

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MARKETING GUIDE 2011

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**Move into tourism sustainability communications 2.0,
engage consumers, maximise all your opportunities and benefits.**

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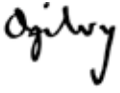
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Engaging consumers to share this responsibility and opt for sustainable holiday choices is central to driving this change

Executive Summary

A) Tourism & Sustainability

Every year, millions of consumers worldwide travel to escape their daily routines. From simple beach breaks to pursuing a passion for high culture, the desire to be away from home is an almost universal one..

Any reader of this guide will be aware that the highly-competitive tourism industry has had to adapt and devise innovative and exciting ways to ratify a growing demand whilst meeting increasing pressure from both government regulation and environmental groups who are concerned with the depletion of natural resources.

This is because the tourism industry is considered to be highly climate sensitive . Not only is it a vector to climate change, accounting for approximately five per cent of global carbon emissions, it is also a victim. With shifting demographics owing to higher costs of living and changing climatic influences, the length and quality of the tourism seasons play a huge part in attracting and deterring visitors .

While conceding that the growth of the tourism industry is dependent on frequency and demand, in the context of sustainability, the principles for economic growth go hand-in-hand. They are neither analogous nor a bolt-on.

The travel industry faces many challenges under the umbrella of 'sustainability'. From integrating the parameters of population growth, to decreasing resources and continued business prosperity, the issues are numerous and complex.

Engaging consumers to share this responsibility and opt for sustainable holiday choices is central to driving this change. And this will not happen without rethinking our approach to marketing and communications to help shape a better future for the travel industry.

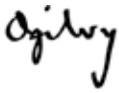
B) The 2011 Context

The economic downturn in late 2008 and 2009 had a devastating effect on tourism. According to the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), international tourist arrivals declined worldwide by 4 per cent in 2009 to 880 million – the year hardest hit by the global economic crisis. This fall has since had a modest revival in 2010 , but patterns of frugal behaviour established during the recession are predicted to continue , and some commentators are even suggesting that the traumatic experience of this recession has radically and indelibly shifted the consumer landscape.

While the downturn kept more travellers tethered and extreme natural events (such as the Icelandic volcanic eruption) delayed those who ventured out, it is without a doubt that holiday makers will increasingly have to tolerate a certain degree of risk and expect to pay higher insurance premiums .

According to Ernst and Young's 2008 'Strategic Business Risk' study, climate change, closely followed by demographic change and catastrophic events, are among the top 10 risks for insurers.

Destinations themselves are currently caught in a classic 'Catch 22' situation. Because of government budget cuts, the horizon of opportunity is dramatically restricted, reducing any marketing impact and losing valuable opportunities. The need for destinations to attract sustainable tourism business is greater than ever.



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As the world's population grows, and with climate change and shifting demographics associated with higher energy costs and an increased demand for food security, destinations and the industry that sells them will face increasingly difficult operating circumstances.

Given this market context, this guide aims to show how sustainability, when marketed well, can be a driver for both inbound and outbound tourism economies.

C) What this guide offers

Ogilvy has been working with brands over the last few years to help harness the power of sustainability. This guide, which is aimed at anyone who is involved in the travel industry, aims to do just that – use the impetus of sustainability to create added brand value, new business and consumer behaviour change.

The guide also acknowledges the relevant thinking in behavioural economics and consumer trends to facilitate with strategies to best engage with consumers on sustainable tourism.

Within this guide, we will attempt to aid marketers in promoting sustainable tourism to a broad target audience. The guide also acknowledges the relevant thinking in behavioural economics and consumer trends to facilitate with strategies to best engage with consumers on sustainable tourism.

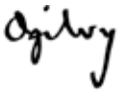
We outline a set of actionable principles to keep in mind when developing a communication strategy that aims to address a sustainability issue. The case studies will exemplify how these businesses have integrated models to make their business sustainable and attractive.

This guide is therefore organised into three broad sections – with a rationale corresponding to each phase, as follows:

- 1) **Focus on fundamentals**
- 2) **Understanding the communications methodology**
- 3) **Integration and modelling: case studies**
- 4) **Marketing tips**
- 5) **Conclusions**

Each section opens with a brief overview and the rationale behind the thinking.

By following the process through which many of our clients work, this guide can be an overall companion for tourism marketers looking to promote sustainable holiday choices and behaviours. While this guide attempts to give you a sense on how to do it, it is not intended to substitute the input and guidance of expert advisors who can counsel you more precisely on how to build 'green' integrity into your company and its products and services.



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THE PUBLISHER & EDITOR:

SEE VIDEO: http://www.travelmole.tv/watch_vdo.php?sid=&id=15211

Valere Tjolle is Sustainable Tourism Editor of the world's largest global online community for the Travel and Tourism Industry - TravelMole.com with 450,000 current global subscribers - and edits VISION on Sustainable Tourism newswire which is sent to 40,000 global subscribers weekly

He is an authority and key proponent of direct and alternative marketing and product creation in the travel and tourism industry with over 40 years in-depth "hands on" experience at every level.

In the travel industry since the 1970's, for the last 15 years Valere has specialised in the ethical development and marketing of sustainable tourism projects.

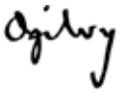
Projects have included tourism developments in Africa, USA, UK and Eastern Europe for clients as diverse as the European Union, the World Bank, the Department for International Development and local and international travel and tourism entrepreneurs.

Valere is also advisor to a number of travel-oriented enterprises who wish to get greener AND more profitable.

Valere has edited the last six years' Sustainable Tourism Reports.

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1) Focus on Fundamentals

A) What is sustainable tourism?

Defining 'sustainability' can be elusive, as it is expected to achieve many things. Sustainability is meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It is an opportunity to invent, create and innovate. It is an opportunity to reconsider products and services. Furthermore, it is a way for every one of us to continually challenge and enrich our professions to be meaningful and future-friendly for all.

As for the terms 'sustainable tourism', we have based our thinking on the Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism August 2002, which is shared in full in the Appendix to this guide.

Simply put, sustainable tourism is a global approach to tourism that covers planning, development and the operation of tourism; that recognises the wider negative impacts generated and attempts to increase positive impact along each of the four pillars of sustainable development (environmental, social, cultural and economic):

- **Reduce environmental impact**
- **Ensure respect of social standards for industry employees**
- **Respect local culture and include local communities in the decision-making process**
- **Contribute to local economic development**

Sustainable tourism, therefore, is a process as much as a concept, that actively takes into account the current and future impacts of tourism to make better places for people to live and to visit. By adopting a holistic approach to the social, economic and environmental impact of tourism, one has to consider whether an eco-lodge in an isolated location is truly more sustainable than a destination that concentrates use of water and power. For the sake of this guide, we will consider that eco-packages will appeal to the eco-conscious consumer and that for non eco-sensitive consumers, carbon-effective "holiday hubs" can be sustainable if consumers are encouraged to adopt eco-friendly behaviour during their stay.

Getting Ahead of The Game

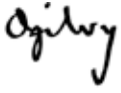
The business case for sustainable tourism.

As Professor Geoffrey Lipman noted in his introduction to the Sustainable Tourism Minister's Briefing, tourism provides about 10 per cent of the world's income and employs almost one tenth of the world's workforce. Tourism's primary benefits are numerous. From the profit it can bring to a local and regional area, to well-being and memories it generates for consumers, to the far-reaching positive impacts of the open-mindedness. And although tourism itself can disrupt and impact ecosystems and environments, tourism can also be the very impetus for conserving an unspoiled landscape otherwise susceptible to industrial development.

On the flip side, carbon dioxide emissions generated directly from the tourism sector account for approximately 5 per cent of global carbon emissions. To put this into context, and to understand the magnitude of numbers, if tourism was compared with the emissions of countries, tourism would be the fifth biggest polluter worldwide.

Furthermore, tourism can also have detrimental social and cultural impacts including the increase of social discord, challenges to social inclusion and the commoditisation of cultures. Mitigation of impacts in the tourism sector, however, can be achieved.

From an environmental perspective, an integrated approach through the reduction in energy use, an improvement in energy efficiency, increased use of renewable energy, carbon offsetting



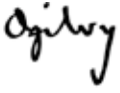
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strategies, changes in business practices, as well as market mechanisms, incentives, taxes and voluntary initiatives, can assist with the drive to a lower carbon economy.

From a social and cultural perspective, sustainable tourism can contribute to a better welcome from local communities involved in the decision-making process; more regular tourism will put less strain on social aspects and provide better job stability for seasonal workers.

Lastly, the economic arguments also provide a strong case in the fight against climate change and its impact on the tourism industry. From insurance costs, to the cost of repatriating customers from areas affected by extreme weather, to the cost of biodiversity and natural resources, climate change is an important cost centre for tourism.

carbon dioxide emissions generated directly from the tourism sector account for approximately 5 per cent of global carbon emissions . To put this into context, and to understand the magnitude of numbers, if tourism was compared with the emissions of countries, tourism would be the fifth biggest polluter worldwide.



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2) Understanding the Communications Methodology

This section will outline various approaches to engage consumers on sustainability.

a) Understanding consumer attitudes: who buys 'sustainable holidays' and who doesn't

Understanding attitudes, particularly values and intentions, means getting behind a given explanation of a person's actions or beliefs. By finding out what principles consumers hold, and how they perceive their relationship with nature, we can then understand how best to devise sustainability strategies in tourism.

There tend to be two main misconceptions about how people think that are chiefly responsible for undermining the impact of current sustainability messages. The first is an assumption that people make rational choices. The second is the belief that people will value planet-saving-good-deeds for their own sake – an emotional response.

The rational versus emotional argument has been exhaustively debated. Across a myriad of environmental issues, communicators have learnt the hard way that supplying technically-correct, logical information does not change behaviours. There are many complex psychological factors at play that mean relying on rationality is risky at best. But with some honourable exceptions, it is understood that the majority of travel brands' sustainability communications abound with facts, figures, percentages and dates.

In addition, most of us are "egoists". That means that in 'real world' everyday decision-making, sustainability has no value beyond its ability to serve individuals' interests, even (dare we say it) those of the self-proclaimed eco-conscious traveller.

The premise of this guide is that in order to achieve real change, we need to market sustainability to the majority of consumers. Not the minority of engaged consumers who will pay a premium for a sustainable holiday package for sustainability's sake. The challenge is to make sustainability attractive to consumers who are experiencing "eco-fatigue", who see sustainability as making sacrifices (not what one looks for in a holiday!) and who are not willing to pay a premium.

One of the major challenges then is to develop pragmatic, realistic and sustainable tourism messages that appeal to everybody – not just those who are proud to be environmentalists, but a wide range of audiences. To create new opportunities to engage with consumers, a focal point is understanding how engaging and inspiring, rather than informing, can be applied to tourism marketing.

Profile of the climate aware holidaymaker – who has made changes to their holiday choices

A visible minority of consumers are happy to pay more for a holiday that is marketed as sustainable. In 2005 the International Ecotourism Society (TIES) published a report on Consumer Demand for Responsible Tourism, showing that a majority of tourists were interested in the social, cultural and environmental issues relevant to their holiday destinations. These holidaymakers were interested in patronising local hotels, learning about local culture and sampling local cuisine. At least a third of tourists surveyed by the TIES said they were willing to pay more to companies that benefit local communities and conservation.

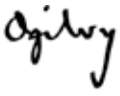
New markets

Currently, a dramatic change is taking place in both geographical tourism source markets and consumer demand for a wider range of tourism products.

The current top 10 of tourism source markets are: Germany, USA, United Kingdom, China, France, Italy, Japan, Canada, Russia and the Netherlands, however, during the course of the next few years new source markets such as China, Russia, Singapore, UAR, India, Malaysia, Turkey, Nigeria, Brazil, Ukraine, Egypt are likely to deliver many more tourists.

It is clear that, aligned with the world's economic power-shifts, beneficiary countries' populations will seek to purchase international travel arrangements.

Sustainable Tourism Report Suite



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For destinations, this presents a challenge and an opportunity. An alternative to increasing the range of source markets is to increase the range of holidays on offer and to tailor offers to specific marketplaces.

Key marketplaces in the next decade have been identified as:

- **Adventure and soft adventure travel**
- **Voluntourism**
- **Long stay holidays**
- **Domestic & regional surface travel (rail & coach)**
- **Educational travel**

An interesting new book helps to explain the appeal of some of the above holiday experiences to 'mature' source markets such as the USA. Spend Shift, published in 2010, tells of a road trip through post-recession America by two experts in consumer behaviour - John Gerzema, the social theorist and business writer Michael D'Antonio. The book sought to test in-depth research by Gerzema's organisation - Young & Rubicam - into the habits and attitudes of US consumers after the deepest economic crisis in modern times.

Gerzema and d'Antonio identified that the recession experience has led to a number of new consumer trends that will drive travellers' interest in new kinds of holiday. They predict that "Our egos will be fed from displaying our personal values through a brand."

Whether they walk the talk or not, these consumers will expect engagements from brands and service providers. They will look for tour operators who share their habits and beliefs and provide concrete proof of this.

Marketing tips: Coherence and Transparency will be key components for marketing to these consumers. Please refer to part 4 of the guide and see sections on

4.Ai) Avoiding greenwashing

4.bii) Defining your vision and engagements

4.ci) Make honesty a priority

Profile of the climate-aware holidaymaker – who does not yet make changes

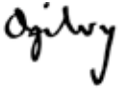
It is difficult to gauge the exact percentage of sustainability-aware holiday makers because of the difference in attitudes between claimed concern for sustainability and actual action. The 2010 HSBC Climate Confidence Monitor found while 40 per cent of global consumers say they are willing to purchase green products, only 4 per cent of consumers actually do when given the choice.

There is mounting evidence to suggest that consumers would make changes to their behaviour, if they saw the direct benefit of doing so. This group does not consider saving the planet as a direct benefit.

British consumers continue to be among the least concerned about the environment (Greendex Survey 2010). Whilst environmental issues are on their radar, they have taken a backseat during the recent financial downturn. According to the 2010 HSBC Climate Confidence Monitor only 8% of British consumers consider climate change to be their top concern. Those who do express concern are not actively engaged with specific issues and have a limited understanding of anything beyond the general. A mere 8% of the population considers climate change to be their top concern.

British consumers are the least likely to agree that environmental problems negatively affect their health (16 per cent versus the average of 39 per cent) and generally, they do not consider that global warming will worsen their way of life (27 per cent versus the average of 45 per cent).

One reason for this apathy is that consumers do not feel that environmental problems impact them directly. Whilst they may recognise the environment as a big problem in the future this seems distant and irrelevant in the present day.



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Perceived cost is another significant factor in the dismissal of sustainable travel choices, as environmental products and services are broadly considered to be more expensive. This trend also applies to travel products as Euromonitor's report into global travel trends post-recession has found. As people gain more financial security, they claim that they will be prepared to spend more on holidays they perceive as being beneficial to local communities and the environment, on the condition that these holiday packages meet the same basic requirements as a conventional holiday.

Paradoxically, price is also one of the factors that contributes to lessening the environmental impact of travel. Euromonitor's report shows that the high price of air travel is causing consumers to now make what many would perceive as more sustainable choices. It points to a trend for downgrading accommodation, i.e. staying with friends, camping, or staying in one's home country rather than flying abroad. From the report, it is unclear if financial circumstances have been defined as a decision to act altruistically on the part of the environment, but the statistics do indicate that government taxes have an impact on consumer decisions – by helping to price consumers out of high-carbon trips.

Money-saving is clearly a strong motivation for consumers to make large-scale reductions to their personal environmental and social impact. But money isn't the only factor – if it was, how do we explain the runaway success of recycling schemes, or campaigns to stop using plastic bags? These rarely offer a money-saving benefit. By understanding the other motivating forces at work, the travel industry has a range of opportunities to engage more deeply with consumers.

Marketing tips:

Please refer to part 4 of the guide and see sections on

4.cvi) Show them the money!

4.civ) Do it with Love

b) Making the Truth Fascinating

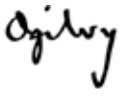
Engaging consumers by shifting the nature of your communications from information-based to need-based communication.

Dr. Peter Sandman, who describes his role as "risk communications consultant" explains the reasoning behind motivation in the following equation:

$$\text{Risk} = \text{Hazard} + \text{Outrage}$$

This equation is frequently used to explain why the risks we can control seem much greater than risks we cannot. In the case of environmental degradation, the Hazard factor is widely accepted to be catastrophically high, but the far off nature of the catastrophes in question means that the Outrage factor is negligible.

For example, when a hotel markets itself as 'green,' it promises consumers the benefit of climate change mitigation, but Sandman shows us that this benefit is largely irrelevant to the consumer. Here the 'green' hotel is using the Educator's Model (see below) whereby information is given out and expected to result in a behaviour change, i.e. a particular brand of product or service is chosen.



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EDUCATOR'S MODEL

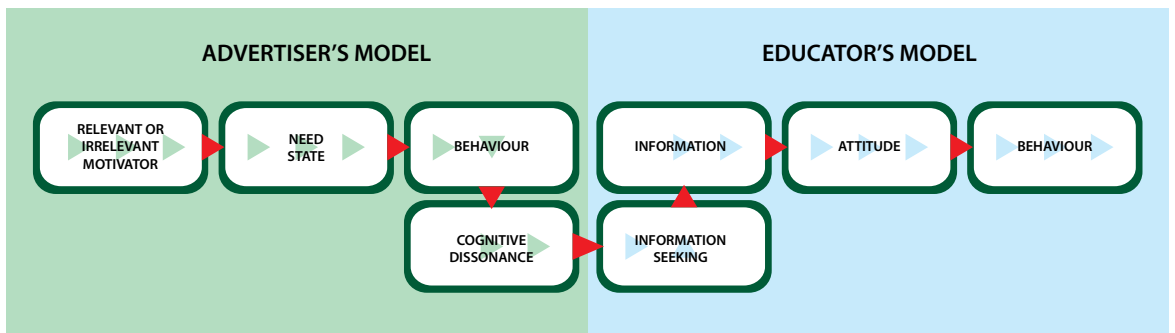
However, a result in behavioural change is less likely to occur as the information provided is perceived as an inconceivable scenario for the vast majority of consumers. Simply linking information to the spectre of climate change is unlikely to drive a consumer to make a more sustainable choice. This is because climate change is not seen as an immediate or pertinent risk.

To make the truth fascinating, we need to consider its urgency and relevance. David Ogilvy who founded Ogilvy Public Relations, once said that “you cannot bore a person into buying your product; you can only interest them in buying it”. The age-old ‘Advertiser’s Model’, where a universal human need is tapped into, leading to a desired behaviour such as purchase, is shown below:

ADVERTISER'S MODEL

Sandman recognised how the Advertiser’s Model ultimately forces the consumer into an awkward feeling where they are bitten by the reality of the product’s failure to fulfil our need – like the car that didn’t end up providing the hoped-for social status, or the furniture that failed to create a harmonious home life. Sandman created a new model of sustainable communication, which links the Advertiser’s Model to the Educator’s Model, showing that this ‘reality bites’ moment can be neutralised by providing information, as per the Educator’s Model. This information will show environmentally-sustainable behaviour to be right, and a contribution to a worthy cause.

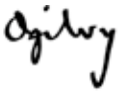
A perfect example of this is the popularity of recycling – an individual might start the habit due to the social pressure of putting the green plastic box outside every week, or a nagging child, but research into the benefits of recycling will reinforce the rationality of the choice. This provides a bigger sense of accomplishment – of ‘doing good’ – and is more likely to result in lasting behaviour change.



Marketing tips:

Please refer to part 4 of the guide and see sections on

- 4.cii) Find strength in humility
- 4.ciii) Find your inner story-teller



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c) Providing a bigger picture: Normative behaviour

The next question for the communication or marketing manager might be how to help encourage consumers to adopt more sustainable behaviour during their trip. There may be significant water, energy and carbon savings to be had in reducing the consumer's own contribution to the energy or water use, or the packaging waste that they create.

A large impact of tourism is the significant resource use and wastage resulting from laundry. In the past few years, reducing the use of towels by guests has been made a priority by hoteliers owing to the significant reduction in water and energy use identified.

In 2008, a group of psychologists led by Wesley P. Schultz, conducted an experiment into the possibility of using normative messages to encourage water and energy conservation among hotel guests by reducing the amount of laundry they create. Normative messages describe the opinions of others regarding a certain behaviour (injunctive norms), or describe the actual behaviour of others (descriptive norms).

The power of social norms to influence behaviour is well-documented, whereby individuals witness behaviour in others and succumb to an unspoken pressure to adopt that behaviour themselves. So-called 'binge drinking' is a useful example of the power of the social norms vs. information – most young Northern European adults, for instance, have at least some awareness of the number of units of alcohol that they should be drinking, they will certainly know the long-term health risks of regular binge drinking, but the behaviour of the friends and peers around them every Friday and Saturday night is a far more pervasive influence.

Schultz et al's 2008 experiment aimed to test the numbers of towels that were re-used at a hotel in response to different kinds of normative messages. These were split into high and low injunctive norms, which describe the respondent's belief about the opinions of others regarding a certain behaviour and, high and low descriptive norms, which describe the actual behaviour of others. The researchers placed four different messages in visible locations in hotel bathrooms, for example:

High injunctive:

"Many guests have expressed their approval of conserving energy. Because so many guests value conservation and are in the habit of conserving, this hotel has initiated a conservation programme."

Low injunctive:

"Some guests have expressed their approval of conserving energy. Because some guests value conservation, this hotel has initiated a conservation programme."

High descriptive:

"Nearly 75% of guests chose to reuse their towels each day. To support our guests who want to conserve, this hotel has initiated a conservation programme."

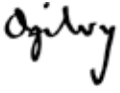
Low descriptive:

"Nearly 25% of guests choose to reuse their towels each day. To support our guests who want to conserve, this hotel has initiated a conservation programme."

Experiments took place aiming to discover if normative messages could improve the success rate of the hotel's towel reuse programme, which used printed door hangers with messaging around social responsibility and environmental protection. Over the course of three experiments, the researchers found that towel use was markedly lower in hotel guests who received a combined high descriptive and high injunctive message, like this:

"Many of our hotel guests have expressed their approval of conserving energy [high injunctive]. When given the opportunity, nearly 75 per cent of hotel guests chose to reuse their towels each day [high descriptive]. Because so many guests value conservation and are in the habit of conserving, this hotel has initiated a conservation programme. If you would like your towels replaced, please leave your used towels on the bathroom floor. Towels left hanging on the towel rack tell us that you want to reuse them."

As a control, a message including just the last two sentences was placed in randomly selected rooms. In a third and final experiment, a third message was added to the control and combined high injunctive and high



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descriptive messages. This described past guests' behaviour about the particular room they were staying in; i.e. "when given the opportunity, X% of guests in this room (condominium X) chose to reuse at least one of their towels each day.

One of the most interesting results of Schultz et al's experiments were that the behaviour change resulting from social normative messages occurred without any social interaction taking place. If it shows that individuals behave more responsibly towards the environment when they are part of a collective working towards a goal, then it might help to explain the popularity of schemes that provide travellers with a chance to take part in a group conservation activity.

Consumers will pay more if they feel that they are directly contributing to something. This is the business case for fair trade products – people pay a premium because most often there is a benefit for them (organic, or small-scale agriculture, is perceived as being better for their health as well as giving them confidence in the product's provenance) and a direct benefit for producers (consumers know where the money is going).

Marketing tips:

Please refer to part 4 of the guide and see sections on

4.biii) Focus on the Facts

4.cv) Embrace the detail

Linking Sustainability to Authenticity

In his study into motivation, the psychologist Abraham Maslow identified some universal human needs. These are arranged in his famous hierarchy as follows: Physiological needs, Safety needs, Love and Belonging, Esteem, Self-Actualisation.

Back in the innocent 1960s, the promise of sun and sea, and being together with the family was an aspiration for Northern European consumers, who began taking advantage of the burgeoning range of package holidays. The low cost, high density, minimal profit formula delivered millions of tourists to hundreds of destinations.

Governments (and global agencies such as the World Bank/IMF), in general were happy because they generated foreign currency to pay bills, stimulated economic development and globalisation, and they fostered this growth by providing cheap loans for hotel and tourism infrastructure.

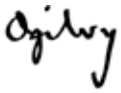
Tour operators and transportation companies also benefitted from this situation because it enabled them to take advantage of a major activity as middlemen and profit from the growth. The boom was largely fuelled by low fuel prices, consequent cheap transportation and a buyer's market in destination accommodation and food.

The commoditisation of tourism combined with globalisation enlarged the buyer's advantage by making destinations extremely similar and thus interchangeable.

Fifty years on, mature markets have moved up Maslow's hierarchy a notch and are looking for a holiday that is not just a commodity. Today, consumers are looking for a trip with self-actualisation thrown in, too – the chance to experience and show off their passions and values, whatever they may be. This helps explain the appeal of longer-distance holidays over recent decades.

Helping consumers to want a holiday with a lower impact is not just about making short-haul, regional and local destinations exotic again and reminding consumers that they can still have unforgettable experiences in destinations that they think they already know well. It's about going one step beyond this and using sustainability messages to enhance the experience itself.

By linking sustainability to authenticity your marketing can have a wide resonance, and the benefits for destination marketers are manifold.



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Marketing tip:

Please refer to part 4 of the guide and see sections on

4.cvii) Show, don't Tell

d) Choice Editing

Serious eco-results will depend on making products and processes more sustainable without consumers even noticing it, and, if necessary, not leaving much room for consumers and companies to opt for less sustainable alternatives to begin with. Examples include thoroughly 'green' buildings, to a complete ban on plastic bags and bottles in resorts, to super-strict bluefin tuna quota — any policy that by default leaves no choice, no room for complacency, and thus makes it 'easy' for consumers to do the right and necessary thing. So the key here is to take care of sustainability for consumers.

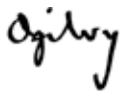
In our 'case studies' section, we talk about brands and organisations who have succeeded in promoting a more sustainable choice by showing consumers the value that it adds to their holiday – whether overtly or not. But there are also brands who are communicating equally successfully by actively using the language of environmental degradation. Normally, the hopelessness that consumers feel when it comes to the environment means that Sandman's Educator's model should be avoided. This is because the consumer feels that his or her individual contribution is not only pointless, and because the contribution they are being asked to make frequently requires a sacrifice or inconvenience. According to research by Thomson & First Choice, some 60% of the population is 'more likely' or 'a little more likely' to book a holiday with a company that shows greener practices.

So when a brand makes a significant achievement in reducing its environmental impact, which a consumer does not perceive that it is at his or her expense, then there is an opportunity simply to offer up this information to them using the Educator's model.

Marketing tip:

Please refer to part 4 of the guide and see sections on

4.bi) Define what the responsible offer is



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Case studies

This section looks at how different businesses have successfully applied the behavioural and marketing models put forward in the previous sections.

Why we must “make the truth fascinating”

Looking through Britain’s (currently no 3 global source market and a mature marketplace) top airline, tour operator and hotel chain websites reveals that the most commonly used strategy for promoting sustainable behaviour in consumers is through the provision of information.

As far back as the 1970s, communication theorists and psychologists have been proving to us that this information-based model is unlikely to succeed in engaging large numbers of people. Why not? Because lack of knowledge is not the barrier to a consumer’s behaviour change. The internet is awash with comprehensive, jargon-free information by travel providers, and governments at every level are even using TV advertising to encourage more carbon neutral practices. The information-based model is ineffective because it doesn’t address the problem of motivation, and the following case studies outline how destinations and accommodation providers have successfully navigated this issue.

Linking Sustainability to Authenticity

For example, by making a low-carbon holiday a high experiential holiday

The higher cost of resources and certain tax implications have affected the travel industry throughout its value chain. A consensus is being reached that short-haul holidays need to be made more appealing to all. The question is how?

The Future Laboratory’s “Sustainable Holiday Futures” paper for the UK’s Thomson holidays nicely reveals the limitations of the Educator’s Model working alone. It references how much less carbon a trip to a hotel in Benidorm would produce, compared with a holiday at a villa with a pool elsewhere in the Mediterranean, or an ‘eco-hiking’ holiday in Chile.

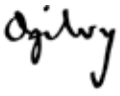
For example, Benidorm’s high rise hotels with shared pools or close proximity to the beach offer northern Europeans the chance to enjoy a fortnight’s sunshine in return for a mere 2.2kg of carbon. So why doesn’t ResponsibleTravel.com sell a package to Benidorm? As CEO Justin Francis tells us, it is because “experience for money is more important than value for money.”

Several years ago, the Spanish Tourist Board’s own research examined the commoditisation of the traditional sun and beach holidays for which its beach resorts like Benidorm became famous. Because other countries began offering this type of holiday more cheaply, Benidorm, like so many other ‘commodities’, reduced prices and was in a ‘race to the bottom’.

Spanish destinations have an excellent opportunity to use Sandman’s model effectively. Potential targets – as identified by Euromonitor – are those who could be convinced to ‘upgrade’ back from a staycation to a main short-haul holiday abroad, and who might be convinced to ‘downgrade’ their length of flight. As Sandman showed us, we do not need to market these holidays as sustainable in order for the consumer to make the preference, and for the tour operator to enjoy the benefits. But how do we make lower-carbon holidays more appealing?

First of all, it must attract those in the middle away from the staycation or the eco-hike in the Andes by offering a comparable experience. Euromonitor tells us that consumers are looking for differentiation. Pure sun seekers were lured away from the Eurozone by new destinations, while a new type of consumer was attracted by the kind of holiday that would offer them something more than cheap family fun in the sun.

Sustainable Tourism Report Suite



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If they can tell this story in a creative way, to the relevant audience, Spain's destinations can surprise and delight consumers with the experiences they offer. Last year, over 69,000 people joined the Facebook page dedicated to the Xacobeo, the pilgrimage to Saint James the Apostle's resting place in Santiago de Compostela, north-west Spain. It is just the kind of unique, character-building adventure that might compete for the long-haul aficionado's interest and shows where a key opportunity for Spanish tourism lies – in engaging the world of niches offered by social networks. The Xacobeo marketing strategy illustrates the importance of social media, and how encouraging participants to share photos and video means that we can spread our personal recommendations beyond the community of people whom we regularly see in person. According to Google, 86% of US leisure travellers will watch a travel-related video before making a booking.. We believe that giving our visitors a compelling reason to make a video is within the reach of any travel or tourism provider. The key is to figure out how their experience will provide a personal achievement or discovery that will make for content that is worth sharing, and perhaps also giving an added incentive to share it.

An added advantage for destinations such as Spain, with a mature hospitality sector and relatively close source markets, is the massive current investment in various forms of both low and high speed surface transport.

Centre to centre high speed trains are now competing with air travel for timings and provide low carbon/low fuel options. There is massive economic investment in this sector. Furthermore, coach travel with higher load factors and lower investment costs is said to be even more sustainable.

In short, regional and domestic tourism has significant and understated opportunities.

Linking Sustainability to Authenticity

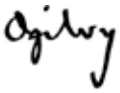
For example, via a gastronomic experience. A striking example of this is the impact that the drive towards more sustainable eating in Italy – most famously the Slow Food movement - has had on the country's tourism industry and its image abroad.

The Slow Food movement began with the founding of Arcigola, in 1986 to resist the opening of a McDonald's near the Spanish Steps in Rome, then creating its own manifesto, based on a belief that "everyone has a fundamental right to the pleasure of good food and consequently the responsibility to protect the heritage of food, tradition and culture that make this pleasure possible". The movement now numbers 100,000 members in over 132 countries. The successes that Slow Food has achieved in building the businesses of grassroots hoteliers, major tour operators, and at the destination level too, neatly sum up why Sandman's model works.

Slow Food champions accommodation providers like "agriturismi" whose websites talk about the home-grown produce that guests can not only sample, but also see for themselves and help to grow, pick and cook. This identifies the almost universal desire of city-dwellers to experience nature and quiet, as well as good food. Once visitors are in situ, the beeping BlackBerry might make them experience the 'cognitive dissonance' of being unable to leave the stresses of their life at home completely behind. But since their hosts are members of Slow Food, they can provide visitors with the information on the wider relevance of their movement, or the reduction in the farmhouse's own impact, that will lead to the changed, or more deeply embedded attitude towards a more sustainable holiday choice. A deeply impressive experience, and a highly-engaged audience, may be the reason for the success of agriturismo like Fattoria Barbiolla Nuova in Tuscany. So many felt compelled to post reviews on TripAdvisor – still one of the most influential sources of information for travellers – that the owner includes a link from the farmhouse's website to these reviews – giving powerful endorsement to the site.

We would argue that the gastronomic holiday provider is in a fortunate position to go one step further and create a more long-term social media strategy. Because cooking is an experience that guests can continue enjoying at home, there might be an opportunity for providers to create or participate in a recipe sharing exercise – keeping in touch with former guests in a way that is relevant to them means that they are more likely to share a recommendation or idea. What's more, it could help to ingrain more sustainable behaviour into our lives back at home.

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For the destination marketer, the key learning from Italy is that agriturismo are successfully packaging and selling a 'destination iconic product' (DIP) – and in turn being promoted by that very same DIP as it sits on supermarket shelves or cookery books worldwide. In Italy's case, the DIP is the wine, food and 'intellectual property' of the country as a gastronomic giant, and it shows how destinations and commercial partners have an opportunity to co-operate for mutual benefit. Word-of-mouth recommendations are even more powerful and far-reaching if they are accompanied by a gift of food or wine that can be passed on and enjoyed by an even wider audience, and food producers from New Zealand lamb are finding that by talking about the rich natural provenance and even the farmer who grew it, they can tell a more convincing story about their products' benefits.

Normative behaviour

Similar principles to those tested by Schultz et al's experiment have already been put to successful use by hoteliers.

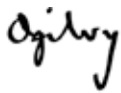
A great example of creating a sense of participation is by maintaining the communication after a hotel guest has checked out. In May 2009, the InterContinental Hotel Group (IHG – the world's largest hotel group) joined forces with the Department of Plant Sciences at the University of Oxford to support its research into conservation. The hotel chain has promised up to US\$1 million over a five-year period to help Oxford increase its research capability in the mapping of biodiversity and to help inform the group's future hotel design and operations. IHG has used this to provide a uniquely engaging angle to its loyalty programme, asking Priority Club Rewards (PCR) members to part fund the donation by asking them to switch from paper to online statements. This will save up to US\$400,000 a year, half of which will be donated to the Department of Plant Sciences at Oxford University for five years. From October, PCR members have also been able to track the progress of the research project and speak to the scientists directly on this site, and more than 330,000 members have now made the switch.

Choice Editing

In September 2010, Italy's famous Cinque Terre national park announced that the use of plastic water bottles by tourists and visitors was forbidden in an attempt to preserve the coastline from pollution and litter. Instead, visitors will be able to purchase reusable metal flasks which they will be able to fill up with still or sparkling water from public fountains.

Another example is Scandic Hotels, with genius and innovation not in their communication, but in the step taken by its purchasing team. The hotelier took jumbo prawns off the menu of every one of its hotels, and ran advertising to tell this story to the world.

On the one hand, the consumer doesn't really lose anything here – since "availability of jumbo prawns" would register on few travellers' list of hotel must-haves, but in banning an entire foodstuff, Scandic has blazed a trail in sustainability. The bravery they showed in purposefully reducing guests' choice shows clear leadership and is what makes the story worthy of its own communications' programme.



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3. Marketing Tips

A) A brief introduction to Greenwashing

Greenwash is not a new concept. The term is believed to have emerged from the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, and it entered the Concise Oxford Dictionary in 1999.

The 10th edition of the Concise Oxford English Dictionary defined greenwash as “disinformation disseminated by an organisation so as to present an environmentally responsible public image. Derivatives greenwashing (n). Origin from green on the pattern of whitewash.”

Along with the recent dramatic rise in green marketing has come an increase in the popularity of the term and, according to the greenwash police, in the incidence of infractions.

The Advertising Standards Authority in the UK is upholding more and more complaints against advertising that can't live up to its green bluster.

This huge rise in interest in greenwash and “green” marketing has one very tangible measure. The Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) Code, enforced by the Advertising Standards Authority, first created a clause for environmental claims in 1995, and since 1998 the UK government has published a non-binding ‘Green Claims Code’, advising advertisers on how best to make good claims.

Is greenwashing really a problem?

Greenwash is an extremely serious matter. It should be a preoccupation for us all because it is insidious—eroding consumer trust, contaminating the credibility of all sustainability-related marketing and hence inhibiting progress toward a sustainable economy.

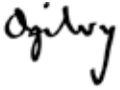
This said, most cases identified as greenwash can either be pinned down to a lack of understanding of the issue, or over-enthusiasm with regard to the “green” credentials of a product or service, rather than malicious intent.

With this in mind, and even if you read no further than this page, we have outlined the simple steps that you can take to prevent greenwashing.

The meaning of all terms used in marketing communications must be clear to consumers. Confusing consumers with language that only a climate change scientist can understand is not a responsible way of promoting a green offer. Be clear and help consumers understand!

- **Avoid using fluffy language - Words or terms with no clear meaning, e.g. ‘eco-friendly’ or ‘natural’ holidays.**
- **Don’t make claims that can’t be verified.**
- **Apply the theory of relativity. Just because you have one responsible offer in your catalogue does not mean that you are a responsible company, or that 100% of your communication should focus on a small percentage of your offer.**
- **Get the data right! The basis of environmental claims must be clear. Marketers must not suggest that their claims are universally accepted if a significant division of informed or scientific opinion exists.**
- **Avoid self-proclaimed green labels. Whilst the thinking behind creating an own-label may be aimed at helping consumers identify responsible products and services, apply a lookalike label without third party endorsement is a greenwash classic.**

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- **Avoid making claims that are environmentally true, but impossible to put into practice – or not representative of normal use. A plane doesn't pollute if it's not flying anywhere!**
- **Ensure that the product/service you are promoting has a genuine sustainability benefit and positive impact (vs its conventional alternative)**

That was the concise version!

If you've read this far, stay with us for an outline of actionable principles that will apply to the overall marketing process.

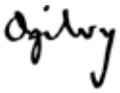
Embedding responsible marketing at the heart of your strategy

This somewhat elusive title reflects our point of view that avoiding greenwash begins long before your creative team sits down to write; it requires placing sustainability at the heart of your marketing process from the earliest stages of product design and business planning, getting employees to rally around it, and then seeing it through to creative development, launch and beyond.

In the past, 'responsible marketing' used to be more about the journeys that brands themselves were taking. Today 'responsible marketing' is also about taking that journey with consumers in order to help them to live better, richer lives.

The main opportunity that arises from applying responsible marketing guidelines to the sustainable tourism offer is that of connecting with people through authentic, creative and empowering communications with purpose and relevance.

This part of the guide is therefore organized into three broad sections— Planning Your Approach, Developing Communications, Choice of media channel and Launch and Beyond.



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B) PLANNING YOUR APPROACH

The planning phase is where the bulk of the work should be done and where the largest part of your energy should be invested. If greenwash means claiming something is green when it isn't, it stands to reason that ensuring that the thing in question really is green before you start talking about it should go a long way toward preventing greenwash problems.

Many marketers go wrong by assuming that a smallish story that already exists or a minor change already in the works will do. Usually it won't. New messages with a couple of green buzzwords won't work either. Sustainability is about driving substantial and authentic change in products and processes up and down the value chain.

If you have taken the time to build a robust and authentic foundation, getting beyond greenwash to great sustainability-oriented marketing becomes much easier. This section will help you create a solid foundation on which to build.

Bi) Define what the responsible offer is

Do it by: Reading the Sustainable Tourism 2011 Report!

Ever find it confusing to know what exactly qualifies as a sustainable tourism offer? Does responsible tourism apply to every type of holiday?

It is our view that all types of tourism – from niche to mainstream – can and should be operated in a way that respects and benefits destinations and local people.

The Sustainable Tourism Report outlines the sustainability issues related to destinations, travel and accommodation and will give you the lowdown on the labels and certifications that you can look out for – for that extra peace of mind.

Do it with: A busy colleague! If it's easily comprehensible to them in the little time they have, then you're on the right track to making your sustainable offer legible.

Do it because: If it's not clear for you, it can't be clear for your customers

Bii) Define your vision and engagements

Do it by: Asking who you are, not who you wish you were.

In a truly ideal world, every organisation would have a clear and aspirational vision of what it means to be sustainable, and would understand that sustainability is an essential part of creating value.

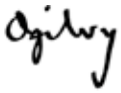
Yet, if it were as straightforward as that, more people would have done it!

The first caveat to avoid is thinking of sustainability as an opportunity to reinvent your brand.

As much as sustainability is an opportunity for new business, added value and innovation, it is not about reinventing your brand. For your sustainability offer to be perceived as sincere (versus opportunistic) by your customers, it needs to be embedded in your brand story and DNA.

By defining what sustainability means for your brand you will be able to create differentiation and your own unique engagements. Using sustainability as a unique selling point in product messaging will invite scrutiny from all quarters. Unless the proposition is robust enough to withstand that level of analysis, the sustainability issue should not be used overtly as a USP.

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Here are a couple of questions that might help you define your vision:

Link sustainability to your brand

Can any of my core brand values be linked to the sustainability stakes around tourism?
Would I define sustainable tourism differently from my competitors?

Personalise the brand journey

What is my motivation for promoting sustainable tourism?
Why do I think sustainable tourism is good business?

Set the destination

Do I want to be a leader, a contender or a complier when it comes to promoting the responsible offer?
What share of my business do I want to be based on sustainable products and services?

Do it with: Clarity about your offer's biggest impacts and willingness to redress them through big change.

Do it because: Defining where you want to go will render your offer all the more legible.

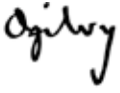
Biii) Focus on the Facts

Consumers want proof of engagement. They want concrete and tangible information on the impacts and benefits of a sustainable holiday package.

Do it by: Getting hard facts and getting them verified! You can't tell a credible sustainability story without real data behind it." Make sure that the responsible offer you're promoting doesn't have any lurking vulnerabilities that are incoherent and that need to be fixed. (And, if they need to be fixed, get them fixed quickly.)

Do it with: Intention and dedication. There's no need to greenwash when you have robust data and dedicated colleagues behind you.

Do it because: What you do is more important than what you say.



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C - COMMUNICATING

Having a great story to tell makes the storyteller's job much easier.

However, we may need to unlearn some of our training as marketers. We are accustomed to seeking the strongest possible articulation of the feature or benefit of the product we are marketing. But in the sustainability space, hubris is a dirty word, and even mild exaggeration can lead to trouble. Instead, we need to commit to some of the same principles of radical transparency we are learning to abide by in today's digital world.

But this honesty need not equate with dull or boastful; on the contrary, it can allow you to discover fresh voices and enter a new compact of trust with your consumers.

Ci) Make Honesty a Priority

Do it by: Telling the truth. There's no simpler story to tell than the real one, but there may be no harder one. Taking a lesson from the political world, we know people will accept progress over perfection as long as shortcomings are declared in full. But a cover-up? Now that they won't forgive. Standards of accountability are especially high when it comes to sustainability, but transparency and honest efforts are more important than perfection. So, marketers: be brave.

Do it with: Marketing that divulges the good, the bad and the beta in the sustainability journey of your offer.

Do it because: Loyalty follows transparency.

Cii) Find Strength in Humility

Do it by: Embracing the journey. No brand or offer is perfect, especially in the world of sustainability, and while big, bold goals for brand evolution are a must, your marketing should convey an understanding that whatever you're doing right now is just a first step in a long process of improvement. So frame your sustainability offer in a way that acknowledges your limitations and includes a commitment to try harder and make things better.

Do it with: Sincerity of intent, a deep understanding of the relevant issues, and a permanent ban on chest beating.

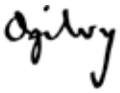
Do it because: Great brands are grounded

Ciii) Find your inner story-teller

Do it by: Starting on the inside, and with a truly substantial story—which usually means building the plot from scratch. So get friendly with in-house experts, with the destinations, with people in the field. Enlist them for your team. Ask their help in scrutinizing the offer, the establishments' sustainability engagements and low-impact activities at the destination in order to discover core, significant improvement opportunities and genuine sustainability benefits.

Many consumers are eager to flaunt their green behaviour and possessions because there are now millions of other consumers who are actually impressed by green lifestyle.

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Encouraging eco-status will involve providing buyers of sustainable holidays with conversation starters and story details to share and build on with their peers. It's about giving each product a story that actually shows that they're green. Everything having to do with (eco-friendly) sourcing, production, ingredients and travel represents a potential benefit to consumers keen on status stories. And the concept is extra attractive for service providers, since they often don't have physical products with which to convey their eco credentials

Do it with: Perspective about the significance of the stories to the bigger picture.

Do it because: Adopting a wider view of industry responsibility is a small step for you but a big step for the industry.

Civ) Do it with love

Do it by: tapping into the emotional arguments.

If people were rational, then the precautionary principle alone would motivate us to take urgent action on sustainability issues. But people are not rational, and on top of that, booking a holiday is perhaps not a process that relies solely on rationale.

This is why despite continuous communication of the extinction threat, of the degradation of natural sites, not enough people act to prevent it via their holiday choices.

This is where we see the limit of this type of "loss" message.

Loss messages focus on long-term (and thus distant) goals and on shared risks. This is in contradiction with the oh-so-human short-term thinking, and decision-making based on personal gain and continuing in our own immediate interest. There is a Homer Simpson in every one of us!

The inefficiency of long-term oriented loss messages is especially relevant when applied to holiday choices – distant destinations where social and environmental impacts will not be immediately felt and will not affect us once we return home.

This doesn't mean that "loss" messages aren't important for raising awareness, they are. But it does mean that this type of message isn't going to engage consumers to act.

Doom and gloom messaging ("climate porn") that is designed to scare people into action more often switches them into apathy. It's easy to understand why individuals feel powerless in the face of climate change.

Do it with: Love. You can't get more powerful than with wonder, awe and a positive attitude.

Do it because: Maximising the solution rather than the problem is good for morale.

Cv) Embrace the Detail

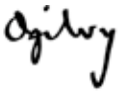
Do it by: Telling the truth about the truth (and nothing but the truth).

Provide pertinent detail at every turn, in every communication or tagline, while avoiding trumped-up generalizations like "helps save the earth" or "good for the planet." Truth-telling reinforces authenticity in a world where half-truths and generalizations can poison your credibility; it avoids the now-cliché "green" and "eco" descriptors, and it's much easier to get through the legal department.

The art is in finding the balance between precise and trivial.

Do it with: Healthy respect for the ability of your clients/consumers—and the influencers they follow—to read between the (tag)lines.

Do it because: Allusion, abstraction and subtle implication are the tools of poets, not brands.



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(vi) Show them the money

Do it by: Promoting both ecological and economic benefits for the responsible offer

Since the start of the recession in 2008, we have seen 'eco' products and services repositioned from 'worthy but expensive' to 'cheap and worthy'. On the one hand, cash-strapped consumers are going out of their way to save money on energy bills, motorized transport and other waste-prone, eco-unfriendly activities. While the environment may not be their primary motivation for adopting these actions, they will nevertheless do less damage. Other consumers are still primarily interested in sustainable consumption, but no longer willing or able to pay the usual premiums.

The marketing messages have shifted in accordance, from distant 'planet-saving' benefits to direct 'money-saving' benefits to promote the double ECO (economic and ecological). For example:

Whirlpool claims that its new topload Cabrio HE washer can save up to USD 900 in lifetime water and energy costs, while GE says its hybrid electric water heater will save consumers approximately USD 250 annually. Kohler Co. says that switching to its latest models of water-conserving shower heads, toilets and faucets would save a family of four between USD 90 and 200 annually (source: WSJ).

Do it with: The green pound. Sustainability isn't just good business for you, it should be good for your customers too.

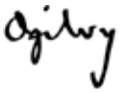
Do it because: It's the choice that counts, not the motivation.

(vii) Show, Don't Tell

Do it by: Finding a forum that allows your actions (or offers) to speak for themselves. Think of it as the ultimate product demo, where consumers can see how amazing your offer is without the background noise of you tooting your own horn.

Do it with: The goal of making sustainability tangible, practical and relevant without saying it is in so many words.

Do it because: Seeing is believing.



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D) CHOICE OF MEDIA

We thought that this section might be a good place to do some myth busting. Read on for some interesting facts to satisfy your inner geek!

Is paper evil?

With so much publicity concerning the environmental impact of print and paper it is surprising how small a part the industry plays in worldwide emissions. Whilst responsible production and consumption should be the way forward for all those in the Graphic Communications Value Chain, we should be aware that print & paper comprises only 1.1% of the Worlds Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

Is digital marketing is the answer to an impact free campaign?

Spam Has The Carbon Footprint of Estonia!

According to a new infographic by Antonio Lupetti for Woork Up, spam produces more than 20 million tons of CO2 a year. Spam, and all emails and websites for that matter, are run by servers that take electricity to produce, and electricity usually entails lots and lots of coal.

So the key word here is efficiency. By improving the efficiency of your marketing campaign you will be able to drastically reduce the environmental impact of your campaign.

Here are some simple pointers for better efficiency:

1. What works?

If you know your customers, you'll know what works well and what doesn't so focus your efforts and don't waste time and resources on the things you feel should be done. E.g. launch events that are always poorly attended.

2. Waste not, want not

Marketing's reputation for waste is, on some levels justified. Fluffy gnomes, throwaway pens, promotional carrier bags, 'goody bags' extravagant hospitality.... If you must use promotional items, choose things people will actually find useful. Disposable items are false economy –as your brand message gets disposed of with the item!

3. Smart briefing

No marketer is an island so brief all parties involved in the campaign that they need to be asking questions about the sustainability impacts of each element of the campaign.

4. Good printing

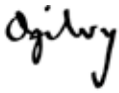
You don't need to rule out printed collateral as part of your campaigns. Paper, if sourced from well managed forests is a sustainable industry. Task your designer and printer with minimising the impacts of any printed items, specify a recycled/part recycled FSC or PEFC certified stock.

5. Location, location, location

Before booking promotional photo shoots or events overseas, consider whether doing so will force people to fly to the destination or whether alternatives can be considered e.g. train or substitute travel Or alternative, local destinations.

6. Plan ahead to save miles

Our 'want it yesterday' culture often puts additional pressure on resources; the last minute products air-freighted in, the rush job on printing that means it needs to be couriered across the country. You'll never avoid these situations completely, but planning an activity in good time can often minimise the environmental impacts – not to mention save your valuable budget.



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7. Share the knowledge

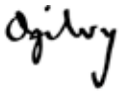
Finally, if you've found a novel way of minimising the impacts of your campaign, then share it with marketing colleagues and others.

And if you want to take things further, here are some thought starters on what you could do to take things to the next level...

Mailing Vert is a direct mailing service that goes beyond the use of recycled paper. Partners in Mailing Vert adhere to a charter including four principles: to protect the environment by purifying all waste water and using vegetable-based inks, solvents and cleaning agents; to preserve raw materials and protect natural resources through the use of paper that's either recycled or derived from sustainably managed forests; to track waste and minimize energy consumption by optimising transportation networks; and to measure and offset the ecological impact of each phase of the direct-mailing process.

Dutch creative agency Spranq has developed a new font called Ecofont that's specifically designed to extend the life of ink cartridges and toner by using 20 percent less ink than traditional fonts. The free, downloadable font is available for Windows, Mac OSX and Linux, and works best at a 9- or 10-point size.

Toyota unveiled the latest version of their Prius hybrid at the 2009 Detroit auto show. The launch was accompanied with flyers embedded with a variety of seeds and the slogan "Good ideas grow. Literally."



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E) THE LAUNCH OF YOUR SUSTAINABLE OFFER

In this world of perpetual beta, it is increasingly true that the launch of a campaign is just the beginning of a conversation with the world, and nowhere more so than in the case of sustainability.

How you go out into the world, your attitude, your openness and ability to listen and respond—your brand's behavior—all affect perceptions of your authenticity. And because nothing signals greenwash more strongly to a cynical audience than the impression that a green campaign is viewed by its authors as just a box-checking exercise, long-term commitment is a must.

Ei) Play devil's advocate

Before the launch, put on your cynics' hat and evaluate your campaign from the point of view of a committed environmentalist. What would they say about your product and its impacts or claimed green credentials? Your method of distribution?

Your promotional tactics? Be honest and then, be willing to change anything that doesn't reflect your brand values or your commitment to sustainability. Testing the concept or campaign with opinion formers before launch may also be helpful.

Eii) Become a First Responder

Do it by: Being prepared to act fast in the face of criticism and collaborate with decriers on solutions before deep reputational damage is done. View critics, influencers and consumers as allies who can help in the constant improvement of your story. Start with your employees—what do you need them to know and feel in response to the criticism? Do they need to do something different in the future? If so, tell them what to do, how to do it and why it's important.

Do it with: Speed and a collaborative open-source spirit, plus a ban on being defensive.

Do it because: Mistakes that are rectified are (usually) forgiven.

Eiii) Commit for the Long Term

Do it by: Taking a "for better or worse" vow to sustainability.

There's no such thing as "one and done" when it comes to improving the impact of your business and offer; nothing screams "opportunistic tactic" more clearly. So fully commit—from the C-suite to the graveyard shift.

Act responsibly. Know and feel good about what you're doing.

And then feed the pipeline with a steady stream of new news.

(Good thing there's no dearth of things to do.)

Do it with: Divine Discontent (David Ogilvy's creed).

Do it because: Resting on laurels is not nearly as much fun as earning them—and then earning them again.

Eiv) Get others talking

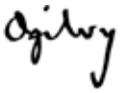
Do it by: including social media in your marketing strategy.

Whilst we still see the value of bought media, there is also great value in owned environments and in earning media space by leveraging your positive actions and engaging in open and reciprocal conversations online.

How about adding a word of mouth strategy to your marketing plan? With a targeted strategy you could establish credible dialogue with your consumers and ignite positive word of mouth. Promoting your brand within influential online communities is a great way to have a two-way dialogue and integrate precious consumer and stakeholder feedback.

Do it with: Open-mindedness. It's about being part of the conversation, not owning it.

Do it because: the best stories are the ones that other people tell about you.



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4. Conclusions

We feel compelled to close by cautioning that successful sustainability marketing is truly a labour of love. We have helped many clients develop sustainability strategies and we know how hard it can be to drive this kind of change through an organisation.

It doesn't necessarily conform to the existing processes and silos; it certainly requires a long look at the new business cases; and it demands dogged determination to move beyond the status quo. This you must embrace to get beyond greenwash and on to great marketing.

But if you've read this guide and you're still up for the most challenging, exhilarating, rewarding project of your career, welcome aboard! Merging great sustainability efforts with great marketing can be done; and when it is done well, it can lead to groundbreaking work, a galvanized workforce, grateful consumers and gangbuster sales.

Good-bye greenwash. Welcome to marketing in the Age of Sustainability. Carving new ground is rarely comfortable and never easy, but you are not alone.

Hallmarks of a leader in marketing —
want to know how you're doing?

We've put together a short check-list of boxes that we hope you will be able to tick the majority of these the next time you pick up this guide.

All my marketing activities promote and enable sustainable tourism choices by my customers.

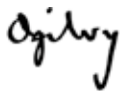
My brand(s) incorporate a promise that includes sustainability, which may even be a key component of my brand and corporate identity.

I am able to provide hard facts and verifiable evidence in support of all the products and services that I have promoted as sustainable.

There is an active and honest dialogue between my staff and customers on sustainability issues, coupled with an understanding of how sustainability issues relate to different packages and destinations.

The relationships between sustainability, brand and reputation have been explicitly recognised and, in some cases, quantified.

Thanks to my marketing strategy, I have contributed to creating more sustainable behaviours among customers.



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APPENDIX

Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism August 2002:

Responsible Tourism characteristics:

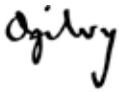
- Minimises negative economic, environmental, and social impacts;
- Generates greater economic benefits for local people and enhances the well-being of host communities, improves working conditions and access to the industry;
- Involves local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances;
- Makes positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, to the maintenance of the world's diversity;
- Provides more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues;
- Provides access for physically challenged people; and
- Is culturally sensitive, engenders respect between tourists and hosts, and builds local pride and confidence

Guiding Principles for Economic Responsibility

- Assess economic impacts before developing tourism and exercise preference for those forms of development that benefit local communities and minimise negative impacts on local livelihoods (for example through loss of access to resources), recognising that tourism may not always be the most appropriate form of local economic development
- Maximise local economic benefits by increasing linkages and reducing leakages, by ensuring that communities are involved in, and benefit from, tourism. Wherever possible use tourism to assist in poverty reduction by adopting pro-poor strategies
- Develop quality products that reflect, complement, and enhance the destination
- Market tourism in ways which reflect the natural, cultural and social integrity of the destination, and which encourage appropriate forms of tourism
- Adopt equitable business practises, pay and charge fair prices, and build partnerships in ways in which risk is minimised and shared, and recruit and employ staff recognising international labour standards
- Provide appropriate and sufficient support to small, medium and micro enterprises to ensure tourism-related enterprises thrive and are sustainable

Guiding Principles for Social Responsibility

- Actively involve the local community in planning and decision-making and provide capacity building to make this a reality
- Assess social impacts throughout the life cycle of the operation – including the planning and design phases of projects - in order to minimise negative impacts and maximise positive ones
- Endeavour to make tourism an inclusive social experience and to ensure that there is access for all, in particular vulnerable and disadvantaged communities and individuals
- Combat the sexual exploitation of human beings, particularly the exploitation of children
- Be sensitive to the host culture, maintaining and encouraging social and cultural diversity
- Endeavour to ensure that tourism contributes to improvements in health and education



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Guiding Principles for Environmental Responsibility

- Assess environmental impacts throughout the life cycle of tourist establishments and operations – including the planning and design phase - and ensure that negative impacts are reduced to the minimum and maximising positive ones
- Use resources sustainably, and reduce waste and over-consumption
- Manage natural diversity sustainably, and where appropriate restore it; and consider the volume and type of tourism that the environment can support, and respect the integrity of vulnerable ecosystems and protected areas
- Promote education and awareness for sustainable development – for all stakeholders
- Raise the capacity of all stakeholders and ensure that best practice is followed, for this purpose consult with environmental and conservation experts