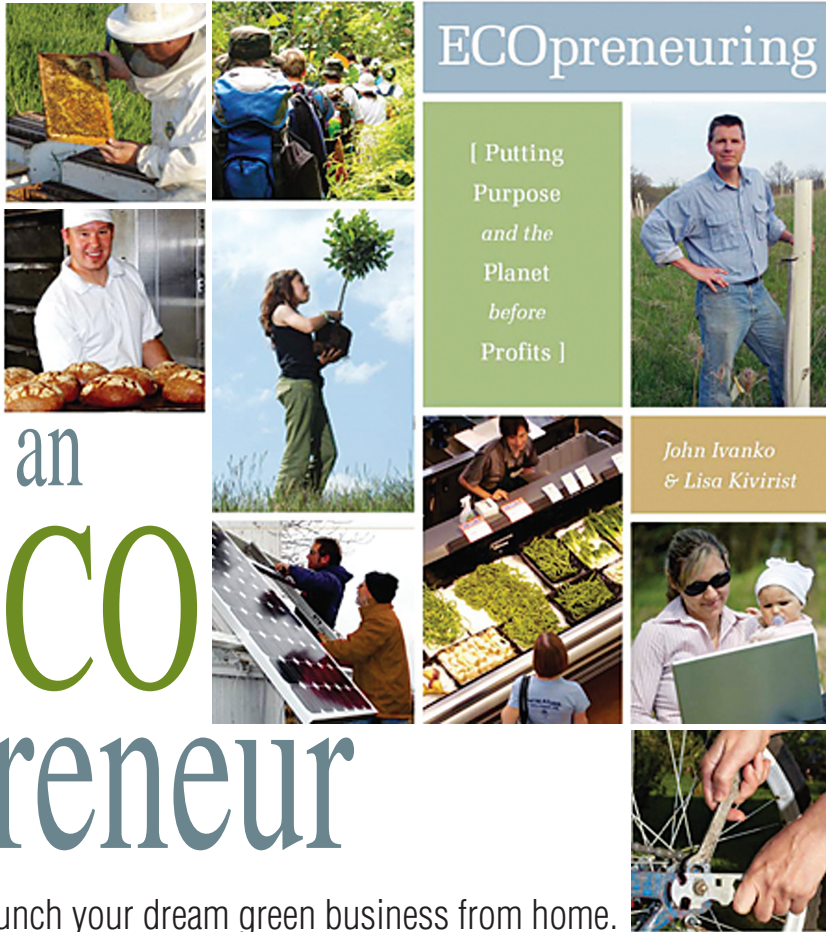


Be an ECO preneur

Launch your dream green business from home.



This issue's guest editors are Lisa Kivirist and John Ivanko, coauthors of ECOpreneur: Putting Purpose and the Planet before Profits. They operate Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast in Wisconsin, completely powered by renewable energy, and write and speak on the exploding green business movement and sustainable food issues.

We live in rapidly changing times: escalating gas prices at the pump, politicians campaigning on a platform of change. Climate change forces millions of Americans—us included—to adapt to increasing variability and instability of extreme weather. As energy, food, and medical costs spiral upward, many of us have less change left over at the end of a day's hard work, especially if we work for someone else. There are still too many of us who yearn for more than a paycheck and want our work to

be more about leaving a legacy than making someone else rich and working for their dream, not ours.

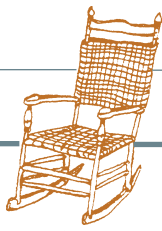
But millions of Americans are launching a dream green business that makes the world a better place by prioritizing purpose over profits and community over building market share. These environmental entrepreneurs, or "ecopreneurs," are starting mission-driven nonprofit organizations in droves, or creating for-profit enterprises that thrive in the sustainable "honeybee economy," guided by a triple bottom line of planet, people, and (some) profits. They own the ladder, not climb it. Our profits fund our purpose—what we refer to as our Earth Mission in ECOpreneur—rather than the purpose of business being solely to make profits. It reflects the fundamental change in how we earn our daily bread, often from a self-sufficient homestead or a home office interlinked with a thriving local economy.

Ecopreneurs are finding ways to turn down the heat, replant forests, eliminate dependence on nonrenewable and polluting sources of energy, transform waste into wealth, reestablish more secure, safe, and bioregional food systems, and break the financial sector's stranglehold on life. And they're doing so without destroying the planet or exploiting people. The defining characteristics of ecopreneurial enterprises often include the following:

- Human-scaled and diversified
- Fill small economic niches in the same way that nature fills ecological niches, creating a web of symbiotic relationships
- Place-based and local, focusing on serving neighbors, not "consumers" in faraway places
- Waste not, for there is no waste in healthy ecological systems
- Fair trade, not merely free trade, with numerous stakeholders, not just a few stockholders
- Possess financial literacy that transcends conventional perspectives of wealth by redefining the purpose of money, holding only income-producing assets, and breaking free from the tentacles of the global financial system

Despite the sketchy research on small businesses, about 97 percent of the nearly 26 million business firms in the U.S. have fewer than 20 employees, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration. We're counted among the 23 million microenterprises, or 15 million small office/home office entrepreneurs, or SOHOs. For many ecopreneurs, our size is personal preference and a competitive advantage while offering us an enviable quality of life that doesn't have to come at a grave cost to the Earth.

Our diversified small business could be its own zip code: a bed-and-breakfast, a marketing consulting company, an electricity utility that harvests power from the wind and sun, a micro biofuels processing facility (to heat our strawbale greenhouse), an organic farm. Some enterprises generate revenue; others save on expenses, allowing us greater self-reliance and



satisfaction that comes from growing our own food, generating our own energy, or building our own home.

Our micro business supersedes our quality of life, not our bank account. Ecopreneuring is not about making lots of money, though some ecopreneurs will achieve significant financial returns because the ideas they implement and businesses they create find a ripe market today. But nearly all small businesses democratize and decentralize commerce by bringing it back to serving the community in which it roosts. Some of these small enterprises aspire to grow better, not bigger. And ecopreneuring helps us craft a livelihood to support our values and restore and preserve our communities.

Small business is big, with the entrepreneurial spirit emerging as the backbone of the American economy about the same time that green is becoming the new gold. The businesses that solve ecological and social problems are the ones to own in the twenty-first century. As any organic farmer selling at a farmers' market, green home-builder who designs with nature, or PV installer will attest, the restoration economy is well underway, and those businesses that are environmentally and socially sound are thriving, often growing at double digit rates. Why? Because these ecopreneurs realize—just like their “conserving customers” do—how we treat the planet and others has a direct bearing on our own health and well-being.

With more people becoming aware of the global and local challenges now facing us, ecopreneurs harness the power of small business as a catalyst for change, creating the change we seek in the world through the business we create. It's a change in consciousness, not merely a change in shopping habits. Commerce has long been the engine of social change, an innovative force in the transformation of who we are, what we care about, and what we drive, live in, wear, and eat. So consider becoming your own CEO—chief environmental officer—of your dream green business, thriving with purpose and meaning, guided by the new bottom line of making things better. 🌱

FarmTek

High Tunnels, Greenhouses, Livestock Housing
Storage Buildings, Riding Arenas, Compost Structures

Call today for your free catalog 1.800.327.6835
or shop on-line at www.farmtek.com. Mention
code FA0804 to receive your 10% discount.

**More Ways To Save with
ESAPCO Financial Services**
**Flexible Financing
Up to 15 Years!**
(Subject to credit approval)
**ESAPCO
Financial Services**

Hay Storage

Horse Arena

Cobra Head Hand Cultivator

Tested by BACKHOME gardeners. The thin, sharp triangular head is firmly mounted on a curved steel neck. This uniquely shaped blade can dig, weed, cultivate, scalp, furrow, and more. Try one today.

A Great
Gift Idea!

Stock No. 10-410
\$24.95 postpaid
To Place
Credit Card Orders
Call 800-992-2546
BACKHOME MERCANTILE
P.O. Box 70
Hendersonville, NC 28793

NORWOOD INDUSTRIES INC.

1-800-661-7746 • Ext. 353

www.norwoodsawmills.com/353

LumberLite 24

Make Money
& Save Money ...

With Your Own
Personal Sawmills

From Only
\$2,990.

www.smallfarmersjournal.com

P.O. Box 1627, Sisters, Oregon 97759

1-800-876-2893

Oil is Over

Small Farmer's Journal

for the best farming future