



## Businesses Going Green

A business that makes the decision to be environmentally-conscious will often promote goodwill among potential customers, while making the world a better place for future generations. Many businesses hesitate to adopt green practices because they fear it will hurt their bottom line and negatively impact profits. But many eco-conscious businesses discover that they can actually save money and bring in new customers who specifically patronize companies that actively make an effort to be environmentally friendly. Many customers may even be willing to pay a bit more for a product or service from a company that is green.

Many businesses already do things that are eco-friendly, not necessarily because they are sensitive to green living, but simply to save money. However, it does not diminish the value of their green efforts. The trick for businesses is to be eco-friendly without compromising profitability.

Here are a few ways to help develop a green business strategy:

### **Telecommuting**

Implementing a telecommuting program for employees can often have additional benefits beyond simply saving money on gas and reducing transportation-based emissions. Allowing alternative working arrangements for employees, such as allowing them to telecommute and work from home, even if only on certain days will often result in those employees being more productive and it will also serve to endear them to your company

### **Electronic Invoices, Statements and Quotes**

You not only can save money on postage but also cut down on the use of paper by converting routine business documents such as invoices, statements, and quotes into an electronic format such as PDF, and then delivering them via email when possible. That is far more green and much cheaper than the traditional method of printing them on paper, putting them in an envelope and mailing them via the postal mail service.

### **Reduce Energy Consumption**

Reduce expenses even further by encouraging your staff members to minimize energy consumption. Whenever possible, use Energy Star Compliant equipment in the office. You can

also use energy-saving light bulbs, now available in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, along with encouraging staff to turn out lights and shut down equipment when not in use.

### **Shipping**

Minimize packaging materials by using boxes that are more properly sized to the item being shipped. Also, use recycled materials for packing and packaging. Offer an electronic delivery option for any digital products such as software or music.

### **Hybrid Delivery Vehicles**

If possible, use an environmentally-friendly hybrid vehicles for deliveries and sales calls. While the initial expense of the vehicle itself may be more, the long-term savings in fuel and possible tax advantages may make an updated fleet of hybrid vehicles a good investment.

### **Natural Lighting**

When modernizing office space, consider how you can utilize natural lighting to help illuminate the space. A brighter office will make it a friendlier and warmer atmosphere for employees. And using natural lighting will help reduce electricity costs.

### **Patronize**

All companies buy supplies and use the services of other companies, so consider patronizing companies who also follow green principles. Simply put, it is the right thing to do. Be reasonable when possible and take proactive steps toward being green, which are not only good for the environment, but also good for your bottom line.

