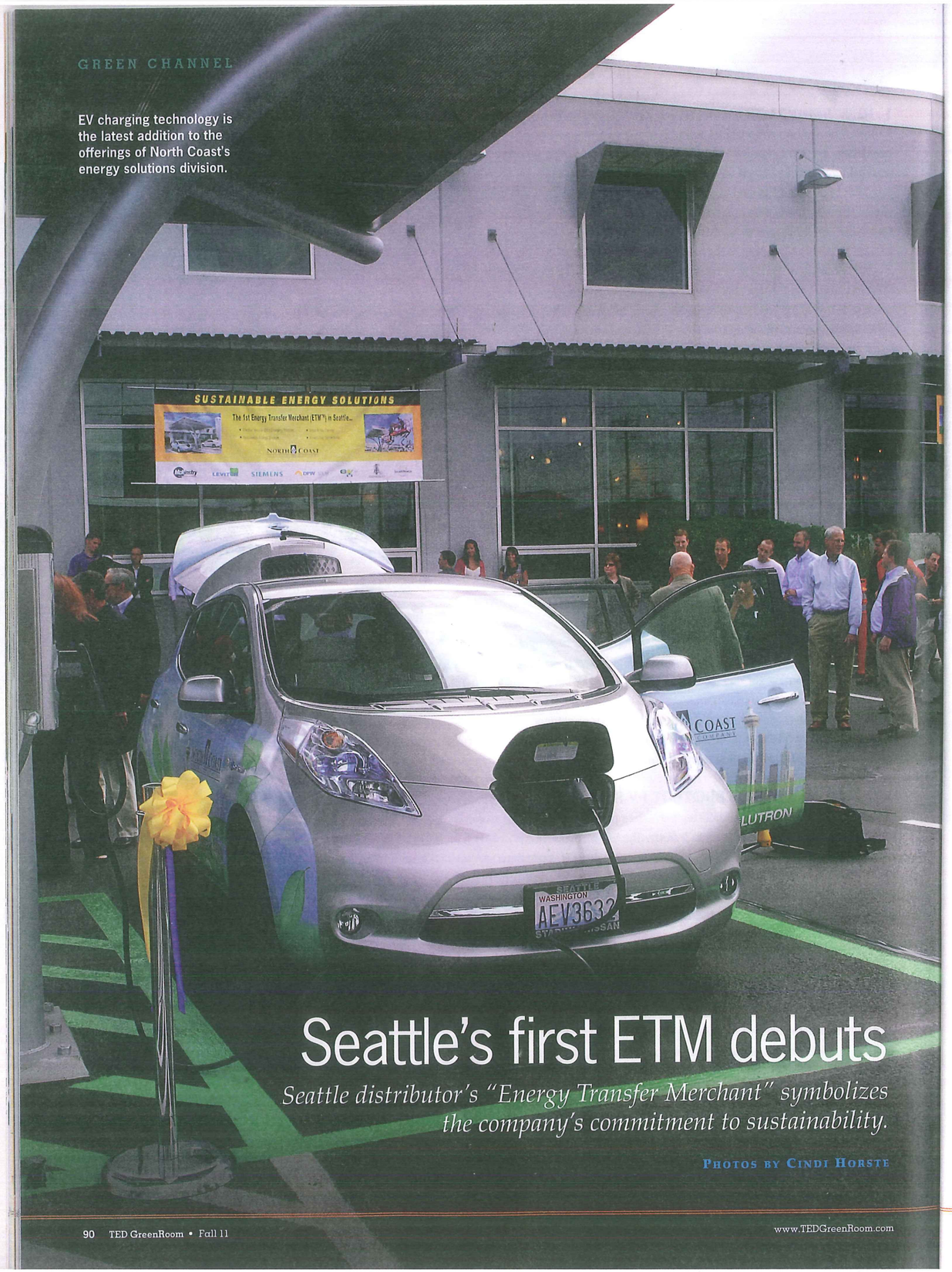
EV charging technology is the latest addition to the offerings of North Coast's energy solutions division.



Seattle's first ETM debuts

Seattle distributor's "Energy Transfer Merchant" symbolizes the company's commitment to sustainability.

PHOTOS BY CINDI HORSTE

From left: West Coast President Mike Miller; James Hoberry of GridMobility; Michael Pesin of Seattle City Light; and Chad Biasi of EV4.

CONTRARY TO POPULAR OPINION, there is, indeed, something new under the sun: a "filling station" for electric vehicles under a PV-covered canopy that soaks up the sun's rays, converts the solar energy to electricity, and then charges North Coast Electric's new Nissan Leaf—and other EVs that swing into the company's Seattle headquarters.

North Coast's Energy Transfer Merchant (ETM) made its debut on Aug. 31 during a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by nearly 80 individuals, including representatives of the city of Seattle, the State Economic Development Commission, the State Department of Commerce, the governor's office, the Seattle City Light electric utility, *EV World Magazine*, Stadium Nissan, several solar nonprofit organizations, and the manufacturers of the various technologies that comprise North Coast's EV charging station.

One of these companies is EV4, the manufacturer of the ETM solar canopy structure that houses the charging stations where EV drivers charge up.

During Phase II, expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2012, North Coast will install a bank of batteries for storing solar energy, along with a technology module (manufactured by GridMobility) that enables communication between the ETM and the grid.

The first of its kind in Seattle, this EV charging station is North Coast's contribution to Seattle's Race to Zero City campaign, a competition among U.S. cities to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2030.

When fully functional, the ETM will have the ability to draw power from the grid in the event that the active solar power and the batteries together are insufficient to completely charge a particular vehicle. An inverse flow of power is also possible: When the batteries are at capacity, with the sun shining, North Coast will be sending electricity back to the utility.

The station is available to not only customers, but also the public. In addition to being its utility, Seattle City Light is also a North Coast customer and has its own fleet of EVs.

As a complement to its ETM, North Coast also bought a new electric Nissan Leaf and wrapped it with a graphic statement about all of the different sustainability-related endeavors the company is involved in.

"Our local sales force will use the car on sales calls, and it will represent our energy solutions division at barbecues and other customer and community events at our 32 locations," noted Tom Woltjer, energy solutions division manager.

In a June posting on emgcartech.com, an auto industry blog, Mark Perry, director of product planning for Nissan North America, forecasted a total of 13,000 charging stations in the United States by next summer. "I think there will be a lot more than that," Woltjer noted, adding that he expects North Coast to install additional stations at other branches.

"We chose the ETM as the icon to represent our commitment to sustainability because it encompasses such a broad spectrum of green technologies: electric cars, clean power, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and a smart grid," Woltjer added. "The ETM represents the future in terms of our culture, our industry, and our company." —JAN NIEHAUS *is an active member of numerous environmental and building industry organizations and her commitment to green runs deep. Contact Niehaus at Jan@CommunicationByDesign.net or 314-644-4135.*