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November 9, 2009

## Is GridPoint the Sugar Daddy of Smart Grid?

GridPoint's buying spree continues with ADMMicro, which manages commercial and industrial energy use. Is the startup buying its way into every smart grid market?

GridPoint – the well-funded startup that seems to be buying its way into every corner of the smart grid market – has just added commercial and industrial energy management to its portfolio.

GridPoint announced Monday that it has bought ADMMicro, a Roanoke, Va.-based provider of “total energy management” controls and sub-metering systems for customers including the U.S. Postal Service, DSW Shoes, Advance Auto Parts and other government and retail clients.

The two did not disclose financial details of the acquisition.

GridPoint, which has concentrated its efforts on serving utilities with software and services, said in Monday's press release that it would use ADMMicro's existing business in the commercial and industrial (C&I) sectors to open “new opportunities for utilities to engage enterprise customers in demand response and load reduction programs.”

GridPoint, which has raised about \$220 million in venture capital, has been on a buying spree over the past year or so, with acquisitions that seem to be aimed at every angle in the smart grid game. More smart grid acquisitions are expected from the likes of General Electric, Siemens, Oracle and Cisco Systems as well as the market consolidates and utilities seek to align themselves with select partners.

In June, it bought Lixar, an Ottawa-based developer of home energy management systems reportedly being tested by Canadian utilities and, in the United States, by Duke Energy (see [GridPoint Buys Home Energy Management Startup Lixar](#)).

And in September 2008, it bought V2Green, the Seattle-based maker of systems to manage the charging – and discharging – of electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles to help utilities manage peak loads (see [GridPoint Gets \\$120M, Buys V2Green](#)).

GridPoint pretty much laid out its acquisition strategy back then, after announcing its most recent, \$120 million investment round.

In fact, shifting business models is part of GridPoint's history. The Arlington, Va.-based startup was founded in 2003 as a maker of products to monitor electricity use, convert solar panel-produced direct current to grid-friendly alternating current and sell excess electricity back to the grid.

But it shifted to focus on software to help utilities manage the interplay of different smart grid systems, perhaps finding that the market for household renewable power generation management wasn't well developed enough, analysts have noted (see [Rooftop Solar, Batteries Included](#)).

GridPoint now has projects underway with utilities including Austin Energy, Duke Energy, Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) and with Xcel Energy's \$100 million SmartGridCity project Xcel Energy (see [GridPoint to Manage Wind Power Battery Storage](#) and [GridPoint Gets Into Solar Integration With SMUD, ComEd](#)).

It also has a marketing alliance to sell its software to smaller, publicly owned U.S. utilities through a subsidiary of the American Public Power Association (see [GridPoint Beefs Up Smart Grid Software, Lands New Marketing Deal](#)).

Many analysts have noted that GridPoint has yet to expand its utility contracts beyond pilot projects – though to be fair, utilities are only beginning to start to implement the kind of complex integration of smart meters, solar and wind power, energy storage, home area networks and plug-in vehicle management systems that GridPoint wants to manage.