The New Grid: How a Nashville Firm Is Building the Bones for AI's Body

As trillions pour into AI, one company is betting on the electricians and engineers who build the physical world. A look at the unseen industrial revolution.

HD

Helen Davis
September 4, 2026

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

NASHVILLE, TN – September 04, 2026 – In a world captivated by the ethereal promise of artificial intelligence, a Nashville-based firm is making a colossal bet on dirt, concrete, and copper wire. American Gridwork Partners (AGP) this week announced the acquisition of three specialized infrastructure companies, a move that signals less about high-finance maneuvering and more about the overlooked, brute-force reality of our digital future: someone still has to build it.

The numbers driving this new era are staggering. The firm's leadership points to an estimated $800 billion flowing into AI-related infrastructure and compute capacity in the U.S. this year alone, a figure projected to nearly double to $1.4 trillion in 2027. Yet, behind these figures lies a fundamental truth often lost in the hype. "You can spend hundreds of billions of dollars building AI infrastructure," noted Benjamin Krall, AGP's Founder and President, "but ultimately somebody still has to install the power, connect the equipment and keep those systems running."

This is the system AGP is dedicated to deconstructing and rebuilding. By acquiring a trio of established, family-grown businesses, the company isn't just expanding its footprint; it's assembling the essential toolkit for what it calls the "next industrial revolution."

Anatomy of a Modern Industrial Platform

The strategy is one of calculated consolidation. AGP has brought Lark Electric, a Kentucky-based contractor founded in 1963 with deep industrial expertise; Group Electric, a Nashville commercial electrical specialist with over 30 years of experience; and a national fiber and cabling business serving sensitive military and federal clients into its fold. These newcomers join PMT Site, a civil and underground infrastructure contractor AGP acquired in 2025 that lays the literal groundwork for power grids and data centers.

Individually, these are respected regional players. Together, they form an integrated platform designed to address the complex, multi-layered needs of modern infrastructure projects. The acquired companies will continue to operate under their own names, preserving decades of local trust while gaining access to the capital and scale of a national platform. The goal is to break down the silos that often complicate large-scale builds.

“Being part of a complete platform gives us the ability to address more of the major service layers required for what is a once-in-a-generation industrial rebuild,” explained Phil Terhaar, Founder of PMT Site. His company, which specializes in the foundational civil, underground, power, and water work, can now seamlessly partner with its new sister companies. “It puts us in a position to follow our customers into larger and more complex infrastructure opportunities that require trusted partners at scale.”

This integrated model is already being tested. In Kentucky, PMT Site and Lark Electric have mobilized on their first hyperscale AI data center project, combining underground utility work with complex electrical installation—a capability few, if any, single entities in the region could previously offer.

The Trillion-Dollar Catalyst: Beyond the AI Hype

While AI data centers are the most visible drivers of this construction boom, AGP’s thesis extends far beyond the server rack. The firm argues that AI is merely an accelerant for a much broader transformation of the American physical economy. Independent analysis supports this view. U.S. utilities are expected to invest over $1.1 trillion in grid infrastructure in the next five years, while long-range forecasts from PwC and Oxford Economics project cumulative U.S. infrastructure needs in the tens of trillions by 2050.

“AI is an enormous accelerant, but it is not the only force driving this investment cycle,” said Grant Stark, CEO of American Gridwork Partners. “We built this platform around the thesis that several major forces are reshaping America’s physical infrastructure at the same time — population growth, climate change, electrification demand, the reshoring of American manufacturing and the increasing automation of industrial facilities.”

This convergence is creating unprecedented demand in the Southeast and Ohio Valley, where AGP is focusing its expansion. Population growth and available land are attracting power-intensive industries like manufacturing, logistics, and automotive plants. Each new facility requires not just a building, but an ecosystem of support: expanded power grids, modernized water systems, and high-speed fiber connectivity. By acquiring companies with deep roots in Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio, AGP is positioning itself at the heart of this regional renaissance, with plans to expand into Florida and other Southern markets soon.

The Human Constraint: A Crisis of Skilled Labor

Perhaps the most critical system AGP is examining is the human one. The grandest infrastructure plans will stall without a workforce to execute them. The firm projects a national shortfall of approximately 300,000 electricians over the next decade just to meet the demands of data centers and the broader electrification of the economy.

“We think one of the biggest constraints on America’s next industrial buildout is going to be people,” Krall stated bluntly. “Electricians and technicians are going to be at the center of that buildout, and we want to be investing directly into that workforce and the businesses that employ them.”

This isn't just rhetoric. The strategy of acquiring established regional businesses inherently taps into existing pools of talent and local knowledge. Furthermore, it empowers these companies to invest in training. Lark Electric, for instance, has already partnered with Owensboro Community & Technical College in its hometown to establish a new training center, a direct response to a local shortage of skilled electricians. By providing capital and stability, the AGP platform enables its member companies to build the next generation of tradespeople, a crucial investment in the nation’s capacity to grow.

From Concrete to Code: The Automation Frontier

AGP's vision culminates in the fusion of the physical and digital worlds. The company is launching a dedicated Industrial Automation & Physical AI division, leveraging the expertise of companies like Lark Electric, which has spent decades working inside the factories and processing plants that are now on the cusp of radical change.

As Ross Hyland of Lark Electric noted, a tremendous amount of opportunity exists within existing infrastructure. Factories built for a different era must now be retrofitted for robotics, autonomous equipment, and machine vision. "Those facilities will require significantly more electrical capacity, controls, connectivity and supporting infrastructure as they prepare for the next generation of manufacturing and automation," he said.

This new division represents the final layer of the platform, moving beyond building the foundation for technology to actively installing that technology into the industrial landscape. It's a recognition that the next industrial revolution won't just happen in a cloud, but on the factory floor, inside the warehouse, and along the supply chain. American Gridwork Partners is betting that the companies who can master both the physical and digital requirements of this shift will be the ones who truly build the future.

Helen Davis

m Insights