

By Paul Overbeck

Opportunities Ahead

2009 shows promise of growth for UV and ozone technologies

When I sat down to write this article, I produced many drafts that rehashed the turbulence, disappointments and shortcomings of 2008, but I threw them all out. Our current global economic situation requires little introduction; while many have focused on what they see as the now inevitable downward spiral, I say we choose not to acquiesce to this thinking. Where some see failure, I see only opportunity and potential.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once challenged us all, saying, "Commerce is a game of skill which everyone cannot play and few can play well."

The current environment offers both risk and reward. I would like to take you back to an Aug. 8 article that appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* titled, "The Spirit of the Bear is with Us." Its subhead read, "Fear of financial collapses, both banking and corporate, political disarray, poor second quarter earnings and Middle East hostilities are keeping the grizzlies image in the fore."

Does this sound familiar? Did you guess that was from Aug. 8 ... 1982?

The objectivity of history can be comforting in turbulent times. In hindsight, 1982 was clearly a time of opportunity. Many water industry professionals and companies took up the challenge and grew the following year and beyond. Just think how the ozone and ultraviolet (UV) segments of our industry, among many others, have changed in the last 26 years.

Opportunity & Message

The International Ozone Association (IOA) is now 36 years old and the International Ultraviolet Association (IUVA) celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. Looking forward, some may think that the success the IOA and IUVA and the respective technologies have experienced is threatened by our global economic situation. Will 2009 prove to be a time of opportunity? Only time and our actions will tell.

Should we assume that spending will be down in market sectors that ozone and UV technologies support, or should we strongly spread the message of the benefits of ozone and UV, positioning industry professionals to catch the economic recovery wave?

Ozone and UV have momentum on their side, and I don't expect acceptance and application to slow significantly. Both technologies are proven, cost-effective, green technologies with

identified advantages and multiple benefits. A recently released Water Market USA report published by Global Water Intelligence states:

The fastest growing water technology markets over the period between 2008 and 2016 will be ultrafiltration and microfiltration membranes (+280%), ozone disinfection systems (+233%), UV disinfection (+227%), membrane bioreactors (+180%) and reverse osmosis membrane systems (+165%). Capital expenditure on water reuse will top \$10 billion between 2009 and 2016.

Ozone and UV are positioned to take advantage of emerging market needs and governmental recovery measures, focused on internal infrastructure investment for job creation. Global news releases highlight infrastructure funding announcements from Asia to Canada, Europe and South America. The incoming Obama administration is indicating vast infrastructure spending to allow utilities to catch up with projects they were forced to delay and to drive new jobs.

Emerging market applications for UV and ozone such as food safety, remediation, air treatment, advanced oxidation and water reuse make the outlook bright for 2010 and beyond.

Education

Both the IUVA and IOA will be delivering educational programs around the world in 2009, including:

- *UV Advanced Oxidation & UV New Applications*, March 12, Long Beach, CA. Experts from across the U.S. will explore the many facets of UV technology in disinfection, advanced oxidation and water reuse.
- *UV & Ozone Workshop at WQA Aquatech USA 2009*, March 17, Rosemont, IL. This workshop will feature introductions to both technologies and commercial-industrial applications.

- *North American Conference on Ozone & UV Technologies*, May 4-6, Boston, MA. This conference will focus on municipal water, wastewater and reuse topics and will include optional technology introductory and operational workshops.
- *UV Applications Workshop at Singapore International Water Week*, June 22, Singapore. This workshop will detail basic UV technologies and applications in water, wastewater, reuse and commercial-industrial applications.
- *19th Ozone World Congress*, Aug. 31-Sept. 3, Tokyo, Japan. The World Congress brings together international experts to discuss current research and state-of-the-art application of ozone technology.
- *5th World Congress on UV Technology*, Sept. 21-23, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The World Congress brings together international experts to discuss current research and state-of-the-art applications of UV technology.

The use of advanced treatment processes including UV, ozone, advanced oxidation and membrane processes will see significantly higher growth in the decades ahead in order to meet a tightening regulatory environment, consumer safety concerns and water reuse necessities in many international regions.

We leave you with a message of hope: Commit yourself today to take full advantage of what 2009 will bring. Water industry professionals must keep pace with technology and stay ahead of the competition through education. *wqp*

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