

5 Businesses Where Being 'Green' Is Easy and Profitable

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Eight Arms Cellars

Iain Boltin, winemaker and owner of Eight Arms Cellars in Berkeley, Calif., didn't expect his career to involve sustainable [business](#) or wine. Yet, both found him. A former advertiser and marketer, he started Eight Arms Cellars in 2006 seeking a career change. After seeing a few wineries emerge in his area, he sought to turn his passion into profit. After several years of study and working harvests at a local winery, he contracted with a grower for the 2006 harvest. His first wine, the 2006 Eight Arms Syrah, Napa Valley, was released in November 2008.

Boltin's initial focus with Eight Arms was simply to make great wine. But, because there was a lag time of two years between making the wine and releasing the first vintage, it gave him a lot of time to consider his marketing plan.

He became interested in socially responsible [businesses](#) and decided that he could incorporate environmentally responsible practices into his. That mission spawned Eight Arms' "[Go Green Drink Red](#)" campaign, which dedicates a portion of wine proceeds to programs that preserve, renew and protect our forests and oceans.

In its first two years, Eight Arms Cellars has donated \$5,000 to such initiatives, an effort that will continue as it grows.

Realizing that as a renter of the Eight Arms facility, he did not have control over the carbon footprint of his physical enterprise, Boltin found other ways to run a green business. He purchases energy credits through Native Energy, a leader in the U.S. carbon market, to offset carbon emissions. Even his bottles, corks and labels are sourced with environmental responsibility in mind.

Boltin urged entrepreneurs thinking about going green to take the plunge.

"It's easy to do and there are a lot of resources out there. I have found it really easy to find suppliers who share my same vision and in this economy, it's great to support other local businesses," he said. "Be genuine about it; don't use the greening of [your business](#) as a marketing strategy. Customers will appreciate that you are making the effort to run a business that is good for the environment and for the community you live in."