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OpenGrid for Smart Cities Now Available on AWS Marketplace

Chicago, IL: Today, Uturn Data Solutions, a Chicago-based Amazon Web Services (AWS) Consulting Partner in the AWS Partner Network (APN), in partnership with Smart Chicago Collaborative, launched a new civic tech product in AWS Marketplace: OpenGrid for Smart Cities. Based on an open source project by the City of Chicago, Uturn has optimized and packaged OpenGrid as an Amazon Machine Image (AMI) making it easy for any city to adopt the platform for its own use and quickly deploy it on the AWS Cloud.

OpenGrid enables municipalities to offer residents, businesses, and communities a better way to explore and interact with publicly-available data about their city or region. It was originally developed for internal use by the City of Chicago as a way to gain situational awareness by viewing information from different city agencies on a single map. In 2016, Chicago released OpenGrid code to the open source community to encourage collaboration between the city and developers.

In January 2016, Uturn and Smart Chicago created opengrid.io, the first publicly-accessible version of OpenGrid with data from Chicago's Open Data Portal. "We wanted to create a new model for open data and civic technology that can be replicated in other cities and organizations," said Dan O'Neil, Executive Director at Smart Chicago Collaborative, a civic organization devoted to improving residents' lives in Chicago through technology. "Now, instead of forking code and paying developers for custom implementations, people can just complete a form and put existing software to work immediately." Funding for the development of opengrid.io was provided by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and through Smart Chicago's Developer Resources Program, with support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

"The code for OpenGrid is available online but adopting open-source solutions still requires in-house expertise and infrastructure to host the application," said Tom Schenk, Chief Data Officer for the City of Chicago. "The OpenGrid AMI enables any city to start using the platform with a click from AWS Marketplace so they can quickly deploy on a low-cost infrastructure. We hope to move the needle from producing open source software to thinking about how it can be easier to adopt and reuse."

Increasingly, governments, public institutions, and commercial organizations are looking for ways to be more agile as well as save money. "The AWS Marketplace 1-Click® deployment model gives both commercial and public sector customers the ability to use software running on the cloud, without having to make large capital acquisitions", said Adam Dillman, Founder and Managing Partner at Uturn Data Solutions. "Uturn Data Solutions will provide technical support including the latest updates and releases to OpenGrid customers as part of their paid subscription. Uturn also offers consulting services to help organizations get the most out of OpenGrid and further expand their data capabilities."

About Uturn Data Solutions

Uturn Data Solutions is a Chicago-based IT consultancy at the nexus of data strategy and cloud computing. They provide advisory and cloud based services to help organizations get the most from their data and technology investments. Founded in 2013, Uturn works with clients in several industries including healthcare, public sector, financial services and tech start-ups to develop and execute data driven initiatives. More information about Uturn can be found at uturndata.com.