

Meet IONETIC, the company creating battery packs that can be adjusted cell by cell

As part of our quick fire questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to James Easton, cofounder and CEO of IONETIC about bespoke battery solutions that can increase energy density and the importance of a clear strategy for success.

I was speaking to several smaller automotive companies in the UK and noticed that many were in critical need of support in all stages of the battery pack value chain – from having the initial vision to producing a vehicle-ready, fully optimised battery.

The existing options available to them were either poor engineering solutions, too expensive, or took too long to develop. It became clear that a new solution was needed, especially for the smaller and niche manufacturers who often need something bespoke and don't meet the minimum order quantities of many global battery pack providers.

Tell me about the business – what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work

with, how you reach customers and so on?

Put simply, *IONETIC* offers a better battery pack solution. We can take customers through every step – from requirements through validation, homologation, scale-up, and manufacture. We can leverage our design platform to get to solutions faster, meaning that we speed up time to market. By optimising for both design and manufacture, as well as having a common platform across customers, we significantly reduce the cost.

Our main customers are currently niche vehicle makers in the UK and Europe – companies that make less than 10,000 vehicles per year. These types of companies tend to be makers of either low-volume passenger cars or construction and service vehicles. Most don't meet the minimum order quantities for many of the global battery pack suppliers and need a cheaper bespoke option.

So far, there are a few methods to get in touch with customers. Sometimes they reach out to us, sometimes word of mouth leads them to us, or if I'm at a specific event, I'll check who's going and try to setup a meeting.

How has the business evolved since its launch? When was this?

We began as a consultancy, offering advice to automotive companies looking to electrify. However, this shifted when we noticed that the EV market was lacking considerably, and that small OEMs were facing difficulties because of this. In response, we decided to pivot almost immediately after the company was launched in January of 2022.

How are you funded?

We have existing funding in place but will soon be raising again. So, if there are any VCs or Angels reading this and want to hear more about what we do, feel free to reach out to me!

What has been your biggest challenge

so far and how have you overcome this?

We're planning to open our first manufacturing facility in the UK next year. This is a big undertaking so, naturally, we've incurred a lot of challenges with it. It's an expensive project, especially as a lot of our customers want to see capability before committing. The result is that some are less inclined to make a commitment with us, which makes raising funding harder.

To combat this, we've developed as much of an MVP as possible within our budget, and build technologies on a smaller scale. I also use my own personal network and expertise to give customers more confidence in us.

How does IONETIC answer an unmet need?

Most of our customers don't meet the minimum order quantities for many of the global battery pack suppliers and need more cost-effective bespoke options. That's where we come in. Designed with flexibility and customisation at its heart, our platform enables each battery pack concept to be adjusted cell by cell - creating a solution that efficiently utilises the available space, increases energy density and meets customers' specific packaging requirements.

We can take customers through every step - from requirements through validation, homologation, scale-up, and manufacture. We can leverage our design platform to get to solutions faster, meaning that we speed up time to market. Finally, by optimising for both design and manufacture, as well as having a common platform across customers, we significantly reduce the cost.

What's in store for the future?

Being less than a year old, we have a long way to go. A manufacturing facility is our next big step. The ultimate end goal is for us to be the go-to for battery pack design and manufacture in Europe, and save over 100,000 tonnes of CO2 from entering the atmosphere by 2027.

What one piece of advice would you give

other founders or future founders?

I think being very strategic makes life a lot easier. Make sure you have a clear strategy for success and that you're aware and on top of your timelines.

More importantly, though, starting is the best thing you can do. There's no point in waiting for an ideal time as it doesn't really exist – just start.

James Eaton is cofounder and CEO of IONETIC.

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