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Greetings!

Sustainable ideas for hotels to go green

Hotels around the world are rolling out a plethora of green initiatives like smart showers, solar power installations, and waste recycling. But what's right for one hotel may not be right or achievable for others.

If you're interested in winning business by going green, there are a wide array of tips and strategies to bring sustainable best-practices to your properties.. Some of them require major capital expenditures while others are easy to implement and even low-cost.

Here are some tips for sustainability across the many different areas of your hotel operation, with examples of specific eco-friendly best practices to consider.

1. Create a green team

Ask interested employees in each department to participate in a 'green team' to take the lead in suggesting eco-friendly best practices in their area. This gives these employees a sense of ownership of green strategies, and more commitment to long-term adoption. Don't forget to acknowledge their efforts, such as with a small stipend, a special luncheon, or gift cards.

2. Target low-hanging fruit to start

Chances are your hotel or hotel group already has eco-friendly programs, but there is almost always room for improvement. For instance, you can cut down on the use of plastic water bottles by offering hotel clients re-usable branded water bottles, adding a water-bottle filling station in the lobby, installing towel racks in bathrooms to make it easy for guests to re-use and creating a sign encouraging use.

3. Shop local

Consider sourcing from the local area where possible. This is not only a great way to support local economies but also to reduce your carbon footprint through less travel.

4. Compost and donate food from your kitchen

Establish processes to compost waste, which can in turn support sustainable gardening practices. Additionally, unused or leftover food can be donated to various local farmers to use in feeding their farm animals like pigs.

5. Install a worm composting bin

There are many benefits of breaking down organic material into nutrient-rich soil and fertilizer:

- Reduce the amount of trash being hauled away to landfills
- Keep pests away from your trash (less trash, less pests)
- Promote healthy organic growing in your hotel kitchen operations
- Reduce plant diseases/require less pesticides
- Help soil drain properly to help cut down on runoff
- Speed-up the composting process
- Cut down on composting odor (since the worms break down the vegetation faster)

You don't even have to worry about hiding the composting bin as knowledgeable guests will notice and appreciate the effort. The picture below illustrates an image of a composting bin taken during the ecorating reassessment of Sirikoi Lodge in February, 2019.



6. Install water and energy saving devices

Use aerators on bathroom sinks to reduce water usage, and replace standard toilets with low flow or dual flush versions. Swap out traditional lights with energy-saving lighting to enhance energy conservation.

7. Invest in green infrastructure

Big-ticket items available to hoteliers interested in long-term sustainability return on investment include:

- Solar panel installations
- Energy star-rated heating and cooling systems
- Water recovery and recycling systems

The picture below taken during the ecorating reassessment of Kilaguni Serena in July, 2019 illustrates solar panel installations investment at the lodge.



8. Ditch the plastic water bottles

Among the most environmentally damaging products on the planet, plastic water bottles take up a ton of space and often get intermingled with garbage during disposal. It’s not difficult to move away from bottled water and toward filtered water dispensers for guests and event attendees.

9. Make green decisions.

Opt for biodegradable, non-toxic products in sustainable packaging as much as possible. A sustainable purchasing policy is relatively easy to establish, and should incorporate items like:

- Paint
- Office supplies, writing pads, and pens
- Light bulbs
- Cleaning supplies, sanitizers, and adhesives
- Paper products

When hotels go green, they do less damage to the environment, lower costs, and win goodwill from guests. Sustainability in the business world is essential to achieving growth and satisfying customers. Increasingly, consumers seek out green businesses and pay more for eco-friendly products and services. Therefore, seek to integrate sustainability in your daily operations to win business.