

Interest in energy efficiency recharges Myron Zucker Inc.

A renewed interest in energy and manufacturing efficiency has led to the rebirth of a Sterling Heights company that helps commercial and industrial customers become smarter about energy use.

In five years, **Myron Zucker Inc.** has gone from losing \$250,000 per year to revenue of nearly \$1.3 million in 2008.

The company's main business is supplying customized power factor correction capacitors and filters to businesses that run large machining or manufacturing operations. In addition, its top executive is becoming a sort of business evangelist promoting government-backed incentives that encourage businesses to implement efficient practices.

A power factor correction capacitor is an electrical device that, when connected to an electrical system or electric motor, improves electrical efficiency. A harmonic filter eliminates voltage distortion generated by electronic and electrical components, improving power quality and system efficiency.

"We don't create energy, but we promote better energy utilization," said Myron Zucker President Donna Zobel, who took over the family business in 2003. "The benefits of running a more energy efficient operation are not just the cost savings a business will realize, but becoming better stewards for the future of our planet."

In today's economy, this can be a difficult sell. Myron Zucker provides its customers with custom-built plans to meet specific needs.

More businesses are heeding the call to reduce their power load, and for good reason, said Jim Newman, (pictured) owner & managing partner of **Newman Consulting Group** in Bloomfield Hills. Newman is known as a leading Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) consultant.

The LEED green building rating system was developed by the in 1998 and provides a suite of standards for environmentally sustainable construction.

"Myron Zucker's products not only positively impact industrial organizations, but they will help commercial buildings more efficiently use energy," Newman said.

"You would be amazed how many commercial buildings don't have good power factors — this means that they are paying (higher utility bills) than they need."

The opportunity for future growth for Myron Zucker and other businesses that offer similar products is significant, especially with President Barack Obama now in the White House, Newman said. He expects that the new president will make a serious effort to develop a policy of reducing power load in existing buildings and installations.

It makes sense, Newman said, because most industrial plants and commercial buildings that haven't already invested in energy saving retrofits could save anywhere from 10 percent to 30 percent on their utility bills with a relatively short payback.

"We're talking about reducing our energy use by 30 percent in this country, which can be done much more effectively by addressing the energy being used in existing buildings and new construction," Newman said. While Myron Zucker competes with such large organizations as **General Electric**, **Eaton Corp.** and **Square D**, it has high-profile clients such as **Honda Motors**, **PepsiCo** and **Rockwell Automation**. Other customers include correctional facilities, such as Oaks Correctional in Manistee, and **Naust Marine**, a provider of shipping equipment located in Iceland.

One Michigan-based customer is Anil Verma, a manufacturing support engineer with **Parker Hannifin Corp.** in Otsego, a manufacturer of motion and control systems.

Power factor correction capacitors recently were installed in the company's brass products division, which have helped raise the location's power factor from less than



80 percent to more than 90 percent. The financial impact is significant. His location previously was charged a penalty by its electric utility each month that averaged \$1,300-1,500 because of the

low power factor percentage.

Now, the Otsego location will be getting a credit each month that could average 2 percent of the facility's \$50,000-\$60,000 average monthly electric bill, Verma said.

"Our target base is anyone who has a plant or even runs a motor," Zobel said. "Our engineers will look at all facility motors, will look at the transformers feeding the plant and help determine how energy can be best utilized before making recommendations."

Zobel's goals in 2009 include increasing national awareness of the benefits of running efficient industrial and commercial operations, working with organizations such as the **National Association of Manufacturers** and the **U.S. Department of Energy**.

Zobel already is working closely with the U.S. Green Building Council. Newman expects that during the next decade, federal regulations will be enacted that will mandate "more responsible energy consumption" practices in the United States and globally.

As the global debate on green policy continues, Zobel hopes to testify in Washington, D.C., and work with industry trade groups in an effort to convince the government of the need for more corporate incentives.

"We have a great message to tell, and more businesses will be impacted by these issues in the coming years," Zobel said.

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