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Latest eco-friendly practices in hotel industry

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Abstract

Hotels have turned towards the concept of green hotel in the view of guest as they experience an increased awareness of environmental damage and excessive uses of goods, energy, and water. Due to this the environmental practices are being followed which includes various recycle, reusable, products are in use. The green hotels aimed to save resources, reduce pollution & operating cost and various other systems like introduction of HVAC, introducing low flow shower heads, etc.

Keywords: Composting, green washing, sustainability, ecofriendly, HVAC

Introduction

Hotels all over the world are implementing green initiatives such as smart showers, solar power installations, and waste diversion. However, what is right for one hotel may not be right - or even achievable - for another. Sustainable hotels are those that use best green practices in maintenance, services, logistics, products, and supplies to significantly reduce their environmental impact. The main components are waste reduction, energy conservation, and water conservation. There are numerous steps a hotel can take to become more sustainable. Some are major capital expenditures, such as replacing the HVAC (Heating, ventilation & air conditioning) system; others are simple to implement and even inexpensive.

Methods utilized

The method utilized is qualitative & information noted from the hotels using various recent trends & various other new developmental approaches through which the hotel can be benefitted. Few questionnaires were also circulated to analyze the requirement.

Why should hotels go green?

Hotels that go green cause less environmental damage, lower costs, and gain goodwill from guests.

In the business world, sustainability is critical to achieving growth and satisfying customers. Consumers are increasingly seeking out green businesses and willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products and services. One-third of consumers prefer environmentally friendly brands, and the travel industry is taking notice. TripAdvisor, for example, has created its Green Leaders Program to highlight hotels with environmentally friendly best practices to conscientious travelers, such as hotels going green with LEED certification (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design).

Hotels can also expect to save a significant amount of money by going green. Moving toward sustainability entails lowering your energy and water consumption, as well as staffing for maintenance and guest services.

Various eco-friendly practices used by the Hotels

Creating a green team

To take the lead in promoting eco-friendly best practices in their field, invite interested employees from each department to join a "green team." This increases their sense of commitment to long-term adoption of green strategies among these employees. Remember to thank them for their efforts by giving them a little stipend, hosting a special luncheon, or giving them gift cards.

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Targeting low-hanging fruit to start

Various hotel or hotel group most likely already has eco-friendly programs in place, but there is almost always room for improvement. Consider the following suggestions:

- Reducing the use of plastic water bottles by providing reusable branded bottles to hotel reward program members.
- Installing a water-bottle refill station in the lobby.
- Adding more towel racks to bathrooms to make it easier for guests to reuse towels.
- Making recycling options visible by posting a sign encouraging reuse. Replacing worn recycling symbols on outdated bins, and place bins near elevator banks where guests will see them frequently.

Creating the hiring and training process green

Reducing the usage of fossil fuels by conducting early interviews over the phone rather than by inviting prospects to drop by, and for in-person meetings, utilize Skype or Facetime. Instead of printing out extensive employee handbooks or hiring papers, provide new hires links to electronic versions of the paperwork or offer computer access on-site for individuals without personal computers. Direct new applicants to online job boards rather than asking for printed copies of their resumes. Additionally, be sure to emphasize your hotel's sustainability initiatives in hiring materials so that all new hires will know that it is a top focus in everyday operations.

Emphasis on efficiency

When it comes to a green corporate culture, this is the name of the game. Remote check-in/check-out and keyless entry services reduce lost plastic key cards, paper usage, and can even help reduce overstaffing — and the additional carbon emissions it causes.

Upgrading your transportation offerings and services with sustainability in mind.

Including charging outlets for electric and hybrid cars for visitors. To promote environmentally friendly mobility, think about renting e-Bikes and e-Scooters (be sure to provide helmets for guests). Reducing the number of low-occupancy automobile trips to and from your hotel by offering group shuttles (in hybrid or electric vehicles) to transit hubs.

Automate conservation

Guest room sustainability efforts have progressed beyond cards reminding guests to reuse towels, turn off the air conditioner, and turn off the lights on their way out. Many hotels today use technology to eliminate the guesswork:

- Smart showers limit the length of showers to a pre-set time, alerting users when their time is up.
- Room sensors detect light levels automatically, increasing and decreasing bulb brightness.
- Thermostats with occupancy sensors adjust heating and air conditioning temperatures. These same room amenities can be linked to apps using Internet of Things (IoT) technology, allowing guests to change settings remotely.

Furnishing rooms sustainably

In addition to smart technology, choosing natural fiber sheets and furniture made of sustainable materials when

furnishing guest rooms. Instead of plasticware, paper, or styrofoam, stock the room with reusable coffee mugs and glasses. Providing natural and organic free-trade soaps and shampoos from certified green manufacturers in biodegradable packaging in the bathroom.

Reducing waste during events

Reducing the number of trash cans at your event venue while increasing the number of recycling options to encourage attendees to dispose of their waste responsibly. Making recycling simple for guests by clearly labelling and positioning recyclable containers for paper, aluminium cans, and plastic bottles.

Incorporating reusable dishes, silverware, glasses and mugs. This reduces facility's use of straws, plastic serving ware, and paper plates. It also save money on supplies and waste management (the less your hotel throws out, the lower the cost for trash hauling). To further reduce waste, replace single servings of cereal, yoghurt, and jam at breakfast bar with glass containers.

Shop local

Using local growers and food providers. It's a great way to support local farmers while also lowering carbon emissions caused by trucking in food from afar. Menu items should include sustainable options, such as vegetarian and vegan options that use fewer resources to produce than meat.

Compost and donate food from kitchen

Establishing composting processes can help to support sustainable gardening practices. Unused or leftover food can also be donated to local and national food banks and programs such as America's Second Harvest.

Stocking-up with sustainable items

Considering green certified businesses when deciding which products to sell or which manufacturers to use for branded apparel and gifts. Investigate ethical clothing brands, fair trade accessories, and even ethical travel equipment.

Operate with efficiency

In terms of hotel gift shop operations, monitoring occupancy levels at your hotel will assist in properly staffing the shop, reducing staff transportation emissions. Sensor lights can dim and brighten automatically at various times of day, and sensor thermostats can keep the shop comfortable.

Sensors on doors can brighten interiors when opened in display cases, and there are environmentally friendly point of sale systems that use less electricity and paper for receipts.

And replacing plastic bags with compostable or reusable bags that can be returned to the desk or placed in drop boxes.

Cut down on runoff

When it comes to the environment, excess water from storms, irrigation, and snow that does not evaporate or absorb into groundwater is a silent assassin. It's particularly difficult on hotel grounds, which have a lot of asphalt parking and concrete outdoor patios. To counteract this, plant a rain garden and water detention ponds to collect drainage, as well as use pervious pavement whenever possible.

Water wisely

With timed watering, smart irrigation systems can reduce unnecessary water use. It can also reduce overall water requirements by replacing grass with drought-resistant native plants and ground cover. This modification also decreases the need for pesticides and fertilizers.

Installing a worm composting bin

There are numerous advantages to converting organic material into nutrient-rich soil and fertilizer:

- Reducing the amount of trash hauled away to landfills
- Keeping pests away from trash (less trash, less pests)
- Promoting healthy organic growing in hotel kitchen operations
- Reducing plant diseases/require less pesticides
- Helping soil drain properly to help cut down on runoff (since the worms break down the vegetation faster)

It is not required to hide the composting bin; knowledgeable guests will notice and appreciate the effort.

Keeping things shady

It may seem obvious but keeping the sun off the hotel's walls and windows can help save money on energy. Plant trees or build awnings and overhangs — these are low-cost projects with long payback periods.

Automating water and energy conservation

To save water, install aerators in bathroom sinks and replace standard toilets with low flow or dual flush models. Replacing traditional lighting with energy-saving lighting that has sensors to turn on and off, as well as brighten and dim.

Investing in green infrastructure

Hoteliers interested in long-term sustainability can purchase high-priced items.

- Solar panel installations
- Energy-efficient heating and cooling systems
- Geothermal cooling towers
- Water recovery and recycling systems

Carry out operations a check-up

Conducting a regular audit of equipment to ensure that it is using the appropriate amount of power — both when in use and when in standby mode. Audit will evaluate current energy consumption, identify energy-saving opportunities, and assist in calculating potential short- and long-term savings.

Keeping an eye on systems

Monitoring sensors are available for most types of hotel equipment, including HVAC systems, furnaces, and generators. These user-friendly systems include wireless reporting systems for predictive maintenance. Even if we do not invest in electronic monitoring, can track every system in facility through an ongoing program involving multiple levels of hotel staff, led by maintenance, to analyze energy waste over time and create improvement plans.

Dumping the plastic water bottles

Plastic water bottles are among the most environmentally damaging products on the planet, taking up a lot of space and frequently getting mixed in with garbage during

disposal. It is simple to transition guests and event attendees away from bottled water and toward filtered water dispensers, refillable bottles, and water pitchers.

Compost whenever possible

It is realized that composting is an important sustainability practice by now. Every year, one-third of the food produced for human consumption in the world is lost or wasted. Training employees to separate compostable waste for easier pickup.

Green decisions

As much as possible, choosing biodegradable, non-toxic products in environmentally friendly packaging. A sustainable purchasing policy is relatively simple to implement and should include items such as:

- Paint
- Office supplies, such as writing pads and pens
- Light bulbs
- Cleaning supplies, disinfectants, and adhesives
- Paper goods

Shop for certified green appliances

Consider replacing current range of appliances with energy-efficient models like ice makers, commercial fryers and griddles, ovens, dishwashers, freezers, and refrigerators. Paying particular attention to outdated washing machines; they should be replaced as soon as possible with more energy- and water-efficient versions.

Steps to Improve Sustainability

- Consumers that care about the environment are big fans of social media. To spread the word about hotel's sustainability efforts among target consumers, use hashtags like #zerowaste and #sustainablebusiness to connect with a variety of social groups.
- To appear higher in Google search results, including hotel's sustainability business practices into search engine optimization (SEO) marketing activities. Discovering out in advance which keywords are popular among visitors looking for eco-friendly hotels, ecotourism, sustainable housing, and ecotels.
- Collaborating with groups dedicated to green business. Numerous of them, including the Green Hotels Association, include certification programs as well as powerful marketing and publicity tools to help get noticed.
- Another essential method for disseminating message is email marketing. The target audience is extremely passionate about sustainability; 88 percent of consumers want companies to assist them in making a difference, which is encouraging for greater email open rates and conversions.

Avoidance of Greenwashing

When sharing sustainability stories, the hospitality industry should be wary of greenwashing, as environmentally conscious consumers react negatively to this practice. According to research, nearly 80% of hotel guests value sustainable practices when deciding where to stay; however, a majority are willing to avoid returning to — and even boycott — a hotel that engages in greenwashing. Examples of common greenwashing include:

- **Over-exaggerating:** Implementing only one or two sustainability initiatives, hotel is not green; rather, it is a hotel with one or two sustainability initiatives.
- **Ambiguity:** Despite its widespread use, the term "eco-friendly" lacks a standardized definition. The public understands this and expects evidence to support use of green terminology.
- **Using faux-green products:** When purchasing sustainable room soaps, cleaning products, and organic foods, make sure to research the provider's reputation to ensure they are legitimate and not just using self-declared "certified" or "100% organic" without proof.
- **Excessive use of "green" imagery:** Excessive use of unjustified green branding, such as photos of animals and flora, is a sure way to turn people off.
- **Excessive data:** Avoid overloading guests with information or overly technical terms when discussing sustainability efforts. Making things too complicated will not attract attention and may even frustrate guests.

Conclusion

As more hotels strive to incorporate sustainable principles into their meetings, events, and guest services, many of today's eco-friendly innovations are becoming standard amenities. The key to increasing your bottom line is to develop green best practices now to meet these expectations. It will also reduce the risk of losing customers to hotels that have extensive sustainability programs. The various innovation would help in sustaining the environment and reduce pollution, wastage of energy and provide other benefits to safeguard the environment.

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