

Senztek launches new energy demand controller at Power & Electricity World NZ

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Trade shows and international conferences are traditionally the place for the 'reveal'; new products, new processes and new ways of doing things.

This year's Power and Electricity Conference is no different, but one of the reveals is. Award-winning Auckland technology company Senztek is to launch a new ultra-next generation proof of concept that will benefit both power companies and their customers.

Over three years of R&D have gone into turning Senztek's idea into commercialisation potential. With it, power companies will be able to improve management of consumption whilst consumers will be able to plan ahead and save on power bills through better understanding and control of their individual usage needs.

Senztek CEO Brian Knolles says the new super-smart energy demand controller is a revolutionary idea whose time has come. It puts intelligent peak load management at the fingertips of utilities and the consumer.

"We've passed the major hurdle; having the prototype running consistently, using all its features including wireless connection to the internet and we're very confident," he says.

Knolles likens the technology jump as similar from trunk calls to mobile phones, or from regular mail to emails, taking electricity management way beyond what has previously been possible.

"Things have moved on from the ripple control days", he says. "Energy demand controllers offer significant benefits to energy and lines companies and to the consumer – either domestic or industrial and that all round win hasn't been seen before.

With an intelligent energy demand controller, utilities will be able to match power consumption intelligently, using the internet for management and control and reducing waste through reduced standby leakage."

Senztek have designed their energy demand controller to work with or without a SmartMeter to give detailed information and control. This means the ability to access and report detailed information about types of energy usage in the household and control peak loadings through advanced differential management of power to different devices.

But it's the informed decisions that win the day for both utility and consumer, with consumers finally being able to see energy usage over time for each major appliance, and control their energy usage with ready access to relevant information through their energy demand controller directly, or via the internet.

"It will mean consumers can start to make intelligent choices about their own energy usage and decide for themselves on any trade off between comfort and economy."

Using energy smarter won Senztek a share of the \$1m Entrepreneurs' Challenge run by the University of Auckland.

Senztek provides smart technology for heating and maintenance of (mainly solar generated) hot water, but its active R&D programme is introducing other technologies; moving the company from intelligent measurement technology to smart energy management.

Mr Knolles said whilst Senztek has made significant inroads into Australia, particularly through their major distributor Apricus, the UK was a new solar market with huge potential to grow rapidly over the next few years. Senztek's goal is to partner with a UK distributor and offer the customised solutions that the larger European controller manufacturers are not prepared to do.

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More information

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Notes for editors

About Senztek:

- *Senztek's business is smart energy management, providing technology for heating and maintenance of stored hot water, mainly solar thermal.*
- *The company recently won a share of the first prize of \$1m NZ in the University of Auckland Business School's inaugural Entrepreneurs' Challenge.*
- *It operates in two distinct industry segments; industrial instrumentation and solar thermal (hot water heating) energy. Senztek's industrial instrumentation is marketed via a single distributor, whilst the solar range of controllers is sold to a network of local NZ and Australian- based solar system sellers and installers.*
- *The company has a 18 year history of designing, developing and manufacturing quality industrial instrumentation including signal conditioners, transmitters, power supplies, and other sensing and data logging instruments- sold into the dairy and winery industries and other industrial applications.*
- *The hot water controller range is a more recent addition to the product range, but represents the largest growth in sales in the past three years.*
- *Approximately 70% of revenue comes from export markets, with Australia being the most significant part of the company's business. It is planning expansion into the UK market early in 2010*
- *Recently the company signed a co-operative arrangement with New Zealand software company, Cortexo, to provide web-based applications for smart energy demand controllers and web-based reporting and control*
- *Senztek employs around 20 people at its Avondale premises.*
- *The company moved to adjacent premises in January 2010, which will allow it to double its production capacity.*