

# Ingeteam

ELECTRIFYING  
A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

# **Application of Container-Based Virtualization Technologies to Smart Grid Architectures**

A composite image showing a real-world electrical power transmission tower in the foreground and background against a night sky over a city. Overlaid on the image is a network graph with glowing cyan nodes and connecting lines, representing a smart grid. A red rectangular overlay on the right side contains the text "INGETEAM".

**INGETEAM**

## WHO WE ARE

**Ingeteam is an international technology company specialized in the conversion of electrical energy, with advanced technology in rotating electric machines, power electronics, automation and control.**

**We strive to meet the needs of our customers, to offer the best and most competitive products, systems and services.**

**Our staff is the key to our success.**

**We apply continuous improvement in operations, processes and organization, to remain agile and competitive.**

**Our aspiration is to be a benchmark in the generation and conversion of electrical energy in the target business sectors.**



## Main magnitudes



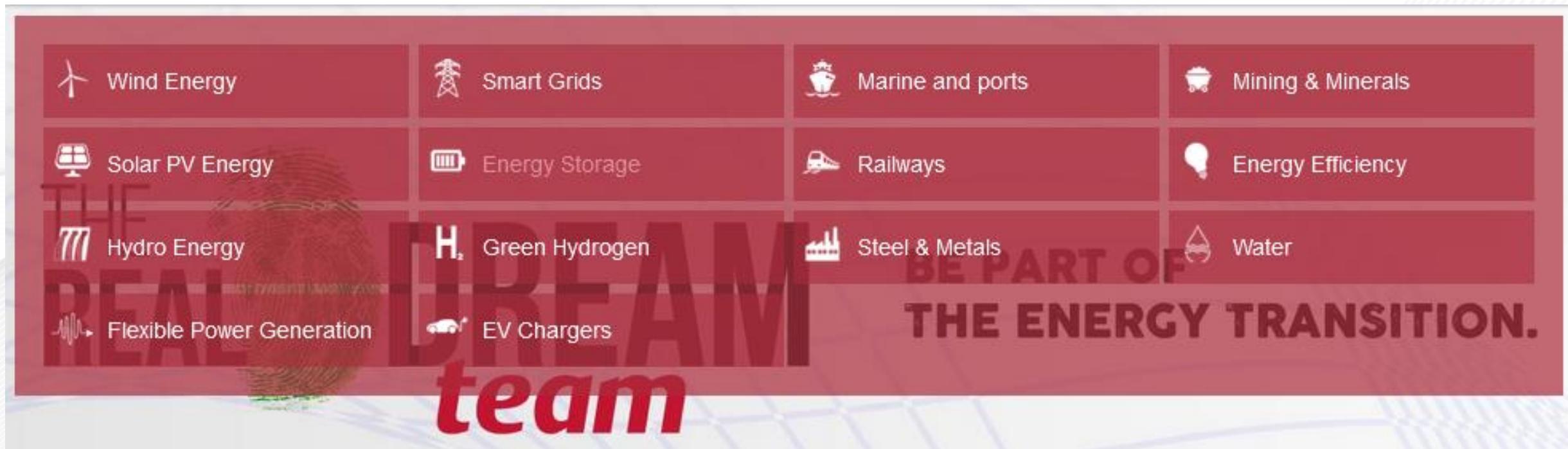
Present in  
**16**  
**countries**  
and new markets.

**+3,500**  
**employees**

In the world.

**5.5%**  
of the turnover,  
invested in R&D  
+500 engineers in  
R&D

**+80**  
**years**  
in the electrical  
sector.



# TRANSMISSION & DISTRIBUTION Sector

## Smart Grids



**+50 years**  
of experience



**+10,000**  
automated substations  
up to 500 kV



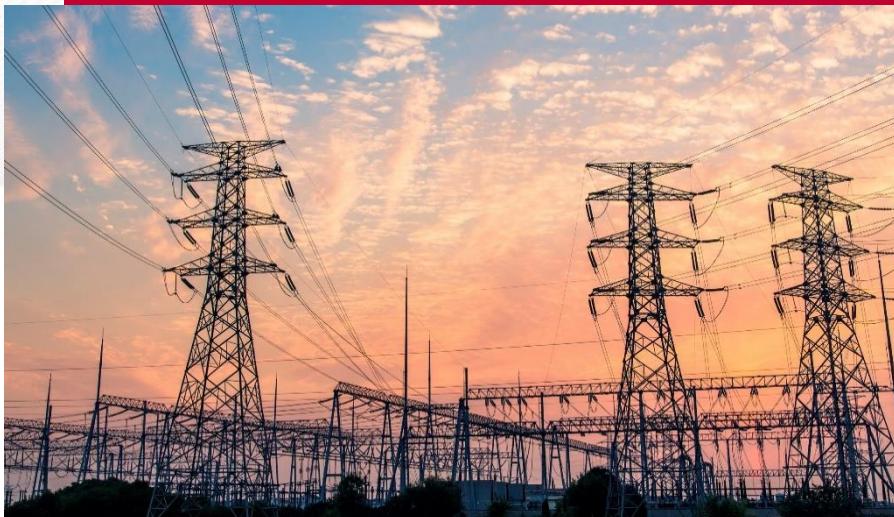
**+33 GW**  
of exported renewable  
power



**+130,000**  
Intelligent  
Electronic Devices  
installed



**+3 GWh**  
of storage (BESS)  
installed in distribution  
and generation  
substations



- > FACTS solutions power electronics-based (STATCOM, SSSC, SOP).
- > Synchronous Condensers SYNCON.
- > Storage Solutions (BESS) and hybrids (SYNCON + STATCOM+ BESS).
- > Substation automation, protection & control.
- > Grid distribution automation.
- > PC&M E-House modular buildings.

## Topics

**SMART GRID  
INTRO**

**VIRTUALIZATION  
TECHNOLOGIES**

**USE CASES AND  
PROJECTS**

**CHALLENGES**

# Smart Grid Technologies



**SMART GRID  
INTRO**

# What is Smart Grid?

A Smart Grid is an advanced electrical power system that integrates **digital** communication technology to manage electricity supply and demand in a **sustainable, reliable, and efficient** manner.

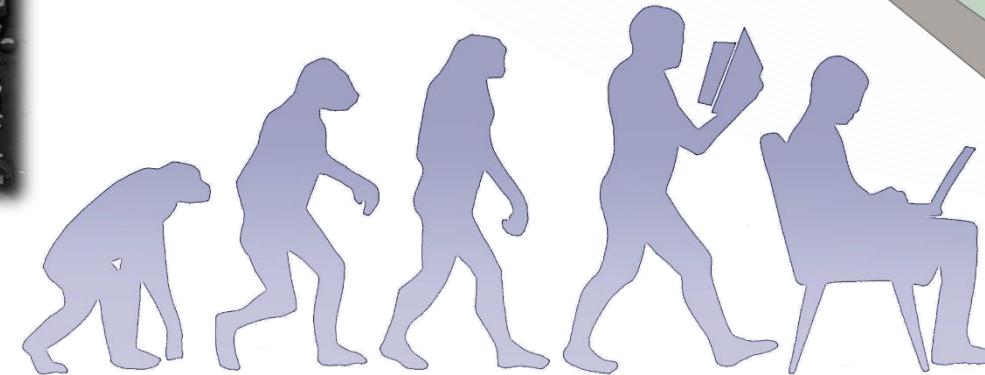


## Some characteristics...

- > **Communication (nearly among every device)**
- > **Real time monitoring and control of the Grid**
- > **Consumers can be both users or producers of energy**
- > **Dynamic pricing and demand response**
- > **Decarbonization**
- > **Energy efficiency**

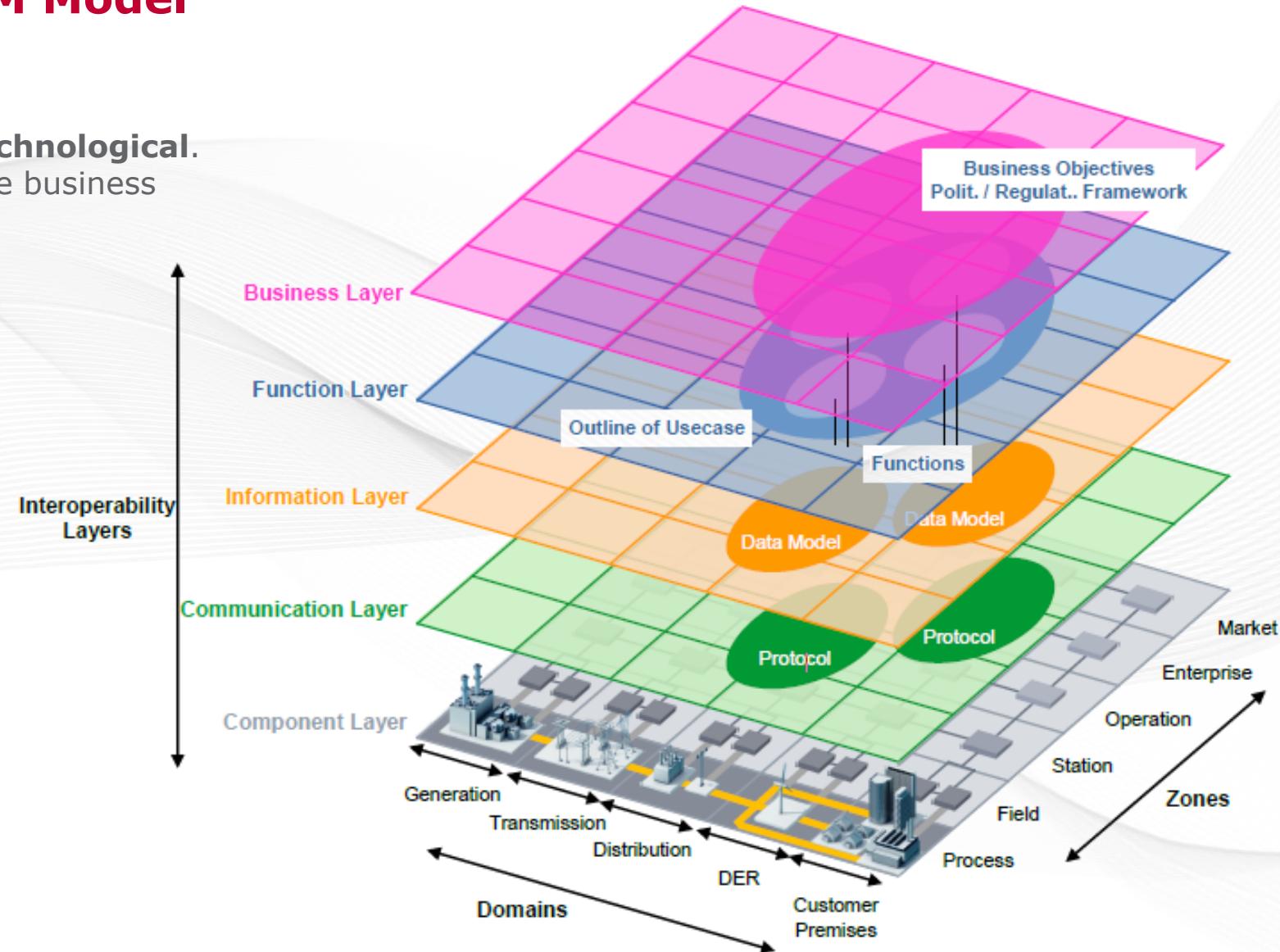
# Electrical Power Grid Evolution

The impact of digitalization on the evolution of the electrical power network is profound and multifaceted. Digital technologies are transforming energy systems to become more **connected, intelligent, efficient, reliable, and sustainable**.



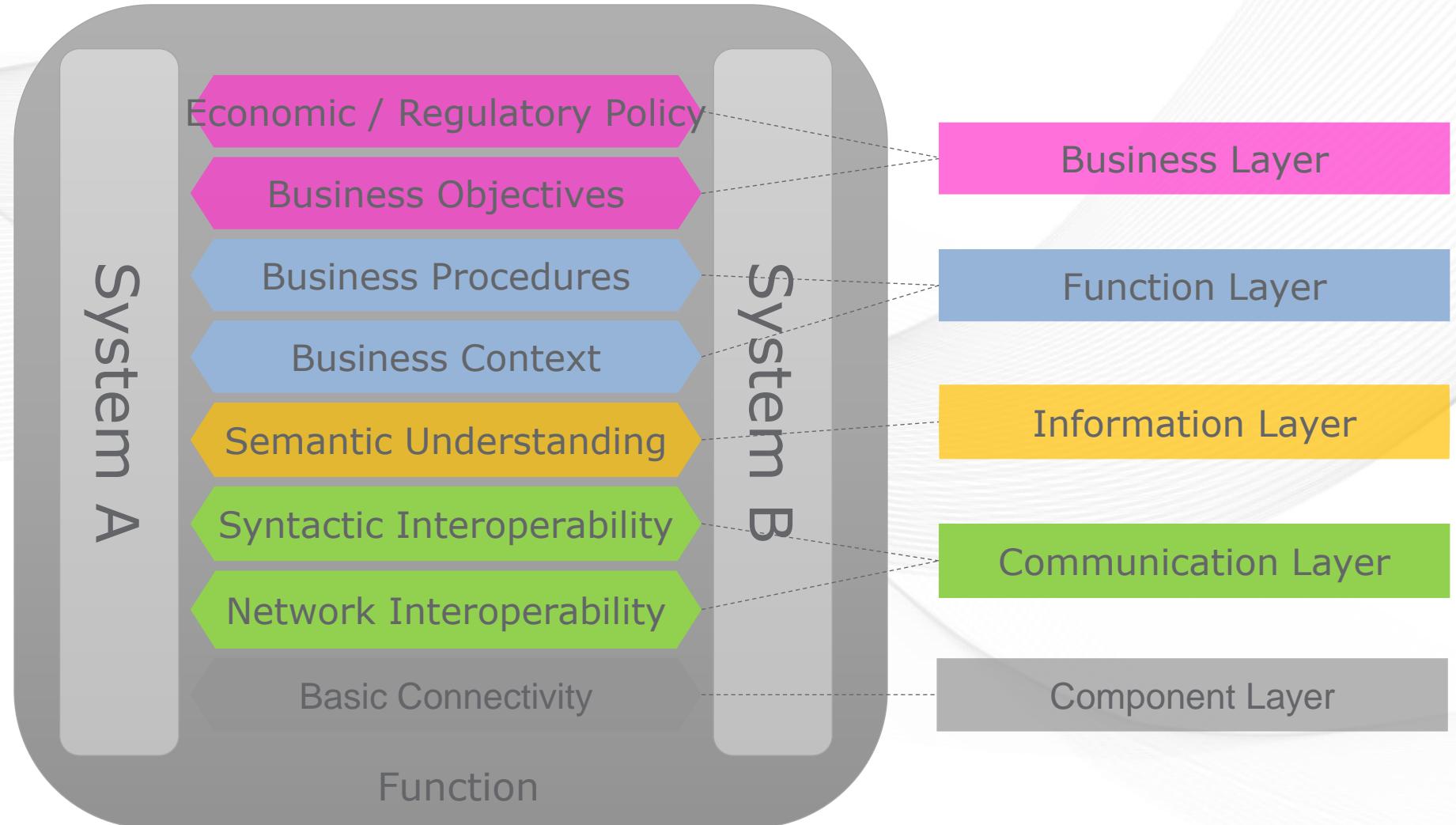
# Smart Grid: SGAM Model

The change is **not only technological**.  
It is a transformation of the business model as a whole.



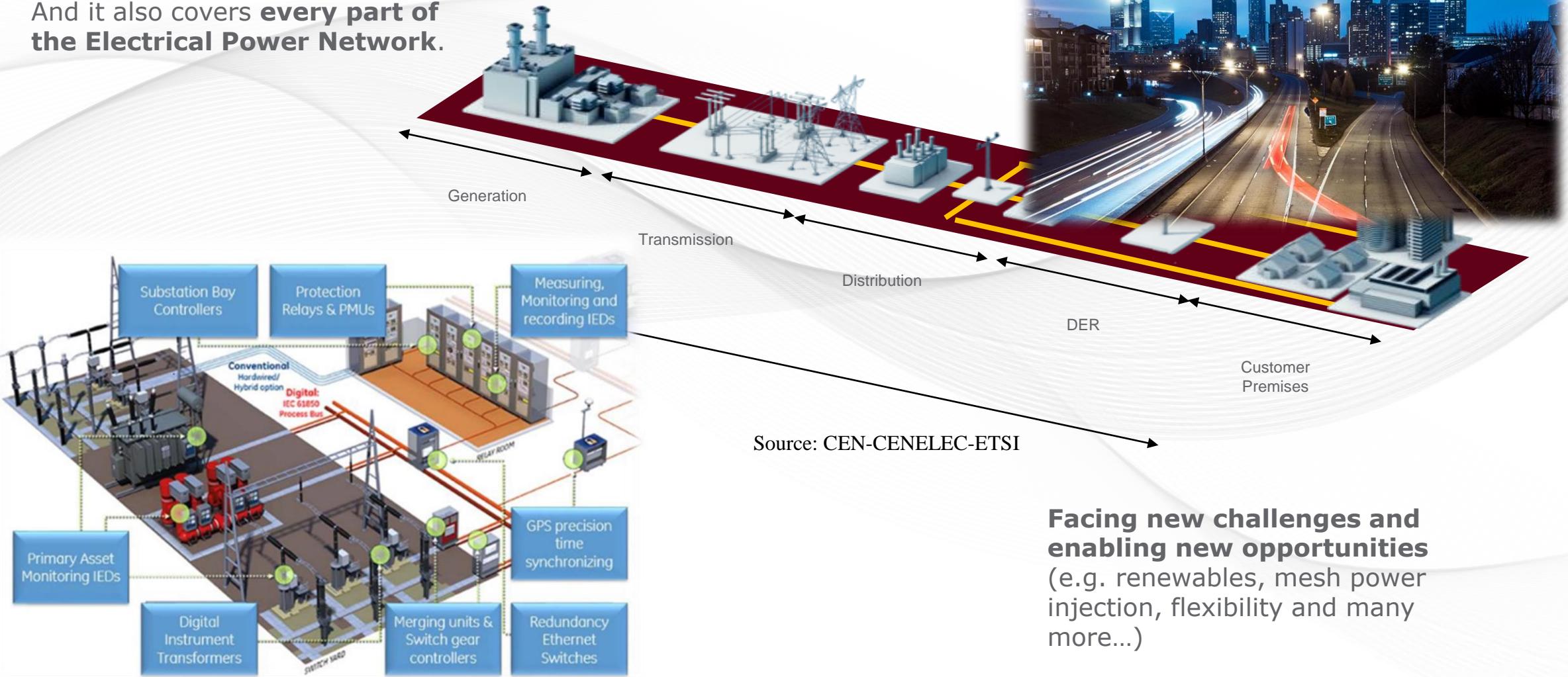
## Smart Grid: SGAM Model

It covers **every aspect** of the Smart Grid.



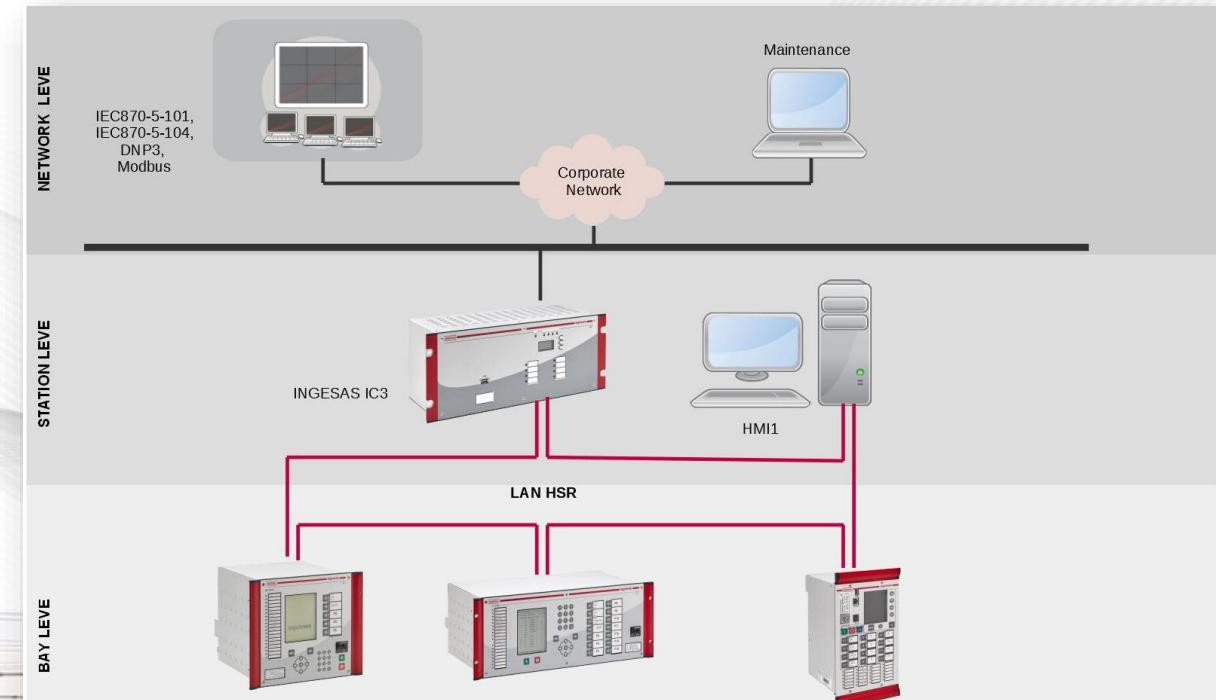
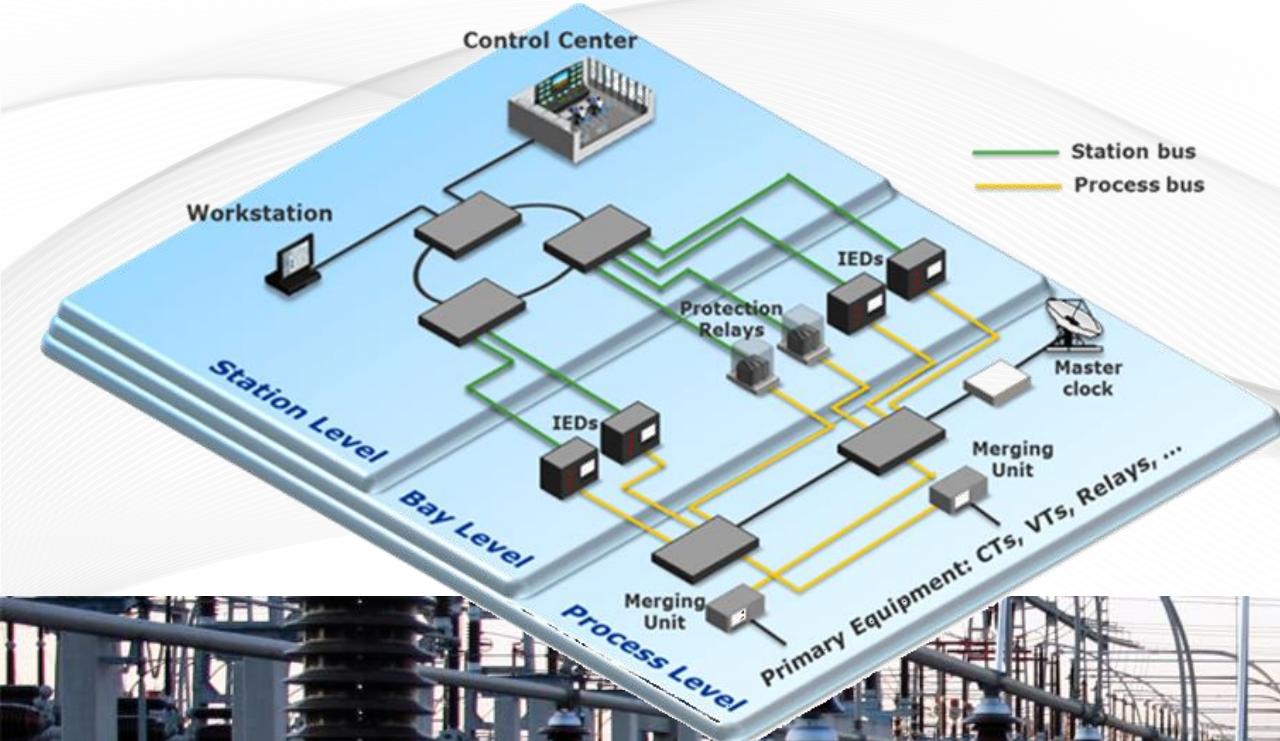
# Smart Grid

And it also covers **every part of the Electrical Power Network.**



# Smart Grid Scenarios

## Generation / Transmission Substation



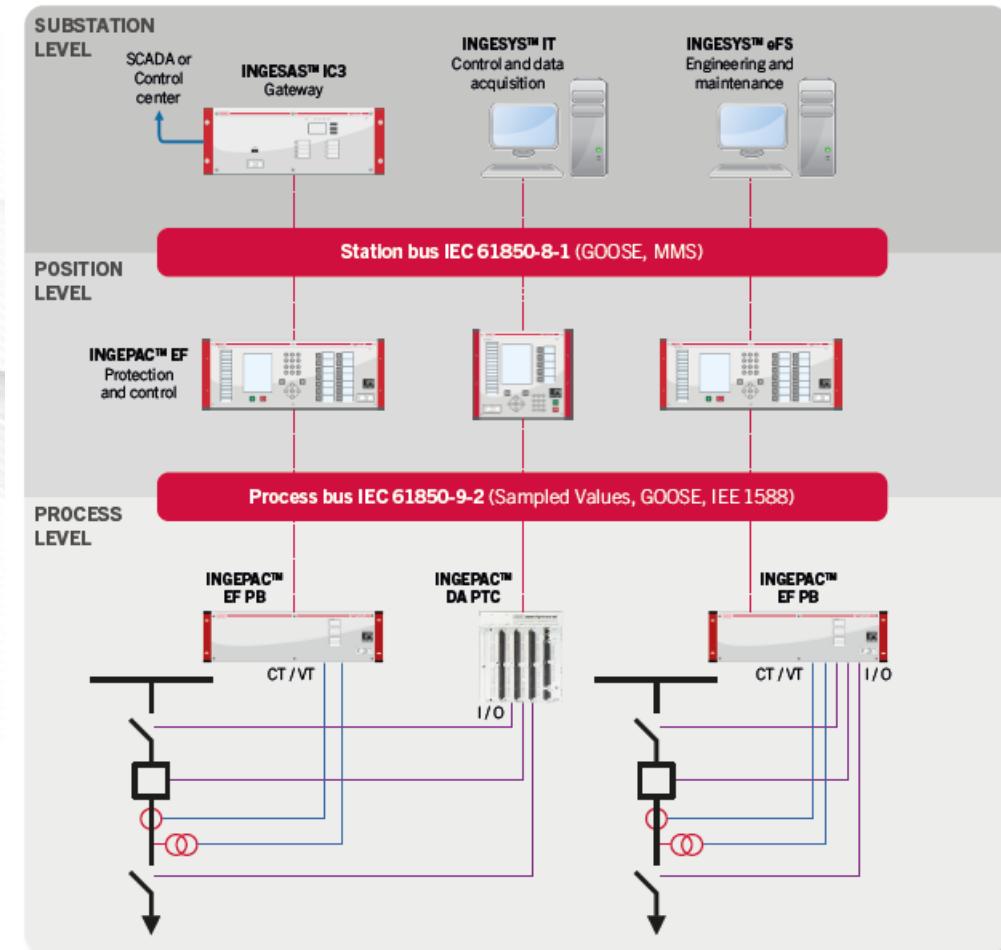
# Smart Grid Scenarios

## Generation / Transmission Substation Example

The **process bus** is a communications network that allows the connection between the protection, measurement and control IEDs INGEPACTM EF and the primary switchyard equipment.

Process bus installation helps to reduce copper wiring, simplifies the engineering and maintenance of Substations and improve safety

- Acquisition of sampled values as per IEC 61869-9 (Non Conventional Transformers) or IEC61850-9-2 (merging Units) standards.
- Reception and transmisión of GOOSE messages as per EC 61850-8-1 standard.
- IEEE1588v2 synchronisation



# Smart Grid Scenarios

## MV Distribution Example

SUBSTATION 1



IEC 61850  
(fiber optic)

RMU Monitoring

Web Server

Measurement

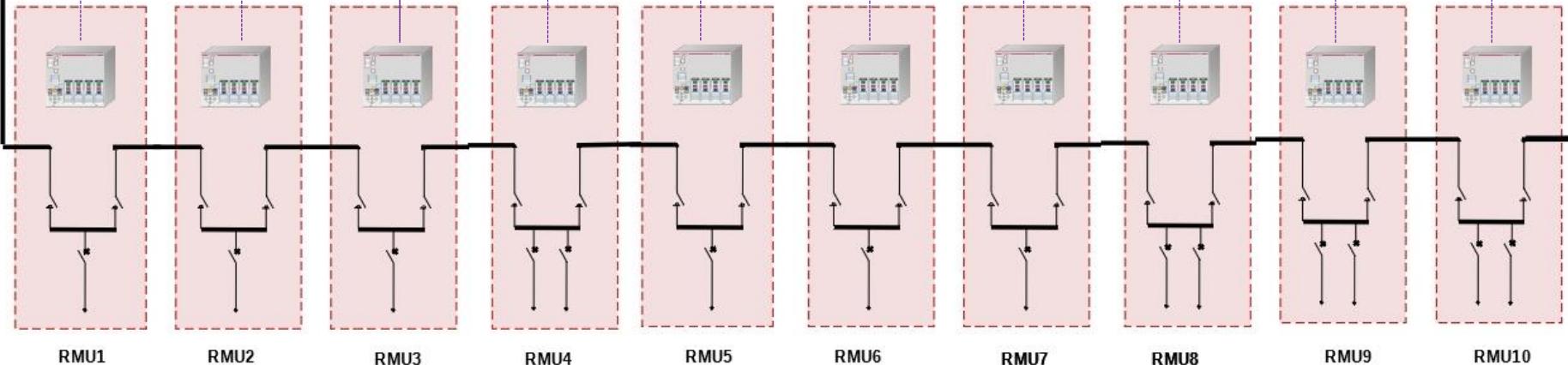
Protection functions

Maintenance information

Automation

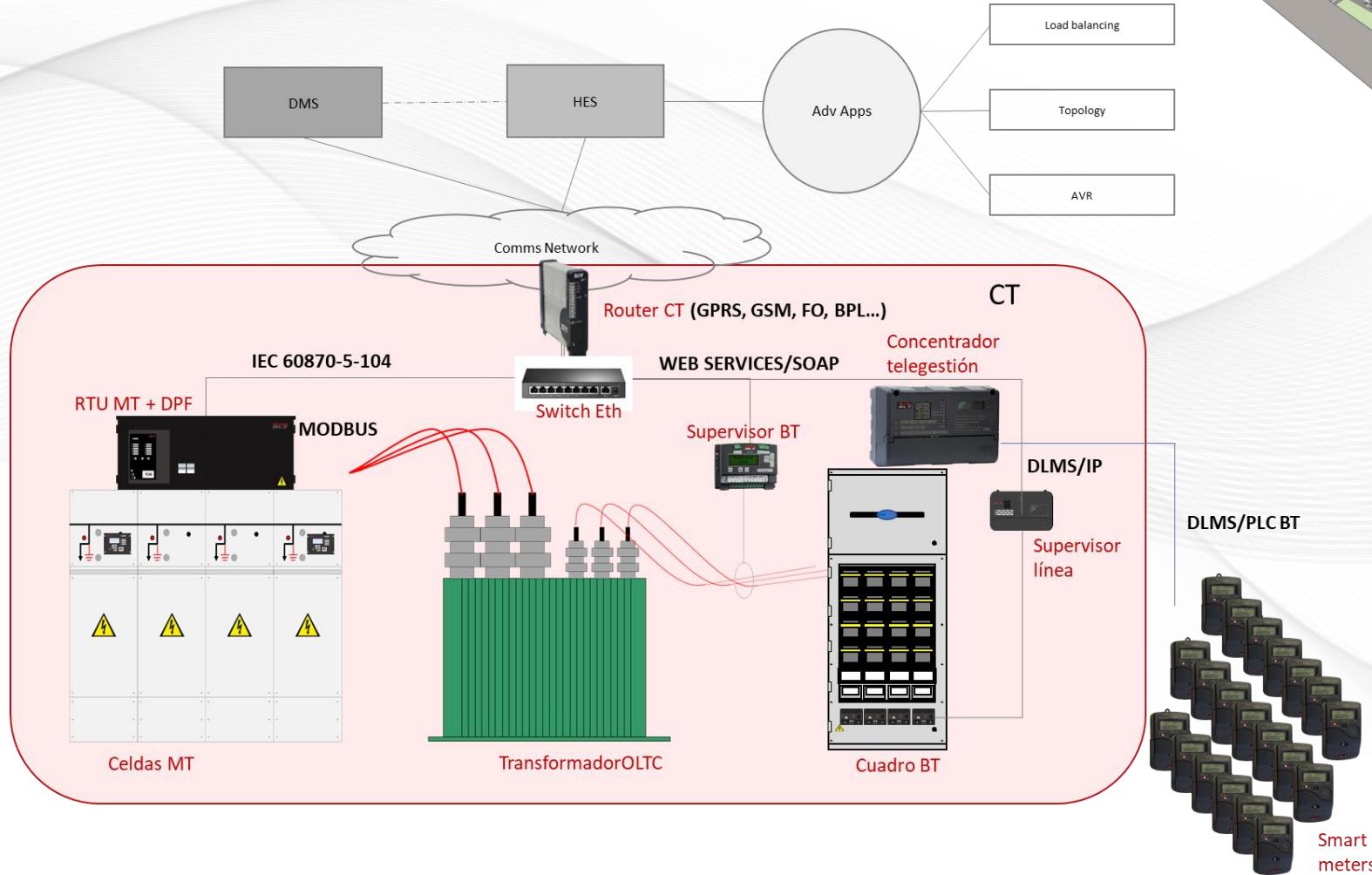
Remote Communications

SUBSTATION 2



# Smart Grid Scenarios

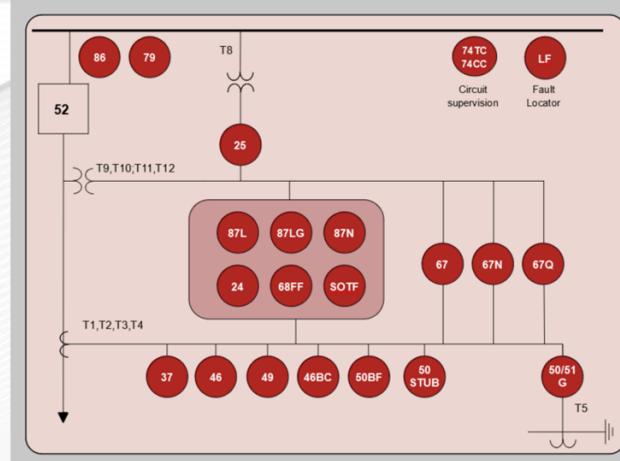
## LV Network Example



# Smart Grid Devices (IED)

## IED Example

### INGEPAC™ EF LD0 Functions



- ✓ T1: Phase A Current
- ✓ T2: Phase B Current
- ✓ T3: Phase C Current
- ✓ T4: Neutral Current
- ✓ T5: I polarization current
- ✓ T8: Synchronism voltage
- ✓ T9: Neutral Voltage
- ✓ T10: Phase A voltage
- ✓ T11: Phase B voltage
- ✓ T12: Phase C voltage

## Cybersecurity



### Differential functions

87: Line differential protection (Instantaneous and percentage)  
Second harmonic restraint and blocking (Cross blocking)  
87LG: Ground differential protection  
87N: Restricted earth  
24 Overexcitation V/f  
50° harmonic level Overexcitation  
Directional supervision  
Saturation detector  
Load compensation  
86 function

### Protection functions

SOTF Switch onto fault  
Undervoltage  
3x50/51 (67)  
50N/51N (67N)  
50G/51G. Earthing overcurrent  
46TOC (67Q), 46IOC(67Q)  
46BC Broken conductor  
50CSC 2<sup>o</sup> harmonic restraint  
50CSC Second and fifth harmonic restraint  
37 Undercurrent  
49 Thermal image  
49T Overtemperature RTD

### Supervision units

68FF Fuse failure

### Fault locator

### Breaker Supervision

k12 breaker monitoring per pole  
74TC/CC Closing and trip circuit monitoring

Excessive number of trips  
Open pole/Dead line detector  
Breaker status logic  
Saturation detector  
Pole discordance

### Breaker Failure (50BF)

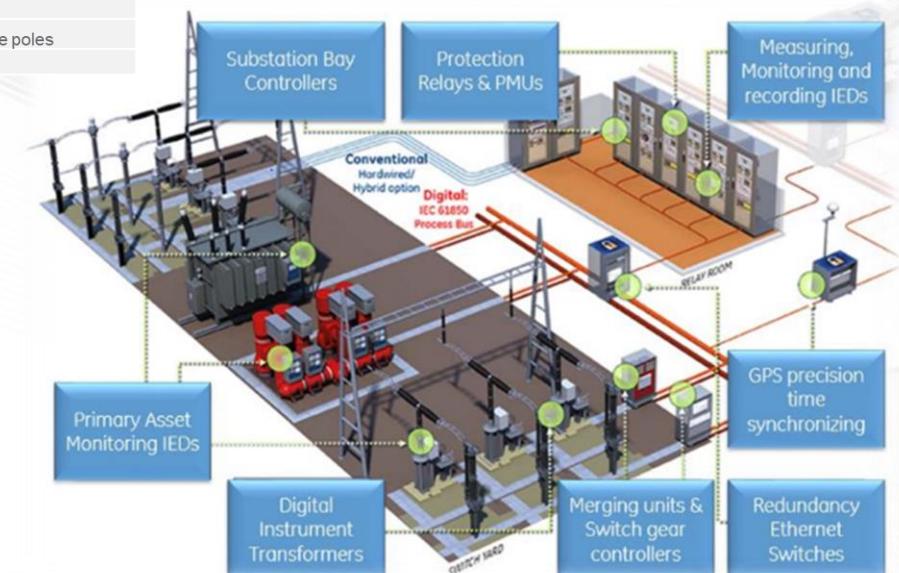
Breaker failure with monopolar/tripolar trip  
Breaker failure with low load

### Automatisms

Synchronism  
Recloser one/three poles  
Coupling

## Protocols and Redundancy

- IEC 61850 Edition 2
- DNP 3 (serial or TCP-IP)
- IEC 60870-5-104 (TCP-IP)
- IEC 60870-5-103 (serial)
- PROCOME (serial and TCP-IP)
- Modbus server (serial and TCP-IP)
- Modbus RTU. Master
- SNMP
- IEEE 1588 v2 (PTP)
- SNTP
- Parallel Redundancy Protocol (PRP)
- High-Availability Seamless Redundancy (HSR)
- D-link redundancy
- Switch mode



# Virtualization Technology



VIRTUALIZATION  
TECHNOLOGIES

# What is Virtualization

## First Approach



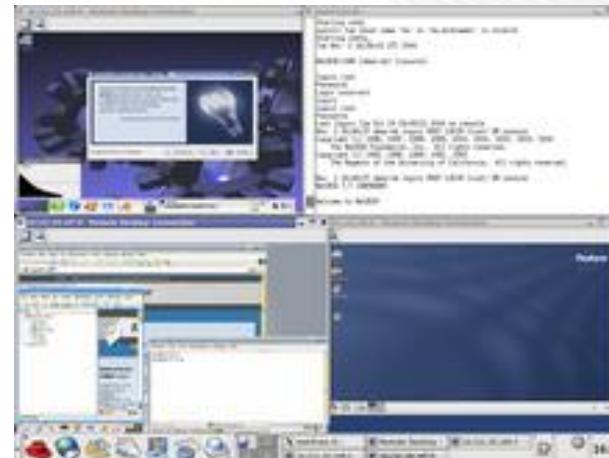
**Virtualization** is technology that you can use to **create virtual representations** of servers, storage, networks, and other physical machines.



Virtual software **mimics the functions of physical hardware** to run **multiple virtual machines simultaneously** on a single physical machine.



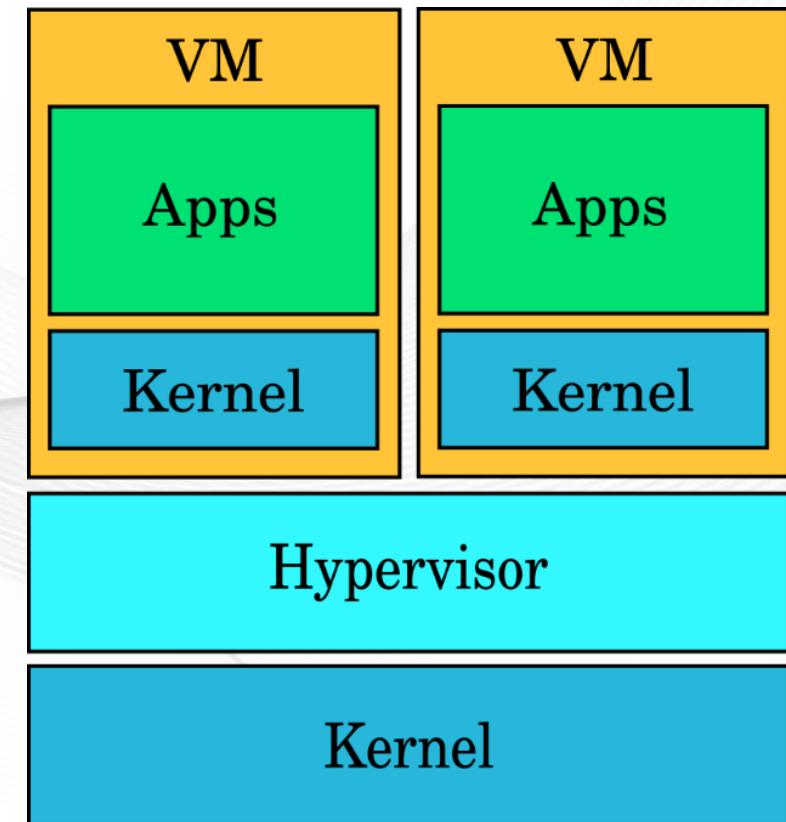
The benefits of virtualization include greater **efficiency, scalability, flexibility**, among others.



# Virtualization

## Types of Virtualization Techniques

- Type 0 (FW)
- Type 1 – Native Hypervisor:
  - VMWare ESXi, Proxmox VE.
- Type 2 – Hosted Hypervisor:
  - VirtualBox, VMware Workstation and Fusion, Parallels Desktop.



# Virtualization

## Other 'Virtualization' Techniques

**Paravirtualization** - Technique in which the guest operating system is modified to work in cooperation with the VMM to optimize performance (e.g. Xen).

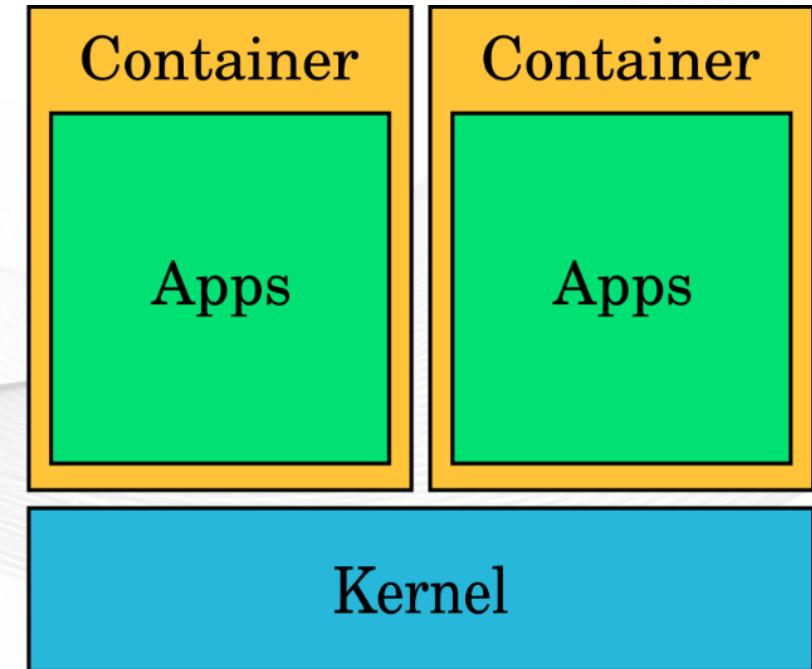
**Programming-environment virtualization** (e.g. Oracle Java and Microsoft.Net)

**Emulators** (e.g. QEMU)

**Application containment** - Not virtualization at all but rather provides virtualization-like features by segregating applications from the operating system, making them more secure and manageable.

Encapsulation / Packaging examples:

- Docker, Podman, LXD.



# Virtualization

## Some Benefits

**Isolation:** Host system protected from VMs, VMs protected from each other. Interaction provided through shared resources (via shared file system volume, network communication)--> architecture design.

**Flexible management:** Freeze, suspend, running VM. Snapshot of a given state. Clone by creating copy and running both original and copy (backup and recovery operations). Allows to run multiple, different OSes on a single machine.

**Useful for DevOps:** Improving system development efficiency. Consolidation, app dev, testing, deployment advantages.

**Replication and Templating:** Easy to write a template to create multiple instances for deployment.

**Incident response / backup and recovery:** It is possible to move a running VM from one host to another (with no interruption of user access).

**Easy integration in cloud** computing environments. Using APIs, programs tell cloud infrastructure (servers, networking, storage) to create new guests, VMs, virtual desktops.

# Virtualization

## What technology is the best?

Every one of them has its advantages/disadvantages. Some of them are shown below:

- Type 0 / Type 1:
  - Allow close to physical partitioning of the HW.
  - They usually need some features from the host OS.
  - ...
- Type 2:
  - The guest OS runs as a process: it cannot take advantages of some HW features (not so good in performance).
  - It doesn't require changes to the host OS (easy to maintain).
  - ...
- Containment:
  - Achieve some goals of virtualization, such as segregation of apps, performance and resource management, easy start, stop, move, management.
  - Allows a more dynamic usage of the existent resources.
  - Less predictive.
  - ...

# Virtualization in Smart Grid



**USE CASES AND  
PROJECTS**

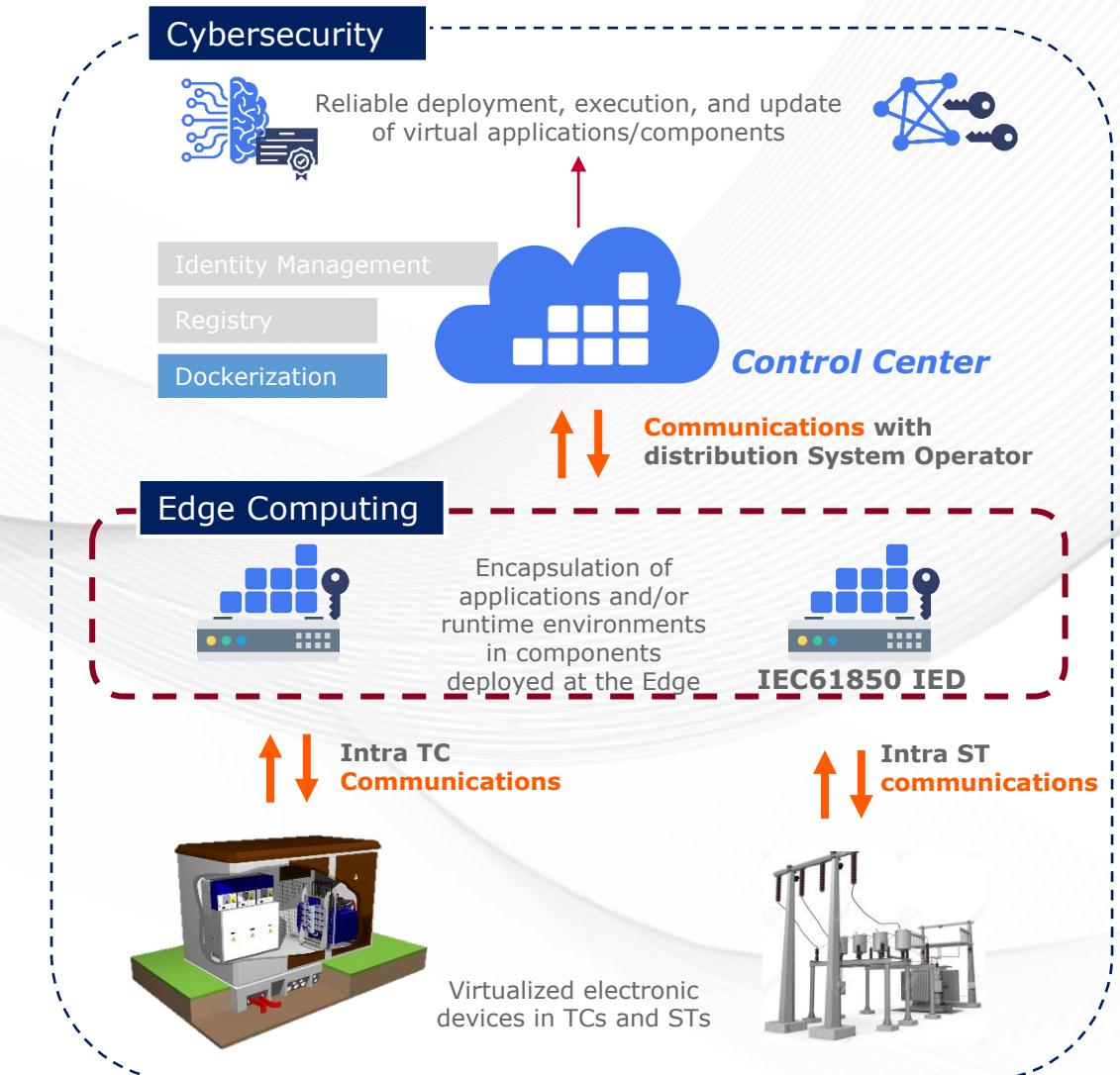
# VIRTGRID Virtualization Project



Project funded by the Department of Economic Development, Sustainability and Environment of the Basque Government (ELKARTEK 2022 Programme).



## DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR VIRTUALIZATION AND INTEROPERABILITY OF FUNCTIONS IN SMART GRIDS



## Virtualization in Smart Grid

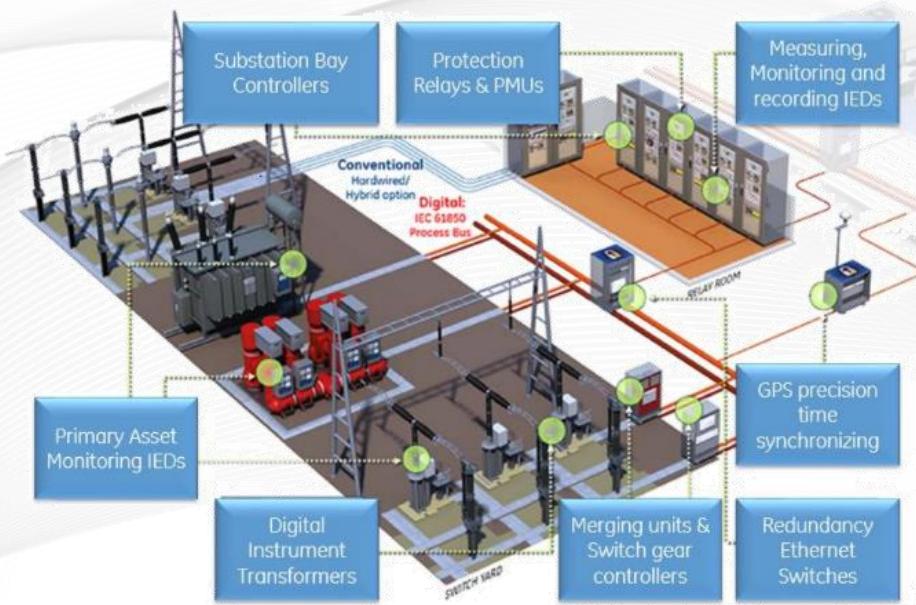
There is not 'one size fits all' solution...



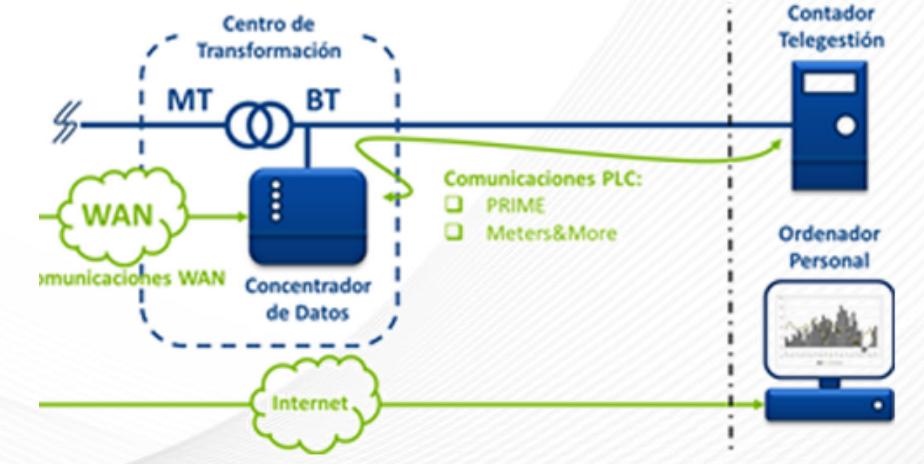
- Network Location
- Functionality
- Criticality
- TSO/DSO policies
- ...

# Virtualization in Smart Grid

## Different scenarios: ST/TC/LV



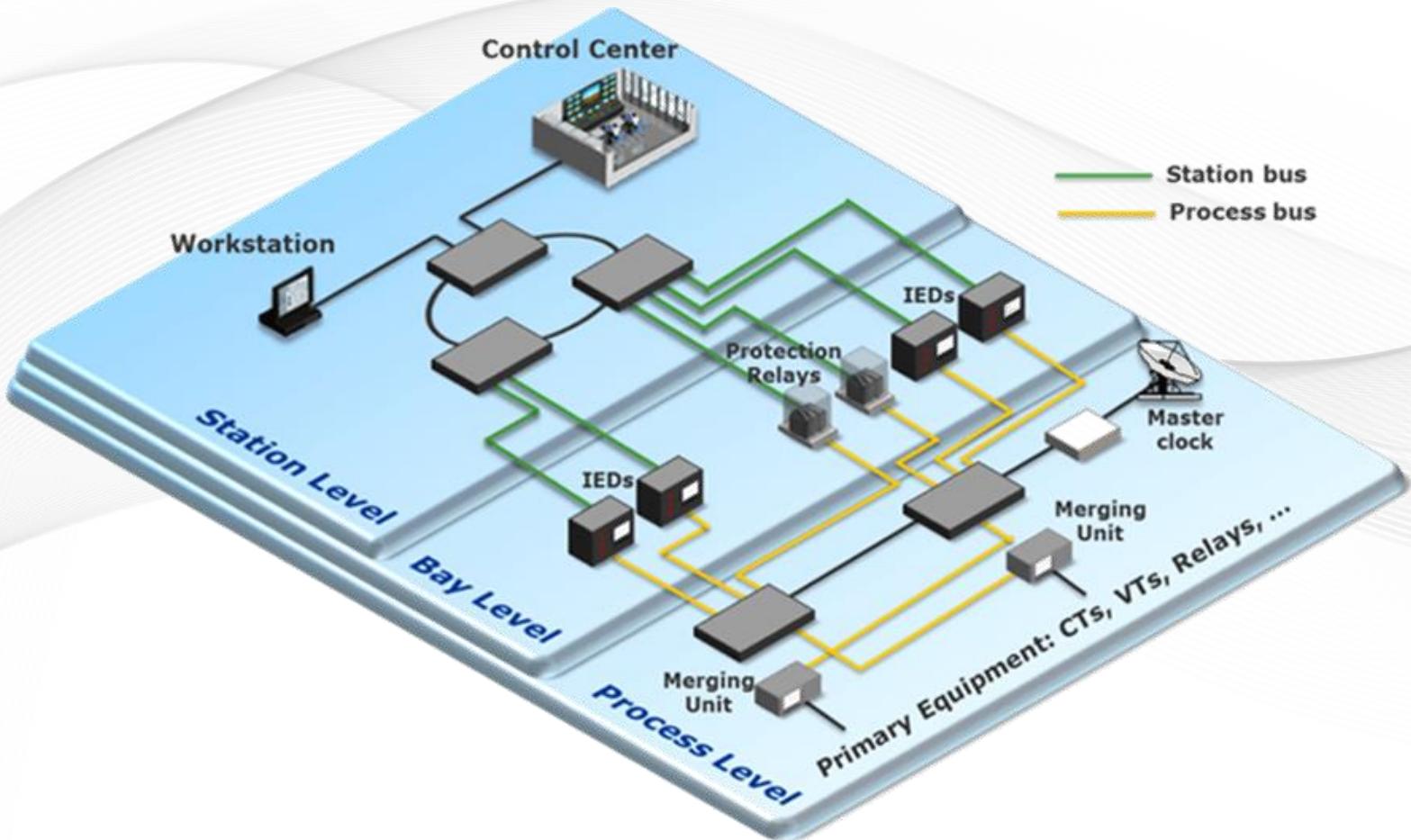
Source: Centro de transformación Inteligente (FutuRed 2020)



<https://www.smartgridsinfo.es/comunicaciones/comunicacion-actualidad-uso-informacion-contador-telegestion>

# Virtualization in Smart Grid

There is not 'one size fits all' solution... let's focus on Substations



Possible solutions:



SCADA System: **Type 2 Hypervisor** (VirtualBox, VMWare) or **Docker**



Real Time P&C Devices → **Type 1/2 Hypervisor + Docker**



Test environment → **QEMU**.

# Virtualization in Smart Grid

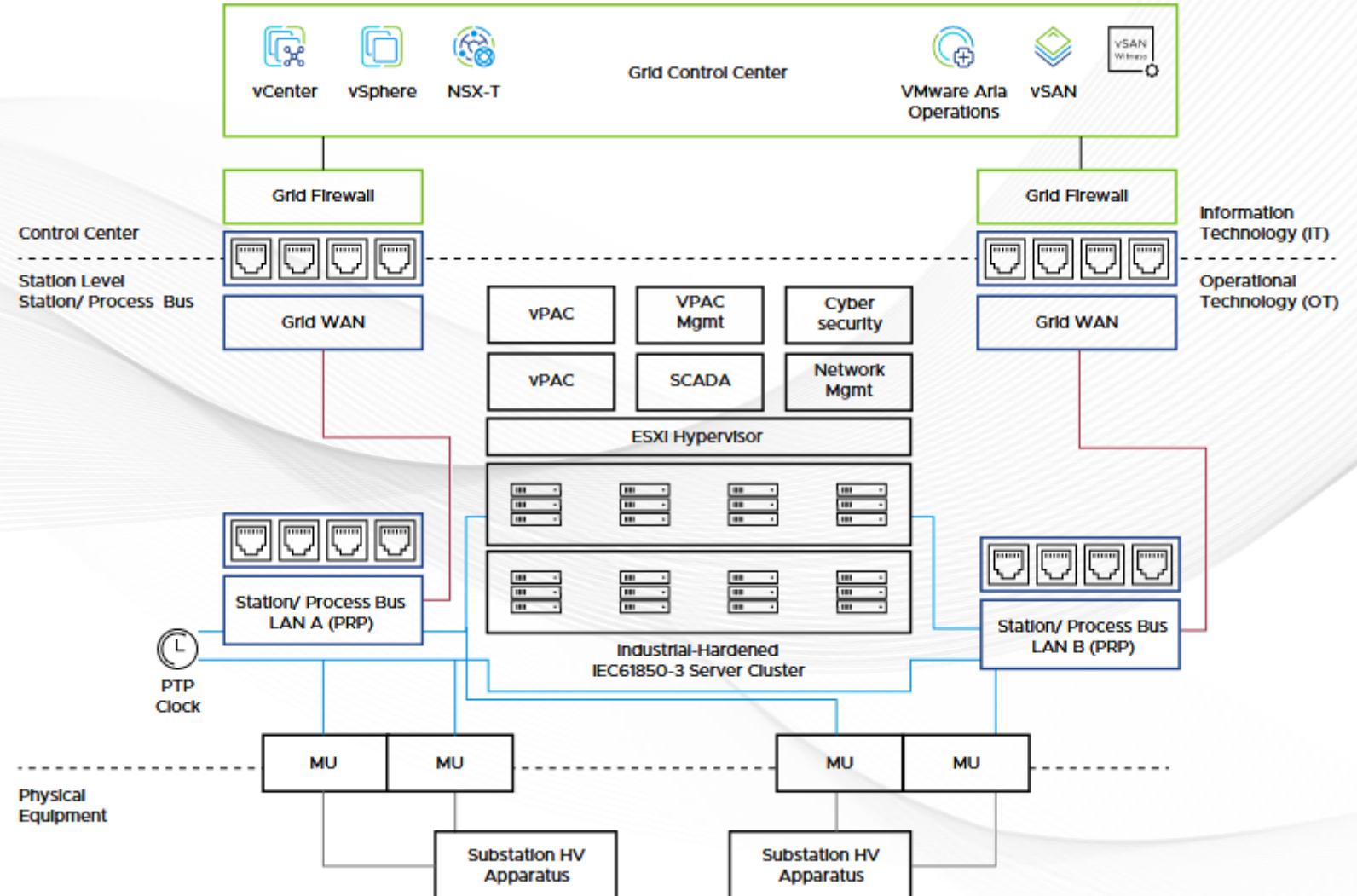
**VPAC Alliance**



<https://vpacalliance.com/>



**Shared Process/Station Bus Architecture example**

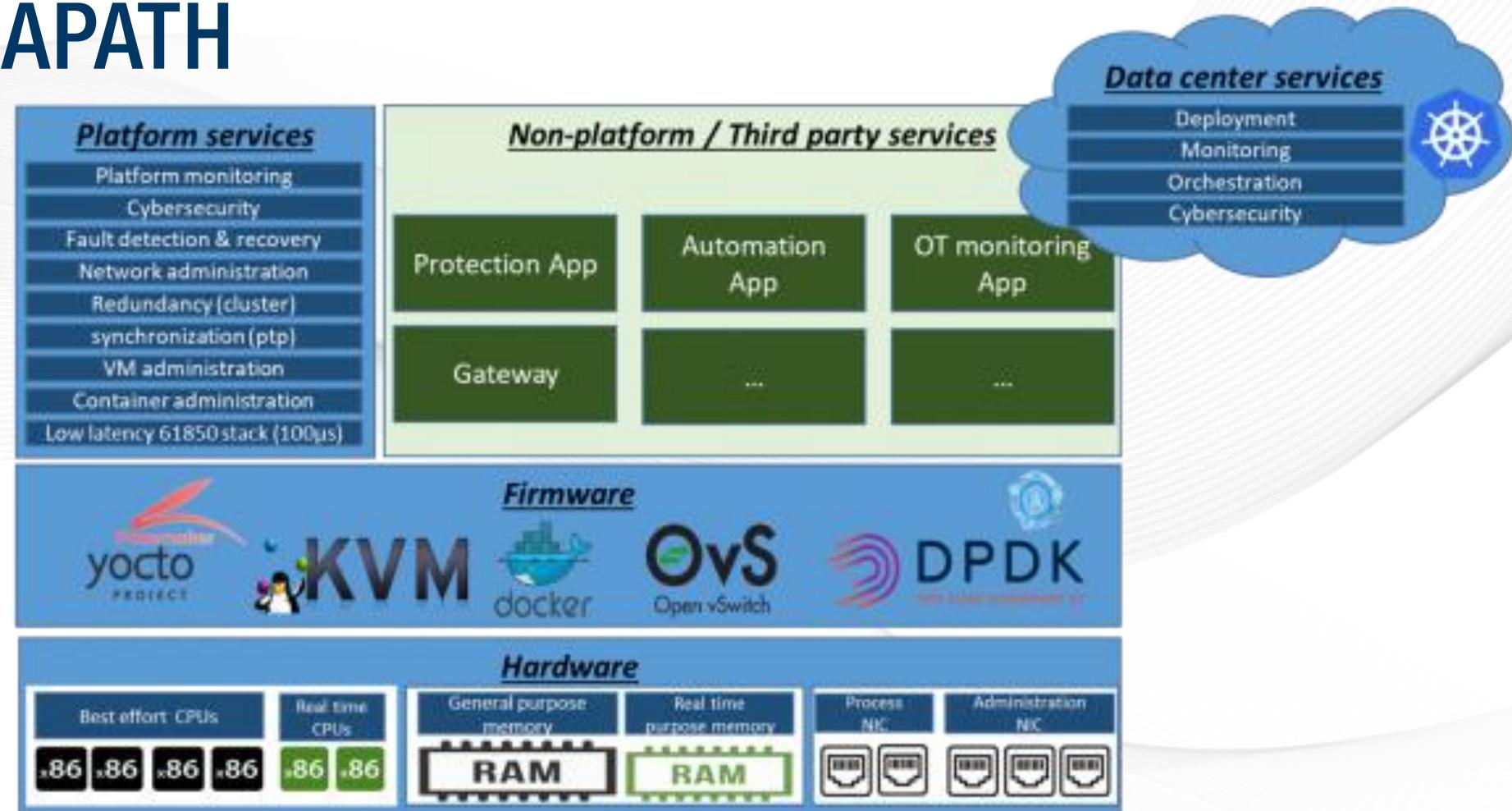


# Virtualization in Smart Grid

SEAPATH



TSOs and DSOs require a **new generation of Digital Substation Automation Systems** (DSAS) that could provide more complex, dynamic, and **adaptive** automation functions at grid nodes and edge, as well as **enhanced orchestration from central systems**, in both **flexible** and **scalable** manner. Virtualization is seen as a key innovation in order to fulfill these needs.



## Virtualization in Smart Grid

There is not 'one size fits all' solution... let's focus on Transformation Centres



RTU



Ethernet Switch

IED

IED

IED



Possible solutions:



RTU: Docker



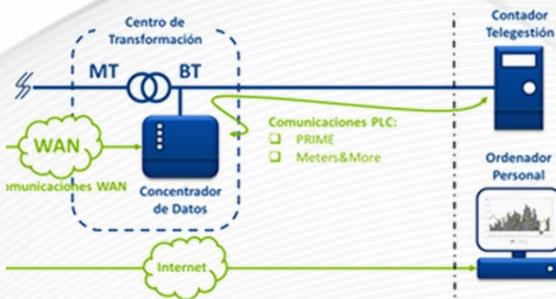
Real Time P&C Devices → **Type 1/2 Hypervisors or Docker**



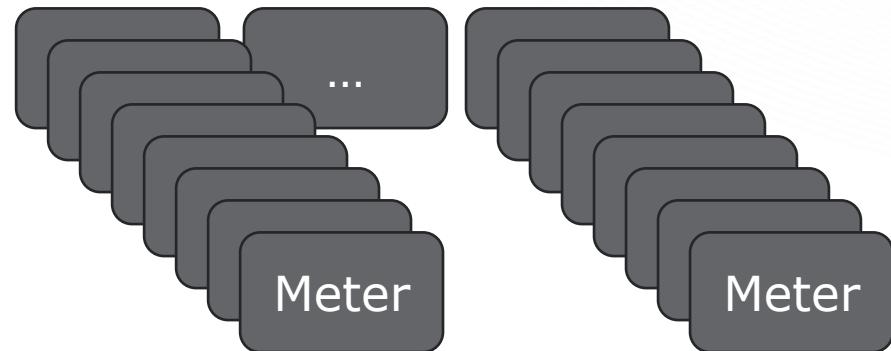
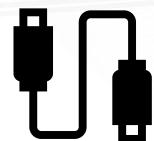
Cloud enabled solution.

# Virtualization in Smart Grid

There is not 'one size fits all' solution... let's focus on Low Voltage Network



Concentrator



Meter



Possible solutions:



Concentrator: Docker



Meter: No virtualization



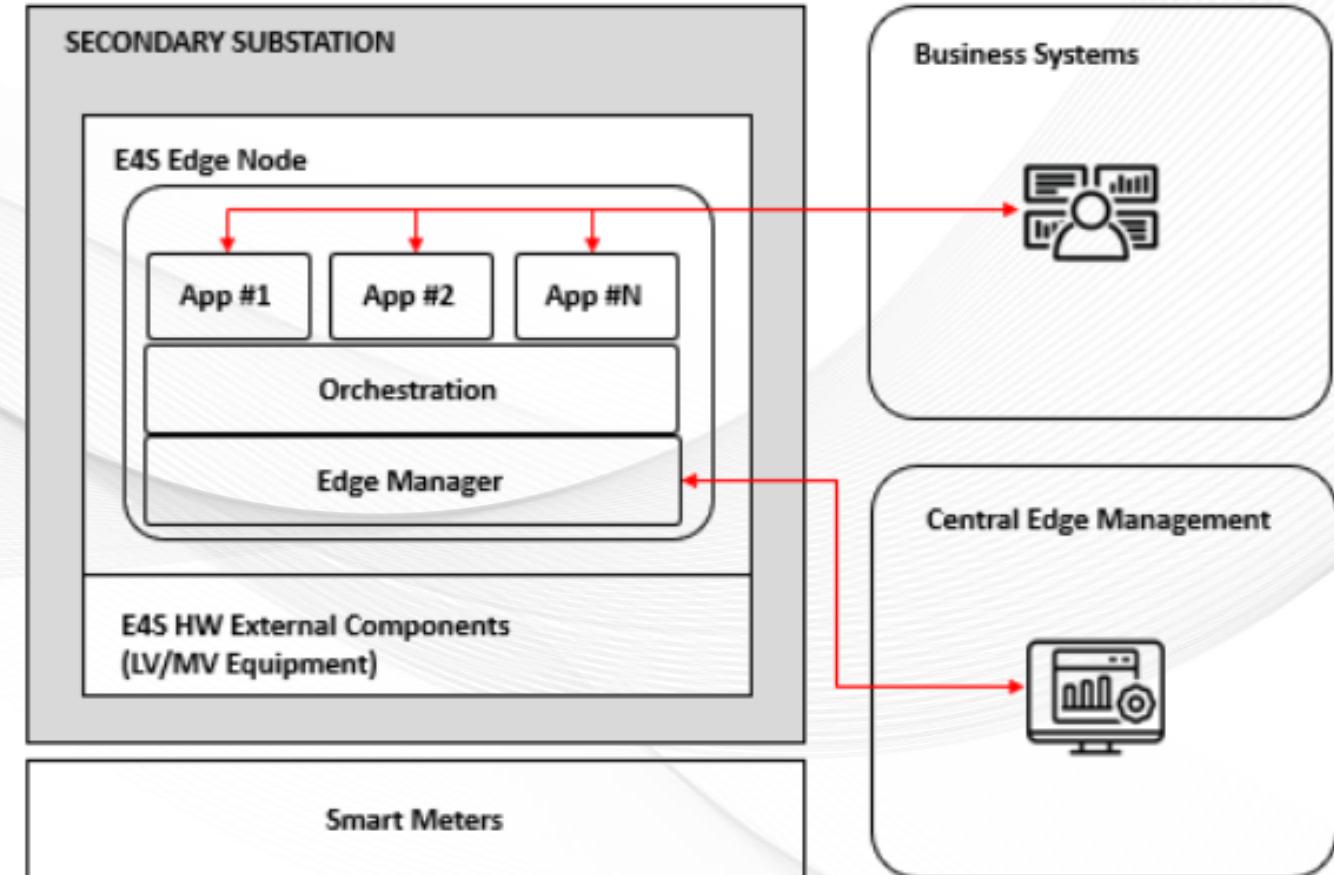
Cloud enabled solution

# Virtualization in Smart Grid

## E4S Alliance



**Adaptive “smart” grid control** is crucial to enable operators to manage demand for power and reliability across the board. To deliver electricity **reliably**, we need to build the **next-generation smart grid**. The industry has created the Edge for Smart Secondary Substations (E4S) Alliance accelerates the **creation of standards-based flexible, manageable, and interoperable platforms**



<https://www.e4salliance.com/data/files/wipe4s-specificationv1.2-summary-v3-vcedit121622.pdf>

# **Application of Container-Based Virtualization Technologies to Smart Grid Architectures**



**CHALLENGES**

# Virtualization in Smart Grid Challenges

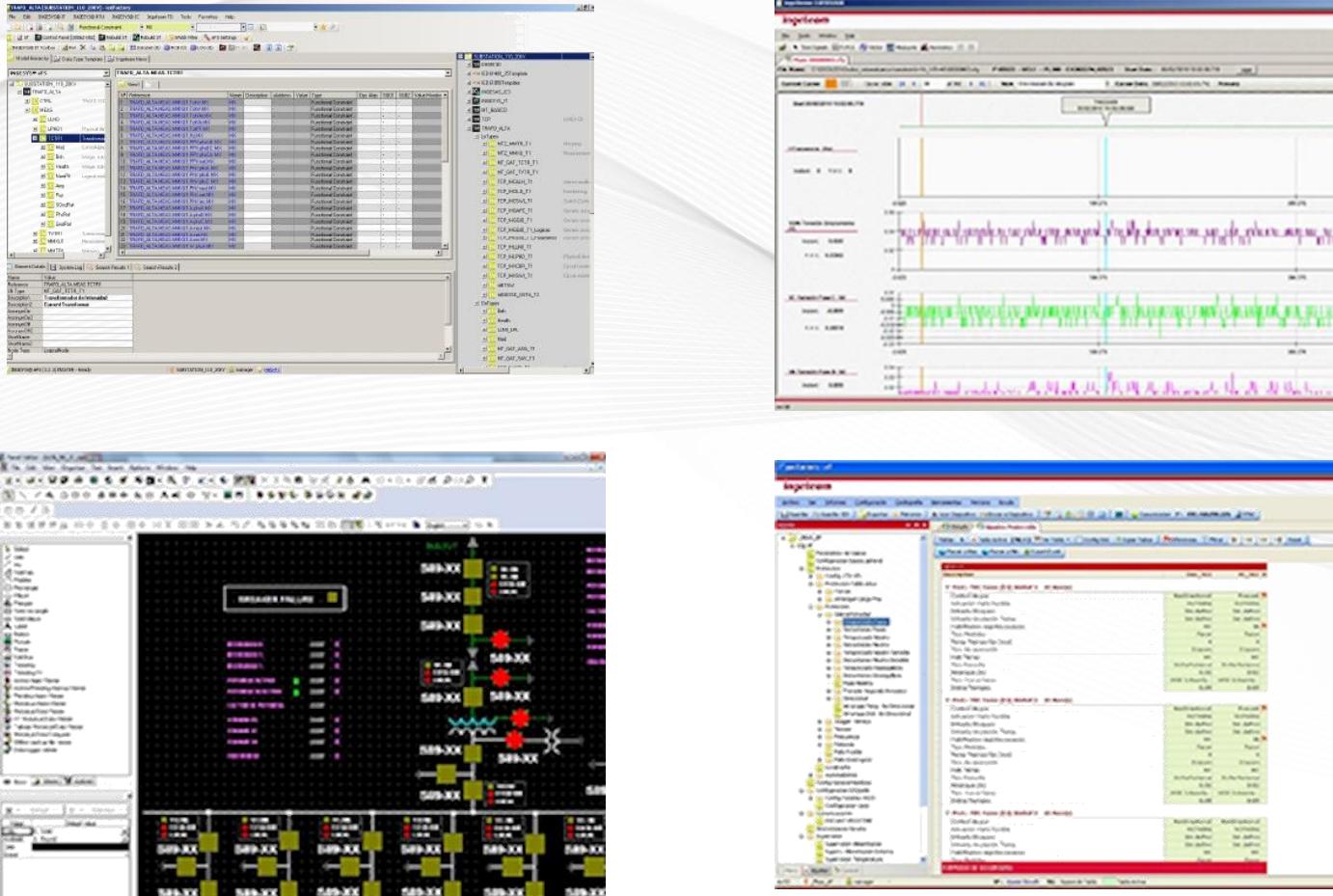
There are advantages, but we can identify some disadvantages or caveats

Let's discuss some examples

Advantages	Caveats
Cost Reduction	Initial Cost
Flexibility	Technology dependency
Cybersecurity	Failure Risk
Availability	Latency
Scalability	Resource Management

# Virtualization in Smart Grid Challenges

## IED and System Configuration

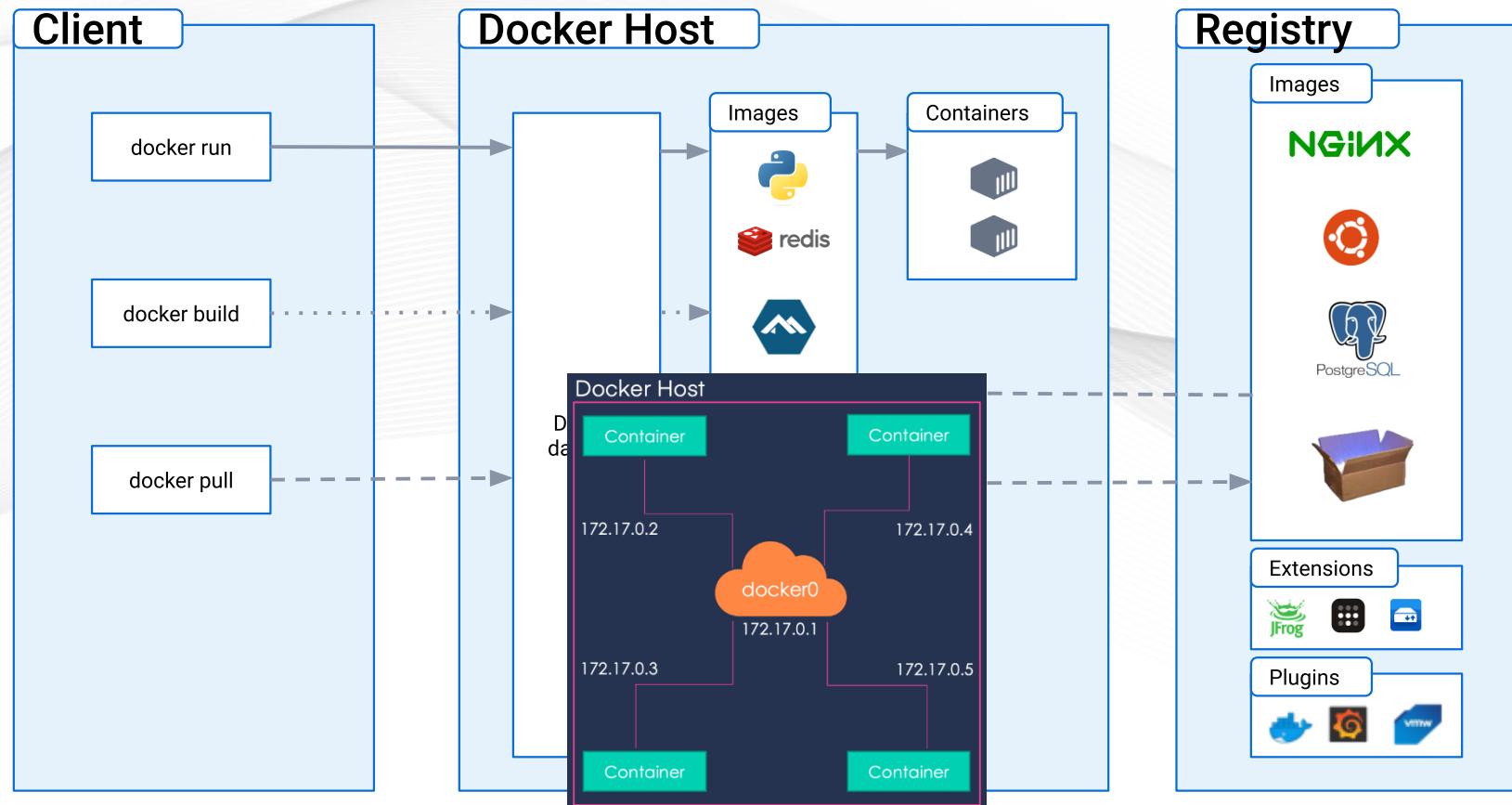


The configuration of the IED devices and the engineering process required for building a Smart Grid case (ST, TC) requires a **high degree of expertise and the use of advanced SW tools**.

The new virtualized scenario will be a **big change**.

# Virtualization in Smart Grid Challenges

## Required Network Ecosystem

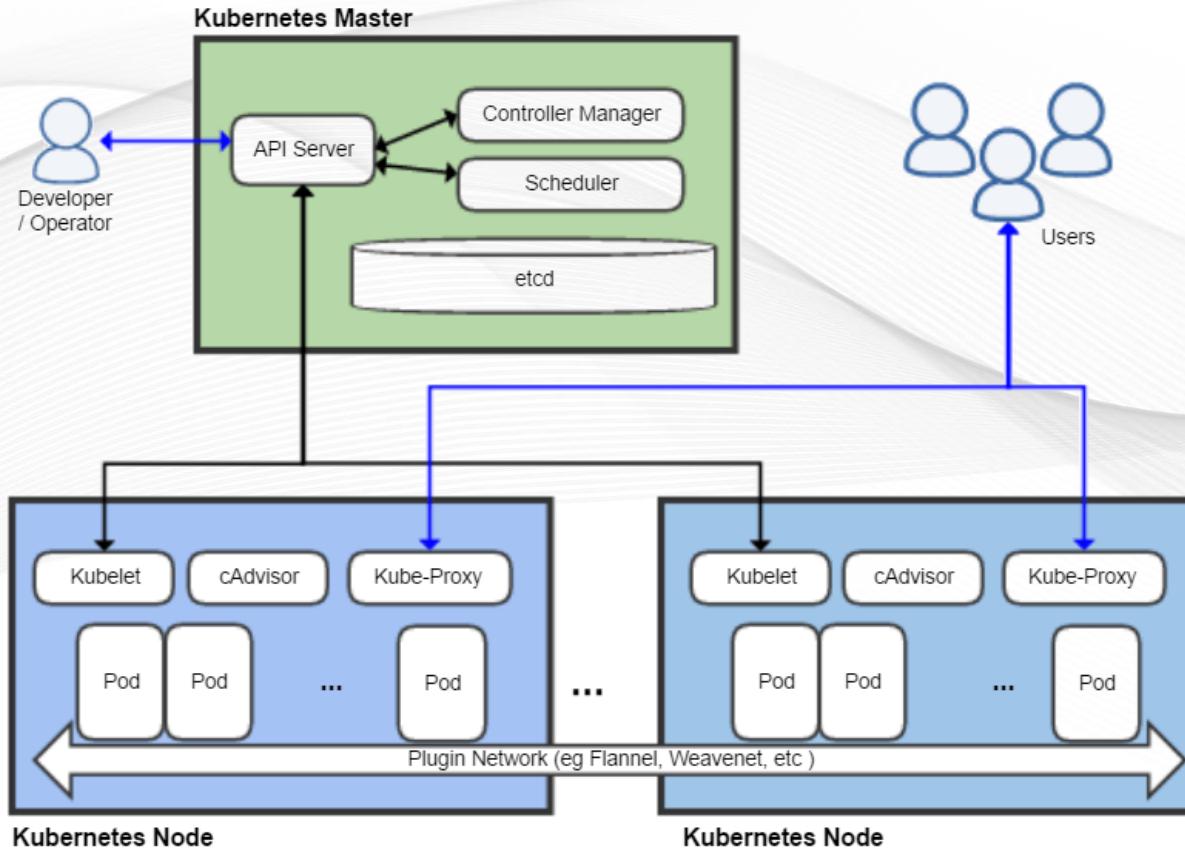


The devices integrated in a docker based network system  
**don't run alone.**

There will be a **new whole ecosystem of tools and services** spread all over the network for leveraging the opportunities that container-based solutions enable.

# Virtualization in Smart Grid Challenges

## Resource Management

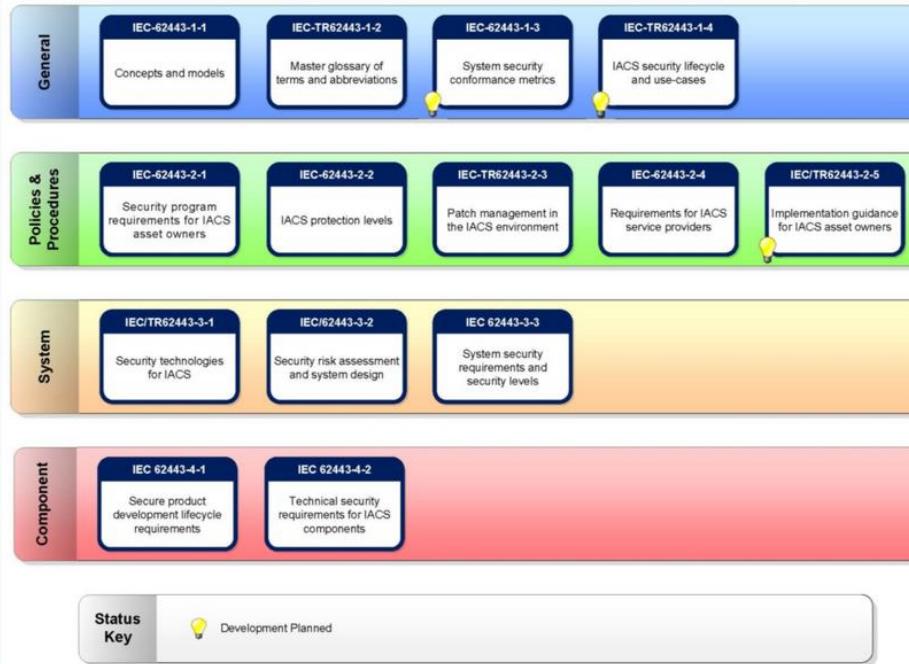


We cannot forget we are speaking about devices and systems running a **critical infrastructure with real time capabilities**.

The management of resources present in current docker networks are **not designed for this scenario**.

# Virtualization in Smart Grid Challenges

## Cybersecurity



<https://syc-se.iec.ch/deliveries/cybersecurity-guidelines/security-standards-and-best-practices/iec-62443/>

The docker solution should **comply with industrial cybersecurity standards**.

## Containers Matrix

Below are the tactics and techniques representing the MITRE ATT&CK® Matrix for Enterprise covering techniques against container technologies. The Matrix contains information for the Containers platform.

		Initial Access	Execution	Persistence	Privilege Escalation	Defense Evasion	Credential Access	Discovery	Lateral Movement	Impact
		3 techniques	4 techniques	7 techniques	6 techniques	7 techniques	3 techniques	3 techniques	1 techniques	5 techniques
	Exploit Public-Facing Application	Container Administration Command	Account Manipulation (1)	Account Manipulation (1)	Build Image on Host	Brute Force (3)	Container and Resource Discovery	Use Alternate Authentication Material (1)		Data Destruction
	External Remote Services	Deploy Container	Create Account (1)	Create or Modify System Process (1)	Deploy Container	Steal Application Access Token	Network Service Discovery			Endpoint Denial of Service
	Valid Accounts (2)	Scheduled Task/Job (1)	Create or Modify System Process (1)	Impair Defenses (1)	Indicator Removal	Unsecured Credentials (2)	Permission Groups Discovery			Inhibit System Recovery
		User Execution (1)	Escape to Host	Exploitation for Privilege Escalation	Masquerading (1)					Network Denial of Service
			External Remote Services	Implant Internal Image	Use Alternate Authentication Material (1)					Resource Hijacking
				Scheduled Task/Job (1)	Valid Accounts (2)					
				Valid Accounts (2)	Valid Accounts (2)					

<https://attack.mitre.org/matrices/enterprise/containers/>

Cybersecurity measures need to be aware of **new threats and attack vectors** related to this virtualized environment.

[View on the ATT&CK® Navigator](#)

[Version Permalink](#)

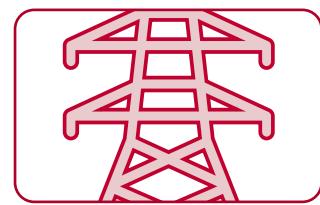
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**CONCLUSIONS**

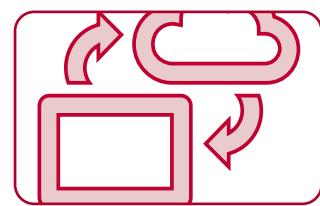
# Virtualization in Smart Grid

## Conclusions



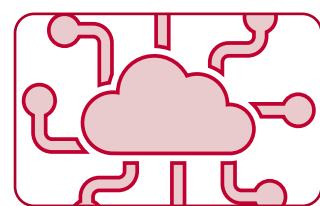
### Smart Grid

- Complex Network System
- Different requirements / approaches
- Critical Sector



### Virtualization

- Multiple solutions / Technologies
- Many benefits
- New Opportunities



### Virtualization in Smart Grid

- ST, TC, LVN
- Cloud enabled solution
- Real projects working on it



### Some Challenges

- IED/System configuration
- Required ecosystem
- Adapted Orchestration
- Cybersecurity

# Questions

## Acknowledgements

The authors gratefully acknowledge the support from the Basque Government VIRTGRID Project (Elkartek KK-2022/00069) . Project funded by the Department of Economic Development, Sustainability and Environment of the Basque Government (ELKARTEK 2022 Programme).