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BUSINESS

100 Green Small Business Tips

By Readers of Small Business Trends,
October 2009

100 PRACTICAL TIPS

We asked the readers of Small Business Trends to contribute their best tips for making their small business practices green and eco-friendly. You've shared 100 practical and easy to implement green business tips. The following tips and pointers represent the combined wisdom of small business owners and stakeholders.

Anita Campbell

Anita Campbell, Editor in Chief

Small Business Trends

<http://smallbiztrends.com>

Conserve

Joel Libava

Web: [The Franchise King](#)

Twitter: [@FranchiseKing](#)

USE A POWER STRIP

“Turn off your PC’s power strip every night. Saves over \$150 a year!”

Susan Oakes

Web: [M4B Marketing](#)

Twitter: [@m4bmarketing](#)

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF NATURAL LIGHTING

“Position your desk to capture all the sunlight when possible.”

Kathy Breitenbucher

Web: [The Pedestal Group](#)

Twitter: [@k_breitenbucher](#)

LIMIT YOUR PRINTING

“For three days, disconnect your printer from the network and connect it to one computer in the office. If every time you have to print you have to save the doc to a thumb drive and go somewhere else, you really only print those things that are must-haves. You’ll be amazed at how much less you need to print!”

Matt Cowall

Web: [Appia Communications](#)

TRY AN E-FAX SERVICE

“If you still need to fax documents, retire the old paper machine in favor of a scanner or eFax service. No more separate paper, toner, power and maintenance, and you only print the ones you really need to (if any).”

Amanda Stillwagon

Web: [My Finds Online](#)

Twitter: [@myfindsonline](#)

TURN OFF YOUR WIRELESS MOUSE

“I turn my wireless mouse off every evening. It seems to really extend the life of my batteries which means fewer batteries in the landfills.”

Todd Allison

Web: www.toddallison.com

Twitter: [@todd_allison](https://twitter.com/@todd_allison)

SAY NO TO SHOPPING BAGS

“A local retail business I worked with started a program called ‘change for bags’. They asked everyone if they wanted to refuse a bag—notice they didn’t say ‘do you want a bag’. Every time someone refused a bag they dropped a nickel into a jar on the counter. When the jar filled they donated the money to an environmental cause. Double Green!”

Angela

Web: www.hp.com

Twitter: [@AngelaAtHP](https://twitter.com/@AngelaAtHP)

POWER DOWN YOUR ELECTRONICS

“Did you know that Energy Star recommends that you power down all electronics—computer, monitor, printer, and other peripherals—when not in use? This includes unplugging power strips at the end of the day, because they consume energy even when the equipment is shut off. But be sure to power down all equipment connected to the power strip first. You can find more tips at hp.com/PowerToChange”

Barry Benjamin

Web: [Going Green](http://GoingGreen.com)

COLLECT DATA ON YOUR USAGE AMOUNTS

“Everyone is different so the best way to go ‘green’ is to first get an accurate reading of what you are using and how much. This can be of anything like energy, water or paper for example. This is called getting a base line. If you don’t get a base line first you will never REALLY know if you are doing better or not with all of the different ways to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. All of the ideas are great and they will work but for maximum benefit you need to know where you are starting from. This also means that you can choose goal and have a celebration when you achieve it. This goal setting is very important in keeping your focus on what YOU want to do and not some consultant like me.”

Nichole Wesson

ENCOURAGE TELECOMMUTING

“Allow telecommuting at least one day a week, if it’s feasible for your company. By doing this, you reduce the energy produced in the office. Employees can reduce their carbon footprint (gas or public transportation) once a week as well.”

Jane A.

ADJUST YOUR THERMOSTAT

“Adjust your thermostat! Set it at 74 to save on air conditioning. Nobody is going to cook at a few degrees warmer temps. In the winter, set it at 70.”

Jeff Yablon

Web: [Answer Guy Central](#)

CONSERVE ENERGY

“Turn out the lights you don’t need on!”

Lynn

Web: [Celebrate Green](#)

SCHEDULE DAY TIME EVENTS

“Stage events during the time of day when the least amount of electricity is used for both lighting and heat or air conditioning.”

Adam

Web: buildingtgreen.com/AuggieVGreenBlog

UNPLUG APPLIANCES NOT IN USE

“Pull out all power chargers that aren’t charging something and coffee makers that aren’t brewing. Phantom loads add up!!”

Becky McCray

Web: [Small Biz Survival](#)

Twitter: [@BeckyMcCray](#)

GET A FREE ENERGY AUDIT

“Get in touch with your electric utility. Many offer free energy audits, giving you more ideas on how to cut down on your electrical consumption. Some water utilities do the same.”

Ron Reed

Twitter: [@themortgagedoc](#)

TRY A FOUR DAY WORK WEEK

“Work 10 hr days and shut down Friday, Saturday and Sunday (every week, every other week or at least once per month—employees will love you as well).”

Ron Reed

Twitter: [@themortgagedoc](#)

UTILIZE NATURAL LIGHT

“Learn to properly utilize natural light sources in the winter (warmth) and in the summer (keep area cool).”

Brian Moran

Web: [Small Business Edge](#)

Twitter: [@brianmoran](#)

USE BOTH SIDES OF PRINTER PAPER

“Instead of printing a document and throwing it out after we’re done with it, we re-use it to print on the blank side of the paper. It has cut our paper costs dramatically.”

Eddie Gear

Web: [Genuine SEO](#)

ENABLE REMOTE ACCESS

“Enable remote access to applications to facilitate home and on-the-road working to cut commutes.”

Kamalika

ADJUST PRINTER SETUP

“Adjust your default print setup for double sided prints.”

Susie Sharp

Web: [Morand Architects, Inc.](#)

Twitter: [@SusieSharp](#)

LIMIT AIR CONDITIONING

“Open the windows during the days whenever possible and turn the A/C off. A/C and heat are never left on at night or on weekends.”

Jarrold Harms

Web: [Detour Salon & Store](#)

INSTALL HOT WATER ON DEMAND

“Install hot water on demand, eliminating constant heating of a water tank.”

ELIMINATE BOTTLED WATER

“Install a drinking water filtration system reducing the amount of plastic bottles and the gas used for delivery.”

Cameron Smith

Web: [Interlinks](#)

WORK FROM HOME

“Working from home has saved me heaps on transportation costs, and saved many car trips.”

Sharon Minchuk

Web: [Splash Events](#)

LIMIT MEETINGS

“Schedule a standing in-person meeting one a month (or more frequently if needed) with an agenda. All in between meetings are handled electronically (email, e-meeting, conference call). Saves on travel (i.e., that carbon footprint) and presentation material waste; but also is more time efficient and organizes clients while still maintaining client relationship. I also find that I get more dedicated attention during the in-person meeting so we get more done.”

Anne-Marie Bonneau

Web: theeconomator.blogspot.com

Twitter: [@AnnMarieBonneau](https://twitter.com/AnnMarieBonneau)

BIKE TO WORK

“There’s now a tax credit for employees commuting to work—it’s called the Bicycle Commuter Act. Not only will employees reduce greenhouse gas production by riding to work, they will get their exercise en route, and save money not only on gas, but through the tax break. You can offer this tax break to your employees and make a big impact on the environment, all the while saving up to 9.5% of your FICA contributions by participating in the commuter program.”

Flora Morris Brown , Ph.D.

Web: [Flora Brown Associates](#)

Twitter: [@florabrown](https://twitter.com/florabrown)

BLOCK JUNK FAXES

“I recently bought a new scanner/fax that has a junk fax blocker. Now I enter the phone number of junk faxes and block that number from ever sending faxes again that use up my paper and ink. I seldom get a junk fax anymore.”

Sarah Bradley

Web: [Help Ahoy](#)

Twitter: [@SJABradley](https://twitter.com/SJABradley)

INSTALL ECO-FONT

“We use [Eco-font](#), as well as using ‘draft print’ option on the printer. Eco-font is a font that uses up to 20% less ink. Therefore, ink cartridges (or toner) will last longer.”

Max Bielenberg

Web: [Dan4, Inc.](#)

Twitter: [@dan4inc](#)

PRINT SMALLER BUSINESS CARDS

“When you need more, design and print smaller business cards. 2 11/16 by 1 5/16 inches is a nice proportion and is about half the size of conventional ones. Perhaps smaller, concise business cards can become the norm.”

Danita Blackwood

Web: [SBTV.com](#)

Twitter: [@DanitaBlackwood](#)

PURCHASE RECONDITIONED OFFICE FURNITURE

“Purchase used and reconditioned office furniture or store fixtures—available through local firms—and donate furnishings when you remodel.”

Kylie Gates

Web: [WSMH FOX 66](#)

ELIMINATE A FEW FLUORESCENT BULBS

“Each of our florescent light fixtures held 4 florescent tubes...we pulled two. I hardly makes a difference in the light and uses 1/2 the energy.”

Carolyn Craven

Web: [Checkbox Survey](#)

Twitter: [@checkbox_craven](#)

OFFER ELECTRONIC SOFTWARE DOWNLOADS

“We only send physical software CD’s to customers who ask for them and really need them—everyone else receives their software through electronic delivery. This saves on wasted CD’s, packaging, and the energy/emissions used to deliver them.”

Sunit Pareek

Web: [CorpoAlert](#)

Twitter: [@friend_sunit](#)

TURN OFF YOUR MONITOR

“A very simple and important TIP is to turn off your Monitor when not in use or put your system on Standby. If you can, then instead of Standby try using the Hibernate option available in Windows.”

ELIMINATE UNUSED COMPUTER PROGRAMS

“You should note that the extra programs running in the background eat up your system resources, which requires more electricity thereby heating your system which releases more heat for the environment to fight with.”

Wayne Liew

Web: www.wayneliew.com

Twitter: [@WayneLiew](https://twitter.com/WayneLiew)

KEEP LAPTOPS OFF DURING CONFERENCES

“Turn off your laptop and resist from turning it on during conferences, meetups or other networking events. The purpose of attending a networking event is to have conversations with people. Keep the work at your office.”

Marcia B

Web: Marcia B Consulting

WORK WITHOUT YOUR COMPUTER

“Shut off your computer for a few hours a day. You will have more time to think about your business and work for your clients. Try meeting them in person or talking on the phone with them. They like it!”

Denise Taschereau

Web: Fairware Promotional Products Ltd.

Twitter: [@FairwarePromo](https://twitter.com/FairwarePromo)

MAKE TURNING OFF ELECTRONICS EASIER WITH A POWER STRIP

“A simple trick for making it easy to turn off monitors, printers, shredders, chargers, etc is to plug the things you want to turn off at night into a power strip screwed under the outside edge of your desktop. When you leave at night, just reach below your desk and flip the main switch on the power strip to shut down everything. No more crouching under desks!”

Jeff Cobado

Web: Brain Trust Technologies LLC

USE SOFTWARE AS A SERVICE

“Software as a Service, often referred to as SaaS, is web based software solutions. By having software hosted elsewhere this reduces power consumption by not having the hardware on-site or centralized.”

Claudio Aricó

Web: Bachicha

SHUTDOWN WORKSTATIONS DURING MEETINGS

“Every time we have meetings/brainstorming/creative sessions, we simply go to the old and loving pencil & paper...and shut down all the computers, printers, scanners, etc. Let’s calculate: 1 hour (minimum) a day, five hours in a working week, 20 in a month, 250 hours in a year...Great!”

John Thompson

Web: [Global Learning Institute, Inc.](#)

PUT LAPTOP AC ADAPTERS ON A POWER STRIP

“To maximize your energy savings using a laptop, put your AC adapter on a power strip that can be turned off as the transformer in the AC adapter draws power continuously, even when the laptop is not plugged into the adapter.”

SWITCH TO ONLINE CLASSES

“Switch your face-to-face classes to online classes because online learning uses 90% less energy.”

Jane Anderson

Web: [CU*Answers](#)

Twitter: [@cuanswers](#)

WASH WORK CLOTHES LESS OFTEN

“Wear your clothes (outerwear) and use towels more than once. Come on, unless you work where you sweat or pick up contaminants, does that outfit really need to go through the laundry?”

USE DESK LAMPS

“Turn off the lights. If you’re in the office alone or with just a few co-workers, use your desk lamps. Leave the room lights in the OFF position.”

Recycle

Robert Brady

Web: [Lotus Jump](#)

ASSEMBLE A RECYCLING PROGRAM

“Ever thought about what happens to all the trash your business generates? The pop cans and paper? Making your business more green can be as simple as putting together a basic recycling program. Even if it’s only a special trash can for paper waste every little bit helps.”

Lisa Sims

Web: [Stretching Your Cash](#)

Twitter: [@bizmoneysaver](#)

UTILIZE RECYCLED INK CARTRIDGES

“One way to go green in your business is to utilize recycled printer cartridges. Instead of throwing your printer cartridge out when it runs out of toner (or ink), hold on to it. There are recycled printer cartridge stores (and online as well) that will give you a discount on a replacement recycled printer cartridge. Not only are you saving money but also helping to reduce the amount of printer cartridges that end up in landfills across the country.”

Joann Sondy

SMALL CHANGES CAN ADD UP

“Greening your business is easy and small things can make a big difference. Recycle unwanted paper & cardboard, eliminate disposable cups and utensils, purchase recycled printer cartridges and even work from home!”

Nancy

Web: [Princeton Cryo](#)

RECYCLE PAPER IN BULK

“Don’t trash papers. Try collecting them and giving them for bulk recycling.”

Shirley George Frazier

Web: [Solo Business Marketing](#)

Twitter: [@ShirleyFrazier](#)

REPURPOSE OLD BUSINESS CARDS

“Tips that I gather to create e-books and downloadable reports are written on the back (blank side) of my old business cards. This is better for me than writing on paper, as I usually misplace the paper before I’m done. One tip is written on each card, and all cards stay in the original shipping box until I’m ready to compile the eBook or report.”

Louana George

Web: [The L Bag](#)

RECYCLE OFFICE TRASH

“Recycle everything the city allows: paper, cans, glass, plastic bags, cardboard, plastic bottles. You’ll be surprised at how little trash you make when the intention is to reduce—if you do that you may be able to reduce plastic trash can liners as well.”

Erika Kerekes

Web: [answers.business.com](#)

USE COFFEE GROUNDS FOR COMPOST

“Take the coffee grounds (no doubt your office makes several pounds each day, at least), put them in a large plastic container, and take turns taking them home to fertilize your gardens or add to compost piles.”

Kathy Watcke

Web: [Infogatherer](#)

Twitter: [@infogatherer](#)

DONATE USED CELL PHONES

“Collect used cell phones and donate to be reprogrammed for victims of Domestic abuse: <http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/Womens+Commission/Domestic+Violence/Used+cell+phone.htm>”

Lizette Pirtle

Web: [Expansion Expert](#)

Twitter: [@expansionexpert](#)

RECYCLE FURNITURE

“I had an old desk that wasn’t in the best of shapes. Instead of buying a new desk and giving this away, I found an artist in town who reclaimed the wood, added metal and created a gorgeous ‘new’ desk for me. Before you throw out or even give something to Goodwill, ask yourself if there is a way you can use what you have with some modification such as painting it, sanding it, or finding someone who can transform it into something wonderful.”

Mrs. Green

Web: [My Zero Waste](#)

REUSE PACKAGING

“My tip is to reuse all packaging that comes into your office. Padded envelopes, bubble wrap, cardboard boxes, mailing tubes and carefully opened envelopes can all be reused. I love tips that save the planet but ****save me money too****—it’s makes total business sense. Each day I carefully slice envelopes and packaging open and store them. When I have some letters or a parcel to send, I select the right packaging from my reuse stash! It also means I can pass P&P savings on to people who buy things from me! AND it’s so simple that colleagues can be empowered in the process which helps plants seeds about being careful with resources. I’ve collected so much packaging in the past I’ve had to give it away on Freecycle; it’s amazing what you can collect once you start.”

Jackie Malcolm

FLATTEN BOXES FOR RECYCLING

“Take the largest empty box for recycling and unfold the ends to make flat. Then fold in the flaps on one bottom, flatten all other boxes and insert into the largest pocket box. Stuff the box full of the other flattened boxes, even folding some to fit. This is a good and easy way to contain the boxes for recycling.”

Jillian Koeneman

Web: [Effect](#)

Twitter: [@effectwebagency](#)

REUSE SHIPPING PALLETS

“Utilize reusable shipping containers and pallets instead of disposable ones. If you eliminate 11 wooden pallets from your business you save 1 tree!”

RJ Cantell

Web: [The Home Depot](#)

PROVIDE RECYCLING BINS FOR EACH DESK

“Rather than have a trash can at every employee’s desk and only a few centralized recycling bins, every employee here has a recycling bin at their desk and only a few centralized trash cans in break rooms. This makes cleanup faster and more efficient, makes it very easy to recycle, and changes the way employees think about the trash they create.”

Patti Osterheld

Web: [POKO, LLC](#)

Twitter: [@posterheld](#)

RECYCLE USED PAPER FOR NOTES

“Keep a bin for used computer paper. Use a paper trimmer to cut paper into 3x5 paper size. Keep a stack of these papers at everyone’s desk. This is a great way to recycle paper and save on notepads as well.”

Flora Morris Brown, Ph.D.

Web: [Flora Brown Associates](#)

Twitter: [@florabrown](#)

DONATE USED MAGAZINES

“Since I traded in unused airline rewards for magazine subscriptions, my office gets flooded with many wonderful magazines. Once I read through them, I remove my address label and bag them for donating to the shops of my dentist and manicurist. They are grateful for the variety and don’t have to be concerned if folks walk away with them since they’ll get a new batch each month. Everybody wins.”

Lisa Roberts

Web: [Business Rx, LLC](#)

Twitter: [@bizrx](#)

REUSE MANILA FOLDERS

“When using manila folders, for temporary organization of a project or task, write the folder title in pencil. Once the project is over or the task complete, you can reuse the folder and simply erase the title tab instead of throwing it away.”

Doug DuCap

Web: [Hugging the Coast](#)

Twitter: [@huggingthecoast](#)

FREECYCLE UNWANTED ITEMS

“List unwanted items for free at your local chapter of Freecycle.org. With 4,812 groups with 6,552,000 members around the world, there’s more than a good chance that there’s a local Freecycle Network in your area. Usually, people who need those items will be more than happy to meet you at your convenience to pickup those items, and you’ll have the satisfaction of knowing that those items are now in good hands and not going to waste. Sometimes, those items can end up in the hands of local nonprofits where they’ll help make a large positive difference in your community.”

Amanda Stillwagon

Web: [My Finds Online](#)

Twitter: [@myfindsonline](#)

REUSE SHREDDED PAPER

“Use all the paper you shred as packaging material. It makes a great cushion for fragile items and it’s free.”

Go Paperless

John

Web: [The Small Biz Nest](#)

GO PAPERLESS

“Go electronic with all your monthly bills and statements.”

Jason Cohen

Web: [A Smart Bear](#)

Twitter: [@asmartbear](#)

REQUEST ELECTRONIC CORRESPONDENCE

“When someone tries to give you paper—resume, brochure, pamphlet, legal document, anything—tell them: “I can’t accept anything on paper. Please send me an electronic copy and I’ll file it.”

If they press you, or if you feel like it, you can follow with: “If you give me that I have no place to put it—no filing cabinet, no drawers, and so forth. I have an excellent filing system on my computer. So if you hand this to me I will literally just put it in the trash, but if you send me it I will keep it forever.”

This is a nice way to pay it forward!”

EntreOrp

ELIMINATE PAPER PAYROLL CHECKS AND PAYSTUBS



Jay Melone

SHARE DOCUMENTS ONLINE

“Use Google Docs so that people can access documents from anywhere without ever having to print something out.”

USE AN ENERGY STAR PROJECTOR

“Purchase an energy star projector that can be used in meetings and eliminate the need to print anything.”

Jen

Web: [Eco-Office Gals](#)

Twitter: [@EcoOfficeGals](#)

GO PAPERLESS

“When I moved I did not connect my printer back to the computer... that was a year ago!! Just go for it, paperless contracts, online document sharing, blogs, social media, there is simply no need to print! Just DON'T do it!”

Kamalika

SWITCH TO E-INVITES

“Invitations for any function can be made as an e-invite. It is more likely to reach quickly and saves on paper cost.”

Jonathan Shanes

Web: [Construction North](#)

Twitter: [@jonnyshanes](#)

TRANSMIT ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTATION

“We provide General Contracting and Construction Management for business. The construction process is very documentation oriented. By utilizing Microsoft Office products combined with the output from Autocad and Adobe Acrobat, we are able to facilitate all of the necessary contracts, forms responses, meeting minutes, contracts, change orders, requests for information, and submittals of products for approval, shop drawings and other documentation using electronic means of transmission.”

MaryAnn Markus

Web: [MaryAnn's Home Staging](#)

PROVIDE PDF BROCHURES

“Provide brochures and estimates as PDF documents. When visiting a new client I bring my laptop with me. It has wireless broadband Internet. I simply email the brochure, estimate and other information to client's computer. I don't have to spend money on paper that the client may or may not want. If the

client wants the document printed out they can print it out in color on their home computer. Otherwise they can view it electronically. Not only does this save money but clients appreciate getting something right there in their inbox.”

Summer Foster

Web: [Michigan Osteopathic Association](#)

POST MEETING MINUTES ONLINE

“We post committee and board meeting minutes in a password protected area on our website rather than printing and mailing.”

STORE CONFERENCE HANDOUTS ON A USB

“Provide conference handouts on a USB drive rather than printing out syllabuses.”

Israela Adah Brill-Cass

Web: [Buggie's Bumpers](#)

Twitter: [@brillcass](#)

ADD A GREEN NOTE TO EMAILS

“One of the simplest tips that has had the greatest impact internally and we believe on others outside our business as well is simply adding a small green tree to the bottom of our signature line in all of our emails with the following message: Consider the environment. Please print this email only if necessary. We find ourselves being more mindful before printing an email and we've heard from people who have received our emails that it made more mindful about printing themselves.”

Adopt Green Practices

Vicki

Web: [Go Green](#)

USE GREEN CLEANING PRODUCTS

“Green clean your office. Replacing one non-green cleaning product can have dramatic consequences. There are green cleaning choices for every cleaning job but let's focus on windows. Example: One concentrated bottle of window cleaner can replace 728 bottles of a popular window cleaner that is not green. The toxins, chemicals and fumes would not be in the air of the office anymore, and the biodegradable green window cleaner is better for the environment. On top of that, the concentrated bottle costs about \$10.00 and \$3.00 for a spray bottle to add your own water to the two drops that are required to make a very effective window cleaner; the 728 bottles cost \$3,232.32 at a discount store. That's a money savings of over \$3,200.00! Last, the cost to manufacture and ship the 728 bottles in terms of environmental pollution is eliminated, as well as the space they take in landfills. This one very easy to do green alternative saves money, is healthier, and helps the environment. How is that for a Win-Win-Win suggestion?”

Tami M. Pederson

USE WOODEN PENCILS

“I believe it’s time to return to using the old but faithful #2 wood pencil. How many pens do you throw away each year? The wood pencil does the same job as the pen except when you need to sign any ‘legal’ documents.”

Martin Lindeskog

Web: [Egoist International Business Coordinator](#)

Twitter: [@lyceum](#)

BUY A LAPTOP

“The best way to help the environment, i.e., your surroundings, is to become a real supporter of the industrial revolution and use cost effective products that is a result of inventors, business owners and capitalists. I think we will see new super compact computer like ultra efficient notebooks / laptops instead of ‘clunky’ big PCs in the future. The trend is that people are buying laptops instead of PCs. It will be interesting to follow the battery manufacturer, Boston Power, in its quest for the ‘next-generation lithium-ion battery technology platform’.”

Red Hot Franchises

PROMOTE GREEN PRACTICES

“Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. There are the three Rs and are on their way to becoming good business practice for many small businesses for going Green. It is the buzz going on these days. Promoting green practices can be helpful to your Business success.”

Rosa Say

Web: [Talking Story](#)

Twitter: [@rosasay](#)

LESS IS MORE: USE IT OR LOSE IT

“We at Say Leadership Coaching adopted this mantra as part of our Core 2009 Initiatives: ‘Less is more: Use it or lose it.’ It started out as clutter-busting to streamline the office environment and move toward more mobile and virtual work. However once we’d warmed up with the usual material culprits we turned our attention to all our business practices—outdated coaching/teaching curriculum, workshop exercises we were tiring of—just about everything. We have found the mantra is helping us break auto-pilot routines and put any sacred cows out to pasture where they belong. Going ‘green’ in your thought processes can release a lot of creativity and banish complacency.”

April Femrite

Web: [Naturally Bamboo](#)

Twitter: [@Naturallybamboo](#)

PURCHASE WIND POWER

“Contact your power company to see if they offer wind energy as an option. For about \$4.00 more per month we are purchasing wind power instead of non-renewable sources.”

BUY ECO-FRIENDLY BANNERS

“Buy promotional banners that are made out of recycled pop bottles and printed with water-based ink.”

Jessica Gardner

SEND GREEN HOLIDAY CARDS

“For the upcoming holiday season, send clients and other business contacts a green holiday greeting card...cards are 50 percent sugarcane by-products and 50 percent recycled paper content, envelopes are from 100% recycled paper: <http://bit.ly/oRNUJ>”

Natasha K

USE RECYCLABLE CONTAINERS

“All Restaurants, for takeout purposes, should provide containers made from non-plastic containers or at the very least recyclable containers. There is still too much Styrofoam, plastic lids, and hard plastic containers everywhere! Also utensils made from cornstarch or potatoes are great! A great direction restaurants should start to go is to charge customers for takeout containers, encouraging patrons to bring their own containers from home.”

Stacey Rose

Web: [Storey Kenworthy](#)

SHOP LOCAL

“Shop and support local companies...by shopping locally you save on emissions and help the local economies.”

Yiana Palacios

Web: [Design Leap](#)

Twitter: [@DesignLeap](#)

UPGRADE YOUR EQUIPMENT

“Replace your ancient equipment! Computers are in every office and they stay on for hours at a time. Make sure that yours is energy efficient. Take a look at the Energy Star site to help you choose the right one <http://tinyurl.com/2c2d2f>.

I've just upgraded to MacBook Pro, it's super energy efficient <http://www.apple.com/macbookpro/environment.html>”

Simon Heseline

USE RECHARGEABLE BATTERIES

“Use rechargeable batteries in your wireless mouse / keyboard, prevents all those batteries from filling landfills.”

Srinivas Vivek

Web: [Inquisitive](#)

USE FREE VIRTUALIZATION PRODUCTS

“For small business IT systems, use free virtualization products like VMware ESXi, VMware Server and desktop to run multiple virtual machines (Windows or Linux) on single physical machine. There will be lot of savings in Capex (hardware) and Opex (power and administrators). Productivity also will improve as less management is required.”

Cathy, Joys

Web: www.justorganizeyourstuff.org

Twitter: @JOYS

BUY ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY SUPPLIES

“Buy environmentally friendly supplies. Yes, they may cost a bit more. But the more people who buy them, the more affordable for everyone they will become.”

Deborah Elms

Web: [Imprinted Originals](#)

UPDATE TRADE SHOW DISPLAYS

“Save money and help the environment by selecting (or switching to) light weight portable displays using fabric graphic displays created with low-VOC inks. What makes them green? Key points = less impact on environment from low-VOC inks, less impact from aluminum or aluminum alloy frames, and *significantly* less gasoline/carbon used in shipping due to much lower weights.”

Kirby Beaver

SWITCH TO FLUORESCENT BULBS

“For larger manufacturing facilities, they could have \$50K in savings and help the environment by switching all their halogen bulbs to fluorescent bulbs!”

Lynn

Web: [Celebrate Green](#)

GREEN YOUR BUSINESS REWARDS

“Instead of giving “things” as gifts or awards, offer experiences, tickets to events or privileges within the company.”

Jooled,

Web: [Andzia's Amber Jewelry](#)

ASK FOR GREEN SUGGESTIONS

“Create a Green Suggestion Box & place it somewhere with a lot of workplace traffic, in a very visible location. Pass the recycled packaging box, appropriated cooler or whatever you use around & ask different departments, groups or people—whatever the case may be—to decorate it with a fun, upbeat green workplace theme. These can be drawings, things pasted on the box, items affixed to the box, etc. Make reviewing—& implementing the suggestions a regular part of the office/workplace routine & you'll find many smart, money saving tips flow in on an ongoing basis, ones that are tailor made for your workplace. Give people a way to share, and believe it or not, they usually will.”

Ron Reed

Twitter: [@themortgagedoc](#)

MAKE GOING GREEN FUN

“Make going green fun for the entire office: best ideas= awards, time off, coupons for energy efficient appliances, etc. But by all means, please do not form another committee!”

Tim Grahl

Web: [Out:Think](#)

Twitter: [@timgrahl](#)

BUY USED OR REFURBISHED

“Always buy used or refurbished equipment. Save it from the landfill while also saving money!”

Naomi Heimeyer

Web: [Redwood Ranch](#)

GET SOME OFFICE PLANTS

“Have 1 plant for every 100 sq ft of office space. This allows you to naturally filter your air in the office. It also seems to brighten the tone of the office when you have other living things.”

Kevin

Web: [Boston Green Building](#)

Twitter: [@bostongreen](#)

LOOK INTO COMMERCIAL SOLAR SYSTEMS

“Look into affordable commercial solar systems that could be put on the roof of your company. Not only do most states offer great incentives and low interest loans for solar system, but the payback period can be under 10 years in many cases. It looks great and shows a company's serious commitment to going green.”

Matt Storey

Web: [Direct Interactions, Inc.](#)

Twitter: [@storeyma](#)

SET UP HOME-BASED CALL CENTERS

“If you operate a call center, consider setting up a home-based agent program. REI, a Seattle-based outdoor retailer, analyzed their entire business and concluded that employee commutes were by far their largest contribution to pollution. By setting up a home-based agent program, they reduced the environmental impact of their operations. Even more exciting, they reduced their overall call center costs.”

Sadie Stocks

Web: [Home Works Remodeling](#)

USE RECYCLED PAPER PRODUCTS

“Switch to recycled toilet paper, paper towels and Kleenex.”

Rhonda Page

Web: [Special Kids World](#)

USE BIODEGRADABLE PACKAGING

“Products should be packed in biodegradable packaging. There is too much plastic and Styrofoam in packaging.”

Anne M. Wenzel

Web: [Econosystems](#)

Twitter: [@annewenzel](#)

MANAGE TELECOMMUTING EMPLOYEES EFFICIENTLY

“Learn how to manage telecommuting employees or contractors. If you can keep on-site visits to a minimum, there is less traffic and congestion on the roads, and fewer fossil fuels burned. It takes being well organized about giving assignments and providing feedback, but with some practice and documenting of procedures, telecommuting management skills can be learned. For employees, consider paying a training wage for the first 3 months while you work out and document the telecommuting system. For contractors, who typically receive a much higher hourly rate, check references and make sure projects and payment schedules are well defined up front. With offsite help, you can grow your business and become more profitable without leaving a bigger ecological footprint.”