

Robots on the move with AT&T IoT and wireless broadband

Business needs

Remotely deploy and manage robots using reliable connectivity for uninterrupted deliveries

Networking solution

AT&T Control Center helps deploy, monitor, and manage robots via SIMs while wireless broadband provides instant, reliable connectivity to keep them in motion

Business value

Save time and expense, substantially increase active robots, and improve operational insights

Industry focus

Environmentally friendly and cost-saving food and merchandise delivery powered by robots

Size

1K connected robots and 500K successful deliveries

About Coco Robotics

Coco Robotics wanted to improve last-mile delivery, so they invented electric-powered autonomous vehicles, called Coco robots, that bring meals, groceries, and everyday essentials directly to customers. Using a SIM, internet connectivity, and a teleoperator to safely find their way, the robots provide a lower cost, environmentally friendly way to ease traffic congestion, free-up parking, and lower carbon emissions in a growing number of cities where the robots are activated.

The situation

Keeping up with rising demand was difficult. Coco Robotics needed a way to provision, deploy, manage, and monitor their rapidly growing number of robots on the ground—and reliable connectivity to keep them moving without delays or downtime.

IoT and connectivity solutions

Coco Robotics chose AT&T Control Center as their IoT solution for managing and monitoring their robots. From one platform, they can easily activate SIMs with zero-touch provisioning, deploy robots, manage connectivity, and analyze usage. Robots on the ground stay connected using AT&T Wireless Broadband for uninterrupted food and merchandise delivery.



An idea gets wings

College friends and roommates Zach Rash and Brad Squicciarini began their journey toward launching Coco Robotics in UCLA's newly founded robotics lab. Even as students, they knew they wanted to build something that brought robotics out of the lab and into the real world. In fact, the company's earliest foundations were laid while they were still at UCLA.

As the idea began to take shape, they knew the company needed a name that felt as approachable as the service they envisioned. For neighborhood deliveries, it was important to choose something friendly and familiar. After scrolling through lists of popular dog

names, Zach and Brad landed on "Coco." "Our mission is to create a better way to do last mile delivery," Rob Zehner, Vice President of Engineering said. "One that's more environmentally friendly, has a lower impact on communities, and provides faster, better service at a lower cost for the people doing the deliveries as well as the people receiving them."

Coco robots operate via SIM cards and a secure internet connection using less than a fifth of the energy of a highly efficient electric car. Plus, they're designed to reduce traffic congestion. Unlike traditional delivery vehicles, the robots don't contribute to gridlock, take up parking spaces, or add to street noise.

Coco culture

Coco's culture is built around experimentation and a relentless focus on the customer. Ideas are tested quickly, refined based on real feedback, and brought back to the people who use them most.

“That’s really what drives the company,” Zehner said. “We’re constantly learning what customers and our partners need—and finding new ways to deliver it better, faster, and more reliably. Zehner believes the shift underway will soon feel obvious in hindsight. “In five or ten years, we’ll look back and wonder why we ever used multi-ton cars to move a burrito across town. There’s a better tool for that job—and it’s already here.”

Since launching in 2020, Coco has been turning that vision into a new standard and a fundamentally modern model for urban delivery.

The business plan in action

Coco robots deliver essential goods, groceries, and restaurant takeout across dense urban markets. Melissa Fahs, Chief Commercial Officer explains that they work with a broad mix of merchants—from independent operators to national enterprise brands—integrating directly into existing ordering flows through marketplace partners such as UberEats, DoorDash, Wolt, and DashMart. The model is designed to be seamless for merchants. There is no capital investment required to participate. Restaurants simply prepare and load the order, while Coco manages the fleet—including charging, maintenance, cleaning, positioning, and ongoing operations. By removing operational friction and upfront costs, Coco has increased operational efficiencies—enabling businesses to offer fast, affordable delivery without the additional infrastructure or risk.

When placing an order in the app, customers can choose between traditional courier delivery or a Coco robot. If a robot fulfills the order, there’s no need to tip. Once dispatched, customers receive real-time updates and a delivery notification with a secure unlock code. Each robot remains locked from pickup to drop-off, protecting the quality, safety, and presentation of the order until the customer opens it. “The food stays secure from the merchant all the way to the customer,” Fahs said. “It’s good for the merchants, good for the consumer, and good for our marketplace partners. It’s a more sustainable option as well, so it also helps the environment.”

Coco’s model is built around hybrid intelligence: humans and AI working together. Coco has human teleoperators who monitor the robots’ journey in real time. While the robots navigate autonomously most of the time, teleoperators are there to handle edge cases—like crowded sidewalks, unexpected obstacles, or complex intersections—and can directly guide the robot when needed.

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**Rob Zehner, Vice President of Engineering,
Coco Robotics**



Expansion headaches and solutions

Demand from merchants and restaurants eager to modernize their last-mile delivery was steadily rising, and the fleet quickly grew from dozens to hundreds of Coco robots. “If we wanted to deploy 40 more robots in a week, we would have to go to the local AT&T store to get SIMs prepared,” Zehner said. “Seeing the scale we needed, I knew there had to be a more efficient way to do this.” The company needed a system to track and monitor robot connectivity, as well as the ability to remotely activate and deactivate robots to avoid unnecessary costs.

“There’s a tremendous amount of overhead with managing that large fleet of robots and cellular accounts,” Zehner added. “We’re very fortunate to be part of the AT&T IoT program, which provides us many additional tools and a clear dashboard where we can observe the status of our entire fleet, request new SIMs, and activate and deactivate SIMs or lines of service easily.” These tools are available with AT&T Control Center.

The team managing the SIMs has been able to eliminate much of the manual work, while AT&T Control Center provides essential operational oversight. “I can ask questions like, have we completed an audit of the SIMs? Do we know exactly how many we have, which robots they’re in, and whether there are any stray lines of service?” Zehner said. The team can now answer these questions quickly and accurately. “That level of confidence is what we need to run the business,” he added. Since implementing AT&T Control Center, the fleet has grown by 300 percent. Scaling to that level would have been very challenging without it,” Zehner said.

Coco Robotics relies on AT&T Wireless Broadband to help keep their robots connected. Zehner explains that reliable connectivity is critical to operations because it’s how teleoperators maintain control and oversight. “Network connectivity is absolutely critical to our business,” he said. “Without it, our robots can’t deliver food, and we can’t serve our customers.”

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Unprecedented growth depends on AT&T support

Today Coco serves more than 3,000 merchants and restaurants demonstrating real-world demand at scale. As a result, Coco is on track to scale its fleet to 10,000 robots globally by the end of the year, reinforcing a delivery model built not just to operate, but to scale.

“We are activating more robots every week,” Zehner said. “And with each one, there’s a new AT&T line of service that’s active and another SIM card that has to be provisioned, installed, and tracked.”

Zehner said the onboarding process was seamless. “The system is really well-designed and easy to use, so we were able to jump right in. There’s training as well, which AT&T provides.”

The AT&T Business sales team took time to understand Coco’s business. They helped the company understand how wireless broadband functions and was on-hand to address the tough questions. “We’re able to reach out when we encounter a problem, which is important. Having somebody pick up the phone at AT&T and engage with us at a technical level is really helpful.”

Zehner said, “I don’t want to have to worry about whether I have the right cellular broadband provider. By choosing AT&T, that’s one less concern. They’ve been in this business from the start, with excellent network coverage, strong performance, and the right products for us. That’s essentially why we work with AT&T.”