



Why Green Meetings? Myths Exposed

by Nancy J. Wilson, CMP and Amy Spatrisano, CMP

Myth: Only "environmental types" are making efforts to go green.

Truth: That would be news to the Fortune 500 hotel chains participating in an environmental benchmark program through The Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum.

Sustainability is also keeping company with mega-retailers like The Home Depot, which is committed to ultimately selling only wood from sustainable forests.

Myth: Going green is much more expensive than conventional meeting practices.

Truth: While a few products and services can be more expensive, the vast majority are actually cost-saving or cost-neutral to implement. For example, just by serving water in pitchers instead of individual plastic water bottles, one conference saved \$25,000.

Myth: Environmental stewardship is all or nothing. Why bother with environmentally friendly practices if you cannot make every aspect of the meeting that way?

Truth: Even just a few practices can make a difference. According to Green Suites International, if just one hotel adopts a linen re-use program, 200 barrels of oil are saved - enough to run a family car for 180,000 miles.

Myth: One conference cannot make that much of a difference.

Truth: It may only be one conference, but the rates of consumption can be staggering. For instance, during a typical five-day conference 2,500 attendees will use 62,500 plates, 87,500 napkins, 75,000 cups or glasses and 90,000 cans or bottles. With green practices put into place, it is easily possible to recycle, compost and donate several tons of food and waste that would normally end up in landfills.

Myth: Conference attendees won't care if the meeting or conference is green.

Truth: By engaging your attendees in practices such as recycling or hotel linen reuse programs, they will feel that the organizers care about more than just making money. Many attendees actively participate in environmentally responsible practices in their private and professional lives. They appreciate being able to make a difference at the events they go to and in the communities they visit.

Myth: Individuals are powerless to change their workplaces and communities.

Truth: The burgeoning green marketplace is filled with success stories of individuals who came up with an environmental solution and helped meet the growing need for green products and services. Empowerment is a primary goal of environmentally friendly conference management, giving each attendee the opportunity to reduce environmental impact and adopt responsible behaviors that continue beyond a single event.

Contact the friendly experts at MeetGreen® today to discuss how we can help you make your meeting green.

MeetGreen® ©2010

6220 NE Glisan St., Portland, OR 97213 P: 503.252-5458 F: 503.261.0964

www.meetgreen.com