



Sprintex charger to power ATG share float

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The WA company behind Sprintex Superchargers is eyeing a \$10 million to \$15 million sharemarket float to fund a big increase in production as it aims to grab a bigger slice of the global high-performance car market.

Malaga-based Automotive Technology Group, which revived the Sprintex technology after buying it from the ashes of Peter Malone's collapsed junior telco New Tel 3½ years ago, has set itself an aggressive growth plan to grab a 10 per cent slice of the world supercharger market by 2010.

The Sprintex technology was housed in New Tel's listed offshoot, Advanced Engine Components, which has itself embarked on a corporate turnaround in the past two years to commercialise its natural gas engine conversion kits.

ATG managing director Tony Hamilton and business partners Steven Apedaile and Rick Siemens bought Sprintex in November 2003 with a view to commercialising what was then seen as an expensive and uncompetitive supercharger.

Production has now increased to 1000 units a year and with funding

from the planned float ATG hopes to be producing 8000 units next year and 32,000 a year by 2009.

"Globally there are 47 million cars a year made and the market for superchargers is about 1.5 million a year and that is forecast to increase to 1.8 million by 2010," he said.

"Our target by 2010 is to have about 10 per cent of the market."

Turbo chargers are the most popular way for car manufacturers and backyard mechanics to increase engine power, with an annual market of about 10 million units.

But superchargers are becoming more popular because of their emissions advantage and smoother power delivery, with luxury car companies such as Land Rover, Jaguar, Mercedes, Bentley and Aston Martin all producing supercharged vehicles.

"Right now there are four companies that design, make and manufacture their own superchargers, and we are one of those," Mr Hamilton said.

"We are also the smallest and we are also the only company which holds a worldwide patent on our

rotor profile, so it means we believe we have the most technologically advanced and emissions-superior supercharger currently available in the world today, and based on that we are getting very strong interest globally in our product."

Mr Hamilton said ATG had several supply deals in various stages of negotiation that if converted into contracts would help the company achieve its growth plans.

ATG has forecast revenue of \$3.5 million for the current year, with sales tipped to jump to \$26 million next year and \$76 million by 2009 on the back of increased production.

The patented Sprintex twin-screw supercharger is a mechanically driven rotary compressor with two rotors that turn in opposite directions.

When fitted to an engine it can increase both power and torque by about 35 per cent and does not have the "lag" found with turbo chargers.

The other arm of ATG is the business Vee Two, bought two years ago. Vee Two designs, manufactures and distributes replacement parts for Ducati motorbikes.



Ambition: Steven Apedaile, left, and Tony Hamilton plan a sharemarket float for ATG. Picture: Stuart Howell