



Big Ideas: Green Entrepreneur Josh Dorfman

Josh Dorfman became an environmentalist out of necessity. Selling bicycle locks while living in China in the 1990s, he realized that the billion bikes then on the road would soon be replaced by a billion cars—with serious consequences to his fate, as well as the rest of humanity's. So he started looking for easy ways to go green and now shares what he's learned with the masses. Dorfman, 35, created the blog and Sirius Satellite Radio show "Lazy Environmentalist"; established the stylish eco-design retailer Vivavi; launched Moderngreenliving.com, an online home directory for eco-conscious builders, renters, and prospective homeowners; and authored *The Lazy Environmentalist: Your Guide to Easy, Stylish Green Living* due out in June. Lazy? We don't think so—he's just getting started.

Can "lazy environmentalism" really make a difference?

Yes! Most people—myself included—will only take actions that plug into their lifestyles. I care about water and energy conservation, for example, but that doesn't mean I'm going to take shorter showers. Now, if someone comes up with a gadget that lets me use less energy or water without changing my behavior, I'll buy it. That's lazy environmentalism: finding solutions that are grounded in the reality of how we live.

With so many companies trumpeting eco-credentials, how can we discern real environmental responsibility from "greenwashing"?

Look for a credible seal. When you're buying office equipment, search for the Energy Star label. Paper products should be certified by the Forest Stewardship Council and cleaning products approved by Greenguard. And watch for certification from Cradle to Cradle, which assesses the impact of a product through its entire life cycle.

The slogan for your site, Moderngreenliving.com, is "My house is smarter than your house." What makes your house so smart?

It runs on wind, for one. Utilities are now enabling customers to bring clean energy into the grid, so almost every American can select clean energy through their provider's Web site. I spend about \$20 more per month, but it's incredibly worthwhile knowing that I'm just sitting here—again I haven't changed a thing in my life and yet I'm doing this amazing thing for the green economy. And depending on how energy rates change, my wind contract could be a money-saver down the road. It all comes down to using less energy and fewer materials.

What is the next chapter in "green" America?

This growing awareness of our ecosystem will take us to a place where we can be more present and connected—where civilization can evolve.