

Companies Take Different Approaches to Earth Day

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OAKLAND, Calif., April 20, 2007 -- Spring is here again, and with it comes Earth Day. Every April 22, promotions about earth-friendly products, promotions or initiatives abound, showing varying degrees of foresight and commitment.

This year is no exception -- in fact, you could easily make the argument that "An Inconvenient Truth," as well as the steady accumulation of evidence about the reality of and threats posed by global warming, have made this year the most abundant Earth Day yet for green announcements.

In the spirit of the season, and in honor of the 37th Earth Day celebration, we present a roundup of some of the best -- and some of the farthest-fetched -- Earth Day promotions to cross our desks here at GreenBiz.

American Workers Want to Be Greener

A survey released by employment agency Adecco found that 33 percent of employees surveyed would be "more inclined to work for a green company" (whether that means they'd rather work for an environmentally responsible company or that they'd work harder for that company than their own is left vague), and another 52 percent think their current employers could do more to be green.

One company is using Earth Day to do just that. Marriott International, which has already made [significant goals](#) toward reducing its environmental impact, will be hosting a [Green Fair](#) for 3,000 of its employees today at its HQ in Bethesda, Md. The event will showcase green products and guest speakers on environmental topics.

Speaking of green products, Office Depot is celebrating Earth Day by launching a new section of its website devoted to [green e-commerce](#). You can buy anything from recycled paper to non-toxic highlighters (which also come in green) to some questionably green products like [individually wrapped non-dairy creamers](#). (Perhaps they fit this category because they require no refrigeration? Or no methane-producing cows were used to make them?)

Continuing down the scale to less-green products, Ford Motor Company has released a list of its [top 10 environmental initiatives](#) timed to Earth Day. While there is a noticeable lack of a shift towards producing smaller, more fuel-efficient vehicles, the release does note that the Ford Escape SUV is 80 percent recyclable, and that it contains the first 100 percent recycled fabric seating material, a step in the right direction. And significantly, Ford is also the proud owner of the Guinness-certified [World's Largest Green Roof](#), atop its Dearborn, Mich., plant.

Electronics Take Center Stage this Earth Day

Awareness of the major environmental and health problems posed by electronic waste seems to have gained serious momentum in the last year or two. Several of the most practical Earth Day promotions on our calendar this year have to do with computers and electronics.

Californians take note: if you've got an old piece of electronics you've been holding on to for no good reason, California's Waste Management Board has teamed up with Wal-Mart to host an electronics recycling program this weekend. More than [40 Wal-Mart and Sam's Club locations](#) [PDF] across California will be taking back computers, televisions, VCRs and DVD players, and just about any other piece of electronic detritus you or your company might have accumulated over the years.

Similarly, Dell Computers is joining with TechTurn and the EPA to take back computer equipment

from 11 to 3pm on Sunday at 13th and E streets in Washington, D.C. And [Verizon Wireless](#) is offering to recycle customers' cell phones and is using Earth Day to launch a program to plant a tree for every customer who switches to paperless billing.

Trees are also a hot commodity this year. In addition to Verizon's program, Seventh Generation has introduced its [OneTonTree](#) project, which aims to raise \$40,000 to re-green New Orleans on Earth Day. Named for the amount of carbon dioxide a tree will pull from the air during its lifetime, Seventh Generation will donate \$1 for each of the first 40,000 callers who plant a "virtual tree" through its website on Earth Day.

Get Outside on Earth Day -- or Don't

The Earth Day Network's website lists more than [18,500 events](#) happening worldwide this weekend. From the very small to the very large, there are events for just about anyone looking to get out and enjoy the spring weather on Earth Day.

Of course, if going out isn't your thing, you could always rent "An Inconvenient Truth" or "The Day After Tomorrow" for some environmentertainment. And two cable channels have also got your needs covered: Starting at 5pm, the Weather Channel continues its departure from the weather report by airing two new episodes of "[Forecast Earth](#)", while the **Documentary Channel** launches its [EarthView](#) block of programming at 7 pm with three environment-themed documentaries, "emPOWERed," "Kilowatt Ours" and "Monumental."

And Now for Something Completely Different...

Each year Earth Day brings out a slew of new initiatives and products from companies that want to green up their image -- or just cash in on Earth Day. But there are always a few news releases that just stretch the limits of credibility. Rounding out our roundup of Earth Day promotions, we are pleased to present two of our favorites of the year.

The headline for this story caught our attention most of all: "Get Green for Earth Day With Teko Socks." Socks? Green? You betcha. [Teko](#) makes eco-friendly socks from organic cotton, Ingeo corn fiber and wool from an environmentally sound sheep farm. The news itself is reasonably Earth-friendly: Teko is buying carbon offsets for everyone who drives to four outdoors and natural foods stores this weekend. But that headline needs some help.

More importantly, and this is one for the record books: Cookie the goat needs help, and only an eco-sensibility can save her. This is apparently no joke: Cookie, a pregnant, Missouri-based goat, broke her leg, and Cookie's owner used a [Mrs. Meyers All-Purpose Cleaner bottle](#) to make a cast for her. The news release from Caldrea, the makers of Mrs. Meyers, was quick to point out that this is an example of reuse taken to an entirely new level.