

System for Reducing Electricity Use Is Self-Monitoring

By NED RANDOLPH

The founders of startup **Advanced Telemetry** are building their business on the concept that when folks see how much energy they're consuming, they'll conserve.

The company's system is a wireless touch panel that shows energy consumption as it happens. It communicates with a "sub-meter" installed at the building site.

"People will do the right thing if they have the tools at their fingertips," says CEO and co-founder Gus Ezcurra. "You have to make it easy, not super expensive, complicated or have big brother do it for you."

The company has 20 employees and, according to Ezcurra, it's hiring one person every 10 days.

While the privately held firm won't disclose revenues or the amount of venture capital it received from 21 Ventures in New York, Ezcurra says they should be cash positive next year, unless they go for a second round of funding.

"If the volume of residential business grows as rapidly as we think, we might need additional working capital," says Ezcurra, who co-founded the company with Tom Naylor in September 2007.

Business, Residential Customers

EcoView works for businesses and homes. The company contracts directly with commercial clients, but has elected to use distributors to reach residential customers.

Commercial customers sign a three-year contract, paying \$600 for the equipment and installation and another \$40 per month thereafter. The company has 70 clients — many fast-food restaurants — representing 100 locations with another

200-300 U.S. locations in the process of deploying, he says.

"We provide the monitoring service for them," Ezcurra says. "Most of our customers are busy running their businesses. A lot have multiple sites."

The buildings must be no more than 4,000 square feet, and the customers must run their own air conditioning system, which is the biggest electricity load.

"When you turn off the lights or the air

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conditioning, you'll see immediately that your power consumption goes down," he said. "The payback is so dramatic. The first two to three months, you're saving 25-30 percent across the board."

The panel can connect to other wireless devices in the home, like the air conditioning thermostat or lighting system.

For residential consumers, the company is turning to distributors of low-voltage products like home security systems and heating, ventilation, air conditioning servicers.

The first to partner with them is green technology company Breeze Play in Charlotte, N.C., which is launching a pilot program to reach 16,000 homes with the EcoView product that Breeze Play branded as EnviroScope.

The company has signed agreements with more than a dozen utility companies in the North and South Carolina area, says Anna Booth, vice president of marketing for Breeze Play.

"That data is so valuable for not only compliance, but behavior modification," Booth said. "(Utilities) are all clearly under a lot of pressure for compliance issues and public pressure to meet public energy standards."

While Ezcurra says the basic monitoring system costs about \$500, distributors will determine the retail price.

The touch panel is Wi-Fi enabled and operates like a computer. Over time, the system logs customer usage. A household can set goals — perhaps using 10 percent less energy in June.

"You program that in, and the system will tell you how you're doing against your goal," Ezcurra said.



Gus Ezcurra

