



## 360° IN THE PRESS

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### Electro Power Systems Fuels \$6.7M

#### **Italian fuel cell systems maker snags first-round funds from 360 Capital Partners.**

Electro Power Systems, an Italian fuel cell component company, has raised \$6.7 million in first-round funding led by 360 Capital Partners.

Torino, Italy-based Electro Power Systems develops fuel cell power-backup systems designed for companies that maintain large data centers, most notably in the telecommunications industry. The funds will be used for R&D and marketing the technology.

"We are very focused on building up case histories to show our potential customers that we have a unique product that can replace incumbent technology with many advantages," said CEO Adriano Marconetto, said in a statement Monday.

Fuel cells generate electricity by causing chemical reactions using fuel, such as hydrogen or ethanol, and an oxidant, such as oxygen or chlorine. Fuel cells can be used to power portable electronics, vehicles, and provide backup energy. Hyped for 40 years now as the next big thing in energy generation, fuel cell technology has been dogged by cost and safety issues.

The incumbent technology in power backup is a mix of battery systems and generators, but according to Mr. Marconetto, those systems can't provide the amount of hours needed for emergency power backup.

"It's a more flexible technology, a cleaner technology, and it can go in areas where incumbent technology such a diesel generators or huge quantities of batteries can not," he said.

The funding round represents one of the largest venture capital transactions in Italy during the last 12 months, according to Diana Saraceni, partner with 360 Capital Partners. Under the terms of the agreement, 360 Capital Partners will invest in Electro Power Systems in two phases, the first which provides immediate funding of \$2.7 million, and the rest will be delivered within the next 12 months.

"For the first time we found clean technology that is not only attractive because it's clean, it's reliable, but also because it's a good value for the money," said Ms. Saraceni.

Electro Power System's technology is not the actual fuel cell "heart," but instead is the components used to house the fuel cell and to cool it, as well as the electronics required to make it work. "That is not to be underestimated, it's about 60 percent of the total cost of the system at the end of the day," she said.

The company faces little Europe-based competition, but U.S.-based companies, such as PlugPower and Reliant Energy, both public, offer similar technology for energy backup.