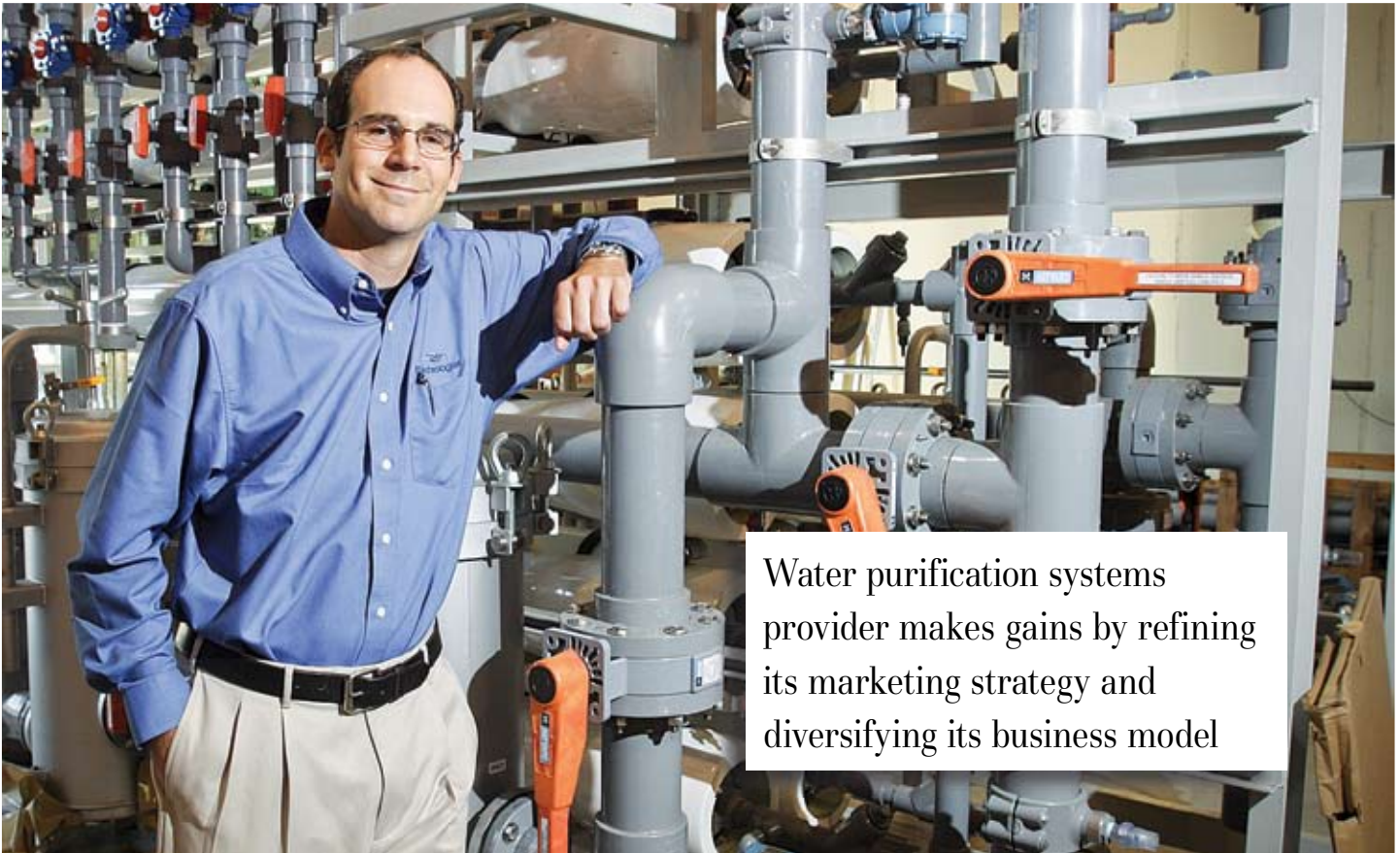


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High-water mark

LT Technologies Inc.



Water purification systems provider makes gains by refining its marketing strategy and diversifying its business model

W. MARC BERNSAU | BUSINESS JOURNAL

When he became CEO of LT Technologies in 2006, Tom Belmont Jr. determined that one of the company's biggest challenges was establishing name recognition in a field with such heavy hitters as GE Water & Process Technologies and Siemens.

It takes more than just innovation to clean up in the water purification systems business. You also need a good marketing strategy and a diversified business model. Just ask **Tom Belmont Jr.**, who in 2006 took over the reins of **LT Technologies Inc.**, the West Bridgewater-based company established by his father, **Tom Belmont Sr.**, in 1990.

When he became CEO, the junior Belmont analyzed the company's strengths and weaknesses. One of its key strengths was the company's expertise in designing and manufacturing a wide range of purification, filtration and treatment products — from standard pH neutralization and compliance systems to custom-built microfiltration systems — for industrial and commercial clients nationwide. In fact, the size of its projects have

run the gamut in cost from \$5,000 to multimillion-dollar jobs in recent years.

At the same time, though, Belmont recognized one of LT Technologies' weaknesses was one of name recognition for a relatively small company — only 15 employees strong today — whose competitors these days include the likes of **GE Water & Process Technologies** and **Siemens**.

"That was probably the biggest challenge: How do we go to market to get more exposure?" said Belmont, 38.

This led to a shift in the company's marketing strategy — by moving away from placing print ads in trade publications and exhibiting at trade shows, for instance, and embracing technology as it related to the company's online presence.

LT TECHNOLOGIES: Revamp enables company to chase big contracts

LT has had a Web site since 1998, but since its products and services have evolved considerably, it was determined that a major re-launch was necessary. By bringing much of the work in-house, the company was able to perform the re-launch for an investment of \$5,000, Belmont said. Design for the new site, which was unveiled in March, was done by **Neveu Design** in Boston.

Belmont said the company has also utilized a number of other Web-based marketing strategies, such as search engine optimization techniques, to boost online awareness of the company.

"We're typically a Web-based marketing business at this point," said Belmont. "We've seen a good return on our investment (in that area)."

Belmont estimates the revamped Web site has received more than 3,000 hits since its launch. And, he said, the company has received inquiries from several companies in the food and beverage and biotech industries as a result of the new site.

Belmont said LT Technologies has grown on the order of about 30 percent during each of the last several years. After bringing in \$2.5 million in revenue in 2008, the company is projecting more than \$3.5 million this year.

Further evidence of its growth lies in the fact that, in August, it expanded its manufacturing and engineering facilities by adding a 5,000-square-foot location in East Bridgewater. Its main site is a 15,000-square-foot location in West Bridgewater.

Belmont believes a key selling point for LT has been its multipronged approach.

"We design, manufacture and service the systems. To be able to have all three (capabilities) under one roof is a big advantage for us," he said.

Market and project diversity has also become a cornerstone of the company's growth strategy. When the company was launched by Tom Belmont Sr. (who continues to work in a customer-focused capacity), it focused on helping midmarket manufacturing clients meet their regulatory compliance requirements with its systems. But as the economy began to take a toll on some of the company's manufacturing clients in the early part of this decade, "we had to shift gears and focus in on different markets," said Tom Belmont Jr.

LT has diversified by tackling larger water purification and recycling projects for a wider spectrum of clients, including precision manufacturers, pharmaceutical, electronics, food and beverage, construction firms, and government agencies.

Douglas Wahl, owner, partner and COO of **The Janzen Wahl Group LLC** in Tuscon, Ariz., for which LT Technologies designed a water recycling system, said he was impressed by the firm's professionalism. "Their work was of the highest value. ... The equipment works flawlessly," he said.

Typically, Belmont said, LT Technologies is working with about 100 clients at any given time. For the past couple of years, it has executed between 15 and 20 projects per year — though the range in cost has been considerable.

For instance, it recently closed a purchase order with **Cabot Stains** in Newbury-

FAST FACTS

LT Technologies Inc., a provider of water purification systems, was founded by Tom Belmont Sr. in 1990. His son, Tom Belmont Jr., became CEO in 2006.

The company works with about 100 clients at any given time and is projecting revenue of more than \$3.5 million this year, compared with \$2.5 million in 2008.

Two growth initiatives for the company this year have included the re-launch of its Web site and the addition of a second facility, located in East Bridgewater.

port on a \$5,000 project to provide a water deionization system.

On the higher end of the spectrum is a multimillion-dollar project, which is about 50 percent complete, that it is performing for the **U.S. Navy**. LT Technologies is manufacturing a high-capacity water purification system for a military facility in East Africa.

The company has been able to go after large-scale projects like this, said Belmont, by often tapping into what he refers to as a pool of "network partners" — such as general contractors, engineers and companies with complementary technologies.

"What you do is build a strong network — you try to work with other companies," said Belmont. "I always say, 'You don't need to have the whole pie, you just need to have a piece of the pie.'"

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