

Global-E

Key innovation: a 100 percent electric car that can exceed 100 miles per gallon fuel equivalency

Where they're based: Mandeville

Year introduced: February 2008

Top executive: Carl Guichard, founder

Web site: www.TeamGlobal-E.com or www.Global-E.US

Carl Guichard grew up with a love for cars. And now that his company, Global-E is developing and refining a series of electric and hybrid vehicles that are "durable, long-lasting and environmentally friendly," he's even more revved up.

One of those vehicles is the Pulse, a four-passenger car that is a 100-percent electric plug-in. It takes four and a half hours to charge, can go 70 mph and meets all federal safety standards, Guichard said. It also has air-conditioning, power steering, power brakes, solar panels on the roof and eight feet of storage space.

While Global-E is moving into production with one model, the company is looking for venture capital to produce more cars.

"We will capture 3 (percent) to 4 percent of the market initially because the major car companies are over-expanded and are parts-centered. Since we don't have their huge infrastructure, we can bring these super efficient vehicles to market faster."

Guichard said the key is changing the consumer's mindset.

"We are doing what Henry Ford did, making cars for the common man. In the event of an accident, the battery will shut off. No acid or fuel will be leaking on the ground."

Guichard said a mechanic won't be a necessity for basic repairs.

"This car doesn't have 700 parts in areas where you can't get your hands on them," he said.

Global-E, whose home office is in Mandeville, is in the process of securing a site in south Louisiana, Guichard said, while another property is being prepared in Los Angeles. The company is also looking for space on the Gulf Coast to assemble the cars.

"We have 35 employees now and should have 150 employees by January or February. From there, we will expand to 500 during the next two years," Guichard said. "In about five years, we should have 2,000 employees."



Global-E founder Carl Guichard stands behind one of his electric concept cars that can exceed 100 miles per gallon fuel equivalency.

Global-E is participating in the Progressive Insurance Automotive X-Prize competition as part of its marketing strategy. Teams will compete for their share of a \$10 million prize. The winner, which will be revealed in 2010, will be the vehicle that wins a rigorous, long-distance stage competition and can get more than 100 miles per gallon.

Guichard, an aerospace engineer at the Stennis Space Center, participated with the X-Prize Foundation to help build the rules for the competition.

"We currently have three vehicles competing and should finish in the top five."*

— Lisa Bacques