

## COOL COMPANIES

### Digital Eskimo keeping it green

When Dave Gravina returned from Europe in 2000 and looked at Australia's increasingly conservative political scene, he decided something needed to be done.

"From many years working in the marketing and communications industry, I knew firsthand the power that design and technology possessed. I decided to harness that potential for something other than selling people stuff they didn't need," he says.

The result was Digital Eskimo, a "human-centred design agency" (currently with 14 staff) that puts people before profits. Led by Gravina (pictured), who was named one of Sydney's top-100 most influential people in 2008 and 2011, the bustling Surry Hills business uses design and technology as tools to help create change.



#### INITIATIVES

- ❑ Keeping a close eye on their client list to attract companies that are progressive and interested in sustainability or social change. Clients include the Australian Conservation Foundation and the Human Rights Commission.
- ❑ All new business is put through an ethical filter to consider whether the project has a positive, negative or neutral impact on the planet.
- ❑ Walking the talk: Gravina is a committed environmentalist who cycles everywhere.
- ❑ A seriously green work space, where airconditioning is used sparingly and natural heat and lighting are encouraged. There's organic food in the fridge for staff, and a bicycle repair workshop on site for company-supplied bikes and use by local cyclists.
- ❑ New focus on designing products that make change "while we sleep". Examples include the Compost Revolution (a product bought by councils across Australia) and Do Gooder, a campaigning tool for change makers and activists.

It's a tricky mix, balancing a client list that doesn't tip too far from the company's green ethos. But for Gravina the real excitement comes with these new tools, which let councils or campaigners "be the hero".

It's a place where he's seemingly more comfortable than on top-100 lists. "Using Do Gooder, [online magazine] New Matilda successfully raised \$3500 to feed writer Ben Eltham lunch for a year, while ACF – one of our most active good-doers – has just completed a campaign that generated over 1000 submissions to the proposed Murray-Darling Basin Plan," Gravina says.

[digitaleskimo.net](http://digitaleskimo.net), [good.do](http://good.do),  
[compostrevolution.com.au](http://compostrevolution.com.au). SUE WHITE