

'A Result-Oriented, Hands-On, Lean-Thinking Leader'



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“When I was a kid, I would take apart every toy I got, rebuild it, then play with it—maybe a sign of an engineer-to-be,” said Jonathan Gur, who has worked in the water treatment industry for more than 30 years. “I have held management and executive positions with global companies – both in municipal waste-water treatment/potable water supply and the technology supplier side, including Degremont Technologies, Blue-Green Environmental Technologies and Newterra.”

By Donna Kreutz



In 2011, Gur joined Evandtec Inc., which later amalgamated with Newterra, who owned Ion Enterprises Limited, a manufacturing company founded in the UK in 1990. In 2005, that company was acquired by the Canadian Ion Enterprises Inc. Gur began as Chief Operating Officer, then was named CEO in 2015.

Ion Enterprises works with distributors around the world, offering both the EnviroTower and ScaleBuster water conditioning technologies. The company manufactures the former in Canada and the latter in the United Kingdom.

Works without harsh chemicals

Gur said: “Unlike systems that use harsh chemicals to dissolve scale and corrosion and contribute toxic pollutants to groundwater, the ScaleBuster works without chemicals. Instead, it employs an electrostatic process. This reduces energy and water consumption, while also reducing or in some cases eliminating toxic-water discharge. This water conditioning solution is environmentally friendly, so the EnviroTower solution can save 10 to 15 percent on the operational side, compared to the traditional chemical water treatment, with better results. It also can extend the life expectancy of HVAC equipment from 10 to 17 percent, with significantly less maintenance and labor costs compared to the traditional chemical water treatment for cooling towers.”

Ion Enterprises has grown exponentially because “the technology does what it’s supposed to do. ScaleBuster precipi-

tates the hardness in the water, allowing the EnviroTower system to physically remove it from the water,” Gur said. “This process prevents the formation of scale and corrosion, and allows the water to absorb scale that’s already attached to internal piping and equipment surfaces, thus saving energy, extending life expectancy of the equipment, saving money and the cost of chemicals and improving the health and safety of the cooling system. The EnviroTower system treats the biological contamination once daily, keeping it under control, while saving cost and still being environmentally



Navy project

friendly.

“Chemical methods are losing popularity because their use adds unwanted pollutants to the water table/ground water,” Gur said. “For instance, the use of phosphates has been banned in the production of washing powders in some industrialized countries since their use promotes the growth of algae and other oxygen-depleting organisms. Without oxygen, lakes and rivers stagnate. Chemicals also are expensive to dispose of and of course damage the environment.

"The cooling-tower water treatment market is huge," Gur said. "In 2014 we decided that our traditional markets, Europe and North America, should be expanded, so we started developing new territories and markets in Central/South America, the Middle East and Asia, including China, Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore, India and beyond. We plan to have these markets fully developed for our technologies in the next three to five years, operating in partnership with current and new local distributors," he said.

Customers around the globe

"Simply stated, my goal is to show customers that technology is good and not using good technology to treat cooling-tower water costs them money. I think we're doing it right. We've manufactured ScaleBuster since 1990 and sold more than 300,000 of those units. We have customers running those EnviroTower systems for 15 years. The results speak for themselves. I do not need to brag about it; we have customers who say it for us." Major hotels have saved millions, he said. And one customer in Hawaii had a unit for 12 years before it ever needed a replacement part (a one-inch valve). Clients range from large industrial corporations to hospitals, universities, hotels, schools, office buildings, municipalities and even homeowners.

Nonetheless this is not an easy sell. "The main concern many customers express is the initial expenditure. To install an EnviroTower system, they may invest \$100,000 to \$250,000, which seems like a lot," Gur said. "However, when doing the real math



and looking at potential savings and ultimate return on investment, it becomes easier to make a decision and place an order. Many customers, following a good experience with one application, become open to try other applications as they see the benefits: operational savings, lower capital expenditures and of course, environmentally friendly.

"Our mission is to offer the best cooling-tower water treatment to our customers, which allows for simple yet efficient treatment that extends the lifespan of the chillers, cooling towers and other equipment. In fact, it was customers who recommended Ion Enterprises to *Corporate Vision Magazine* in the United Kingdom, which in 2019 recognized the company as "a leading innovator in energy-saving water treatment." He also received an email from a customer in the US with the subject line all in caps: THANK YOU VERY MUCH. Attached was a photo

of the company's chiller and the message, "after two seasons in Texas, it is clean as a whistle—not one spot of scale."

Gur also works closely with distributors around the world and frequently participates in trade shows. "I like doing them. I personally go six, seven times a year—usually Hong Kong, Singapore and China. This week we have sent a director to Abu Dhabi." On LinkedIn, Gur is described as "a result-oriented, hands-on, lean-thinking leader." He relishes using his engineering skills to devise solutions to tough challenges, while also improving processes, productivity, efficiency, profitability and competitive advantage. "I'm involved in every detail and that includes signing off on every design." ♦

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