

# Opportunities Abound



For those of us involved in the water treatment industry, I think we are embarking on some pretty exciting times. It seems as if you can't walk pass a newsstand these days without seeing water in the headlines. From water shortages to drug-tainted water, this noble industry is quickly making its way into the forefront of America's consciousness.

Things may seem to be bleak as the U.S. residential market is struggling; for manufacturers, competition from overseas is increasing; and there is an escalating universal need for more efficient and environmentally friendly behaviors and technologies. Nevertheless,

I think what might appear to be insurmountable challenges may actually prove to be an invaluable source of opportunity for this industry.

Recent acquisitions and joint ventures among some of the industry's largest manufacturers are also providing evidence that this industry is on the brink of technological innovations of paramount measures. With the recent joint venture between GE Water & Process Technologies and Pentair—at one time two of the industry's fiercest competitors—these former foes are now a combined force working together to develop technology that could potentially provide a breakthrough unlike anything we've seen in this industry in the past 50 years.

And the acquisition trend goes on—Watt's Water Quality & Conditioning Products purchased Topway Global late last year and Trojan Technologies recently acquired R-Can Environmental, Inc., to name a few. With every acquisition, two strong industry players combine their engineering, sales and customer service teams, creating an organization that is twice as strong as when it began and is better poised to serve the industry.

And with the current issues facing our industry, such as pending water softener bans, we may need manufacturers to work together to create new technologies or enhance existing technology to overcome whatever stipulations may be placed on our industry.

For the average water dealer who might be sitting back and carefully watching as manufacturers acquire one another, working hard to fight a slipping residential market and wondering what all of this will mean for you and your business, I think you are in a pretty good position. Water is on everybody's radar right now and the products you sell are only going to get better and more advanced.

To that end, I would like to share some encouraging information with you: The latest ADP Employment Report has found that in an economy that is barely staying afloat, small businesses are helping the U.S. economy keep its head above water. The report also found that small businesses have created more than 93.5% of all new net jobs over the last 20 years, and the National Small Business Association believes the only way the U.S. economy can bounce back is through the fostering of small businesses.

Encouraging information indeed, and I think our opportunities will only continue to grow.

*Stephanie Harris*

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## coming up next month

The October issue of *Water Quality Products* will feature UV disinfection, residential water treatment, water reuse, software solutions, ozone, WQA forum and sales tips. Be sure to visit our website at [www.wqpmag.com](http://www.wqpmag.com) for daily industry news updates.



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