

## **Bob Shallit: Eye on power**

### **Folsom startup may have breakthrough fuel-cell system for television cameras**

**By Bob Shallit -- Bee Columnist**

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The fuel cell business has been long on promise. Short on results.

But a Folsom fuel cell startup seems poised to start delivering cost-effective products in at least one niche market.

Jadoo Power Systems already has sold cells that power surveillance cameras. But the big sales could come later this year when it rolls out a product to replace the bulky batteries now used in TV news cameras.



KOVR cameraman Marty Hernandez, left, films reporter John Iander in downtown Sacramento this week. Hernandez is testing a fuel-cell power system made by Jadoo Power Systems in Folsom as a substitute for bulky batteries normally used in TV cameras.

**Sacramento Bee/Brian Baer**

KOVR (Channel 13) already is testing the cells in a couple of its cameras. Sales to dozens of other stations could follow the product's official unveiling at next month's National Association of Broadcasters conference in Las Vegas.

"We're the best-kept secret in the industry," says Jadoo CEO Larry Bawden. "We won't be for long."

Bawden is projecting sales of between 200 and 400 units at a cost of about \$4,000 each for the fiscal year ending in September.

The appeal: Jadoo's cells last much longer than the batteries now used in TV cameras, are half as heavy, recharge more quickly and cost just about the same as standard camera battery packs. Another selling point: You can pull a battery from a camera and replace it without any interruption of filming.



The Jadoo Power Systems device for TV cameras utilizes hydrogen fuel cells, such as the one above.



Above is a fuel-cell charging station, with a hydrogen tank in the background.

**Sacramento Bee  
photos/Brian Baer**

"It works like a top. It's cool," says Marty Hernandez, a KOVR cameraman who has been testing out the system. "I'm running four hours and 45 minutes a unit." How long do standard batteries last? "Oh, 20 to 40 minutes."

Jadoo was formed two years ago and received \$5 million in backing from Sinclair Broadcasting, which owns KOVR. It hasn't received much media attention, but it's attracted political interest. President Bush invited company execs to Washington, D.C., last year for a demonstration of the product.

Now Sen. John Kerry, Bush's probable Democratic opponent, is intrigued. His advance folks were on the phone with Bawden this week, scoping out a tour of Jadoo's Folsom offices.

### About the Writer

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