

### Commercial Electrolysis: Setting the Stage for H2@Scale

Kathy Ayers, Vice President of R&D H2@Scale workshop, November 16, 2016

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# **PEM Electrolysis: Product History**

- Designed for life support in closed environments
  - Replaced caustic KOH systems
  - Qualified for O<sub>2</sub> generation in space and underwater
- Optimized for high reliability
  - Shock and vibration mil specs
  - Cost and efficiency not factors



NASA OGA system: ISS

- Early lab scale products also replaced KOH systems
  - Pure water as circulating fluid eliminated need for customer to handle hazardous materials



### **Evolution: 20 Years of Maturity and Scale**



Non Detectable Decay Rate

50,000

60,000

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40,000

1.4

10,000

20,000

30,000

Operating Time (Hours)

Total Cells Replaced
Original Cells in Operation

## **Platform Iterations: Electrolysis**



Product Generation

- 4 major platform changes over ~5 orders of magnitude
- New technology has to go through similar progression



# **Projections for H2@Scale**

#### Let's assume:

- PEM systems at 100 MW scale w/in 10 yrs
  - Pt/Ir can support 10's of GW production
- Membrane based electrolysis = some mix of PEM and AEM (aggressive AEM)
- SOEC matches aggressive AEM assumptions
- PEC reaches 100 kW scale by 2026 and 5 MW by 2036
  - 100 kW =  $\sim$ 1000 m<sup>2</sup> electrode area
- STCH lags PEC by 2 years



## **Resulting Timeline for Energy Storage**





# **Electrolysis Markets**

• Each new platform has had an identified market



Required to maintain sustainability and profitability



## **Power Plant Market**

- Over 18,000 hydrogen-cooled electric power generators world-wide
  - 25% North America, 75% ROW
- Addressable market estimated at over \$2.5 billion
- Value proposition
  - Improved plant efficiency
  - Increased plant output
  - Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
  - Payback typically less than one year
- Primarily H- and C-series, often integrated solutions (containerized)











#### **Renewable Energy Storage: Stranded Wind & Solar**



(1) Addressable market size based on management's internal estimates for Germany.



### Finding the Value Proposition

- Markets are large but customers want solutions: not a set of discrete technologies.
- Creative entrepreneurs are finding ways that hydrogen fits and provides an investment return
- Opportunities vary in size from <10MW to >> 100 MW
- Successful product strategy will need to scale to accommodate
- Gaps in technology / cost need to be addressed to enable



## Demonstrations

- Many larger European projects in progress
- MW scale and larger: >20 MW awarded
- Projects include R&D elements

Swiss Electrolyzer Plant Generates Hvdrogen from Renewable Power For Fueling and Industrial Applications





- 200 kW Proton electrolyzer + methanization
- H<sub>2</sub> combined with biogas CO<sub>2</sub> to produce biomethane (4H<sub>2</sub> + CO<sub>2</sub> → CH<sub>4</sub> + H<sub>2</sub>O).
- Injected in gas grid  $\rightarrow$  Carbon neutral process.





## **Cost Reduction Opportunities**





## **Bipolar Plate Project Success**

- Surveyed and selected manufacturing techniques
- Modeled fluid flow and mechanical strength
- Prototyped parts and qualified alternate coating for improved resistance to environment and lower cost
- Scaled by 6X in active area and 3X in cell count vs. prototype
- Realized expected savings and achieved >500,000 cell hours
- Establishes credibility of cost reduction opportunities





# **MEA Improvement Pathway**

MEA and stack price relative to 2015 MW baseline



- Similar opportunity as bipolar plate
- Higher material utilization and automation
- Demonstrated feasibility for manual/small batch processes

 Interactions with other components



## Implementation lags R&D considerably





## **Opportunities and Challenges**

- Pathway defined to cost targets
  - Opportunities/needs in several areas
  - No single area that contributes majority
  - Lag in proof of concept to commercialization
- Interactions and integration are essential
  - Adjacent cell components
  - Matching of stack and power supply I-V
- Fundamental need is next scale
  - Manufacturing processes and product output
- Requires investment and focus
  - Materials understanding for manufacturing development



### **Questions to be Answered**

- Need additional market input on:
  - How the system needs to interact with the grid
  - Optimal building block size distributed vs. centralized
  - Preferences for hydrogen usage solutions (can we develop "typical" scenarios?)
  - Standard parametric cost/performance model for business case development
  - Regulatory position / constraints to scaled applications (no different from large scale industrial process plants??)

