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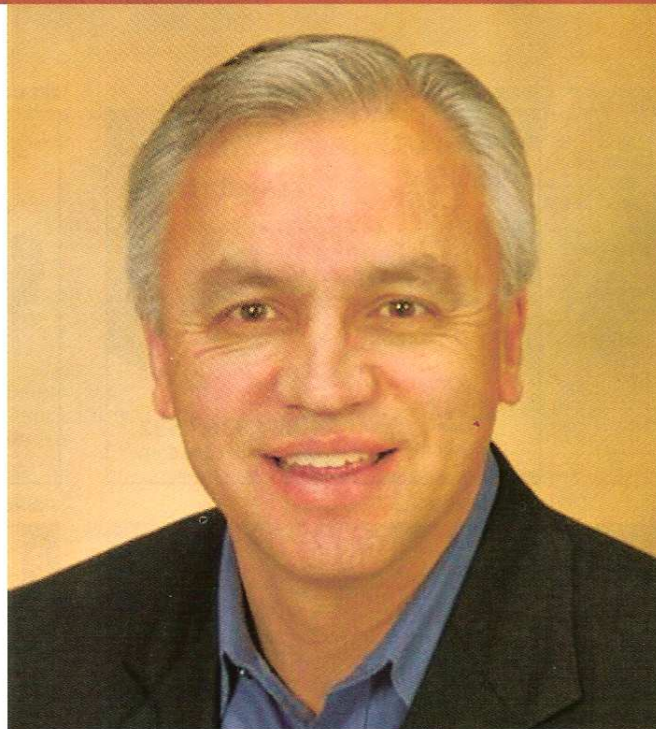
EFFICIENCY FOR THE FUTURE

» MARK BERNARD STECK

We spoke with Gus Ezcurra about energy efficiency, the stimulus package, and what it all means for the future of building in America. Ezcurra is the CEO of Advanced Telemetry, a company that makes the EcoView, which allows you to monitor how much energy is being used in your home in order to reduce consumption.

[MBS] You're dealing with things like tax credits, smart energy management, state and local government rebates, and how this can benefit Americans in general, but how does this affect the building community specifically and what changes, from the builder's perspective, are taking place right now?

[GE] What's important is the stimulus money and the government support for Green building. The government has made available close to \$50 billion earmarked for Green energy, everywhere from consumers buying energy-efficient appliances to electric vehicle technology to the smart grid. One of the easiest ways is through rebates. The biggest initiative early on is trying to get money into the economy as quickly as possible with what they call "shovel-ready projects." The most obvious shovel-ready project is trying to avail themselves of the state programs already in place. Most states already have programs for energy savings, something that has to do with, for example, rebate programs, R&D credits, etc. The problem was that many states were having the same economic difficulties and their budgets were depleted. With a lot of those funds for Green energy, the money was taken out to pay for other parts of the budget. Every state has had problems with this. So the first thing that was done with this Green energy stimulus



money is that it was re-injected into those funds, so now the states have the money available for these rebate programs. And there's rebate programs available for so many different facets. Anything basically that really saves energy and is environmentally friendly, there's rebate programs in place and they're well-funded, so a building operator can get money back quite rapidly from the state once they've completed paperwork for it and everything else.

[MBS] What about the timeline? Where are we at and what sort of prediction can you make of how and when this will affect the industry?

[GE] Money's already trickling in right now for the most obvious rebates, the ones that are already in place. I think you'll see a lot more money injected into the economy as summer starts to roll around, because some of these programs are dependent on approvals of your plan, so if you're going to build a new building and make it very energy efficient, zero carbon footprint, alternative energy sources and all that, that's a little more complicated and

takes some time to get that approval, but that's happening too. It's on a fast track and it happens relatively quickly, especially by government standards, but I think you'll start to see the impact of that around midsummer to end of summer, and then you'll start to see your larger investments as well.

[MBS] What kind of roadblocks do you see builders coming up against in taking advantages of these things?

[GE] I think you're going to have a few things. You still have the government bureaucracy and paperwork; that's always going to be there. They've really tried to fast-track it, they've really tried to help us out, but a government is a government and so you have to fill out a lot of paperwork and jump through a lot of hoops. That, I know, is frustrating for a lot of people, just having to go through it all, having to expend some time and people and effort and all that, but that's going to be a concern. I think the other thing is that even though \$50 billion assembled for Green energy sounds like a lot, the fact of the matter is that it's not that much. There's

just so much opportunity, so much demand out there that even this is going to dry up to some degree, so I'm sure it will be refunded every year if it works well this year, but a lot of these programs are going to run dry.

[MBS] Give me kind of an overview of what you think, as a whole, this stimulus plan is going to do for energy efficiency in America?

[GE] One thing about energy efficiency, it really has not been embraced rapidly by the large corporations. So corporate America has been a little bit slow in developing the technologies and then implementing the technologies in the marketplace. A lot of this stuff is being done by smaller companies that are working on research and development, developing the technologies that let us deploy this in mass amounts, and I think that what this does now, this stimulus gives a real jolt to this industry, and takes it to the next level in allowing it to get out there for the greater population. I'm very excited about it because we needed something like this to get us kind of off dead-center, and that's what this is doing. Then to stimulate the customer or the consumer for these products at the same time, that's a kickstart that's needed. I'm very excited about it. This is exactly what's needed. This is a real sea change in this whole industry of energy/cost relation, and I also think it's a potential sea change in the economy in general. You've got a new market, new sources of opportunity, and you've got new ways for traditional businesses to do business and save money. I think this is something that will be looked back on in a few years as a real element of change in the economy of the United States. ■