

Reliance Unlimit's IoT technology stack (chart)

STL Partners

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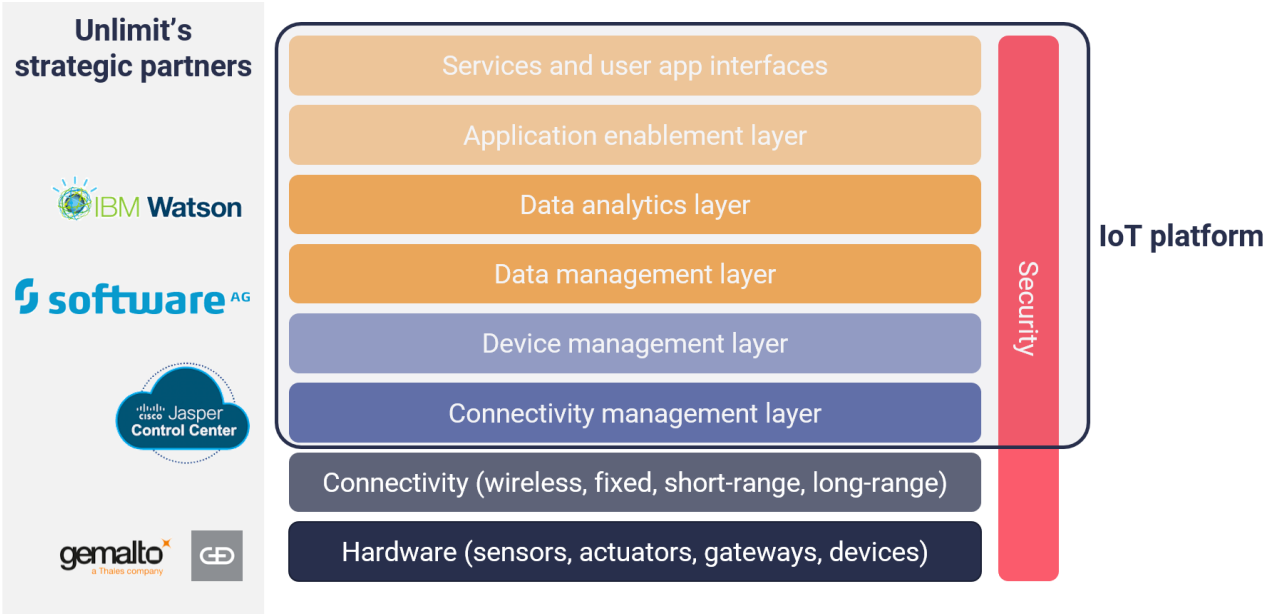

Source: STL Partners

Unlimit was established in 2016 as the branch of Reliance Group (including Jio) to capture the opportunities presented by the development of the Indian IoT market. At the time, the market seemed ready to adopt IoT solutions and various Indian government initiatives were stressing the importance of the IoT for Indian economies. In order to capture this rapidly materialising demand, Unlimit needed to enter the marketplace in the shortest possible time. To do this, it chose to compile a platform with strategic partners, rather than build its own technology, as many other telcos have attempted.

There are five levels on an IoT technology architecture:

1. **Hardware:** devices, IoT sensors, gateways and hardware development components such as microcontrollers.
2. **Communications:** this includes the different types of IoT connectivity (cellular, LP-WAN, fixed, satellite, short-range wireless and others) and the communication protocols used in those forms of connectivity.
3. **Middleware software backend:** this is a set of software layers that are traditionally called an IoT platform.
4. **IoT applications:** this includes application development enablement tools and the applications themselves.
5. **Security:** this runs vertically across all levels. Although this is simplified into a single vertical layer, in practice there are separate security features integrated into IoT solutions at each layer of the architecture. Those features work together to offer layer-to-layer and end-to-end security.

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To create its IoT architecture, for each of the key layers, Unlimit selected strategic partners that were able to offer an agnostic approach, with sound experience in its selected verticals, proven success in the marketplace, and technological features such as usability, scalability and openness. Unlimit was also uncompromising on selecting partners willing to engage in a revenue-sharing partnership model, in order to ensure it could bring a comprehensive solution to market without making a huge up-front investment. These strategic partners supply the tools for value creation – in the form of end-to-end IoT solutions and an environment for collaborative innovation.

See more IoT research:

- **Reliance Unlimit: How to build a successful IoT ecosystem**
- **A new role for telcos in smart cities**
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