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WINAICO explains why power from the sun still adds up

When purchasing modules: "always buy with an open eye" and good returns are still assured

Creglingen, 26.04.2012 - There has been a great deal of discussion regarding the federal government's decision to reduce the feed-in tariffs. However, power from the sun still remains a sound, ecologically important capital investment. After all, the consumption of one's own generated power adds up in the long-term. But what is the whole story? WINAICO intends – as neutrally as possible – to provide assistance here.

If one looks at the bigger picture then it is clear that, due to the planned withdrawal from nuclear power, investment in renewable energies is essential. For this reason the federal government is being required to prepare the national grid – an activity that will be expensive and that is likely to have a negative effect on the price of energy. In support of this activity the industry is working on a solution for storing independently generated electricity at local level, in order to allow the use of power generated from the midday sun during evening times for example. Experts estimate that good solutions will be available on the market within just 3 years.

Photovoltaic systems are becoming increasingly economical every year. The new subsidy levels are forcing consumers to compare various offers. The market is a complex place for the layperson: German and international suppliers, renowned names and unknown companies are dividing the market up between them. It is not always clear with every brand name, just where the product is manufactured. Considerable price and quality differences exist, non-binding statements regarding service lives and theoretical yields add to the confusion. Falling property prices are placing property owners under pressure to make successful long-term investments. The fact that investment in renewable energies adds up in relation to the value of property is uncontested.

However, an economical offer can quickly transform into a costly bad investment.

What help is out there in the photovoltaic jungle?

1. Guarantees & product certificates

With an operating life of at least 20 years, the quality of the components and the installation work are highly significant factors. Performance and product guarantees should be appropriate. For example, WINAICO offers a 10-year product guarantee and a 25-year linear performance guarantee. Furthermore, in agricultural areas in particular the additional ammoniac resistance – confirmed for WINAICO by the German Agricultural Society – is extremely meaningful.

2. Subjective product quality

Take a look at modules in the various price classes. On the basis of our experience, every customer is able to understand why a WINAICO system comes at a higher price than the cheaper alternatives. It is particularly important to ensure the good processing quality of the photovoltaic modules, because only if all of the components have been put together optimally can the entire system function optimally.

3. Reference systems

Request examples of systems previously completed. You will often find comparable projects, which will provide you with a better idea of how a system is going to perform in terms of yields over the year.

4. Constant protection

Clarify with the vendor whether an availability guarantee is provided across the entire service life. Something that the manufacturer may provide as standard may not always be supplied by the dealer. And in all cases: Seek advice regarding appropriate insurance options. For example, WINAICO offers free insurance cover for the complete system over a 2-year period after purchase – with compensation paid out for issues such as material damage right through to reduced yields. On request this cover can be extended to a 10-year period.

In general terms it is necessary to observe the following points during the purchase:

- Offers that contain formulations such as “modules XY are comparable with” or “brand inverter suitable for the modules” are dubious.
- Check the processing quality and take a look at samples as a minimum.
- Ask about reference systems.
- Request the yield data for existing systems.
- Never buy a system on the basis of a description or photo.
- Have an efficiency calculation drawn up and explained to you.
- Find out about the origins of the components.
- Ask the questions:
 - Where is the manufacturer based?
 - Is there a branch in Germany?
 - Does the manufacturer keep stock?
 - Is the manufacturer to hand in the event of a complaint?
 - Does German jurisdiction apply?
- Find out about past experiences with solar systems fitted by the installation company.

It is rare to find energy generation that integrates as harmoniously into the natural and urban landscape as photovoltaics. Germany is the pioneer in solar energy and will retain this position in the future.

“It's unwise to pay too much, but it's worse to pay too little. When you pay too much, you lose a little money - that's all. When you pay too little, you sometimes lose everything, because the thing you bought was incapable of doing the thing it was bought to do. The common law of business balance prohibits paying a little and getting a lot. If you deal with the lowest bidder, it is well to add something for the risk you run, and if you do that you will have enough to pay for something better.”
John Ruskin (1819-1900)

Please note: You will find us at the Intersolar in Munich. We would be delighted to arrange a time to meet personally there, or organise a personal appointment with the WINAICO company management.

WINAICO Deutschland GmbH – Manufacturer and system supplier

As a 100% subsidiary of the semiconductor company Win Win Precision Technology Co., Ltd., based in Taiwan, WINAICO manufactures and distributes crystalline high performance modules worldwide. Furthermore, as a systems house for photovoltaics, WINAICO Deutschland GmbH delivers complete PV system packages. Company customers are solar specialists, solar technologists, installation specialists and project developers. Here, installation specialists profit from the superior product quality of products manufactured in Taiwan in accordance with the highest quality standards, as well as from the comprehensive consultation, planning and maintenance services of WINAICO Deutschland GmbH. Generous stock levels in Germany ensure the rapid availability of WINAICO products throughout Europe.

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