCoE’s official opening. Cisco and the New Songdo International City Development LLC established in 2011 a joint venture called U. Life Solutions, which aims to build and operate the infrastructure for the best breed of smart city solutions within the Songdo International Business District. U. Life Solutions recently launched Masterbell, a smart home solution that provides education, counseling and healthcare services through an HD video system called TelePresence.

Also noteworthy is the center’s collaborations with Korean solution partners including N3N, a surveillance system developer, and NEXPA, an unmanned control system developer. Both have introduced the systems already being applied at IFEZ to promote citizen safety and convenience. N3N has also received Cisco’s support to do business overseas.

“We look forward to further positive developments in the future,” said Chong.

The IoE era is estimated to generate USD 19 trillion in value over the next decade, including USD 4.6 trillion in value within the public sector.

“The new wave of revolution, IoE, cannot be created or led by one company alone. But collaboration among various companies, industries and countries together will make this possible,” said Chong. “Cisco hopes to enjoy the benefits IoE will present together with its local partners in Korea.”

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- Cisco defines “Internet of Everything” as “bringing together people, process, data, and things to make networked connections more relevant and valuable than ever before, turning information into actions that create new capabilities, richer experiences, and unprecedented economic opportunity for businesses, individuals, and countries.”
- At the GCoE in Songdo, you can check out several of Cisco’s smart systems and solutions, including the Integrated Operations Center, which allows multiple agencies to work together via a single system and dashboard, the Smart Media System, which lets you do everything from ask questions to a virtual concierge to locate your car by entering your license plate number, and various “smart+connected” solutions.