

## Sustainability Practices in the Hospitality Market

FIRST AND LAST NAME GOES HERE

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Travel and Tourism was responsible for slightly less than 10% of the 2011 global GDP. In 2011 it was also responsible for approximately 5% of the world global carbon dioxide emissions forecast saying it will rise to 130% by 2035( Manganari, Dimara, & Theotokis, 2016). As more and more studies and information support the negative effects which are poisoning the earth, a call to action has been heard and supported by companies and consumers alike. By considering the long-term needs of the planet, the need to become more aware of our effects on the environment above the demands of the people.

There are three main stakeholders: Companies, consumers, and government and trade organizations. Companies must decide which green initiatives to explore and the effects on profits. Consumers must set the standards of green expectations and understand the changes “green” environments may have on normal hospitality practices. Government and trade organizations have begun to regulate hotel green practices (Manganari, Dimara, & Theotokis, 2016). By doing so, the forecasted carbon footprint of the travel and

tourism industry could significantly decrease. Combining all three stakeholders' expectations, values and goals is an ongoing task. Finding a common platform for all stakeholders to work together towards a common goal is the first step.

Hotels and restaurants are exploring and initiating a variety of green practices. With an overwhelming number of options, the decision to go green is not an easy decision nor an inexpensive one for the hotel industry. Providing the appropriate changes while still focusing on profit and guest satisfaction took many hours of decision making and retraining from CEO's to Front Desk Clerk. Hotels must pick and choose the green initiatives that work best with their specific brand. (Rathore, Gawankar, & Mills, 2009).

Environmentally friendly, often referred to as "green" initiatives or practices, have grown through the past few years. This study focuses on hotels and their attempts to provide green options and continue to provide positive encounters with hotel guests. A major obstacle was the ability to educate guests without correcting guests' previous habits. Lee, Jai, & Li (2016) have outlined positive techniques and tools in this article. Suggestions were made to help promote new behaviors, allowing guests to better participate and appreciate the changes.

Hotel sustainability does not only affect products and services, but the buildings themselves should be reimaged in order to provide the best green initiatives. Designing new buildings with the integration of advanced "green" amenities is becoming a social norm. Thanks to advancements in technology, there has been an increase in the "Smart" building industry and the LEED certified building movement. However, "green" is not always easy when it comes to preexisting structure. Using the BEER-Building Energy Efficiency Retrofit, older buildings are making strides to support a new purpose while retaining their historical value. (Xu, Qian, & Chan, 2012). Based on Key Performance Indicators (KPI) buildings were analyzed to see what attributes were required in order to provide the highest level of energy efficient upgrades. Some properties are better at reducing energy than others and KPI is used to distinguish the value of said changes.

Studies such as Schubert, Kandampully, Solnet, & Kralj's (2010), which looked at green practices in restaurants in Columbus, Ohio, are discovering a pattern which implies the main cause for hospitalities limited green practices were due to a lack of awareness. Breaking down green practices into 3 main components; environmentally, healthy, and socially responsible habits, will allow for a positive return on investment, if employees receive proper training, and will lead to company norms.

Jones, Hillier, and Comfort (2014) compared and analyzed the top ten hotel companies in order to research different levels and forms of Sustainability. While the large companies such as Marriott and IGH provide a very specific sustainability statement, other companies chose to use vague terms in order to be seen as eco- friendly.

Common practices are being used in most comparisons, the depth and holistic culture efforts are being distinguished. Using the 3 R's model, companies can start by, reducing, reusing and recycling. The implementation of the following practices is becoming widely used and accepted in the hospitality industry:

- Replace traditional lights in corridors and common areas with motion-detecting long lasting led lights.
- Reduce the hours spent on housekeeping practices such as doing laundry and vacuuming. Mind this, most guests do not expect that their rooms would be cleaned every day and you should encourage them to restrict their use of towels and fresh linen to what is available in their room upon their arrival. This can be achieved with an award system, where they are granted a complimentary experience, such as a spa session in exchange for being more resourceful with their linen.
- Use keycards as a way of making sure that guests are not leaving the lights on when they leave the premises.
- Solar panels are a great source of renewable energy and are an option worth exploring in the long run.

Research by Vermma and Chandra (2018) analyzed significant attributes that contributed to guest preference and loyalty when choosing a hotel. Previously the price, hotel reputation and amenities were the leading factors. The increased concern of environmental issues has introduced a new element to the guest decision making, Green Initiatives. Online sustainability programs tracked the carbon footprint of participating hotels which allowed for easier comparison of consumption before and after green initiatives and allows for proof of changes to be seen and valued by both corporations and guests.

Kim, Li, Han, & Kim (2017) focused on what effects amenities and green practices have on the client value of a hotel stay. Findings proved that although the lack of amenities may not have affected a guests satisfaction level, only hotels with advanced green initiatives and amenities received WOM (word of mouth) recommendations and personal loyalty. Companies that used environmentally offensive practices gained brand recognition and a competitive advantage against other hotels who waited until the last minute to cater to new green expectations. Providing new innovations ahead of the trend has proven many times to provide companies with a competitive advantage, green practices are yet another example of this theory.

After understanding the links between green amenities and client value, Griskevicius, Tybur, & Van den Bergh (2010) analyzed through interviews the common reason for the increased volume in consumer green preference. The elevated price may have seemed a small price to pay to have a cleaner carbon footprint, positively produced goods, or maybe the simplicity of support a movement. Researchers found the main reason to be those of another nature. While eco-friendly was barely thought of, the most common answers to interviews were related to personal status and reputation. Even in the most selfless actions, most people just want to be “cool”

Companies attempting to only decrease its negative environmental impacts while making little to no effort to increase proactive green initiatives are seeing significant disadvantages and negative rapport. Analysis of holistic approach suggests corporations should start with environmentally sound manufacturers of hotel items. The major incentives for companies to use a green supplier is broken down into four main

categories; regulatory, competitor, customer, and socio-cultural. Each category explains the incentives and disadvantages of using green suppliers. Once a company has chosen to go green, the research again describes in detail how to construct guidelines to ensure suppliers meet the company's environmental expectation. (Hsu, Choon, Hanim Mohamad Zailani, & Jayaraman, 2013).

While more and more products are being produced to meet the needs of eco-friendly consumers, many large companies are seeing a decrease in purchase of their not so “green” cheaper products. Many of these companies have decided to redesign purchasing and production processes in order to meet evolving demands, while other companies have found it cheaper to just change how products are perceived, which is often referred to as greenwashing. (Delmas & Burbano, 2011) Using dishonest and confusing techniques in order to cover up the use of harmful ingredients or company practices is one of the most commonly seen greenwashing practices.

In the midst of the latest “green” interest, how can companies and consumers see or measure the results and future effects on the environment? One commonly used tool is the 2015 Hotel sustainability benchmarking tool (Chong & Ricaurte, 2015). This tool separates and compares hotels based on different segments in order to achieve the more realistic results. Hotels can input data into the benchmarking tool in order to receive an accurate view of their efforts compared to other similar hotels. Data from this benchmarking tool has been used to support many sustainability programs and changes throughout the hospitality industry.

Despite the relatively young idea of green hospitality it is a fast-growing topic. Unfortunately, research is normally used to help understand what is happening in the world during a certain period, and how it has changed over time, is at a minimum on the current topic. Despite the positive outcomes of consumer behavior studies, very little research had been published. The more the research was analyzed the easier it will be to recognize patterns and provide corporate and behavioral models (Myung, McClaren, & Li, 2012) Developing training plans for green hospitality employees is another area that will require vast amounts of future study and analysis.

Recent trends in green innovations are leading to a society that is more environmentally aware. Resources that are used to make everyday products are becoming an issue on many fronts increasing the need to develop and initiate alternatives to the past lifestyle and products. Starting with the 3 R's, reduce, reuse, and recycle, there is a significant change in the rate that resources are being used. However, all change comes at a price whether it is monetary or convenience.

Hospitality markets such as hotels are responsible for significant amounts of the waste produced daily. This manuscript will analyze whether or not there are enough options available for customers to obtain green initiatives. Literature analyzing common green practices for hotels and restaurants and why environmentally friendly options are or are not being made available to customers will be used to develop a solution.

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