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Get your green on

Green your web experience

By Keana Okuda

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It may be hard to imagine that this giant "intangible" thing we call the world wide web has an even more giant carbon footprint. Sitting at your computer, clicking away, seems relatively harmless but, when you think about all the "tangible" components that go into creating a complete internet experience, your talking some mad emissions. Lighten your contribution and/or do the world some good by utilizing these greener search engines...

Flock.com Eco. From the creators of Netscape, came Flock. Flock Eco-Edition, fitted with the same Mozilla Firefox base and Yahoo! search engine as the original Flock, stepped in to green the scene. Preloaded with the top green web content, this browser also makes it super easy to organize all of your social networks (MySpace, Facebook, etc.) under one roof. Oh yeah, and they donate ten percent of their proceeds to an eco-charity of your choice.

GoodSearch.com. Seriously as simple as 1, 2, 3. Pick the charity or school you want GoodSearch to donate to, then search and feel good knowing that every search is doing the planet a tiny bit of good. Easy peasy. You can also add schools and charities to their list. No more collecting soda cans to fund field trips!

Blackle.com. Produced as a response to a blog post by Mark Ontkush, which stated that, "An all white web page uses about 74 watts to display, while an all black page uses only 59 watts." Aimed as an attack on Google, which services millions of searches per day (from a white page), he goes on to say that if Google gave in to the dark side 750 Megawatt-hours of energy would be saved each year. In steps Blackle, the "black" Google (not really).

TheGreenSpider.com. Based on the same concept as **Blackle.com**, only colored. Click the "Save Energy" link on their front page to read specific energy saving details regarding different colored backgrounds and different computer monitor technology. Sounds boring but is actually pretty cool. View or contribute to the "Green Tips Wiki Page" linked at the bottom of the page, for a deeper, green web experience.

GreenMaven.com. The internet is an easy place to get lost and feel overwhelmed. The folks at Green Maven help you work it out by focusing on "green, conscious, and sustainable websites." Basically, it's a search engine that gives preference to established green/eco sites. They've



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also got a Firefox search plugin and some blog action on their homepage so check it out.

CatchTomorrow.com. "The search engine that helps fund public schools." Go to the site, click on "Hawaii" and choose your school before you begin searching the web. If you don't see your school, email webmaster@catchtomorrow.com and request that it be added. Donating to your alma mater has never been so easy.

If you've got some spare time on your hands, and/or you happen to be an online games junkie, try <http://www.FreeRice.com>. It's an online game that helps expand your vocabulary while donating rice to starving countries... The more words you know, the more rice Free Rice gives. Their website states, "For each word you get right, we donate 20 grains of rice through the UN World Food Program to help end hunger." Test your knowledge and see how many grains you can get Free Rice to give.

Also recently discovered, I'm by Microsoft (<http://www.im.lyc.com>). Once you've joined, each time you use Windows Live Messenger or Windows Live Hotmail you help a social cause, including the Sierra Club and StopGlobalWarming.org. Just jump to their site, click "Join Now" and follow the prompts. By the way, I know it's great to have an email account with more storage space than you'll ever need in a lifetime. However, letting un-needed emails sit around in cyberspace also contributes to your carbon footprint. In 2003 it was estimated that 10-20MB of online storage required the energy from one pound of coal, annually. Those numbers are, by now, severely outdated though, it is known that the internet use comprises three percent of the United States electricity consumption. More storage means more energy and more energy means more emissions (in most cases).

If it's green website design and/or hosting services you require, there's plenty of that available too. My personal pick is GreenCollarTech.com. Florida born, Hawai'i resident, Brent Norris of Green Collar Technologies can give you local, sustainable web design and a future in solar website hosting (on this island). Read the article on Norris and his company beginning on page 15 in this issue of Big Island Weekly.

Other green hosting companies include EcoSky.com, SOLIDLOAD.net, AcornHost.com, DreamHost.com, WebCiel.com, SolarWebWorks.com, Ellon.com, AISO.net, and more. Another resource that I haven't tried personally but would like to, is Host4Green.com. They offer a complete list of ALL green web hosting companies as well as their own 100 percent (profit free) wind energy hosting. A few of these website hosting companies actually use renewable wind and solar energy to run their servers, AISO is one and GreenCollarTech.com will soon be. Many of the others get away with calling themselves "green" or powered by "renewable energy" because they purchase renewable energy credits to offset their emissions. Well, if you read my article on carbon offsets you know how those work and although it's better than doing nothing, it's still kind of a cop out. So, do your research and choose the company that is the most green but also suits your needs and fits your budget.

One last thing... If you are looking for a greener ISP (Internet Service Provider) keep your eyes on Green ISP, at <http://www.greenisp.net>. I know, they were super creative in coming up with the name. They also offer website hosting via Green WebHost at, you guessed it, <http://www.greenwebhost.net>.



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