

Verizon concert to go green

Jack Johnson encourages his fans to carpool to concert, and also to register to vote

By Emily Belz

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Singer-songwriter Jack Johnson's concert today at Verizon Wireless Music Center in Noblesville will encourage concertgoers to follow his lead by going "green," and registering to vote.

As he travels from city to city on this tour, Johnson works to reduce his carbon emissions footprint by using biodiesel to fuel his tour bus and prohibiting concert promoter Live Nation from printing fliers to advertise the concert.

"Unfortunately this (touring) is a very dirty business environmentally," said Andrew Newport, Verizon's director of operations. "There's always more you could do."

The majority of the tour's "footprint" is left by fans driving to and from

shows, and Johnson uses his Web site (www.jackjohnsonmusic.com) to encourage fans to do their part to be green by carpooling, biking to concerts and drinking from reusable containers.

Johnson also has partnered with the nonprofit HeadCount.org group to register more than 100,000 voters at 1,000 concerts and festivals in 2008, according to Chelsey Northern of the public relations firm Giant Noise.

HeadCount has teams in more than 50 cities and two full-time volunteers who travel with Johnson to activate street teams and mobilize voter registration.

Verizon is also doing its part to go "green," said Newport.

Fans who drive hybrids to Johnson's concert or carpool with four or more will get preferred parking. Once inside the venue, they'll find recycling containers, environmentally friendly light bulbs, and organic hand soap and recycled toilet paper.

In an eco-village at the concert, the All at Once social network will showcase local environmental organizations Central Indiana Land Trust, Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, Student Peace Alliance and Friends of the White River. Booths will educate guests on ways to help the environment.

Michael Martin, director of MusicMatters, an organic marketing and branding firm, said he has been working for nearly 20 years to bring this green culture to the music industry.

He also tried for several years to get Ticketmaster to offer fans carbon offsets when they bought tickets, but Johnson's tour was the first time the company agreed to it. A carbon offset is an agreement where shoppers attempt to offset their own carbon footprint, usually by paying to have an organization work to reduce emissions elsewhere.

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