

Green Footprints

By Tanya Spann Roche

Think Speak Act, LLC has been a “green” holistic video production company since our inception in 2004—so what does that mean?

Until recently, it meant that we just quietly went about our crunchy eco-ways like many other small “green” businesses we know, striving to provide the best service possible to the planet as well as to our customers. We reduce, reuse, recycle, buy recycled, seek out earth-friendly and organic, and conserve energy and natural resources whenever possible. We support and work with many environmentally conscious organizations, and we consider the needs of the earth in our purchases and decisions.

We also go digital whenever possible, including posting review cuts on our ftp site, e-mailing scripts and invoices, and accepting credit cards for “paperless” payments. Our company’s promo video is environmentally themed (it was a winner in the treehugger.com green video contest), and our promotional items are made from recycled materials. Our customers especially love our coffee mugs made from recycled televisions. We also pride ourselves in maintaining a low overhead and reduced footprint to ensure the best value to our customers.

But now that the word “green” is popping up everywhere, how do you tell who really is? Sadly in our industry, we too often see: producers put entire scripts into the trash without any thought of reusing or recycling the paper; field crews throw away non-rechargeable batteries instead of finding safer ways to dispose of them or using rechargeable batteries instead; craft service and catering tables without any containers for recycling or for collecting coffee grounds, paper products, or leftover fruits and vegetables for compost; post-production houses that leave their equipment running all of the time, even over the weekend; and production facilities undergoing renovation that simply toss old electronics and materials rather than finding ways to reuse or recycle them.

With the green movement becoming part of mainstream culture, it’s exhilarating to see so much concern and awareness. It’s also frustrating to see a lot of “greenwashing”—too often vendors advertise “green” products or services with only very vague or even flat-out untrue assertions of how they are benefiting the environment. Unfortunately there are no widespread certifications for being “green” yet, but our business is a proud member of Co-op America’s Green Business Network, which screens all applicants for a commitment to environmental and social responsibility.



Tanya and Mike Roche at the DC Green Festival

Like any good video production, becoming more environmentally-aware requires: research—learn the eco-jargon, find out what recycled, post-consumer content, organic, fair trade, FSC certified, sustainable, carbon offset, LEED, Rainforest Alliance Certified and other terms really mean, and judge for yourself who is really making a difference and what is just a sales pitch; creativity—think beyond that recyclable corrugated cardboard box, define what goals you want to achieve to make the world a better place, and use your ingenuity to get there; and finally “show, don’t tell”—you can talk about changing the world until your lips go numb, but you’ve got to think about how everything you do impacts the planet and act on it to really make a difference.

Tanya Spann Roche and Mike Roche are co-owners of Think Speak Act, LLC, a holistic video production services company. You can find out more about their environmental commitment and see their award-winning green video “Reality in the Self-Checkout Lane” by going to their website, www.thinkspeakt.com, and clicking on “About Us.”