



The Cheapest Electricity Is the One I Do Not Buy, but Make and Store

FENIX has remained an entirely Czech company throughout its existence, without any foreign involvement; however, it has integrated nine companies located outside the Czech Republic into its structure. According to **Cyril Svozil Jr.**, the chairman of the board of directors and a member of the second generation of this family business from Jeseník, these companies, similar to other communities, embody and manifest the principles upon which they were established.

■ **A year ago, you assumed leadership of a company that has been in the heating systems industry for over thirty years. Do you think the business environment is supportive of innovative companies?**

The business environment undoubtedly encourages innovation. However, excessive bureaucracy and the cumbersome state apparatus stifle entrepreneurship, not just in innovative sectors. Recently, I was amazed to hear Elon Musk, who is set to lead an initiative in the new US administration humorously named DOGE (The Department of Government Efficiency) describe the US bureaucracy. I can only imagine what he would say about the EU, which is notorious for its excessive and pointless administration. He might describe it as "banal bureaucratic evil" and choose to steer clear of Europe altogether.

■ **What certainly does not favour companies is the price of energy. Could the FENIX energy concept be the solution?**

Honestly, I worry that for those who do not want to relocate, the best remaining option is achieving maximum self-sufficiency. We began exploring the idea of a modern building featuring a high-

quality cover, electric radiant heating, photovoltaic systems, battery storage, and dynamic spot electricity trading. Years ago, we anticipated that high electricity prices and potential grid outages were likely. Today, we have a manufacturing plant and office buildings operating under this model, which we call the Fenix Energy Concept. This setup not only provides a high level of self-sufficiency during the summer months but also significantly reduces energy costs, with a payback period of 5–7 years.

■ **The solar boom is now shifting to the rooftops of industrial buildings. How can industrial battery storage be beneficial?**

Preventing grid outages, levelling out peak demand, and participating in electricity spot market trading are just a few of the capabilities of our systems. Essentially, the cheapest kilowatt-hour is the one I do not buy. It is also true that if I can charge a large battery storage for free from the sun (or at the cheapest overnight rates), cover my consumption or at least most of it during the day, and then sell some more during the evening peak, then I go from being a mere customer and in a way a vassal to a so-called prosumer who is an active part of the system.

■ **Integrating battery storage into the energy system can also mean more stable and efficient use of renewable energy sources. Do your clients perceive it this way?**

No doubt. We are now going to see a big boom in large battery storage systems that will be designed for this very purpose, the so-called SVP (power balance services). That is, to stabilise the grid. The battery storage operator will wait for an instruction from CEPS for the participants to supply the grid or, on the contrary, to withdraw from it according to the current state of the grid. It can be assumed that due to the massive increase in renewable energy sources, the use of these stabilisation batteries will increase dramatically. We are building ourselves another large BESS (1MW/2.4MWh) on site, which will be commissioned in January 2025 and will provide this type of service to CEPS. We are observing a strong market demand.

■ **What is your corporate philosophy based on and how do you promote it?**

Dad wrote the corporate ten commandments when he was the founder of the Group. I think it is still valid and there is no need to change it in any way.

1. The aim is to build a strong company but composed of small and clear autonomous units always dealing only with their own "core business". This is the only way to ensure a highly motivated workforce and the necessary flexibility even in a relatively large organisation

2. The customer is the real boss in the company, he must feel that way from the first contact
3. Sustained growth is real and necessary, the conditions include an innovative and welcoming social climate, motivated and educated people, and a free and undistorted market
4. The phrase "enough is enough" signals an impending decline in the future
5. Work must be organised to the maximum extent possible so that people are not just parts; priority is given to building coherent agendas and processes with clear responsibility and ownership for a specific outcome
6. The number of vertical management levels in the organisation should be kept to a minimum and subject to regular review – this is the key to maintaining flexibility and high motivation
7. Market development does not lead to a loss of opportunities, only to a shift and the emergence of new ones.
8. Opportunities are always and everywhere, you just need to identify them and choose the right time to realise them
9. Trust is the foundation of any successful endeavour; it is hard to earn and easy to lose. It is essential to quickly sever ties with those who have wasted trust.
10. Happiness and contentment are just a state of mind and positive thinking is the key to them. ■

Thank you for the interview.

