

# BEHIND WHEELCHAIR CUSTOMIZATION AT SUNRISE MEDICAL IN FRESNO (CA), WHERE INNOVATION NEVER SLEEPS

- Sunrise Medical has made a name for itself as a leader at the heart of the high-tech powered wheelchair industry. In the world of mobility devices, the most important players in this field all pay particularly close attention to every move this global company undertakes. In a nutshell, Sunrise Medical builds the powered wheelchairs that drive change. They are a game changer, an organization that changes the way that something is done by implementing a totally new way to perform tasks in a more efficient manner.
- The REGNER® founder and President, Kurt Regner, together with the CEO, Conxi Langreo, visited the Sunrise Medical factory located in Fresno last September 18. They had the privilege to take a plant tour and experience first hand how Sunrise manufacturing capabilities contribute to the company's overall strength

Kurt Regner and Conxi Langreo arrive at the premises of the company set in Fresno County, a hub for medical manufacturers. In this area, there is an important number of companies dedicated to healthcare and medical supplies with easy access to a skilled and productive workforce. Sunrise Medical benefits from the well-trained mass of engineers and technicians coming from a variety of universities which dot this Californian region. In order to better understand the company's performance, strategy and current challenges, Regner and Langreo have the opportunity to take a plant tour.



**"At Sunrise, we haven't built two wheelchairs alike during 2018"**

**Abraham Baez,**  
Senior Materials Manager



Abraham Baez talking with Kurt Regner at Sunrise Medical premises in Fresno (CA).

They had the chance to see the factory first-hand accompanied by Abraham Baez, Senior Materials Manager. The first thing he let us know: "At Sunrise, we haven't built two wheelchairs alike in 2018". The reason lies in Sunrise Medical's strategy. One of the company's key strategies is to bring customized state-of-the-art mobility devices to the market at top speed. Its core competence is the customization of the product for the end user and doing this in a very precise and efficient manner. Abraham Baez highlights that "we pride ourselves in delivering a wheelchair that can be fashioned in a myriad of configurations in just four days". **He went on to say:** "Chances are everyone finds exactly what they want. The goal is to provide customers with what they want, when they want it."

However, to apply this apparently simple statement into practice is quite complex. The layout of the factory has been redesigned depending on the different platforms. The platforms are the base to building the large variety of powered wheelchair models with the right mobility solutions. These are modular platforms, named in this way for their numerous possible configurations, starting from a single original design. **The idea behind the modular platform is to maximize the possibilities for building a diversity of models carrying out slight structural modifications.** Undoubtedly, it is curious how such a diversity of products can originate from one single scalable design. As a result, Sunrise enables its customers to create their own wheelchair by selecting from an array of materials and accessories. As **Abraham Baez informs:** "We have increased the number of platforms this year, so we have become more flexible in production. Now, we can ship even faster".

Moreover, an extensive network of trained dealers provide advice. The company also works in tandem with hospitals, training their clinical staff and providing support to physical therapists who regularly deal with matching the needs of patients challenged with complex rehabilitation needs. **All powered wheelchairs are made on these well-thought out platforms, allowing the company to vary their custom options ranging from styles to fabric choices rapidly.**

Indeed, the ability to respond quickly to a customer's orders, to customize solutions to match the customer's exact requirements or to swiftly ramp up production is a powerful and inimitable tool. This is particularly important at a time where competition is no longer just based on price and conformance of dimensional quality. **As the Senior Materials Manager remarks** "The growth and success of Sunrise Medical is based on the firm's ability to produce custom powered wheelchairs on demand, meeting precisely the needs of each individual customer and producing these items only after an order has been placed, thereby totally avoiding the risk of superfluous finished goods in stock".



The Sunrise Medical's Q700M powered wheelchair.



## REGNER® Actuators, making all the difference

Anyone who drives a Sunrise Medical wheelchair is in constant contact with the innovative electric linear actuator systems (designed and manufactured) by REGNER®. **At any of Sunrise Medical's factories, REGNER® linear actuators are their choice in order to guarantee reliable and silent movements.**

Powered by our electric linear actuators, Sunrise wheelchairs enable individuals worldwide to choose the right position on a daily basis. **Their electric functions are operated by REGNER® linear actuators making functions such as the seat lift, the legrest angle, the seat tilt, the chin control and the backrest inclination possible.** Fully-compliant with international medical device standards, REGNER® specializes in creating customizable sleek linear actuators capable of providing safe, precise and clean movements.