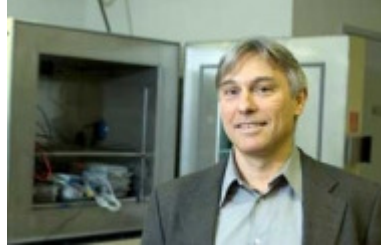


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# Amperion's equipment goes beyond smart grids

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**Nachum Sadan, CEO of Amperion, gets a charge when he thinks of how the opportunities for smart grid technology have grown recently.**

With billions in federal funding on the way and an industry-wide groundswell of interest in smart grid technologies, dozens, if not hundreds of companies are jumping on the bandwagon.

Amperion Inc. is one of those companies, and the Tewksbury-based equipment maker has jumped on with both feet over the past few weeks, announcing two new partnerships expected to help propel the company into the core of the smart grid market.

While officials may be excited about the new interest and opportunities in an intelligent communications grid based on the nation's power infrastructure, the truth is, Amperion did not land on the bandwagon just recently. As a developer of broadband over power lines (BPL) technologies, Amperion has been in the "power infrastructure as a communications network" market for years. Smart grid applications may be a new bandwagon, but to Amperion CEO Nachum Sadan, they look an awful lot like a more crowded and government-funded version of the BPL bandwagon.

"We're not getting into smart grid just because it's hot. We've been waiting for this and working on it for three years," said Sadan. "But the past six months have changed everything, and we think the opportunity has gotten even bigger."

Amperion's equipment was originally designed to provide Internet service through the power infrastructure. The company has been at it for more than seven years and has a portfolio of 122 patents in the area, the licensing of which has begun to generate some revenue for the company — "a couple of million" dollars, according to Sadan.

Over the past two weeks, the company has entered into two new partnerships that will help it penetrate both the smart grid and Internet access pieces of the industry. First, Amperion has partnered with Tewksbury-based smart meter maker muNet Inc. The tandem combine muNet's access equipment — smart meters — with Amperion's network infrastructure, offering utilities a kind of starter kit for automated meter reading applications. Because all the equipment is based on Internet Protocol (IP), utilities can eventually add other applications to the system.

"We feel strongly that if automated meter reading and smart grid applications are going to succeed, utilities need to drive IP as deep into the network as possible," said Sean Doyle, president of muNet. "This will also encourage numerous applications, not just meter reading."

In order to get a foothold on some of those other applications, Amperion has also struck an agreement with International Broadband Electric Communications Inc., an Alabama-based BPL provider. The partnership is expected to combine the resources of each company to expand the availability of BPL as an Internet access platform.

Amperion was founded in 2001 by power company American Electric Power and networking equipment maker Cisco Systems Inc. Officials would not provide financial information, but the company has received funding from private investment firms GIV Venture Partners and RedLeaf Group Inc., both of Pennsylvania, and by Aspen Ventures of Connecticut.