

Green Beginnings

Plant the green business seed early on and get it growing from the start.

By Nichole L. Torres | [Entrepreneur Magazine - December 2007](#)

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Green is on everyone's brain these days, so why not build environmental policies into your company during the startup phase? "[The environment] is top of mind with customers," says Patrick Nye of the Bonneville Environmental Foundation, a nonprofit organization that sells carbon offsets. "A lot of folks who didn't know much about us a few years ago are becoming pretty [knowledgeable]. And they're making decisions about the companies they support based in part on how green that company is."

Going green was Daniel Feuer's intention from the start when he launched [UJeans](#), a made-to-measure jean manufacturer in Ontario, Canada. Founding the company in 2005, he looked at every element of his manufacturing and distribution to find ways to go green. He sought out natural washes and dyes instead of chemicals, as well as sustainably grown cotton. He even makes sure his outsourced service providers are green-minded and socially responsible (for example, they pay a living wage). On the shipping and packaging end, Feuer created a mailing envelope out of excess denim scraps, and for in-store sales, he designed a recyclable tin embossed with the UJeans logo that can be reused as a CD or makeup case. His company's environmental backbone has helped push 2007 sales to \$500,000. Says Feuer, 38, "It's something every company should be looking at. [You] can be green, socially conscious and profitable from the get-go."

Going green from the beginning is much easier than trying to do it after your business is established, says Karl R. Zimmer III, founder of business consulting firm Zimmer Advisory Group. He advises entrepreneurs to be responsible for the triple bottom line: economic, environmental and social impacts. "Look at all the requirements of running a business, from office supplies to production to transportation," says Zimmer. "[For] everything you do, keep in mind the impact it has on the environment." From using recycled paper and furniture to cutting down the waste you create in the office, the ways you can go green are endless. Check out greenerchoices.org for even more ideas.