

Brief Profile

Pianeta is the first Italian company to have been established with the purpose of designing, developing and managing Agile Energy SystemsTM (smaller size plants compared to the big traditional power plants) integrating cutting-edge hydrogen based technologies for energy purposes.

Pianeta was founded in 2003 upon the strong willpower of Gruppo ASM, based in Settimo Torinese, near Torino, and private entrepreneurs Adriano Marconetto (already co-founder of the successful digital music company Vitaminic) and Emilio Paolucci (professor at the Politecnico di Torino).

“Hydrogen-based Agile Energy SystemsTM – confirms Professor Paolucci, Pianeta’s engineering department director – require constant international technological scouting, the ability to segment in a completely new way the new energy market, elevated integration skills of the different technologies chosen from time to time to answer the needs of each individual market segment. To be the first ones to experiment this activity equals to being the first to create a completely new store of expertise and competitive advantage which can be sustainable for the companies within the territory. Since its start off, Pianeta has chosen to collaborate not only with research bodies in Turin but also with a range of companies throughout the territory – specialised in different kinds of installation or in the production of cutting-edge systems due to increase the value of thermal energy – in order to grow in a system context and therefore avoiding the typical risks of who operates in an isolated way”.

Throughout the last two years in fact, Pianeta has learned to carry out a range of different tasks. It has designed and developed “Primo Settimo”, the first stationary hydrogen-based Agile Energy SystemTM in Italy, conceived with the purpose to make Gruppo ASM’s Settimo HQs energetically self-sufficient. It then devised, together with Environment Park’s Hysy Lab, the so-called “first hydrogen Olympics”, or rather, a series of fuel cell and other hydrogen-based technologies power systems, starting from the plant at its completion at the ex Italsider colony in Sansicario, wanted and financed by Regione Piemonte administration.

“This plant – says Marconetto, Pianeta’s CEO – represents the best of the community’s system integration of “hydrogen” capacities in Piedmont. A year’s team up with Hysy Lab for the plant’s design based on the choice of the best existing technologies and their integration to make them “user friendly”. A process involving numerous companies and subjects that proved their ability to perform an active role in the project. An achievement that makes us very proud since no other company has ever before realised these kinds of plants on the occasion of such an important event as the Olympics”.

Thanks to this considerable experience, Pianeta has become one of the driving forces of a International Consortium gathering in a network a range of research centres, companies and territories with the goal of developing hydrogen infrastructures for future leading sport events. The consortium encompasses the city of Valencia (America’s Cup), Hamburg (football world cup), Beijing and London (Olympics). “The above mentioned cities see in

what we do today what they would like to develop tomorrow – confirms co-founder Emilio Paolucci – and this allows us to set the foundations to start exporting shortly our know-how and to create further opportunities to experiment these technologies, granting us a part in a world scale technological network”.

Obviously Pianeta’s challenges are not exclusively addressed to the international market: there is still a lot to be done at home as well. And since a couple of weeks the Gruppo ASM has entrusted Pianeta with the management of some more traditional but nevertheless interesting business lines. The energy management of some hundred condominiums and public body estates, Settimo Torinese’s municipal lighting (and shortly other city councils), the development of microturbine-based Agile Energy SystemsTM.

The integration of these areas with new technology opportunities will propell the technological transfer from demonstrative plants (Pianeta’s hydrogen systems) onto the real market, establishing in Italy one company of a kind: no longer a technological “boutique”, but an energy company totally focused on the production of green certificates as envisaged by Kyoto Protocol applications, and on the development of cutting- edge highly efficient energy plants.

A further sign that shows how Pianeta has left behind its “start-up” phase - the production of mainly demonstrative plants – receives a further confirmation from the company’s setting up innovative energy projects with Italian utilities, important property companies which are in the process of building new housing estates which apply new energy and architectural concepts, and with telecommunications companies to operate antennae back-up systems.

According to Marconetto “the next few months could mark Pianeta’s turning point. On the one hand, the huge international visibility drawn by the Olympics on our plants will have to be exploited at its greatest to establish foreign business opportunities. And on the other, the new activity areas require a more and more substantial choice of the new. For instance, we are already thinking of fitting cogenerative micro-turbines in place of simple boilers installed in many of today’s buildings (to increase efficiency, decrease costs and pollution) and in the same buildings we will fit fuel cell-based power systems, as soon as possible, which will fuction both as heating and electricity supply: which translate into a more environment-friendly, energy efficient, economical for users, and more development opportunity for us. We want to try to be the first Italian company to realise this project which involves a technological transfer and, in doing that, the first to develop in concrete an energetic business model aiming at producing energy where and when it is needed without waste.”

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