

Premier Auto Tops and Interiors, Santa Clara, California

Standing Out

Premier Auto Tops and Interiors is one of the largest and most experienced upholstery companies in the San Francisco Bay Area. Founded in 1965 by Dan O'Neill and Bob Mestressat, Premier has been at the same location for 45 years and now implements sustainable business practices.

Sustainability is one of the guiding principles by which Premier does business. Bay Area Green Business signage is prominently displayed to remind customers and employees of the importance of maintaining green practices to support a clean environment. Premier believes in running an environmentally clean and efficient business that protects the environment and provides a safe working environment for their employees. They also offer customers clean, safe materials for their vehicles that are either recycled or can be recycled.



Photo Credit: Premier Auto Tops and Interiors

"By upgrading to newer bulbs we get more light while using half the number of bulbs."

-Suzanna Schleck, Owner
Premier Auto Tops and Interiors Inc.

Business Snapshot

Upholstery shop located in Santa Clara offering a variety of repair and upholstery services.

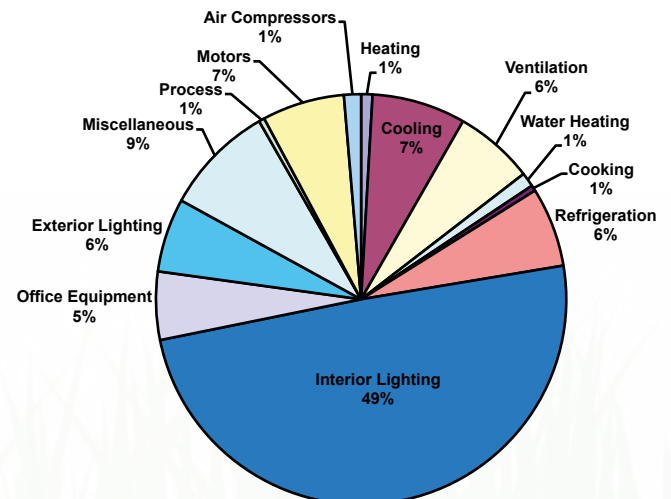
Climate Friendly Actions

- Recycles 90% of materials
- Installed insulation to improve energy efficiency
- Upgraded light bulbs and added reflectors to increase useable light by 55% while decreasing energy use
- Uses 6 different recycling bins for foam, leather, paper, cardboard and glass, which has reduced garbage output by 75%
- Refills plastic spray bottles to reduce aerosols
- One of the only auto upholstery businesses that offer mineral dyed green leather
- Buys green cleaning products, makes their own cleaning solvents, and uses reusable cotton rags instead of paper towels saving both money and resources

Investment Cost: \$4,500 lighting retrofit

Estimated Yearly Cost Savings: \$800 electricity bill

Typical Warehouse Electricity End-Usage



Data are from the California Commercial End Use Survey (2006)

Award Winning Actions



What Actions Did Premier Take to Save Energy?

According to the California Commercial End Use Survey, interior lighting and cooling are two of the biggest end uses of electricity. These were the areas targeted for investment by Premier. Premier applied roof insulation to reduce the need for heating and cooling in the office. The temperature in the office is now more constant so they can use less electricity. They also upgraded the light bulbs and added reflectors to increase the useable light in the shop by 55%, these actions also helped save energy.

What Actions Did Premier Take to Reduce Waste?

One of the key sustainable business practices is waste management. Premier has taken a proactive approach in reducing the amount of waste they produce by setting up recycling bins for foam, leather, paper, cardboard, and glass; reduced garbage containers by 75% and recycle 90% of the materials they discard.

What Actions Did Premier Take to Promote Green Products?

By using fewer aerosol products and relying more on refillable plastic spray bottles they are able to reduce garbage and their emissions. Premier is one of the few auto upholstery businesses that offers mineral dyed green leather (regular leather uses very polluting chemicals to preserve and dye the leather). They also offer 'green' products including auto carpet manufactured from recycled water bottles.

What Actions Did Premier Take to Encourage Green Transportation?

Premier encourages customers to use public transportation to get from Premier to work or home by providing complimentary shuttle service to either Cal Train or the light rail stations (25% of the customers use public transportation).



Photo Credit: Air Resources Board

Premier received a 2009 CoolCalifornia Small Business Excellence Award

"[Premier] has a display of green, recycled materials in our sales area to see green options."

-Suzanna Schleck, Owner
Premier Auto Tops and Interiors Inc.



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