

BUSINESS

This building's cool, man

**U.S. firm uses
high-tech system
to control the air
and save energy**

MICHAEL LIEDTKE
Associated Press

FOSTER CITY, Calif. — On a typical summer day at Electronics for Imaging Inc., about 700 workers can feel the cool breeze drifting across San Francisco Bay without stepping outside.

Taking advantage of its waterfront location, the company uses a high-tech network of dampers and fans to import air to its 10-storey headquarters. Workers are comfortable and shareholders are happy as the company saves tens of thousands of dollars in energy costs each month.

The unusual cooling system is only one example of the ingenuity that makes EFI's headquarters one of the most energy-efficient buildings in power-hungry California.

Air-circulation motors shift to lower speeds when they don't need to work as hard to reach a desired temperature. Elevators learn usage patterns so they don't have to go up and down as frequently.

"If we had more buildings around like this one, I have a feeling our black-out problems would either be gone or less of a concern than they are now," said Grant Duhon, who supervises commercial construction for Pacific Gas and Electric Co.

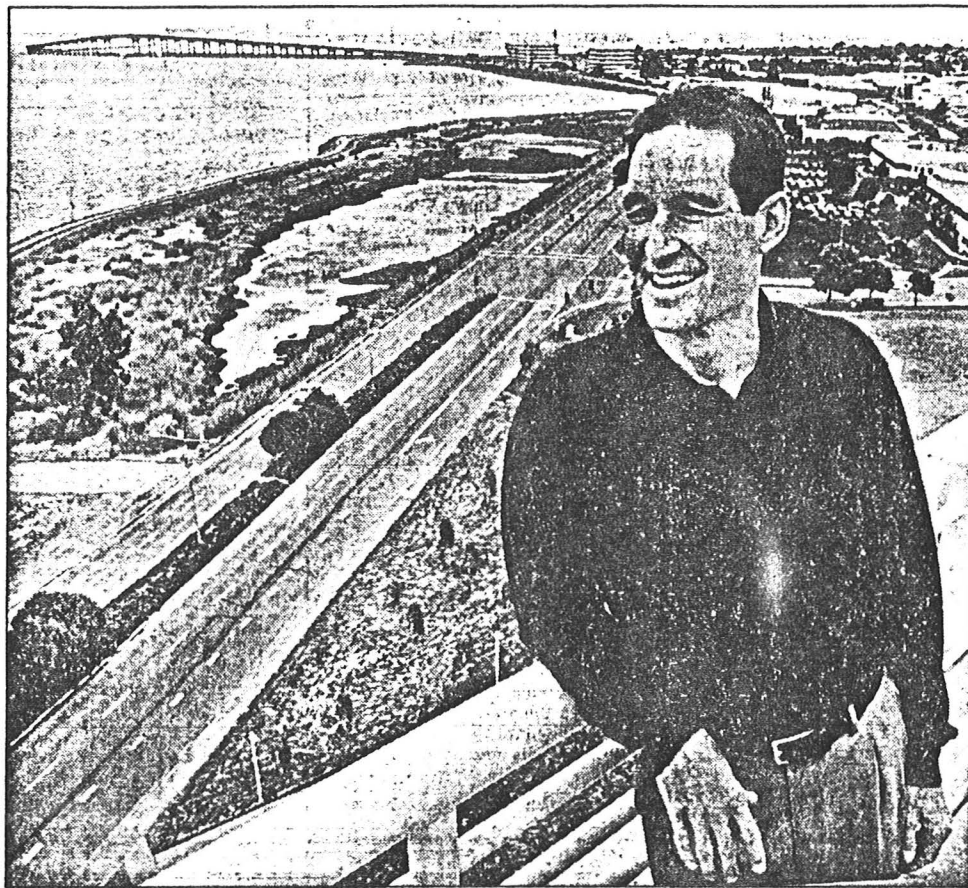
PG&E estimates that EFI's energy-saving measures save the equivalent of 783 kilowatts per day — enough to power roughly 600 homes.

Until recently, few high-tech companies seemed interested in steering their innovative drive toward energy conservation. Rapidly growing Silicon Valley businesses demanded energy reliability, and not necessarily efficiency, to power computers around the clock.

This has fueled perceptions that high-tech companies played a key role in creating a statewide power shortage.

But the industry's energy usage isn't that much greater today. Technology companies now consume 4.1 per cent of the electricity in PG&E's service area, which covers from central California to the Oregon border. A decade ago, it was 3.9 per cent.

"Energy conservation just hasn't



PAUL SAKUMA, AP

Fred Rosenzweig, president and chief operating officer of Electronics for Imaging Inc., looks out from the rooftop of his 10-storey high-tech headquarters over the San Francisco Bay in Foster City, Calif.

been on the radar screen for most Silicon Valley companies because of its low cost," said Severin Borenstein, director of the University of California at Berkeley's energy institute.

"The electricity bill has taken up just one or 2 per cent of the budget at most Silicon Valley companies."

A recent utility-rate hike that will double the electricity bills of some businesses is prompting more high-tech companies to find ways to curtail usage, said Michelle Montague-Bruno, spokesman for the Silicon Valley Manufacturers Association.

"It's not only good for conservation, it's good for the pocketbook," she said.

To save power, IBM Corp. in San Jose and parts-maker Solecron Corp. of Milpitas, Calif., are investing in

white coating materials to create "cool roofs" that retain less heat and keep their buildings cooler.

Other high-tech companies are taking a lot of small conservation measures, such as setting thermostats higher, installing power-saving devices on computers and keeping more lights off.

At least one high-tech company is trying to cash in on California's greater sensitivity to power issues. Alameda-based Silicon Energy Corp. makes a suite of software that tracks a company's energy usage and provides a road map for conserving power.

EFI, which makes equipment and software that link computer networks with colour copiers and printers, spent about \$1 million U.S. more on its

\$57-million headquarters for the conservation systems.

"We could have spent that extra money on a lot of marble in the lobby and fancy paintings on the wall, but what does that do for anyone?" said Fred Rosenzweig, EFI's president and chief operating officer. "I think if you do something pragmatic, you will wind up looking smart in the long run."

EFI estimates it saved \$600,000 U.S. in utilities over the past two years combined and should save at least \$500,000 U.S. this year. The company also believes its headquarters — filled with cool, clean air — brings psychological benefits that increase productivity.

Noted Rosenzweig: "Our engineers don't seem to mind spending 10- or 12-hour days working here."

Air Canada squeeze: more seats, fewer

Airline seeks to drive up revenues with fuller flights following 50-per-cent drop

WOJTEK DABROWSKI
Canadian Press

TORONTO — Air Canada, beset by a drop-off in business-class travel and mounting fuel costs, will move to fill its planes with economy seats as it tries to cut expenditures and increase rev-

heels of Air Canada's request to its 39,500 employees to consider reducing work hours or taking a leave of absence, particularly in the winter months, to help the airline cope with a prolonged economic slowdown.

Last month, the airline outlined a plan to improve its financial performance by \$1 billion

an example of that, Cooke said.

Kavafian said the move is a logical one but not the complete answer to Air Canada's problems.

"Their business is soft, so they're meeting that softness with a reduction in expenses, labour being a big chunk of their expenses, about 28 per cent," he said.

round-trip surcharge on all its domestic flights. It has also sought new sources of revenue from providing maintenance services to other airlines and by flying to more mid-size U.S. cities.

Gary Fane, director of transportation at Canadian Auto Workers, said the union's members at Air Canada