



PowerGenix Shows off its Battery in a Prius

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Posted May 12th, 2008 at 5:00 am in [Startups](#)

[PowerGenix](#), an eight-year-old startup based in San Diego, Calif., will be showing off its [nickel-zinc battery](#) in a retrofitted Prius *this week* at the [Advanced Automotive Battery Conference](#). Yeah, that's nickel-zinc, not the [nickel metal hydride battery](#) that the Prius has already made famous. But the company says its nickel-zinc battery is 35 percent smaller than the Prius' nickel metal hydride battery, has a better energy density and also costs less.



While the company has just started shipping its batteries for the power tool and scooter market, this is one of the first times the company is displaying its battery pack for vehicles, which it hopes to sell into the hybrid market. PowerGenix's CEO [Dan Squiller](#) thinks the electric vehicle market will segment when it comes to battery technology: all-electric vehicles will go with lithium-ion battery technology, while parallel hybrid vehicles like the Prius will end up with a lower cost but high energy density technology like PowerGenix's.

Ultimately, that means the company won't be trying to sell its battery into the plug-in hybrid and all-electric vehicle market. But then again, the company doesn't shy away from pointing out that, when compared with lithium ion batteries, its battery is "less than half" of the cost, and is safer and less toxic because it uses a water-based electrolyte.

Wherever its battery ends up, this week, the company's touting it in a Prius, side by side with the Prius' original battery in order to show the size difference. While its not selling its hybrid vehicle battery yet, PowerGenix says it's already talking with Japanese car companies and Chinese hybrid electric vehicle makers. The company is backed by over \$31 million in 3 rounds from [Element Partners](#), [Granite Ventures](#), and [Braemer Energy Ventures](#), among other investors. Squiller tells us that the company is looking to raise a final round in the next few months and could be ready for an IPO as soon as 2010.