



SUSTAINABILITY
IN TOURISM

TOURISM EXCELLENCE

Sustainability

Fact Sheet Summary – Hints and Tips

Prepared by **VECCI** for **Tourism Victoria**



MAKING YOUR BUSINESS MORE SUSTAINABLE



Key Point

Commercial Benefits

- There is an established connection between sustainability and commercial success, because reducing energy consumption, minimising waste and conserving water saves money and so increases profit
- A stronger environmental commitment can give a business a definite marketing and competitive advantage
- Nexus Research in 2004 found that 62% of tourists said green accreditation would encourage them to consider one accommodation property over another.
- There is virtually a new, untapped market comprising visitors who are aware of environmental issues, some of which make consumption decisions based on environmental values.
- A business demonstrating sound principles and practices can stand out from the crowd



Key Point

Sustainability in Action

- Achieving sustainability is often seen as an expensive, time consuming and complicated ideal, but there are many things that can be done in a business that will cost almost nothing and only take a few minutes to implement
- You could immediately slice 10 per cent off your running costs just by addressing basic things like water conservation, chemical use, energy consumption, waste minimisation and recycling

Simple ways to a 'greener' business:

- Bathrooms
- Cleaning products
- Gardens and grounds
- Green power
- Grey water
- Heating and cooling
- Hot water
- Laundry and housekeeping
- Lighting
- Office administration
- Promotional materials
- Restaurant, bar and catering

Source: *Tourism
Excellence
Website;
Sustainability*



Key Point

*Source: Tourism
Queensland,
Working With
Communities: A
Guide for Tourism
Operators Website*

WORKING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Working with local Communities

There are many benefits for a tourism business in becoming a respected and valued partner of the local community and economy

Working with local communities is a core element of sustainable tourism and can help you to:

- Enrich the visitor experience
- Active community partner
- Minimize conflicts
- Positive publicity
- Improve reputation and business brand
- Enhance visitor satisfaction
- Support local conservation goals

Working with local communities does not need to be complex or costly. It also has the advantage of being mutually beneficial.

Practical ways your business can work with and support the local community are:

- Buy locally-produced goods and services
 - Employ local people
 - Work with local partners to support projects that increase community well-being
 - Provide support for local schools
 - Incorporate regional food and/or wine as part of your product experience
 - Provide information to guests on the area's cultural and natural characteristics and offer tips on how they can ensure that their own behavior respects these characteristics
 - Encourage guests to purchase locally produced products and support local service providers
 - Offer discounted access to your tourism product to a local school, local resident group or local special interest group.
 - Offer work experience for one or more students residing in your local area and/or provide advice on job applications or interviews.
 - Sponsor local events, sporting teams, other
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Key Point

Source: *Tourism Excellence Website; Sustainability*



Hot Tip

BE SEEN TO BE GREEN

Green Marketing

- 'Being seen to be green' and building your green credentials is a marketing advantage that can impress and attract customers who also share a concern for the environment
- However, managing your tourism business in a way that is sympathetic to the environment should not be just a public relations exercise
- Today's travellers are increasingly well educated, well read, and concerned about the environment. Tokenism and superficial approaches are easily detected. Knowing the environmental record of a destination or a business can influence market perceptions
- Tourism businesses – from B&Bs to international hotels - that have acted to improve their environmental performance have discovered a whole host of audiences keen to hear about it - not just existing and potential customers, but also the media, employees, and local communities.
- Such businesses have benefited from keeping their messages simple and accurate, and by emphasising what they have achieved in relevant terms such as cost savings
- If you can show and communicate that you care for the environment, as well as the visitor's comfort, you will gain customer respect and loyalty

Considerations when Green Marketing

- Be honest
- Substantiate claims
- Conduct market research to identify 'green' trends
- Use recycle paper for promotional material
- Advertise the natural surroundings
- If you have become 'greener' let people know!
- Incorporate environmental messages in all advertising
- Participate in Awards/ Accreditations.

Note:

- Beware of false 'green' advertising. The major criticism of 'green' marketing has been operators or destination which market 'green' but are actually doing business as usual. This tactic can backfire and you may be under a lot of scrutiny from consumer groups and government agencies!
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INVOLVING STAFF



Key Point

Your Staff and Sustainability

- If you operate a larger tourism business, involving staff is one of the keys to maximising improvements in energy, water consumption and waste management. Gaining commitment and enthusiasm from your staff is critical to your success in adopting sustainable practices
- If your tourism business is small, it is still important to involve your staff with implementing some of the simple sustainability activities we discussed earlier



Key Point

Involving Staff in Action

An effective way to involve staff and clearly communicate 'green' messages is to establish an 'action team' or 'champion'. This team can develop:

- Leadership
 - You must ensure that your team has the ability to foster leadership and enthusiasm about your environmental focus and vision
- Education and Training
 - It may be as simple as educating your staff about how to save water and energy. For your training to be taken seriously, consider including it in induction and or within other training
- Monitoring your progress
 - Continually reviewing your performance will ensure you determine savings, improvements and can report to staff
- Benchmarking
 - Establish benchmarks to assist with monitoring your progress and to provide measurable outcomes. Practices that can be benchmarked include water consumption, electricity consumption and gas consumption

Your 'action team' or 'champion' could be responsible for:

- Identifying priority issues for action
- Developing systematic action plans
- Setting targets
- Reviewing proposed actions for improvement
- Monitoring progress and providing feedback to managers and staff



Hot Tip

CLIMATE CHANGE AND YOUR BUSINESS



Key Point

*Source: Tourism
Excellence
Website;
Sustainability*

Impacts of Climate Change

- The natural greenhouse effect warms the planet and allows humans to live on the Earth
- However, human activities - predominately the burning of fossil fuels are causing greenhouse gas concentrations to rise above natural levels, further heating the planet. This is called the greenhouse effect
- As the concentrations of these gases in the lower atmosphere grows, global temperatures rise, causing changes to weather conditions. The enhanced greenhouse effect is often referred to as global warming or climate change

The potential impacts of climate change on the tourism industry include:

- Higher temperatures
- Extended peak and shoulder seasons
- Snow seasons shorter
- Unreliable snow cover
- Impacts on ecosystems
- Effects on the natural beauty of destinations with distinctive landscapes
- Increased risks of bushfires
- Increased drought
- Other natural disasters



Key Point

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How you can Reduce the Rate of Climate Change

There are 4 stages to reduce your greenhouse emissions:

- Determine your carbon footprint
 - There are many good online calculators to help you establish your green house emissions
- Improving energy efficiency
 - Improving energy efficiency reduces your green house emissions but also helps you save money. Simple tasks discussed earlier, such as changing light bulbs are easy actions to take
- Purchase or invest renewable energy
 - Business can use renewable energy (wind, solar, biomass, small hydro and co-generation) by installation of a renewable power generation on site or the purchase of green energy

Note: This may not be relevant for smaller tourism businesses.
- Offset your Emission
 - Once energy use is reduced to the extent technically or financially feasible, carbon offsets can be purchased for some or all of the remaining emissions

Note: This is not the preferred option - best practice is always to try and reduce your carbon emissions



Hot Tip

FURTHER SUPPORT

Further support

There are a number of resources and support tools available for you to explore that may assist you to become a 'greener' business:

- **Rebates and Funding**

- Smart water Fund
- Sustainability Fund
- Renewable Energy Support Fund
- Litter Prevention Grant
- Public Place Recycling Grant

- **Certifications**

- Green Globe
- Eco Certification
- ISO14001

- **Further information and support**

Resource Smart Business

Sustainability Victoria is helping to assist Victorian businesses identify, design and implement sustainable energy solutions

Grow Me the Money

Grow Me The Money is a 12 month online program that helps small to medium sized businesses become more sustainable and save money in the process

Carbon Innovators Network

EPA has established the Carbon Innovators Network – a network for business leaders and climate change experts

Greenhouse Challenge Plus

An initiative of the Australian Greenhouse Office to accelerate the uptake of energy efficiency and integrate greenhouse issues into business decision-making

For more information or any of the above resources go to

- www.tourismexcellence.com.au
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