Energy & digitalisation: twin transitions

In conversation with Matthias Rebellius, CEO Smart Infrastructure at Siemens

The digital and the green energy transitions are complex, demanding, and simultaneous. Yet Matthias Rebellius, CEO Smart Infrastructure at SIEMENS, is optimistic: the fact that they are both happening at once represents a unique opportunity to harness synergies.

Some find the idea of just one epochal challenge daunting enough. Now, companies are faced with two – the digital and energy transitions. Is it possible to succeed in them simultaneously?

It is impossible to succeed in one without the other. Today, buildings represent 40% of the world's energy consumption, yet less than 10% worldwide are energy efficient. We need smart buildings and smart grids to achieve the goals laid out for example in the EU's Fit for 55 program(1). What is more, energy has become, and will remain, a scarce commodity. The less we need, the better. The energy transition will not be possible without the digitalisation of our buildings and infrastructure.

> **There will be no building transition without digitalisation and no energy transition without the building transition. By 2040, most commercial buildings will be autonomous.**
>
> Matthias Rebellius, CEO Smart Infrastructure at Siemens

Are companies aware of this imperative – and of these synergies?

Yes, and they are becoming more demanding. They know that there is enormous potential in IoT, artificial intelligence, connected devices, and grid technologies, 5G networks and the Cloud. The synergies of all these technologies are opening up new possibilities.

Which is reflected in many of the projects on which Siemens and SPIE are working together: we have implemented our Smart FM 360° automated buildings reporting tool for Siemens Real Estate, for instance.

Together, our companies represent almost 300 years of innovative corporate history. In the 1880s, for instance, Siemens was involved in the first ever electric railway in Berlin; just a few decades later, SPIE was helping to electrify the Paris metro. Similarly, today, we're moving towards ecosystem solutions which will set benchmarks for the future.

What do you think the most important developments of the coming years will be?

I personally believe that, by 2040, most commercial buildings will be autonomous. They will know their users' preferences in terms of comfort and safety and will be able to cater to them while managing systems in a much more sustainable way. The effect will be immensely positive.