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by [Audra Distifeno](#)

Kennewick's KAIZENSPEED helps gearheads achieve peak performance

In a race to become a premium performance brand in Northwest, KAIZENSPEED of Kennewick manufactures top-of-the-line auto parts, all in the name of speed.

Owner Reid Lunde plans to have the human and technological resources to influence the industry and meet the finish line by 2023.

Over the years, we've found things that work well and things that don't work at all – and everything in between.

Reid Lunde, owner of KAIZENSPEED

“There isn't a world-class manufacturing hub in this area of the U.S.,” said Lunde, the founder and president of KAIZENSPEED.

Lunde plans to change that with KAIZENSPEED.

“It's going to be a long road. We chose eight years to go through ups and downs, but it's going to happen. Or I'm going to die trying. We're going to become the next Lingenfelter of the Northwest – a legacy brand.”

The company's current business is made up of about 50 percent Northwest-region customers and the other half comes through online sales on its website, KStuned.com, which offers products like drag brakes, wire covers, oil pans, tensioner and eliminator combos and more. The company also provides services – Dyno tuning, engine assembly, and auto transport to its shop.

“We are long established in the Honda drag racing community around the world and our products are on the fastest Honda drag race cars on the planet. Over the last few years, we've been focused on performance package development for modern (General Motors) vehicles – Corvette, Camaro, Cadillac CTS-V and more,” Lunde said.

From 2005 through 2011, KAIZENSPEED mostly offered services to local residents.

“We survived because of a few unique products that we created and shipped to customers all over the place,” Lunde said. “That's been the key – products instead of 'custom' services. Any time we profit, we put it right back into the business. I take only what I need to live. I have employees that make a great deal more money than I do. That's okay because we're building something great by 2023.”

Custom work isn't a profitable or efficient undertaking, Lunde explained, and that's the very reason KAIZENSPEED is moving away from it.

“The term ‘custom’ gets thrown around a lot and we have a lot of history of doing custom work but our focus is on product development,” he said. “Our products are ‘aftermarket’ but not ‘custom.’ We design products and services that improve the performance of production vehicles.”



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and development engineer, uses the FaroEdge to make a 3-D scanned image, providing a platform for designing parts that fit precisely. The process that previously took two weeks to complete can now be done in eight hours and is accurate to .002 of one inch over a 9-foot span.

Lunde said production vehicles are engineered to do many things pretty well, but also must to meet a lot of regulations, so that means there are compromises made.

KAIZENSPEED focuses on improving engine performance, serviceability and the aesthetic features of the car.

Now the company is focusing on product development and manufacturing of products that appeal to the after-market crowd.

And to do that, the company is using an engineering tool called a FaroEdge, a 3-D scanner with impressive reverse-engineering software called Geomagic Design X.

“It allows us to do everything from quality inspection to complex geometry. It’s a game-changer for our product development initiative and it sets us apart,” Lunde said. “With that

piece of technology, we recently were able to design and produce a product in one day, and it fit perfectly. Before that process would have taken many days and many revisions.”

Manufacturing requires a great deal of systems to create a reproduceable product. A company must have detailed written processes for ordering materials, receiving materials and creating prints to clearly communicate what it needs to its partners, he said.

“We also have processes for pre-fabrication, fabrication inspection, inspection after powder-coat and even which boxes to use and how to pack items for shipment,” Lunde added.

There are so many facets that it can be a little overwhelming for a small team. But quality is never compromised.

“We make and design many different parts. Design engineering, testing and product development is done entirely in-house,” Lunde said.

Machining is done through a partnership with TK Machine in Richland, Aquacuts in Kennewick and other machine shops around the country.

“We also use Custom Coat Powdercoating in Pasco. Final welding and assembly is done here in-house,” Lunde said.

When Lunde first started the business, he took a shotgun approach to his business plan, which consisted of “show up and make it happen.”

But time and experience have given him a long list of lessons learned that have been incorporated into the way he does business.

“Over the years, we’ve found things that work well and things that don’t work at all – and everything in between,” Lunde said. “Now we have a clear understanding of the work we do want and the work we don’t want.”

From the humble beginnings in his friend’s backyard shop while attending Columbia Basin Community College to becoming involved in racing against the fastest guys on the planet, Lunde said he learned what world-class really meant.

“That forced us to improve,” he said.

His intense focus on improvement and growth propels him to set the bar high. Lunde's goal is to increase that number by 50 percent in 2016 and then double that in 2017.

In 2008, revenues were between \$350,000 and \$400,000. Last year, revenues exceeded \$1.1 million, he said.

"Entrepreneurship is what I was born to do, and I'm stubborn, so I have to forge my own path," Lunde said. "Even though no one in my family is a 'car person,' I built and modified (remote-control) cars in middle school and was swapping out engines in my only car in high school."

In addition to providing services to those seeking higher performance automobiles, KAIZENSPEED is committed to building trust with its customers.

"The auto industry has been perceived as untrustworthy, which is a negative. But at the same time, that's the opportunity," Lunde said. "There's a small-town mindset among people in this area that they have to go out of the region to get world-class products and services. We're proving that wrong one client at a time."

The company's very name, "kaizen," a Japanese philosophy that means "continuous improvement," parallels its mission.