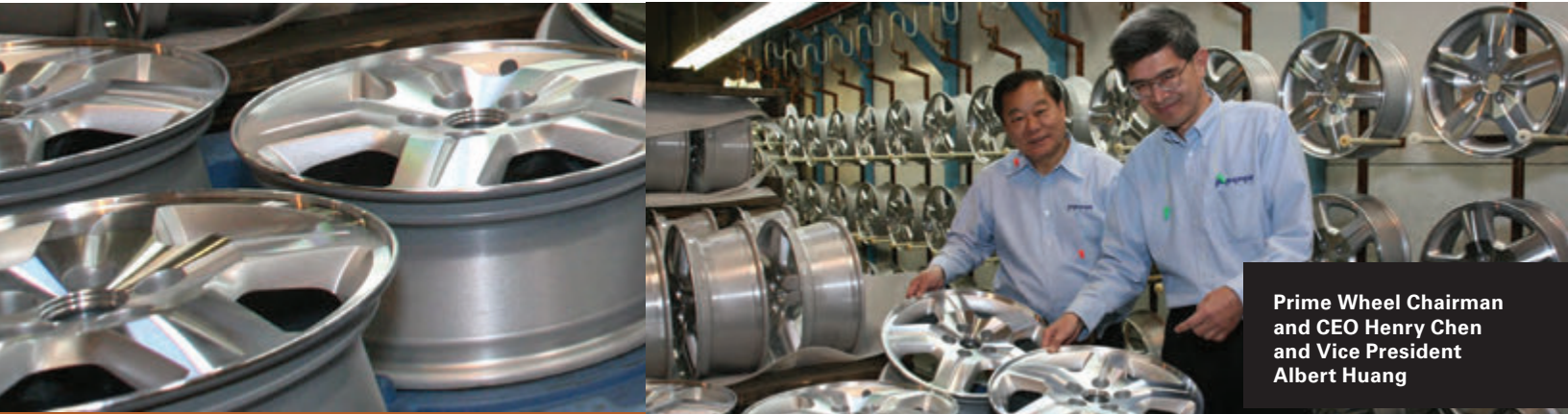




Prime Wheel



Prime Wheel Chairman and CEO Henry Chen and Vice President Albert Huang

Manufacturer Prime Wheel Turns Optimized Energy Management into a Business Advantage

Manufacturing companies are used to meeting challenges, but in recent years, California manufacturers have been confronted by some unprecedented heavy pressures. Global competition and mounting labor and material costs have forced them to find ways to produce more efficiently. High on this list of pressures is the rising cost of energy.

The best manufacturers have met this challenge by improving their energy management. Prime Wheel, makers of high-quality custom aluminum wheels, has thrived under adverse market conditions in part because their energy investment delivers such a consistent return. The key to their success isn't how much energy Prime Wheel uses. It's how well they use it.

Optimizing Energy Usage: Survival and Success

Even with an energy-intensive manufacturing process, Prime Wheel has added manufacturing capacity. The key, says Chairman and CEO

Henry Chen, is using energy more wisely. "We're a major supplier to DaimlerChrysler, Ford, General Motors, and Mitsubishi," he says. "Those companies can't charge consumers more for their products, so we can't charge them more for ours. Meanwhile, we've expanded our operations several times, invested in new equipment, and consumed more power. Managing energy in the best possible way isn't just an option for us. It's a matter of survival."

"Our manufacturing process takes 800 employees working 24/7," Chen continues. "It consumes millions of kilowatt hours of electricity in a plant operating under very strict environmental regulations. Every wheel we make has to meet the highest standards, and we ship over 10,000 of them a day, on time, to our customers. We spend heavily for our electricity supply, but we don't see it as overhead. We think of it as an investment, and we want to make sure we get every possible dollar back from that outlay."

Estimated Savings by Managing Energy

- *Location:* Gardena, CA
- *Industry:* Manufacturing
- *SCE Programs Utilized:* Express Solutions, Customized Solutions
- *Results:* Annual savings of 7,200,000 kWh for process improvements and upgrades; additional 152,000 kWh savings on lighting retrofits; received incentives of \$527,000

ESTIMATED ANNUAL SAVINGS
\$800,000+

Energy Management Success Story

Manufacturer Prime Wheel Turns Optimized Energy Management into a Business Advantage

A Never-Ending Race to Improve

"Companies like ours add equipment to expand their capabilities," Vice President Albert Huang continues, "but at Prime Wheel, we found that simply adding equipment just shifted the problem instead of solving it. We focused instead on our process engineering to be less wasteful, faster, and ultimately more profitable." For example: Prime Wheel used Southern California Edison's (SCE) Customized Solutions to optimize machinery for the delivery of compressed air. The improved process saved 1.7 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity annually and eliminated the need to purchase additional equipment.

To save even more, they also moved to more efficient lighting and variable speed drives on motors. "When we started," Chen says, "Prime Wheel had about 25 competitors in Southern California. Today we have three. Some people might think that manufacturers here are an endangered species, but our company has grown, and energy management is a key to that growth. We take advantage of every energy efficiency solution and equipment rebate offered by SCE to get the fastest return. We're committed to staying here, and we're proving that even in a market where energy costs are rising, a company like ours can flourish."



"We take advantage of every energy efficiency solution and equipment rebate offered by Southern California Edison to get the fastest return."

Prime Wheel Chairman and CEO
Henry Chen

Earn Even More Savings with Other SCE Offerings

Southern California Edison offers a range of energy management solutions to help you better manage your electricity costs.

- Purchase qualifying energy-efficient equipment or technologies and receive incentives and rebates through SCE's Express and Customized Solutions.
(800) 736-4777
www.sce.com/Express_Solutions
www.sce.com/Customized_Solutions
- Use Savings By Design for project assistance and financial incentives for the design and construction of energy-efficient buildings and installation of high-efficiency building systems.
(800) 338-8502
www.savingsbydesign.com
www.energydesignresources.com
- Save more with SCE's Demand Response Programs which offer low cost ways to reduce your electrical bill for agreeing to temporarily reduce electricity usage during peak hours.
(866) 334-7827
www.sce.com/drps
- Use Web-based tools such as SCE EnergyManager® Basic, SCE Cost Manager® and SCE Bill Manager® to monitor and track your electricity usage.
(888) 462-7078
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