



GLOBAL IMMERSION ANNOUNCES WORLD-FIRST HYDROGEN FUEL-CELL PLANETARIUM

West Sussex, UK --- April 1st, 2010, West Sussex, UK --- After a stated challenge to “Rewrite the way planetariums operate” at the 2008 International Planetarium Society conference, Global Immersion has announced plans to build the World’s first hydrogen fuel-cell powered planetarium.

Officially called H2GO!®, these new completely self-contained planetarium power plants will convert a stream of hydrogen into electricity to be used for the operation of planetarium systems including as projection, audio, and lighting. Each H2GO! system is comprised of a highly technical, field-tested ‘JouleCell’ chamber that stands approximately 50 meters high and weighs in at almost 18 tons.

Speaking about this ground-breaking innovation, Matt Fox, Chief Managing Engineer at Global Immersion said, “This marks the beginning in self-sustaining planetarium projection experiences. This is the future of projecting tiny dots on the inside of large balls set to synthesizer music - we are very excited about the possibilities of where this technology will take us.”

The only pollution the H2GO! system will create is heat and clean, drinkable water. “In a single day, the H2GO! will create three thousand times more electricity than a normal planetarium would consume in a month” Fox continued. “Experimental architectural designs have suggested the excess power can be used to heat the building housing the planetarium and provide all of the necessary power to run the building’s infrastructure.”

As with any other hydrogen fuel-cell power generator, two crucial obstacles needed to be overcome before bringing the design to market. The first is the inherent flammability of hydrogen (think the Hindenburg). This issue has been solved not by making hydrogen less flammable, but by situating the power plant at least five kilometers away from the planetarium.

“We decided that if one of the H2GO! systems were to suffer any kind of unlikely system failure, we would want it to be as far away from people as possible” Fox explained. “As a result, the system will come bundled with high-voltage cables that can be custom fitted to the local power grid. Running thousands and thousands of meters of high tension powerlines through people gardens is a difficult task. In some ways, dealing with the farmers and land owners has been more of a challenge than inventing the H2GO! itself! We’ve become quite adept at teaming up with local authorities and permitting offices to get the necessary lines run.”

The second major issue to overcome was the ability to get the hydrogen fuel to the H2GO! system. Global Immersion has founded daughter company ‘HydroTransit™’; specializing in hydrogen fuel delivery, to assist customers interested in purchasing a H2GO! “Hydrogen may be the most abundant element in the universe, but that doesn’t mean it’s easy to come by in central England”, Global Immersion’s Lead Project Engineer Jack Langley noted.



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Driver, Jan Breens added, "These things consume so much hydrogen that we had to invent a whole new fuel delivery industry that is reliable, inexpensive, and, most importantly, safe. We want to keep the digital stars shining and not harm people in the process."

The delivery model is simple; once the H2GO! power plant is built, the customer can sign up for the hydrogen delivery service and a tanker will arrive every three hours to deliver the needed hydrogen to keep the planetarium operational. The tankers, far from ordinary fuel-delivery trucks, are custom-fitted with a containment system that keeps the fuel from escaping during transit. The details of this containment system are considered an industry secret. This special containment system also effectively removes the possibility that any major catastrophes will result from traffic accidents or malfunctions.

Matt Fox said, "In this climate of increasing ecological awareness, a planetarium driven by a completely environmentally friendly power plant is not only responsible, it is also a positive and unique feature to attract eco-tourists." He adds "It's also just smart business. A single H2GO! will pay for itself in less than 50 years."

The first H2GO! system is slated to begin construction in July of 2010 and is considered a crucial component of an as-yet-to-be-named planetarium in central England.

For more details, contact Global Immersion at nolimits@globalimmersion.com

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About Global Immersion

Global Immersion is an award-winning organization, dedicated to the unique and innovative medium of immersive theater.

With over ten years experience in the world of fulldome displays and scientific data visualization, Global Immersion combines a broad range of proven technologies to create enthralling and exciting immersive theater. As a full-service team, they pull together exceptional theater design, advanced projection technologies, content production, user-friendly controls and advanced audio & lighting – all on a digital infrastructure.

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