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BUSINESS

Notes from around the Minnesota business community

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THE WARMEST SOLUTION

Keith McKinzie's solar powered shades look sharp and heat your home to boot.

BY KATIE PELTON

IN THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES of conversation, it's obvious that Keith McKinzie's conviction for his product is the key to his success. When he says, "This is the best product in the market and I'll tell you why," he's not being conceited; this Two Harbors, Minn. native can back it up.

After starting as a hobby in college, McKinzie's Solar Choice has become a booming business and his profits double on a monthly basis.

"When I saw the price of gas go up a few years ago, I thought, 'Look what I've done to my fuel bill with this (solar heater) I've built,'" McKinzie says. "I got it tested at a university and they said this is the right product and it will work for about anywhere with a south facing window."

McKinzie started solarchoice.com and "hooked up with the proper people" — a.k.a. an investor who helps emerging companies grow.

"There are no moving parts, zero emissions and no carbon problems. This is about as green as it gets." --KEITH MCKINZIE

While all other solar heaters on the market are placed outside, Solar Choice is the first of its kind to work from indoors, giving it a significant advantage. This is especially true on our fair, frigid state where this solar heater doesn't require additional energy to combat the freezing temps.

Masquerading as vertical blinds, the heater works for any and all south-facing windows. The product places highly absorbent metal into a plastic sleeve to create natural convection that results in capturing the sun's heat. It brings the cold air off the ground and pumps the hot air in.

Although McKinzie and his five employees also work with national distributors for hotel chains and schools, his website is the easiest way for consumers to purchase this true energy-saver.

"There are no moving parts, zero emissions and no carbon problems,"

McKinzie says. "This is about as green as it gets."