



The Institute of Outdoor Theatre

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Sustainable Practices in Outdoor Theatre

During the spring semester of 2012, graduate student Scott Gray worked with the Institute of Outdoor Theatre and the Center for Sustainable Tourism at East Carolina University to develop a basic set of recommendations for how our member theatres might identify the advantages to be gained by adopting sustainable practices. His report follows.

Top Ten List for a Sustainable IOD
Executive Summary

- 1. Create and Implement a Staff Green Initiative***
- 2. Switching to LED lights***
- 3. Conciseness of State and Federal Grants***
- 4. Recycling Programs***
- 5. Green Friendly Facilities***
- 6. Green Visitors***
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- 8. Vision of Where You Are/ Where You Want to Be***
- 9. Alternative Energy***
- 10. Waste Management***

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Create and Implement a Staff Green Initiative

The first step in any green takeover for a business is getting every single person involved. By establishing a Staff Green Initiative, the company is making a statement that says we are ready for a change, and we are all in this together as a unified front. Examples of Staff Green Initiatives are:

- No Plastic Water Bottles
- Car Pooling
- Minimizing Carbon Footprint
- Active Recycling
- No Disposable Coffee Cups

These are just a couple examples of many green initiatives that the IOD members can adopt to ensure the work place is indeed a green one. Also, ensuring that your visitors have a great time, while maintaining a green visit, you can use the United States Travel Care Code:

10 WAYS TO CARE:



1. **Learn About Your Destination** — Enjoy a rewarding experience by learning more about the natural environment, culture and history that makes every destination unique.



2. **Don't Leave Your Good Habits at Home** — While traveling, continue to recycle, use water wisely, and turn off lights as you would at home.



3. **Be a Fuel-efficient Traveler** — book direct flights, rent smaller cars and keep your own vehicle operating at maximum efficiency. Once in your destination, walk or bike where possible.



4. **Make Informed Decisions** — Seek out destinations or companies that engage in energy efficiency or recycling programs and that take actions to preserve their communities and the natural environment.



5. **Be a Good Guest** — Remember that you are a guest in your destination. Engage with locals but respect their privacy, traditions and local community.



6. **Support Locals** — As a visitor, the money you spend on your trip can help support the local artisans, farmers and business owners whose livelihood depends on tourism.



7. **Dispose of Your Waste Properly** — Leave a beautiful place for others to enjoy – recycle where possible and always dispose of your waste with care.



8. **Protect Your Natural Surroundings** — Be mindful of the plants, animals and ecosystems that you impact. Avoid feeding wildlife, stay on designated trails and strictly follow all fire restrictions.



9. **Make Your Travel Zero Emissions** — As an additional step, consider the option of purchasing carbon credits to fully offset your travel's impact on climate change.

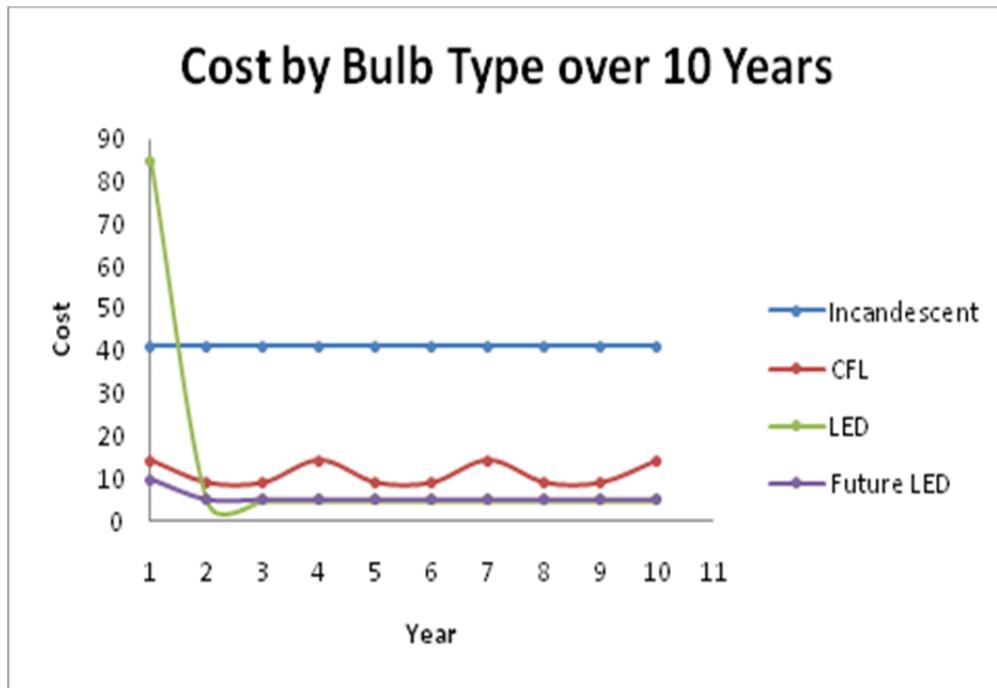


10. **Bring Your Experiences Home** — Continue practicing your sustainable habits at home and encourage friends and family to travel with the same care.

Switching to LED Lights

Utilities are a major issue with any outdoors event. The major issue with any outdoor drama is lighting. It is well known that switching to LED lights, albeit expensive at first, is a major reducer in one's Carbon Footprint. This is when the funds become available to your particular show. It is shown through many studies that show after five years, there will be a return on investment for LED lights with venues as big as The Lost Colony and Unto These Hills. With smaller venues it takes

a bit more time, exponentially. Here is a chart made by Jeffery B. Allen from his article, *LED lighting 101: You've heard about it, so what is it?* on Examiner.com , displaying the costs of regular bulbs all the way down to LED lights:



This is only a small facet of what switching to LED lights will do for your budget over time. It also dramatically drops your utility bill over time.

Consciousness of State and Federal Grants

Being aware of the resources that are available is a very important facet to running any successful business. There are many tax breaks and grants available to business that are “green” or “sustainable,” in every state. Tapping into these resources not only help the cash flow for a business, but also help the community as a whole by being sustainable. Contact your local congressman, or do a little online research and you will be surprised at all of the available resources for simply being a responsible and sustainable business.

Recycling Programs

Ensuring a sustainable company and having a thorough recycling plan goes hand in hand. Making sure that there are recycling receptacles throughout the entire venue allows patrons a way to recycle with ease. Properly labeling these receptacles will also help with your green agenda. This will ensure tax breaks from local and state governments in certain areas.

Green Friendly Facilities

Not only is a green friendly facility good for the environment, it is also a positive marketing campaign that has proven results for other companies. What exactly is a green friendly facility? It is a facility that tries in everyway to be sustainable and go green. For example: low flush toilets, recycled paper/toilet paper, low lighting, recycling programs, proper waste management, a staff green

initiative, and many others. This encompasses all of your sustainable practices that the patrons can see.

Green Visitors

A great way to make sure that all of your visitors have a great time while staying green is the Visitors Care Code that is shown above. Also, by having well labeled recycling receptacles and signs posted to assist patrons in contributing to the green initiative, it will help push progress forward. Making the patrons aware of the IOD's practices will also help them to carry out good practices when they live, which is good for everyone.

Green Concessions

There are many simple ways to make one's concessions stands very sustainable, albeit they are slightly more expensive. Switching from paper to corn based, biodegradable cups are a small but key step to green concessions. If paper is a must, making sure that the cups are already made from recycled products helps. Again, making sure there are well labeled recycling receptacles are available will help ensure green concessions.

Vision of Where You Are/Where You Want To Be

Making a list of your sustainable practices all ready in use, and a list of practices you wish to create and implement is a great starting point in building a new sustainable plan. Half of the battle is getting started, that being said, this is a

great way to get the gears moving. Not every drama will have the same list due to size, funds, location, and many other variables that play an integral role in building such a plan.

Alternative Energy

As we all progress throughout the years, alternative energy is becoming a viable option. If in any way the company can benefit from alternative energy sources such as wind, geo-thermal, and solar, it would be financially viable in any state to do so. These alternative resources, although expensive at first, do indeed show a return within 10 years. Not only will you see long-term returns, government applies short-term tax breaks with every alternative energy source.

Waste Management

Properly disposing of all waste plays an integral role in developing a positive sustainable plan. Not only recycling, but disposing of all waste properly can ensure a green plan. For example, the United States Congress's waste management plan includes disposing of their solid waste by transferring it via a small logistics company to an incinerator which provides energy by turning turbines through heat. This is just one of the many varieties of ways to turn your waste into a positive impact.

Sources

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