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november 25, 2008

Green in the Name of Greed



My astronomy professor said something interesting the other day, and it reminded me of a theory of mine. He mentioned – in regards to climate change and the state of our planet – that there exists an opportunity to create jobs. Specifically, he joked about checking the Yellow Pages to find a windmill repairperson (to no avail), as there should clearly be someone trained to fix these increasingly-common contraptions. While I doubt you'd ever find such a person in the phonebook, the point is that with all the emphasis on emerging sources of "green" energy there will come some employment opportunities.

Now, for my theory:

I think if we do manage to save the planet and curb our emissions it will have nothing whatsoever to do with actually caring about preventing the destruction of Earth. Rather, it will come about as a side effect of wanting to make money from the new markets that will open up as a result of the focus on alternative energy sources. Call me cynical, but we have known about the problems (and many others) and haven't done much about it. Throw some opportunities to make money in there, however, and I think we may go green in the name of greed.

Any one of you reading this could cash in on the green movement. You can invent something. You can get a job in a field related to the reasearch or development of green technologies. You can write a book about the subject. There are SO many opportunities surrounding the inevitable move to greener lifestyles, and I think the desire to make money will ultimately be what saves us, as ironic as THAT is (considering capitalism has greatly contributed to the state of our planet).

For all the consultants that currently exist (honestly, sometimes what they advise is so painfully obvious), wouldn't it be great to be part of a green consulting company? One of the main ways to cut back on heating and lighting costs is to simply design things differently. I'm no expert (I wish I was) but even I know that the way we do things is often the least efficient way. Greed, my friends, will save us. I start a consulting company that approaches businesses, governments, and schools. I tell them how they can change a few things and save tons of money in the process (saving the planet is a positive side effect). They pay me money for having saved them money, and greed has transformed an energy-inefficient building into just the opposite.

The above example exists already, I'm sure. But when the time comes that it is criminal to NOT undertake the energy-saving methods, consultants will be in high demand. That's one example, of course. There are other ways to make money from the focus on becoming green, and some creative individuals will figure out how. It's sad that I think money will be what makes us move to technologies and habits that are just plain better for us. But if history is any indicator, curbing our wasteful ways is coming very slowly. I don't even care if we go green in the name of greed, if the alternative is NOT going green and destroying the planet entirely. I'd rather have Earth keep supporting its inhabitants, even if the reason it continues to do so is the lust for money rather than the desire to preserve our home planet. Now get out there and make some money from this already!



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I just want agree with what you've said.

I used to work for Ikea and they had all sorts of green initiatives but from looking at the company newsletters most of those initiatives actually made the company money or reduced expenses. For example they installed skylights and energy efficient bulbs and dramatically decreased their energy consumption. Good for the planet and it also reduced expenses for them.

Posted by Bhavik on December 11, 2008 7:52 PM

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