

# **Start A Green Event Policy**

## **The Checklist To Running An Environmentally Sustainable Event On A Sustainable Budget**

Please use this guide to start a green event policy within your company, which will lead to reducing the impact the meetings and events industry has on the planet. This information can be implemented today with immediate results.

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## Overall approach...

1 <sup>st</sup> step is to	<b>REDUCE</b>
Then what you cannot reduce	<b>REUSE</b>
Then what you cannot reduce or reuse	<b>RECYCLE</b>
Then what you cannot reduce, reuse or recycle	<b>OFFSET</b>

## Travel procedures and offsetting...

- ❑ Use public transport, walk or ride to the event;
- ❑ Have the ticket cover the cost of public transport;
- ❑ Set up a car pool for your event;
- ❑ If you're planning a public event, make it easy for people to use public transport to get to your venue, and offer an incentive for them to do so;
- ❑ Clearly convey information about public transport on the invitation or send out this information when they accept;
- ❑ Have bike racks, bike storage areas or bike concierge at your event;
- ❑ Have change areas and lockers at your event to encourage bike travel;
- ❑ Use shuttle buses to and from your event to the nearest public transport hub;
- ❑ Schedule your event to take into account peak travel times, faster travel means less impact which occurs in off-peak times;
- ❑ Offer teleworking as part of your event. This includes services like podcasting, webcasting and video conferencing;
- ❑ Use hybrid cars or cars that use alternative fuels;
- ❑ Supply transport that ensures minimal empty seats but monitoring RSVP's and attendance numbers;
- ❑ Reduce trucks and vehicles going onto sites and pool resources where possible. Trucks that are not at full load is waste, arrange one truck to collect all equipment from suppliers and have their teams wait at the venue to unload;
- ❑ Reduce site inspections and use local 'scouts' to obtain the information you need;

- ❑ If you need to travel somewhere try combining it with other meetings to reduce the number of times you travel;
- ❑ Travel only with travel companies that have green policies and are active in their reduction of impacts on the environment;
- ❑ When considering a provider for air travel:
  1. Choose direct flights where possible;
  2. Consider the age of the aircraft (new aircraft are more efficient);
  3. Fly economy class (business class has higher emissions per seat);
  4. Choose airlines with higher load factors (ratios available);
  5. Choose airlines that are active in their green policy
- ❑ Offset your carbon emissions produced by the plane, boat or car where travel is essential. There are now over eighteen companies operating in Australia where you can offset your emissions (pay a fee calculated on the amount of carbon you will use). Only chose companies that offset your emissions by investing in renewable energy.

### **Waste management...**

- ❑ Implement a waste reduction policy that addresses:
  1. Reduction of waste altogether;
  2. Reuses waste where possible;
  3. Recycles waste where it cannot be reduced or reused.
- ❑ Reduce waste in the event by accurately supplying options that are best fit;
- ❑ Ensure recycling is in place at the event and monitor the effectiveness;
- ❑ Ensure your waste management plan addresses all types of waste;
- ❑ Ensure you compost food or get it collected and given to charity;
- ❑ Sign post, educate and encourage event reuse and recycling policies, thereby extending the life of resources and products;
- ❑ Monitor RSVP and attendance numbers to ensure supply is tailored to the numbers thereby avoiding waste;
- ❑ Reduce the amount of printed promotional material used and supply electronically;
- ❑ Do not use gift bags at the end of events;
- ❑ Encourage the design of your event to be based around standard hire items with minimal construction or an approach that will not be useable in other situations;

- ❑ Investigate outlets and avenues for recycling your unwanted or excess items, materials or products to reduce waste;
- ❑ Make informed purchasing decisions – research and prioritise supplies and equipment that support the use of recycled materials or has end-of life recycling potential;
- ❑ Buy products made from recycled materials;
- ❑ Prioritise and consider purchases – refurbish items and reuse rather than replace or discard;
- ❑ Ensure that all equipment uses recyclable paper and vegetable ink;
- ❑ Ensure all printers and photocopiers are set to double-sided printing;
- ❑ Work with your company, industry bodies and government to herald any new waste management concepts and support initiatives from key stakeholders and suppliers;
- ❑ Keep up-to-date with strategies and recycling industry improvements – adapt, adjust and improve your recycling efforts and strategies;
- ❑ Reduce use of packaging material, or where required ensure the material is reused or recycled;
- ❑ Make arrangements with suppliers for the return of unwanted or unused products and materials – arrange for the return of printing cartridges, containers and packaging;
- ❑ Submit proposals and quotes electronically and reduce hand outs in meetings;
- ❑ Ensure the use of non-toxic cleaning products at the venue or with cleaning contractors;
- ❑ Publish your commitment to the environment.

### **Power and water supplier selection and consumption reduction...**

- ❑ Ensure your event and event business is buying 100% accredited Green Power;
- ❑ Only use venues that offer 100% accredited Green Power;
- ❑ Encourage your staff to buy 100% accredited Green Power;
- ❑ Ensure you have shower timers in all showers;
- ❑ Ensure your toilet suppliers are using 'grey water' and correctly disposing of 'black water'. Ensure the toilets use urinal technology that replace water in bathrooms;

- ❏ Ensure your generator suppliers are using modern, fuel saving and environmentally friendly units such as biodiesel fuel. Monitor the use of generators to reduce running time, and use Town Power (Power supplied in the ground) where possible;
- ❏ Ensure practices are put in place for minimal use of resources – signs help remind and educate people;
- ❏ Appoint a staff member to be responsible for ensuring unnecessary lighting and power is turned off and reduced;
- ❏ Ensure all equipment is turned off at the switch when not in use. Exhibitions are a major sources of excess power by leaving equipment on overnight;
- ❏ Don't use the air-conditioning in venues during the set-up and pack period and see what alternatives are available during the event to air-conditioning;
- ❏ Encourage your events to occur during the day to reduce power consumption;
- ❏ Ensure your event reduces damage to grass and outdoor areas to avoid waste and impact on the environment;
- ❏ Use energy efficient LED lighting to reduce consumption;
- ❏ Retrofit any hired trailers, offices or toilets with energy efficient lighting;
- ❏ Ensure your technical suppliers are using modern technology that is energy efficient and design systems that reduce excess equipment.

### **Printed material and information communication...**

- ❏ Ensure the reduction of produced printed material at every stage of your event by using technology;
- ❏ When printing is unavoidable use recycled paper. This paper must be 50% post consumer waste recycled paper, printed using vegetable inks (DIC Australia on 03 9552 4500) and double sided;
- ❏ Ensure your printed material is produced on the minimal size and requests guests to recycle when finished;
- ❏ Encourage replacement of printed menu and programs with information given by presenters, wait staff and event staff;
- ❏ To reduce printed material send out a disc after an event with relevant information, presentation, papers and web-site links to all attendees;
- ❏ Ensure your events uses electronic communication at every opportunity;
- ❏ Ensure printed signage is reusable and reduce the printing of dates on signage;

- ❑ Print signage on biodegradable materials;
- ❑ Encourage the use of plasmas, projected or electronic signage to reduce production;
- ❑ Ensure your event does not lay out pens and paper on tables for attendees. Prior to the event communicate that attendees are to bring their own;
- ❑ Ensure your event collects and reuses name badges;
- ❑ Encourage the reduction of gift bags and satchels at events. Where required reduce information within, ensure bag is durable to extend life and only offer to attendees when asked;
- ❑ Encourage the use mobile phones to give seating and registration details, reducing the need for printing...this can be done with Bluetooth technology and include all conference information (BreezeTech 02 9810 5339);
- ❑ Ensure your event communication includes a green message reminding people to think before printing.

### **Caterer selection and menu choices...**

- ❑ Ask to see the caterers' green policy, this includes a Hotel situation where catering is handled internally;
- ❑ Ensure your event uses water glasses and jugs, and does not use bottled or unnecessarily imported water;
- ❑ Ensure your event does not use individually wrapped items, such as mints, lollies, salt, pepper or sugar satchels.
- ❑ Ensure your caterer addresses the following areas with each menu and their business as a whole:
  - Fresh, local and in season organic food or food that is fair trade;
  - Uses minimum animal products (ie. Meat) and clearly offer vegetarian options;
  - Uses fish selected from sustainable fish supplies,
  - Avoids use of packaging and plastic bags;
  - Provides reusable crockery and cutlery;
  - Offers reusable or recycled napkins;
  - Requires minimum transport to the venue.
- ❑ Where disposable cups, plates and cutlery are absolutely required buy ones made from recycled fibres and corn starch that are recyclable;
- ❑ Ensure your caterer has reviewed their cooking equipment and procedures to reduce excess equipment and increase efficiencies;

- ❑ Ensure your fridge units are used the minimal amount of time required and reduce the chilling of products in cardboard as that lengthens the chilling time;
- ❑ Clearly signpost vegetarian food, the recycling and food waste systems and any other initiatives you have put in place;
- ❑ Encourage, educate and involve attendees in separating the waste into containers;
- ❑ Inform your attendees about these environmental initiatives so they can learn from it.

### **Venue selection and requirements...**

- ❑ Ensure your venue has a green policy;
- ❑ Ensure your venue uses 100% accredited Green Power;
- ❑ Ensure your venue is near public transport;
- ❑ Ensure your venue has easy access for all types of people;
- ❑ Ensure your venue adheres to the catering requirements listed above if catering is handled in-house;
- ❑ Ensure your venue uses as much natural resource as possible. This includes natural light, water recycling and catchment and the use of fresh air;
- ❑ Take into account the Green Star (accreditation based on construction criteria and running requirements of the building) rating of the venue and what procedures are in place to improve the rating. Currently 6 Star is the highest;
- ❑ Ensure your venue has air-conditioning that can be controlled in each room and activity and reduce the use of this during 'down times';
- ❑ Ensure your venue actively implements changing linen procedures that reduce excess cleaning;
- ❑ Accurately plan your event taking into consideration expected numbers, length of days and number of rooms to ensure best fit and minimal use of additional venues or unnecessarily extending the length of the event;
- ❑ Ensure your management team works with the venue in reducing power and air-conditioning use when not required;
- ❑ Ensure your venue has waste reduction procedures as per the waste section above. There is a lot of waste management in venues that we event managers don't see and therefore don't address.

## **Tendering for and procurement of each segment relating to an event...**

- ❏ Ensure your tender clearly outlines your commitment to the environment and requests all responses to outline their policies. This will be like a spider-web and will result in this becoming standard in our industry;
- ❏ A good Green Policy will request the following:
  - A formal Environment or Sustainability Policy;
  - A formal Sustainability Management System;
  - Accredited and / or audited systems as listed above;
  - Commitment to measure their impact on the environment for the service they are to provide and outline targets;
  - A system to ensure their suppliers have the same responsibilities and systems regarding the environment;
  - A statement of commitment from all staff towards these policies and help to implement them;
  - Policies that address the main headings listed in green in this document.
- ❏ Ensure when asking for nominations and entries in Award Events or Prizes that all entrants must state their Green Policies and this goes towards part of the Award judgement (weighted accordingly);
- ❏ Encourage the purchase of products and raw materials based on recycled content. These include toilet tissue, wood and plastic composites, packaging and containers, printer cartridges, office paper and stationery supplies;
- ❏ Encourage the purchase of refurbished, recycled and reconditioned products as this will save money and also help to support the recycling industry and the development of new markets for recycled products;

**Relevant web-site, please note we are not endorsing these sites or companies and they have not been audited.**

Listings	<a href="http://www.greenpagesaustralia.com.au">www.greenpagesaustralia.com.au</a> <a href="http://www.thegreendirectory.com.au/">www.thegreendirectory.com.au/</a>
Paperless Information	<a href="http://www.breeze-tech.com.au">www.breeze-tech.com.au</a>
Travel	<a href="http://www.131500.info/">www.131500.info/</a> <a href="http://www.greenglobe21.com">www.greenglobe21.com</a> <a href="http://www.goget.com.au">www.goget.com.au</a> <a href="http://www.thecarpool.com.au">www.thecarpool.com.au</a> <a href="http://www.envisionit.com.au">www.envisionit.com.au</a>
Products	<a href="http://www.neco.com.au">www.neco.com.au</a> <a href="http://www.greengoods.nsw.gov.au">www.greengoods.nsw.gov.au</a>
Recycling	<a href="http://recyclingnearyou.com.au">http://recyclingnearyou.com.au</a> <a href="http://www.visy.com.au/recycling">www.visy.com.au/recycling</a> <a href="http://www.livingthing.net.au">www.livingthing.net.au</a>
Power	<a href="http://www.greenelectricitywatch.org.au">www.greenelectricitywatch.org.au</a> <a href="http://www.greenpower.gov.au">www.greenpower.gov.au</a>
Catering	<a href="http://www.visyclosedloop.com/index.php?page=225">http://www.visyclosedloop.com/index.php?page=225</a>

**The information you need is here. START NOW...**