

Welcome to Solar Weekly Insight, presenting the most important developments in the global solar industry, ranging from significant industry trends, policies, research, and new technologies to markets and pricing.

This week's edition focuses on large solar thermal and PV plants, projects as well as improved solar industry and market conditions.

280 MW Solana CSP plant begins operations in Arizona



The Solana CSP plant can produce six hours of electricity without operation of the solar field

This week Abengoa announced the beginning of commercial operation at its Solana CSP plant in the U.S. state of Arizona. The plant is not only the largest operational CSP plant in the world, but also the first utility-scale solar plant in the United States to feature energy storage. Solana can supply electricity for six hours after sundown using molten salt energy storage. [More](#)

This follows on news late last week that U.S. publisher Liberty Interactive has invested USD 300 million in the holding company for Solana. [More](#)

Japanese market update: 3.67 GW of PV commissioned in first year of feed-in tariff



This week Japan's METI released figures for the nation's feed-in tariff, finding that 3.67 GW of PV was connected to the grid in the first year of the program. Performance from April through June 2013 was particularly strong at 1.83 GW, and the nation has approved another 18 GW of projects that have not yet been completed. [More](#)

*Picture left: Japan is building an increasing number of utility-scale PV projects.
Image: Kyocera*

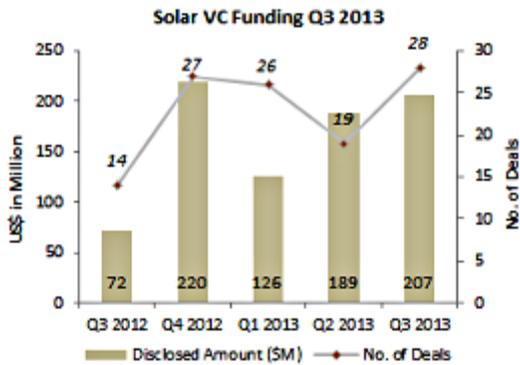
SolarCity acquires Zep Solar



This week SolarCity announced that it is buying mounting system maker Zep Solar for USD 158 million, payable in SolarCity stock. Zep will continue as a business unit of SolarCity. [More](#)

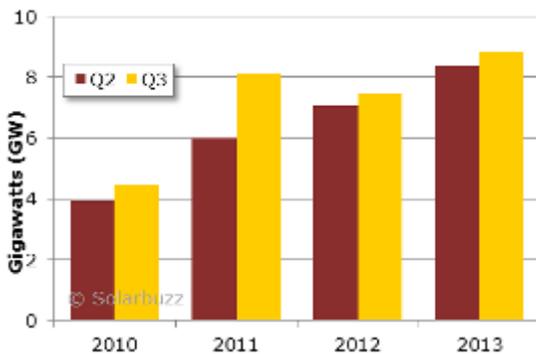
Picture left: SolarCity says that the Zep mounting system has allowed its installation crews to greatly increase their productivity. Image: Zep Solar

Improved solar industry conditions in Q3 2013 as 9 GW installed



Overall, the global solar industry appears to be recovering. Mercom Capital released its third quarter funding and M&A report this week, reporting a growth in overall spending and over 3 GW of project acquisitions during the quarter. [More](#)

Picture left: Venture capital funding was at its highest level since the fourth quarter of 2012. Image: Mercom



While NPD Solarbuzz released figures which find that 9 GW was installed globally in the third quarter of 2013, a 20% increase over the third quarter of 2012. [More](#)

Picture left: NPD Solarbuzz notes that this is the strongest Q2 and Q3 demand to date. Image: NPD Solarbuzz

Neo Solar Power shows strong Q3 results



Taiwanese PV cell maker Neo Solar Power is having a good quarter, and year. The company saw its ninth consecutive month of revenue increases in September, with USD 444 in revenues in 2013 to date. [More](#)

Picture left: Following the merger with DeSolar, NSP is the world's second-largest PV cell maker. Image: NSP

DECC roadmap for UK solar PV deployment policies



This week the UK's Department of Energy and Climate Change unveiled the first part of its roadmap for PV deployment, which lays out priorities including appropriate siting and support of low-cost projects. [More](#)

Picture left: UK Energy and Climate Change Minister Greg Barker says that PV can play a role in delivering clean energy at the lowest possible cost. Image: UK Government

Utility-scale solar PV, CSP met 3.0% of California's electricity demand in September 2013



Late last week Solar Server published a new analysis by renewable energy consultant Bernard Chabot which finds that utility-scale solar PV and CSP met 3.0% of California's electricity demand in September 2013. This does not include "behind-the-meter" residential and commercial PV systems. [More](#)

Picture left: As California ISO data does not include "behind-the-meter" PV systems, PV and CSP met more than 3.0% of demand during the month. Image: SolarCity

El Salvador to launch bidding process for 60 MW of utility-scale PV



Finally, this week El Salvador announced that it will hold a bidding process for developers to build 60 MW of utility-scale PV, as well as 40 MW of wind. [More](#)

Picture left: El Salvador has rich natural solar potential

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