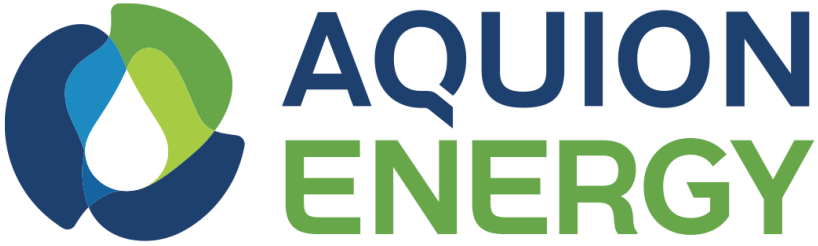


# 2012 Progress Report
# Smart Grid Demonstration Program

Ted Wiley, Jay Whitacre

Department of Energy Peer Review
26 September, 2012

# Thanks to Our Supporters

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AQUION ENERGY

# About Aquion Energy

Founded on the belief that stationary energy storage must be:

- **Safe:** Non-toxic and immune to catastrophic failure events
- **Reliable:** Long lasting and capable of operating in abusive environments
- **Affordable:** Made from abundant, simple materials via a scalable manufacturing process

This principle demands a new type of energy storage: **Aqueous Hybrid Ion Batteries**

Designed for stationary, long-duration applications

- Utilities—various grid services
- Microgrids—telco, mining, commercial/residential solar, military, island, campus, etc.



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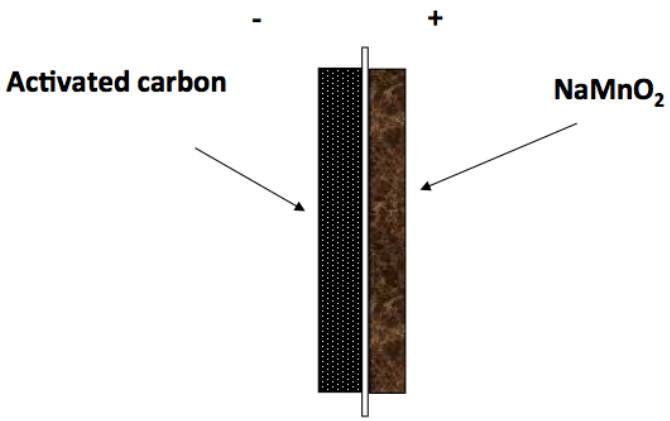
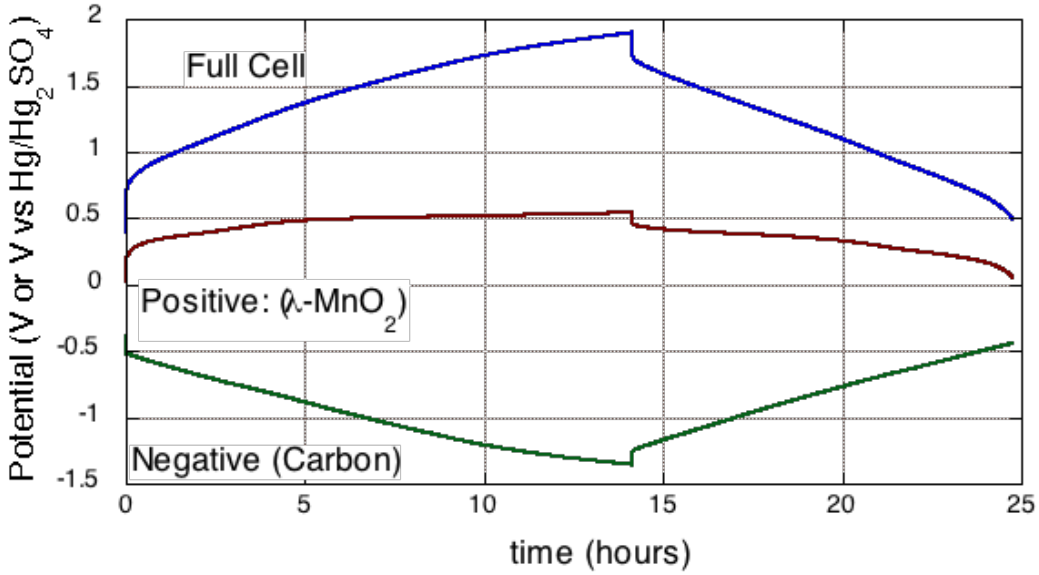
# Aquion AHI Technology: Electrochemistry and Device

"Aqueous Hybrid Ion" chemistry:




3 electrode data




- Anode is low cost activated carbon
  - Enabling low-cost surface modification developed
  - Electrochemical Double Layer Capacitor Effect + pseudocapacitance
- Cathode is λ-$MnO_2$
  - Alkali ion intercalation material – very stable in neutral pH aqueous electrolyte
- Electrolyte is $Na_2SO_4$ in water (~1 M)
- Functional ions are Na, Li, and protons



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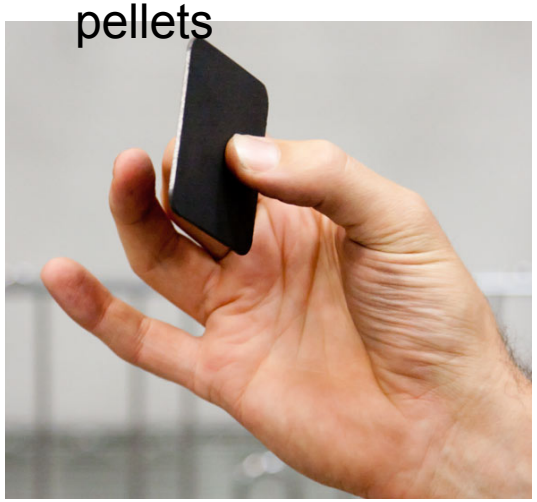
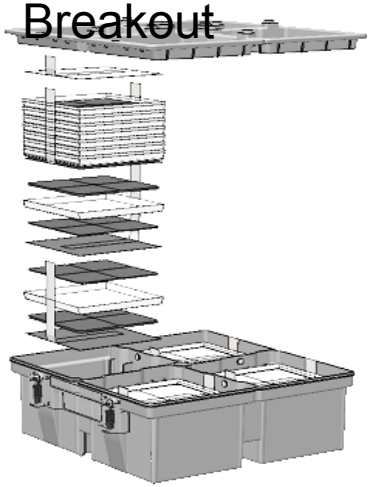
# Aquion AHI Technology: Electrode and Device Structure

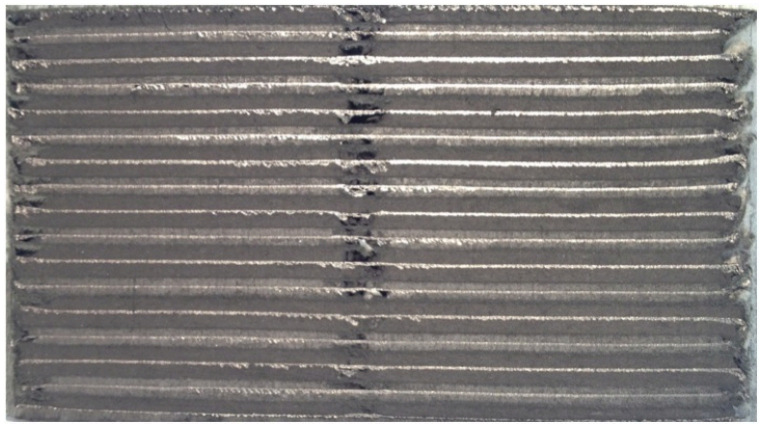
2” square pellets



Product Breakout



Electrode Stack cross section



- 1 to 4 mm thick Electrode pellets are made from a blend of active material and additives
- There are 4 pellets per electrode layer in a true prismatic electrode stack
- The electrode stacks are heat-sealed in a polypropylene package

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# Aquion's FOA36 Award: Goals and Milestones

**Project Outcomes**

- Successfully completed project ahead of schedule
- Proved selected materials could function in thick format electrodes
- Proved out a full pilot-scale production line
- Produced engineering prototype units showing indicative performance
- Created several functional systems, including a >10 kWh, 1000 V grid connected system
- Demonstrated key performance goals for the technology
- New materials examined at Carnegie Mellon University

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# Aquion's FOA36 Award: Performance Goals

| Target | Demonstrated |
|---|---|
| >5000 Cycle Life | >5000 in prototype cells, 1200 Cycles in production style cells – testing ongoing |
| 10 years projected calendar life | No evidence to show <10 years – testing ongoing |
| <10% capacity degradation | Demonstrated through a variety of tests |
| Low capital cost | Competitive with PbA over lifetime |
| >10 kWh storage unit fabricated and demonstrated to be able to give/take from grid | Achieved – with a >1000 V battery pack at Aquion Energy HQ |

High Voltage Test System at Aquion

Pilot Line in Operation

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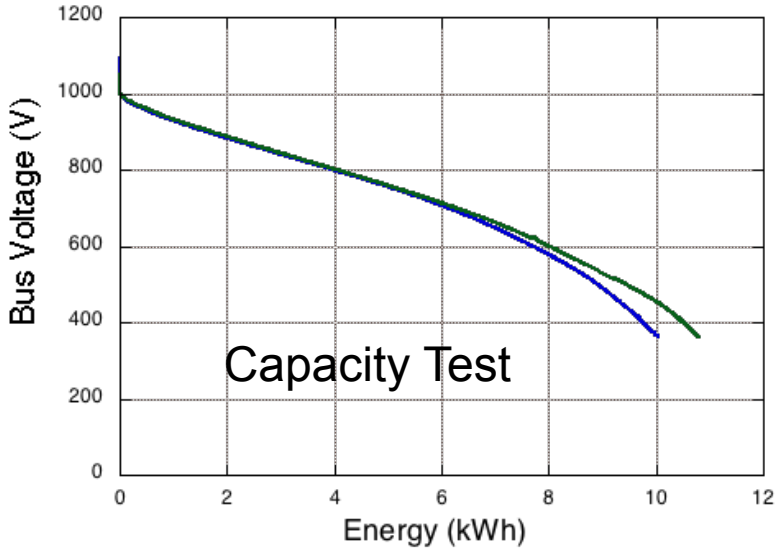
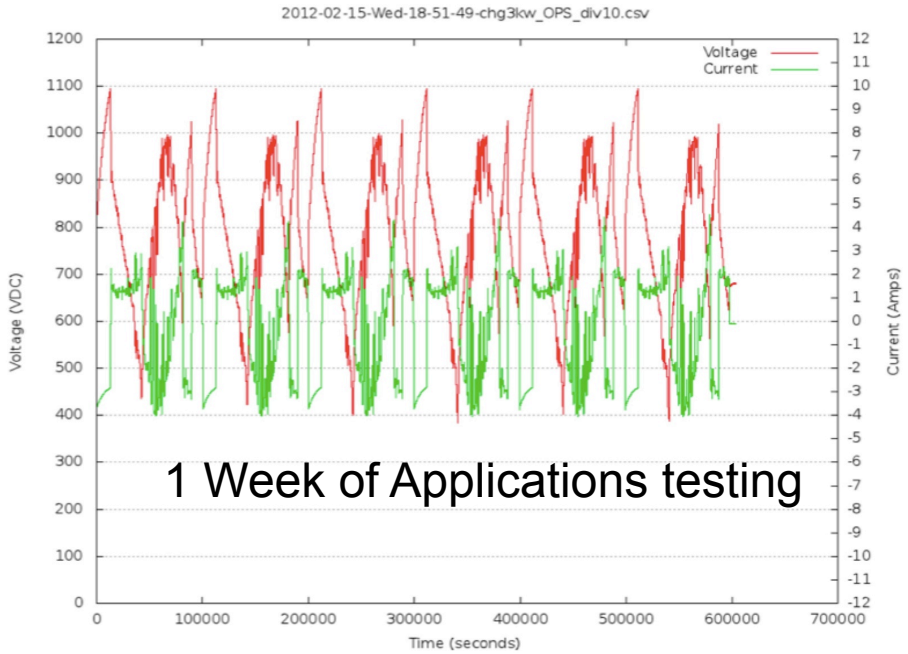
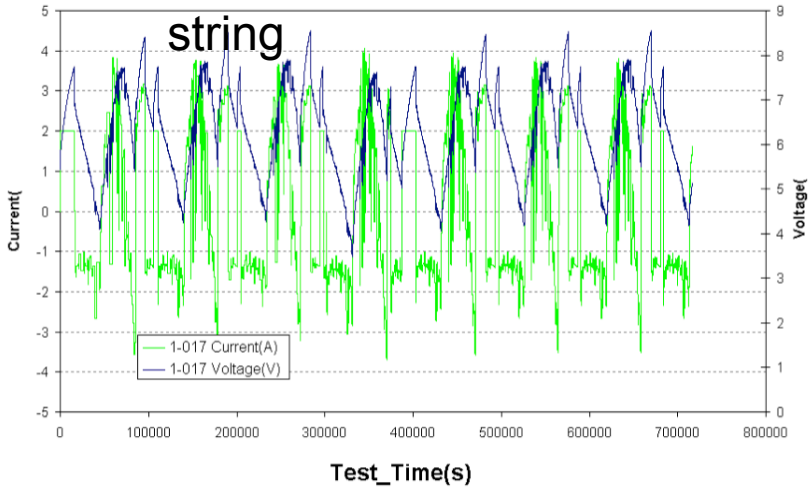
# Deliverable Performance: >10 kWh Grid-Connected Demo






Same test on 4-Cell string

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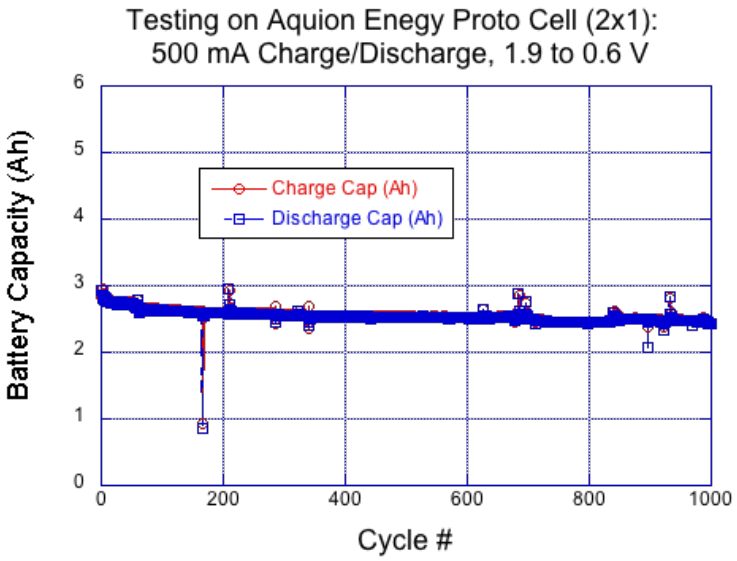
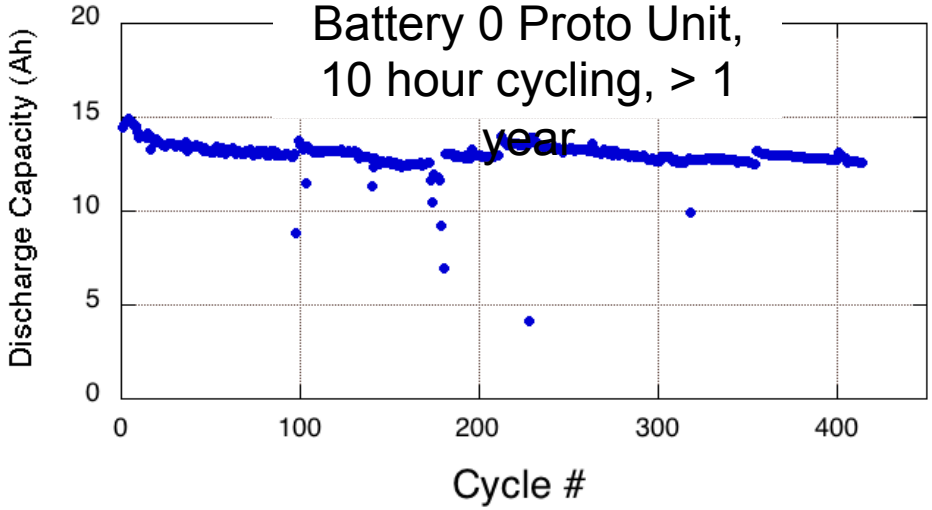
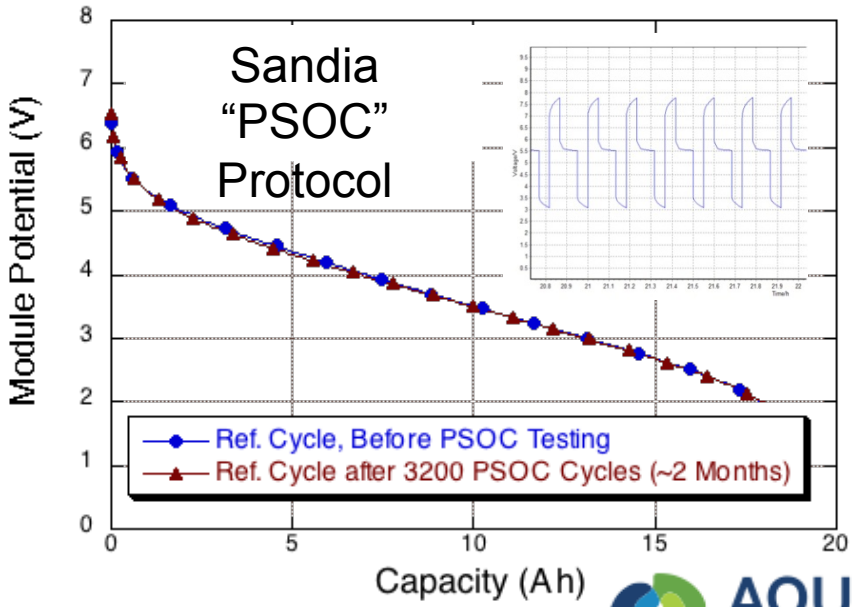
# Performance Overview – Cycle Stability




- >1000 cycles demonstrated on production electrodes in 1/8th size cell fixture
- >1 Year, 400 deep cycles on full size “battery 0” ubit
- Approaching 20,000 PSOC cycles on set of Battery 0 units with minimal loss in function

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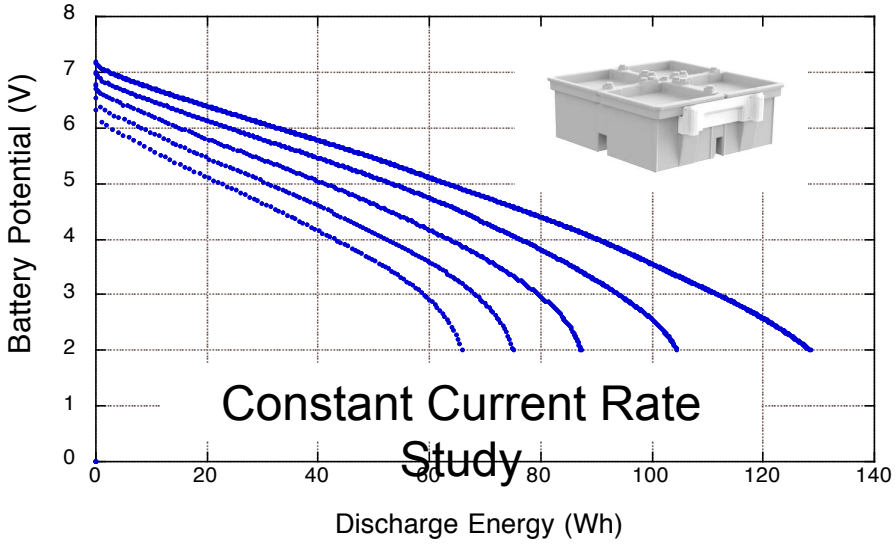
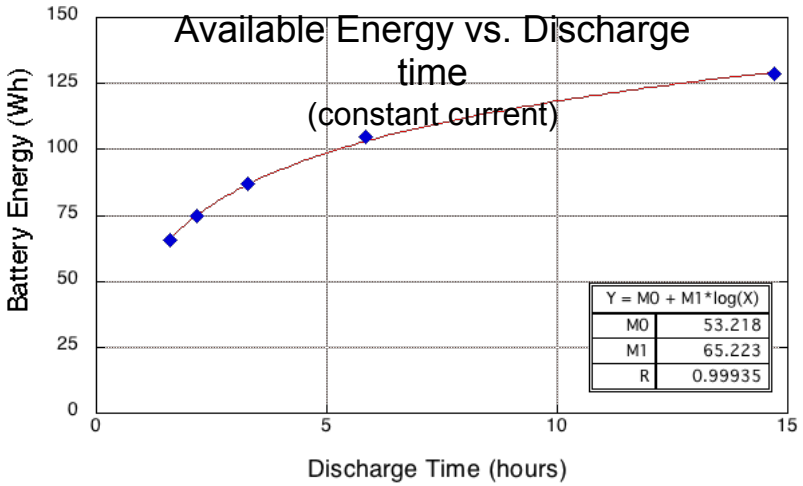
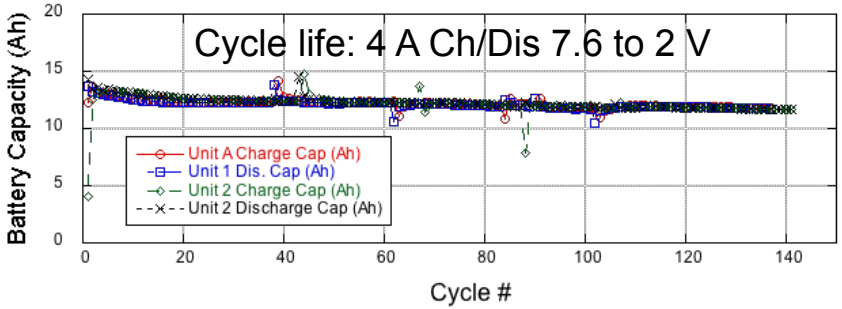
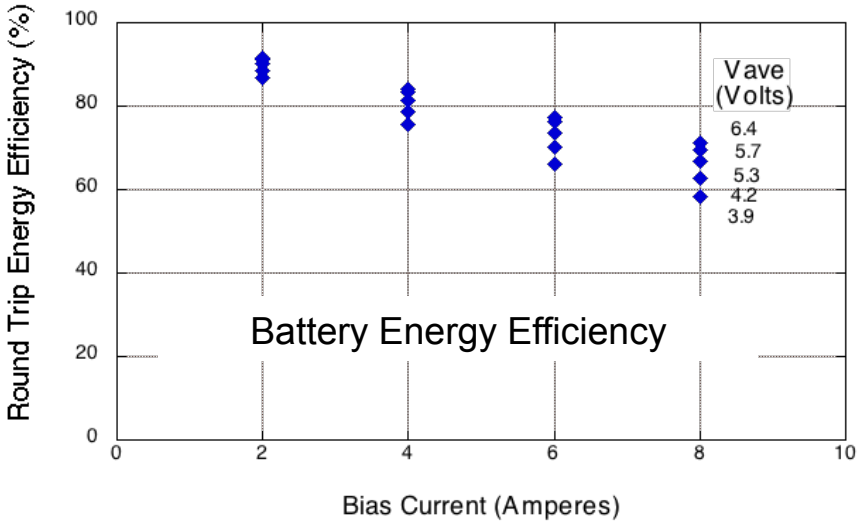
# Pre-Production “Alpha” Unit Performance




- Units are ~7.6 V at full state of charge
- Give ~130 Wh at >15 hour discharge rates
- Efficiencies range from the low 90’s to 60%, depending on state of charge and current/power load
- Cycle life data consistent with prototypes



AQUION ENERGY

# Basic Research at Carnegie Mellon

Carnegie Mellon

- Funding has supported (in part) 1 Postdoctoral Scholar and two graduate students
- 2 Key projects:
  - Understanding carbon/electrolyte interactions for neutral pH energy storage devices
  - Low cost manufacturing of next generation anode materials
- Papers/Dissertations Published:
  - Wei Wu, Alex Mohamed, J.F. Whitacre, “Microwave Synthesized NaTi2(PO4)3 Anode Material for Aqueous Electrolyte Batteries: Process Routes and Performance in a Dual Intercalation Sodium-Ion Battery”, Submitted, Journal of Electrochemical Society (2012)
  - J.F. Whitacre, A. Mohammad, S. Snehbag, T. Wiley, E. Weber, D. Blackwood, E. Lynch-Bell, J. Matusky, D. Humphreys, “Large-Format Asymmetric Sodium-Ion Functional Energy Storage Devices for Stationary Applications”, Journal of Power Sources (2012), 213, 255-264, (2012)
  - S. Chun, J.F. Whitacre, “Relating Electrolyte Acidity and Hydrogen Uptake in Mesoporous Activated Carbons”, Submitted, Electrochemistry Communications, (2012)
  - “Electrochemical Capacitors: The Evolution and Control of Physicochemical Properties during Processing” Ph.D. Dissertation, Sangeun Chun, Carnegie Mellon, 2011
  - S. Chun, J.F. Whitacre, “The evolution of electrochemical functionality of carbons derived from glucose during pyrolysis and activation,” Electrochemica Acta, 60 pg 392-400, (2012)
  - S. Chun, Yusuf N. Picard, Jay Whtiacre, "Relating Precursor Pyrolysis Conditions and Aqueous Electrolyte Capacitive Energy Storage Properties for Activated Carbons Derived from Anhydrous Glucose-d", Journal of the Electrochemical Society, 158 (2), A83, (2011).
- Key findings:
  - Relationship between electrolyte species and functionality for different carbon morphologies explained
  - Carbon’s ability to locally store hydrogen and derive current later is maximized in intermediate pH solutions
  - Very rapid microwave synthesis processes can be used to create $NaTi_2(PO_4)_3$ which performs well as an anode material in an AHI environment

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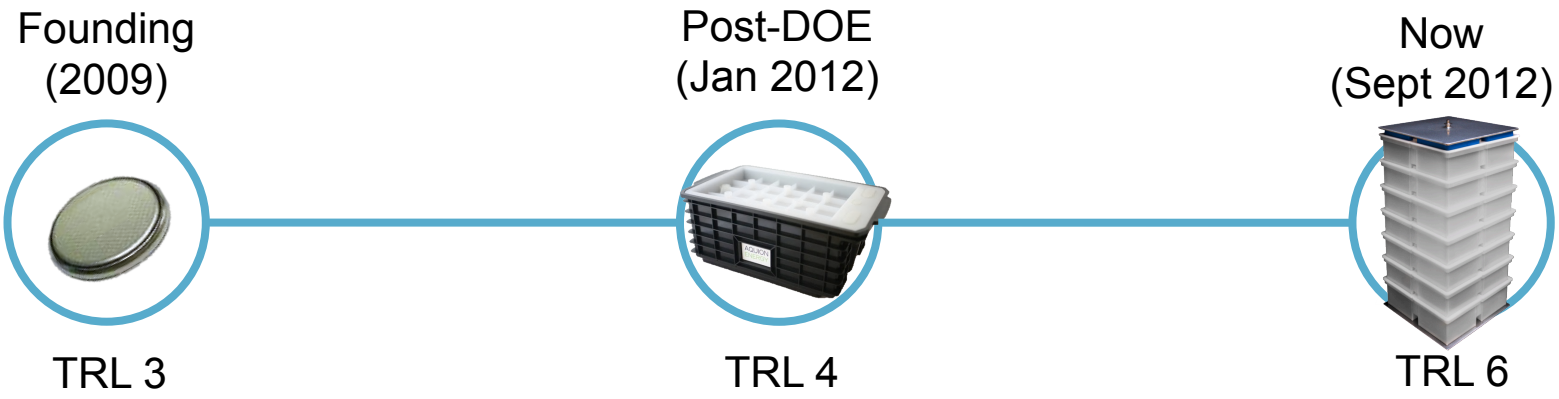
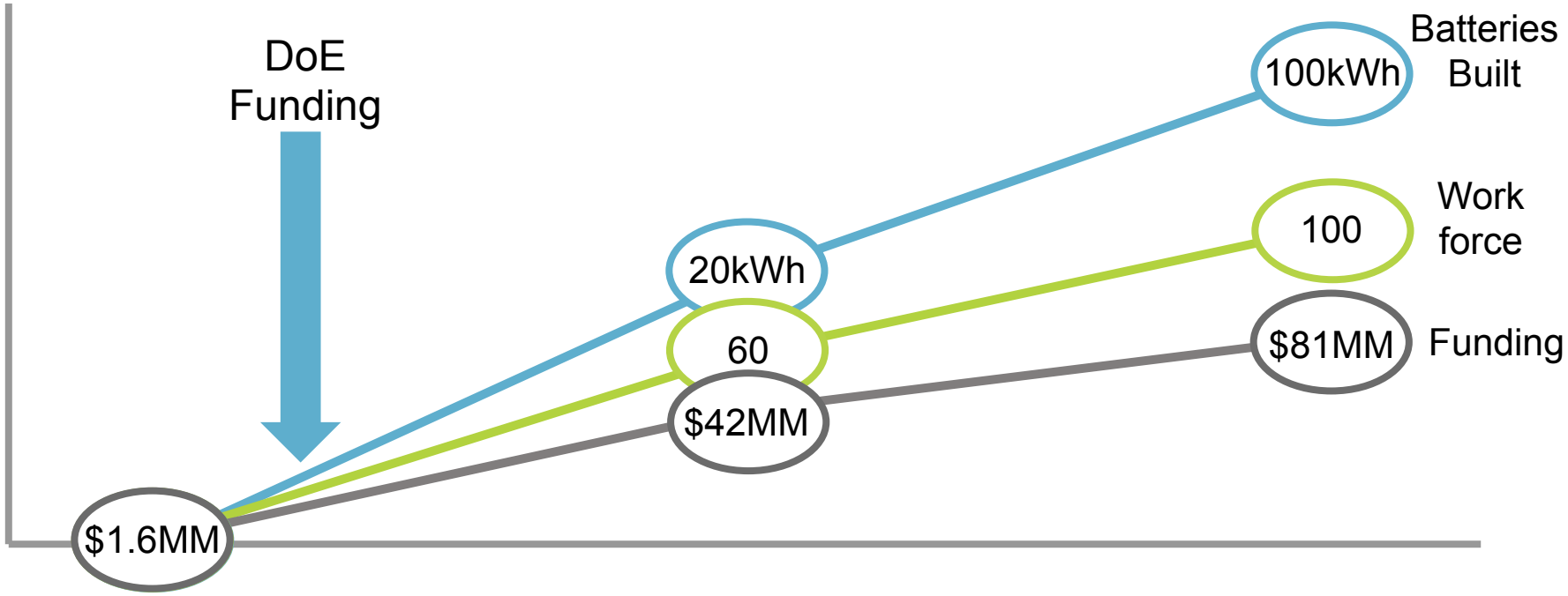
# Aquion Over Time: Product, Employment, Funding

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# Product Progression: Coin Cells to Stacks

**2009**

Coin Cell:
Demonstrated
Functional
Material
~4 mWh

**2011**

Engineering
Prototype:
Demonstrated
Manufacturability
~35 Wh

**May 2012**

Beta Product:
Initial Sales
~1 kWh (stack)
~140 Wh (battery)
** 7 battery stack (48V) will be base unit of delivery*

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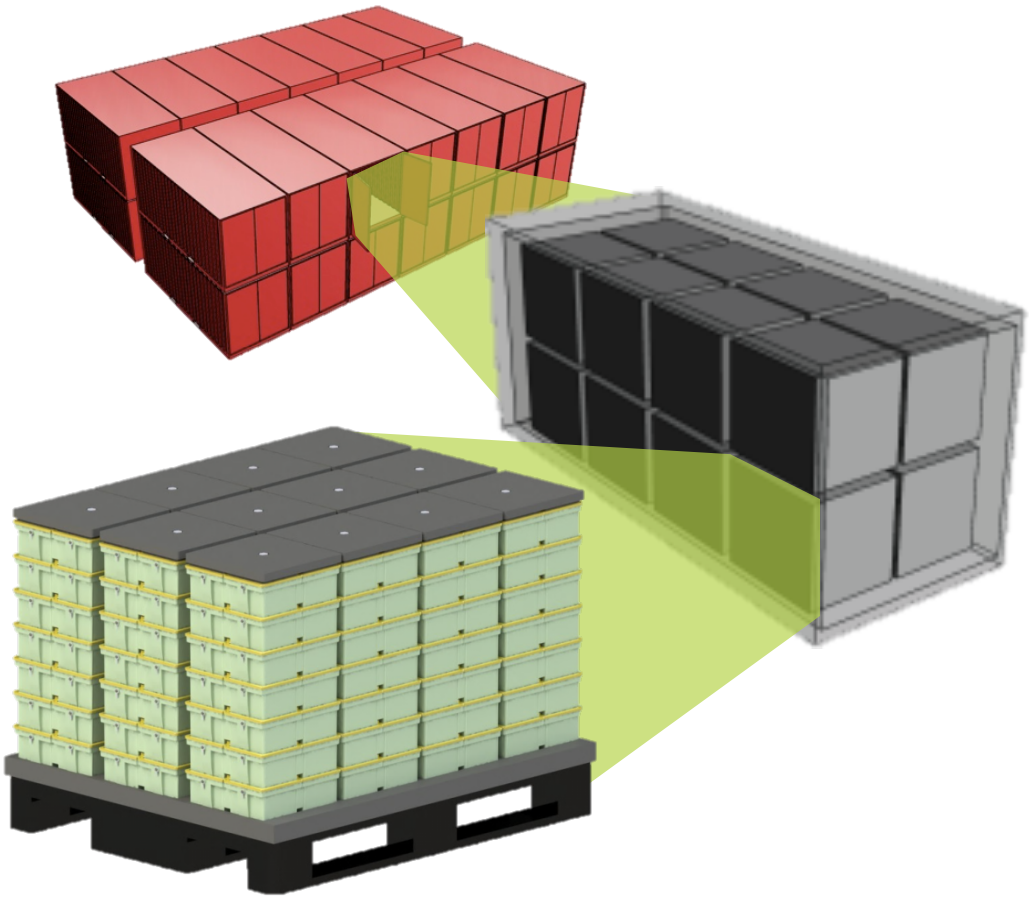
# Product Progression: Future Plans

Current beta product

**TRL 6**



Planned modules and containers

**TRL 7**

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# Manufacturing Progression

## Lab Assembly

Hand assembled cells, 1 cell per hour, to quantify advancements

**2009**

## Manual Pilot

Hand assembled assembly line on pilot dial table

**2011**

## Automated Pilot

Semi-automated manufacturing on dial table

**May 2012**



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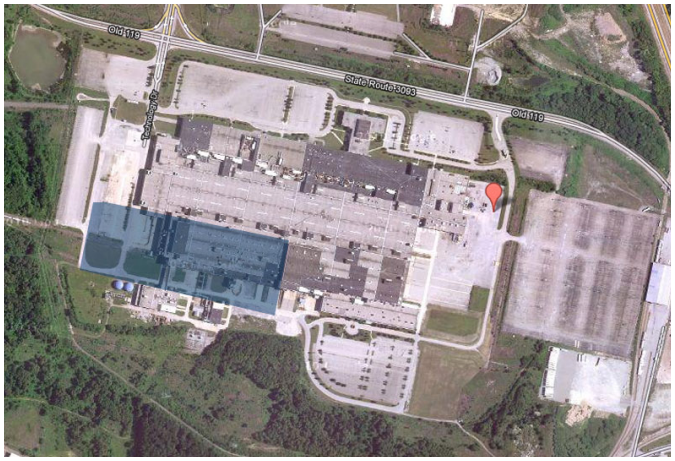
# Manufacturing Progression: Future Plans

## Current Operations

Pilot facility in Pittsburgh, PA
~30,000 sf

## Planned 2013 Operations



Full Scale Manufacturing in Westmoreland PA
~300,000 sf

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# AHI Battery Deployments

**Development Systems**

- Collaborate with PCE Developers

**Grid Tied Demos**

- Wind & Solar Support; Demand Management
- 5-15kWh systems
- Sited at PGH

**Off Grid Grid Demos**

- Residential and Portable Solar
- 2-5kWh systems
- CA, ME, FL, PA, Africa and Australia

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# AHI Battery Deployments: Future Plans

## Reference Systems at Aquion Headquarters

## Large Demos and First Commercial Deployments

# Summary of Accomplishments Enabled by FOA 36

- Grew from one full time employee to over 100
- Raised over $81M in Equity and Debt
- Produced 1000's of battery units for preliminary testing
- Deployed AHI energy storage systems globally
- Scaled production from lab to pilot scale
- Designed and deploying commercial scale manufacturing facility in PA
- Designed built and tested DoE final Deliverable for project: > 10kWh high voltage energy storage system able to perform grid operations

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