

Trade Show Executive's

# Going Green

GUIDEBOOK



## what **Recession?**

Going Green is Going Strong  
Despite the Economy

The recession had the potential to cause the Green movement to wilt, but instead, green is hotter than ever and remains on track to even higher acceptance.

BY HIL ANDERSON, *senior editor*



# Trade Show Executive's Going Green

## ATLANTIC CITY CONVENTION CENTER

Atlantic City, New Jersey  
[www.atlanticcitynj.com](http://www.atlanticcitynj.com)



### Green Initiatives

The Atlantic City Convention Center was a green building from its inception, and has increased its green initiatives ever since. With a skylight covering the length of the building, it was constructed at an angle to track the sun all day, taking full advantage of the light. Today, the rest of the roof is completely covered with one of the largest single-roof solar systems in the country, which provided 28 percent of the facility's energy in its first year of operation.

But the Atlantic City Convention Center's green story doesn't end there.

Energy use has also been reduced through lighting retrofits, new door and air curtain installations, replacement of older video systems with LED video displays, and large fans to circulate the heat and air more efficiently.

Recycling efforts go far beyond the standard paper, cardboard, glass and plastic consumer items. Several tons of shrink wrap from packaging and boat wrap from a boat show have been recycled, along with more than 47,000 pounds of carpet, more than 2,000 pounds of wooden pallets, some 5,500 pounds of electrical equipment, recyclable cartridges from soap dispensers, computer equipment, lamps, ballasts, batteries and excess building materials.

In a unique partnership, landscaping materials from a large trade show were reused as landscaping improvements at the Convention Center, and in citywide beautification projects.

Green products are used throughout the Atlantic City Convention Center's offices and public areas, and the food service utilizes local and organic produce whenever possible.

Getting to Atlantic City and getting around can be green, too. The Atlantic City Rail Line, with daily service from Philadelphia's 30th Street Station and seasonal weekend service from New York's Penn Station is located at the Convention Center, and the city's convenient 13-passenger jitney buses run on natural gas.

According to Gary Musich, vice president of the Atlantic City Convention & Visitors Authority, "We're proud of our record of going green while at the same time providing top-quality service and keeping the comfort of our guests in mind."

### Sustainability Checklist:

- Building Certification
  - LEED – certified, silver, gold, platinum
  - BOMA – air quality
- Energy Star
- Catering
- Energy Management
- Environmentally Approved Products
- Indoor Air Quality
- Operations Management
- Transportation
- Waste Management
- Water Efficiency



# Going Green

## GUIDEBOOK

Exhibitors continue to be demanding when it comes to ROI and scrutinizing their services bill. And during this rough patch in the economy, it would not be unreasonable to assume eco-friendly products and services, with their premium prices, would be among the first things sacrificed by trade show organizers and exhibitors.

But "Going Green" did not fade away. The movement gained even more momentum as cities, facilities and vendors continued to take small steps and big steps to help out Mother Nature and appeal to

associations and independent show organizers that have made sustainability part of their culture. And for convention centers in particular, Going Green can reduce operating costs.

"Meeting planners and trade show organizers are planning green meetings and want their convention center partners to be environmentally responsible too," said David Osterhout, director of operations at the George R. Brown (GRB) Convention Center in Houston.

The GRB this Summer joined the

growing ranks of convention centers with LEED certification. In this case, the GRB earned a "LEED Silver for Existing Buildings" certification, which generally means time and money devoted to planning, training and renovations across the wide range of requirements.

Although politicians sometimes see environmental regulations as a drag on business, LEED certification was seen as a positive investment, even in an oil-centric city like Houston.

"From a competitive standpoint, earning LEED certification was an important move for us," said Luther Villagomez, general manager of GRB. "Becoming more energy efficient is a prudent bottom-line action step. Our clients will be happy and the environment is better for it."

Late last year, the Pasadena Convention Center had its LEED ticket stamped in the form of Gold certification, making it one of only three Gold convention centers in the nation. As was the case in Houston, the Californians gained a prestigious marketing tool. "It is an enticement for our clients," said Michael Ross, CEO of Pasadena Center Operating Company. "They know they are hosting events in a facility that is actively protecting our precious resources."

The Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre reduced its carbon footprint by 14% between 2007 and 2009 by measures such as variable frequency drives on escalators and automatic-operated faucets.



The Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

### Worldwide Trend

Pasadena, Houston and a host of other cities have been greening up their convention infrastructure for more than a few years. And the trend is not limited to our nation. Developers have been following LEED guidelines in the construction of convention centers and hotels around the world.

The Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) this Summer was saluted as the organization with the "Highest Amount of Carbon Footprint Reduction" among the 103 organizers receiving the Carbon Less Certificate. The HKCEC reduced its carbon footprint by 14% between 2007 and 2009 by measures such as variable frequency drives on escalators, automatic-operated faucets and strict control of a lights on/off policy.



# Trade Show Executive's GoingGreen

## PASADENA CONVENTION CENTER

Pasadena, California  
[www.PasadenaCenter.com](http://www.PasadenaCenter.com)



### Green Initiatives

Because of its commitment to sustainability, the expanded Pasadena Convention Center has been awarded LEED® Gold Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, making it one of the greenest convention centers in North America.

The Pasadena Convention Center features a state-of-the-art 55,000-square-foot exhibit hall (expandable to 80,000 square feet), 25,000-square-foot ballroom, 29 meeting rooms, 25,000 square feet of pre-function space, and the renowned 3,000-seat Pasadena Civic Auditorium.

During construction of the \$150 million facility, 85 percent of the construction waste was recycled, while 44 percent of the building materials were locally manufactured.

The facility has been designed to perform 32 percent better than California's energy efficiency standards. This is done by using automated, high-efficiency lighting and equipment, including LED technology. Cool roofs and the use of light-colored paving reflect the sun's heat instead of soaking it into the buildings. A new energy-efficient central plant installed on site ensures the larger facility doesn't increase demand on Pasadena's electrical grid.

Water-conserving restroom fixtures reduce water consumption by 37 percent. The landscaping features drought-resistant native plants, and storm water run-off is used for irrigation. An aggressive recycling program manages show and operational waste to reduce the impact on landfills, save energy and reduce pollution.

The Pasadena Convention Center encourages responsible commuting. The facility is just one-half mile from the Gold Line commuter rail station and within walking distance of three bus stops. Incentives are offered for employees using public transportation. Preferred parking is available for employee carpools and vanpools.

Located 11 miles from downtown Los Angeles, the Pasadena Convention Center is within walking distance of 1,200 hotels rooms and Old Pasadena's 200 shops, restaurants and clubs. The city offers 2,000 guestrooms, 500 restaurants, golf, theatre, gardens, and museums with treasures such as an original Gutenberg Bible and masterpieces by Van Gogh, Rembrandt and Picasso.

### Sustainability Checklist:

- Building Certification
  - LEED – certified, silver, gold, platinum
  - BOMA – air quality
  - Energy Star
- Catering
- Energy Management
- Environmentally Approved Products
- Indoor Air Quality
- Operations Management
- Transportation
- Waste Management
- Water Efficiency



## Solar Pioneer

*Atlantic City, NJ* – The Atlantic City Convention Center was among the pioneers in bringing solar energy to the trade show industry.

When it was announced in 2008 that a solar array would be built on the roof of the center, it was predicted to produce enough power to satisfy 26% of the building's needs. But after three years of operation, the percentage has increased to 30%.

The percentage could go up further in the near future as the center carries out upgrades to lighting and the steam and hot water systems. There are also plans in the works for a wind turbine at the center that provide another 16% of the building's power.

The 2.37-megawatt array was the largest single solar array in the U.S. at the time it was installed by Pepco Energy Services. It consists of 13,486



“We had projected production of 26% of our electricity, based on an average year,” said Jeff Vasser, president of the Atlantic City Convention & Visitors Authority (ACCVA), which owns the center. “For the array to produce 30% percent, even in years when we had a high number of cloudy and rainy days, is outstanding.”

mono crystalline panels and covers 290,000 square feet, or about two thirds of the center's roof.

The ACCVA estimates solar power will cut the convention center's electric bill by \$4.4 million over the course of its 20-year power purchase agreement with Pepco.

The Hong Kong Award for Environmental Excellence was a local award, but its conservation efforts were impressive and will be noticed by organizers around the world. “We have had a green committee in place since 2007 to formulate environmental measures for the HKCEC,” said Monica Lee-Müller, deputy managing director of HKCEC (Management) Ltd. “With more than 1,000 events held at HKCEC annually, our long-term goal is to mobilize show organizers, exhibitors and visitors to join our carbon-reduction programs.”

## New Ideas

When the Going Green movement began, it was up to individual entities to find ways to chip away at their environmental impact and come up with the right solutions for their buildings, events and products.

As the years passed, ideas were exchanged and new techniques and products became standard features. It would be difficult in 2011 to find, for example, a trade show without a paper-saving digital program, a convention center without LED lighting, or a hotel that replaces each towel daily without giving their guests the option of using them one more day.

The next few years will see a new generation of ideas, some of which are

“ Meeting planners and trade show organizers are planning green meetings and want their convention center partners to be environmentally responsible too. ”

**David Osterhout**

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS,  
GRB CONVENTION CENTER IN HOUSTON.



# Trade Show Executive's Going Green

## FRONTIER AIRLINES CENTER

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

[www.frontierairlinescenter.com](http://www.frontierairlinescenter.com)



### Green Initiatives

The Wisconsin Center District, which owns and operates the Frontier Airlines Center, the U.S. Cellular Arena, and the Milwaukee Theatre, has undertaken a series of initiatives to conserve energy, expand recycling and reduce waste in its ongoing efforts to be a “greener” organization.

“Aside from the clear environmental benefits, these changes are critical to the continued success of our venues, and we chose to invest in greener infrastructure,” said Wisconsin Center District President and CEO Richard Geyer. “This is just the beginning of our efforts. We will continue to look for new and inventive ways to save money, conserve energy, serve our customers and protect the environment in our community.”

Among the changes at the Wisconsin Center District are:

- All-new, efficient HVA C system with recalibrated controls to reduce energy usage by 10 to 15 percent, including set point sensors reset to 68-72 degrees;
- Motion sensor lighting controls installed in restrooms and elevators, reducing electricity usage by 35 to 60 percent;
- Ongoing fixture replacement to utilize high-pressure sodium, compact fluorescent, LED and other highefficiency light sources;
- “Low Flow” restroom fixtures, including motion sensors and automatic shutoffs;
- High-Recycled content and fully-recyclable disposable food service items;
- Comprehensive, single-stream waste recycling under development in cooperation with Levy Restaurants and Waste Management, Inc.

“We are proud to join the trend of going green to lessen our environmental impact and carbon footprint in Milwaukee,” said Frank Gimbel, Wisconsin Center District Board Chairman. “We encourage other Milwaukee-area businesses to go green and commit to making a real difference.”

The District will pursue “green” certification once equipment is acquired and single-stream solid waste recycling is fully implemented.

### Sustainability Checklist:

- Building Certification
  - LEED – certified, silver, gold, platinum
  - BOMA – air quality
  - Energy Star
- Catering
- Energy Management
- Environmentally Approved Products
- Indoor Air Quality
- Operations Management
- Transportation
- Waste Management
- Water Efficiency



## Steps to Take for a Greener Meeting

The APEX standards will provide trade show organizers with a universally accepted platform for ensuring that their events are as green as they can make them. But the industry has already blazed the trail and established some practical steps that can be taken.

### #1 Get it in Writing

Inserting green goals into a formal contract puts organizers and vendors on the same path. It has the added benefit of putting your team on notice that "Going Green" is not just a concept, it is part of the business plan for the event. Measure performance, such as how much waste was recycled and how much electricity was used. Such measurements provide a benchmark for future shows.

### #2 Reduce paper consumption

Placing as much material as possible into digital format pays off in several ways. It cuts down on waste and also reduces printing costs. When you must use print copies, specify recycled paper whenever possible. Use vegetable-based inks and print on both sides of the paper.

### #3 Make Recycling Work

Before selecting a venue, check to see what material is recycled in that particular city. Alert attendees

that recycling bins are available on the show floor. Clearly mark the containers and make sure the cleaning crews follow recycling collection procedures. Look for name badges and lanyards made from recycled or biodegradable materials.

### #4 Take Care of the Leftovers

Scout out soup kitchens and other charities in the venue city that can pick up and safely transport large volumes of leftover food. A lot of food waste can be shipped off to a commercial composter, if one is available in the area.

### #5 Water Worries

Eliminating bottled water in favor of old-fashioned pitchers and glasses cuts down on throw-away plastic and also conserves water in cities where supplies can be tight.

### #6 In the Restroom

Convention centers should use organic fair-trade soaps, recycled paper products and low-flow faucets and toilets.

### #7 HVAC Coordination

Most convention centers and hotels have become adept at turning off lights and air-conditioning in unoccupied rooms. That trims power consumption and utility costs.

already coming on line. This Spring, SMG installed the ORCA Green Machine at the Tulsa Convention Center. The ORCA is a device that composts leftover food onsite without requiring a truck to haul it to a facility outside of town.

In Portland, the management of the Oregon Convention Center (OCC) replaced its in-house Starbucks stands with the Portland Roasting brand effective August 1. The move was more than just bringing in a hometown company. "Offering Portland Roasting allows us to improve the coffee-drinking experience for our clients while adding to our long list of green operations," said General Manager Jeff Blosser. The company is located just a few blocks from the OCC, which allows its delivery people to haul their biodegradable sacks of coffee beans to the center on bicycles. And if they need a vehicle to keep up with demand on busy days, the company has an electric Nissan Leaf at its disposal.

### APEX Standards Almost in Sight

With ideas and efforts coming from all corners and covering everything from rooftop gardens and solar arrays to paperless invitations, it is small wonder that putting together a list of best practices for show organizers is still a work in progress.

But progress is being made. The Convention Industry Council (CIC) announced this Summer that the APEX-led program to develop standards for sustainable meetings was nearing the finish line.

Eight of the nine separate draft standards were complete as of June and had passed their initial review. "We know there is a lot of anticipation within the industry," said Karen Kotowski, CEO of the CIC. "The process has been a long one due to the overwhelming interest and we are right now at the finish line."

The standards have in the works since 2008, and with the continued high level of interest in the greening of the trade show industry, it will probably not be the last word on the topic. **TSE**



# Green Your Show

Let **United** show you how to reduce overall show costs while making the environment just a little bit better, and letting your attendees know that your show is ECO-friendly.

**Find out how United can Green your show and reduce your costs**



Richard A. Simon  
President & CEO



Vicki Rosen  
VP of Operations,  
Maintenance



Buddy Linn  
VP, General  
Manager



Raymond Santos  
VP of Operations,  
National

Call (312) 922-8558  
or visit [www.unitedhq.com](http://www.unitedhq.com)

**UnitedService**<sup>™</sup>  
Companies

United National Maintenance, Inc. • United Maintenance Company, Inc.  
United Temps, Inc. • United Security Service • U.S. Aviation Services

*#1 in Cleaning and Maintenance Services for Trade Shows*