

GE investing \$1B in Bay Area software hub

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(AP) -- General Electric Co., a maker of power plants, jet engines and medical imaging equipment, said Thursday that it is investing \$1 billion in a new software headquarters in the San Francisco Bay Area with plans to hire 400 software-related staffers to develop what it calls the "Industrial Internet."

The headquarters will be in San Ramon, about a half-hour drive east of Oakland, in leased space at the Bishop Ranch office complex.

The Fairfield, Conn.-based industrial giant is hoping to attract technology experts who live in the East Bay region of greater San Francisco, but prefer not to make the long commute to Silicon Valley, which is home to leading technology companies such as Google Inc., Apple Inc. and Intel Corp.

The company, which has 300,000 employees around the world, already has 5,000 software workers. The new center will focus on innovating software that runs increasingly intelligent machines and equipment.

"It's equipment being connected onto a network and the ability to gather that information, analyze it and act upon it," Bill Ruh, a GE vice president who is leading the initiative, said in an interview. "That's what we think of as the Industrial Internet."

GE has hired 50 workers already and plans to add another 350 over the next 18 months, Ruh said.

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