

# TURNING THE PAGE ON SOLAR



**THE Page family-owned business has been manufacturing furniture for the educational and commercial market since 1919. Zero Emissions Noosa met up with Shane Smith who's been with Page Furnishers for over 40 years. He arrived on his electric scooter and says no fancy title, "just call me spokesperson".**

He's a strong advocate for solar, having a large home system and is proud of his Tesla battery, particularly when there's power outages and his power stays on giving him that slightly smug feeling when his house is the only one in street with the lights still on. And no more annoying clock resetting.



Shane Smith on his e-scooter

Page invested in solar back in 2015 with a large 200kW on their two buildings either side of Factory Street in Pomona. It was a natural choice for the business fitting in with their sustainable ethos. Attention is paid to reducing raw material wastage and they've found ways for timber, metalwork and paint shop materials to be re-used and recycled. Solar provides over 40% of their electricity needs with the panels oriented east and west to even out generation during the day.

The majority of their electricity bill is based on the maximum 30-minute usage over a month(demand charges), so they have many efficiency measures such as slow ramp up of compressors and fans. They've investigated batteries for the factory, but the financial case doesn't stack up yet.

Shane says they've experienced some reliability issues with inverters so have recently upgraded to top-tier Fronius inverters, and warns not to scrimp on quality. His only grumble is that they can't export their excess due to Energex restrictions, which he says "Is a crying shame that generation for 2 1/2 days a week is wasted".

Shane says it's a credit to family owner Alan Page that the business is still innovating and thriving sustainably after 102 years in business.