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## Scottsdale solar pool cleaner raises more than \$400,000 on Kickstarter

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A Scottsdale-based company has raised more than \$400,000 through **Kickstarter** to produce its next generation of the world's first solar-powered robotic swimming pool cleaner and chemical dispenser.

Solar Pool Technologies Inc. launched its \$315,000 Kickstarter campaign on July 30 to fund the production of its Solar-Breeze NX.

The successful crowdfunding campaign ended up raising \$408,078 from 758 backers from all over the world when it ended on Sept. 12.

"We were a little surprised how quickly it took off," said Solar Pool CEO Paul Sim. "After just a couple days we were almost halfway to the goal. We continued to grow and ended up surpassing our goal."

Sim said the company chose this funding route from the suggestion of customers and to close the gap between paying suppliers and getting money from customers.

"Through Kickstarter we knew we had a committed customer base, but it's also a great way to broadcast news about new products and get support from across the



PROVIDED BY SOLAR POOL TECHNOLOGIES

Paul Sim, the CEO of Solar Pool Technologies, stands next to the company's Solar-Breeze solar-powered robotic swimming pool cleaner and chemical dispenser.

world,” Sim said. “Through Kickstarter we could get money first from customers because of the pre-order sales.”

The company launched its first version of Solar-Breeze in 2011 and sold about 6,000.

Solar-Breeze is like a Roomba for the pool, cleaning the debris on the surface of the pool while running completely off of solar energy. The sun also recharges the unit’s battery which allows it to run after the sun goes down, Sim said.

“It gets debris off of the surface of the pool before it sinks to the bottom so there isn’t as much bacteria growth in the pool,” Sim said. “You don’t have to run other pool cleaning apparatuses as much, at least 50 percent less, which saves on energy savings. It’s also a convenience factor since you don’t have to hand skim the pool anymore.”

The second version, the Solar-Breeze NX, includes several enhancements, including expanded battery power management, extended motor life and a new plastic cover to improve its resistance to ultraviolet rays and slow the deterioration of the unit.

The Solar-Breeze’s advanced software controls the unit’s overall functions by directing it to areas with the most sunlight. The unit also evenly distributes chlorine throughout the pool.

Solar-Breeze NX sells for \$558, but pre-orders until January will be available at a discounted \$528 through the website.

According to Kickstarter, only 2,371 campaigns out of more than 250,000 since its inception have raised more than \$100,000.

Solar Pool Tech, which started in 2009, ultimately wants to create a family of solar-powered products for the pool to take the pool off the power grid, Sim said.

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