

Green Hotels Association

GREENING NEWSLETTER

Climate is a perfect storm for sustainability With climate change on the radar, hoteliers are in the midst of a perfect storm for discussing sustainability.

Recently, weather conversations have become more interesting, more intense and much more frequent. Yes, the media is now better at getting our attention, with catch phrases such as The Polar Vortex, Superstorms, Snowmageddon, Snowmageddon 2, etc. We are living with a new reality of increased disruptive weather patterns, temperature extremes and swings, drought and flooding. More importantly, we're living in a new winter reality of increased flight cancellations, weather delays, airport closures, travel advisories, people sleeping at airports and stuck trying to get home, no-shows and frustrated customers. The data will come out, and articles and research will show the effects of the weather on travel and on hotel demand—both positive and negative.

But when considering travel, it may be good to limit travel from mid-December through mid-March. Plan on more conference calls, maybe try out some more video conferences, push travel back, move it around, build in more buffer days to the schedule to allow for delays, prepare for cancellations and for people to call in. Think twice about travel to the Caribbean in the fall, the Northeast and Midwest in the winter or to California in forest-fire season. Several more travel restrictions are popping up. Avoid Singapore's potential haze in the dry summer when Indonesia sets itself on fire.

The sustainability discussion

When you put these pieces together, the sustainability discussion changes. Let's forget about the questions as to whether it pays to go green, whether the customer is willing to pay more, whether the return on investment is good. Let's focus on the connection that this discussion will bring.

We're talking more about the weather, and more and more people make the link between the weather and climate change. Each major storm, major disaster, major travel nightmare nudges a few more people into being cautious or concerned about climate change.

The shift in public opinion coincides with the effects of climate change today, not far off in the future or in a faraway land. As a result, climate risk for hotels will start to appear in more of our discussions: in company risk disclosure, in feasibility studies, in market forecasts, in insurance premiums and in the daily conversations of executives and travelers alike.

What to do

As the conversation becomes more frequent, we eventually turn to what to do about it. This is where the challenge lies: enabling travelers and guests to put together the pieces themselves and understand the key drivers of climate change, how it's affecting our daily lives and livelihoods and what are the steps we can all take to embed some form of action into the routine—even if it includes staying in a green hotel (and how the attributes of that hotel are reducing the specific impacts that contribute to climate change).

Here are a few managerial takeaways and actions:

1. Take a look at your green claims and see if they are appropriate.
2. Discuss with the green team to seek a common understanding about climate change (and if your hotel doesn't have a green team, then please get with the times).
3. Help the guest understand that your energy-efficiency (or even renewable energy) programs and specifications are an important way the hotel is reducing its impact on climate change.
4. Thank guests for supporting in their own conservation efforts while at the hotel.

And of course, let's consider sub-segmenting a "staycation" with a "snowcation" spa package for those trying to go on vacation but got snowed in, as well as a last-minute "stranded traveler" package with upgraded amenity kits and airport transfers to pick up some more walk-ins.

We're in the midst of a perfect storm for discussing sustainability. On the downside, we'll have to put up with more extremist fear-mongering. On the bright side, we have climate change to thank for making conversations more interesting.

Ricaurte, Eric, HNN columnist (eric@gviewadvisors.com), <http://www.hotelnewsnow.com/Article/13396/Climate-is-a-perfect-storm-for-sustainability>, March 24, 2014

HOTELS AROUND THE WORLD ADDING MINERAL POOLS TO SPA TREATMENTS Sit Back and Soak Awhile in Natural Springs

Instead of pushing traditional spa services, several hotels around the world are focusing on expanding natural hot springs on-site as a way for guests to unwind. A recent renovation at Calistoga Spa Hot Springs in Napa Valley, CA, for example, added four mineral pools with temperatures ranging from 80° to 106°F.



Dunton Hot Springs, a resort in Colorado's San Juan Mountains, has five natural sulfur-free hot springs and is working on creating a sixth. The new Nayara Springs in northern Costa Rica has natural hot springs running through it, and each of its 16 private villas has a plunge pool fed by their waters.

Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts has two properties in China where natural springs are a highlight: the Banyan Tree Chongqing Beibei in the southwestern metropolis of Chongqing has a 100°F hot spring attached to its 107 rooms and seven additional indoor and outdoor springs as part of its spa. Angsana Trenching Hot Spring Village (another Banyan Tree) in the Yunan province has 43 mineral-based springs spread over 180,000 sq.ft.

Two Bunch Palms in Desert Hot Springs, CA is in the midst of an \$11 million renovation that includes adding two hot springs to its current one. The pools will be heated to 104° and each

will be able to accommodate at least 20 people.

Susie Ellis, the president of SpaFinder Wellness Inc., an online service that connects consumers with spas, said that soaking in hot springs is an ancient practice that's finally coming into vogue because travelers are more interested in natural treatments. "They feel good, relieve stress and there are a lot of them around the world which are finally being tapped into," she said.

Any health benefits aside, the biggest perk of hot springs at hotels might be their affordability since most properties don't charge their guests to use them.

Vora, Shivani, "Hotels around the world adding mineral pool to spa treatments," <http://intransit.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/03/22/sit-back-and-soak-awhile-in-natural-springs/>, March 22, 2014

The 5-Minute Bed Work smarter to increase productivity

The trick to bed-making efficiency is to reduce movement around the bed and to minimize unnecessary movements that will consume time and possibly tire the housekeeper. Here are steps to making a faster bed:

Stand at one side of the bed and wave the bottom sheet evenly across it. In a similar fashion, spread out the top sheet so it lies directly over the bottom sheet. Next smooth the blanket or duvet across the top sheet. Then, spread the coverlet across the bed.

Simultaneously tuck the coverlet, duvet and top sheet under the foot of the mattress. Move to one side of the bed and pull taut these three bed linens. Fold down approximately 6 inches of the coverlet, duvet and top sheet from the top of the mattress. Repeat this step on the other side of the bed so that linens are taut and the fold down matches.

Fold back another 12 inches of the three top linens to reveal the bottom sheet. Working around the bed, tuck all four linens simultaneously between the mattress and the box spring, creating hospital corners at the foot of the mattress.

Frye, William D., "The 5-Minute Bed," *Lodging Magazine*, March, 2014, p. 16

At night, the ocean cleanses dirty air

The ocean doesn't just moderate temperatures and influence weather in some of the world's biggest cities; it also has the power to cleanse the air, new research suggests. At night, the sea surface can absorb and remove up to 15% of smog-forming nitrogen oxides that build up in polluted air in coastal cities like Los Angeles, according to a study. Researchers at UC San Diego came to that conclusion after deploying scientific instruments at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography pier last year to measure the exchange of trace gases between the air and the sea.



The conditions were just right one night in February when winds blew a polluted air mass from the Los Angeles Basin

along the coast and toward the sea, allowing the researchers to track what happened to the nitrogen oxide gases as they swept across the surface of the sea. Tim Bertram, an atmospheric chemist at UCSD who conducted the research with graduate student Michelle Kim, said the measurements taken that night provided one of the first real-world answers

to a long-standing question: To what extent does the ocean surface remove the ingredients of smog?

Bertram said he was expecting the pollutants to react at the ocean surface to form other compounds. To his surprise, the analysis showed that ocean water is a "terminal sink" for nitrogen oxides, meaning it permanently removes them from the air. "As soon as it's lost to the ocean surface, it's gone," Bertram said.

The interaction of the ocean, atmosphere and the pollution we generate is so complex that it is too soon to say whether the study's findings mean that seawater has an overall benefit for air quality in coastal cities, Bertram said. "It certainly is important, but it's yet to be quantified exactly how important that process is to smog formation," he said.

But it's a question worth further research, the article says, because nearly half of the world's population lives within 125 miles of the coast, releasing much of the world's nitrogen oxide pollution close to salt water.

Barboza Tony, "At night, the ocean cleanses smoggy air, study suggests," *Los Angeles Times*, latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-ocean-smog-nitrogen-oxides-sink-20140305.0,5746239.story#axzz2vlgfaXAr, March 6, 2014

TOILET TECH FAIR TACKLES GLOBAL SANITATION ISSUES

Who would have expected a toilet to one day filter water, charge a cellphone or create charcoal to combat climate change? These are lofty ambitions beyond what most of the world's 2.5 billion people with no access to modern sanitation would expect. Yet, scientists and toilet innovators around the world say these are exactly the sort of goals needed to improve global public health amid challenges such as poverty, water scarcity and urban growth.

Scientists who accepted the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's challenge to reinvent the toilet showcased their inventions in the Indian capital. The primary goal: to sanitize waste, use minimal water or electricity and produce a usable product at low cost. The World Bank estimates the annual global cost of poor sanitation at \$260 billion, including loss of life, missed work, medical bills and other related factors. India alone accounts for \$54 billion—more than the entire GDP of Kenya or Costa Rica.



India is by far the worst culprit, with more than 640 million people defecating in the open and producing a stunning 72,000 tons of human waste each day—the equivalent weight of almost 10 Eiffel Towers or 1,800 humpback whales. Pooping in public is so acceptable that many Indians will do it on sidewalks or in open fields. Gaze out the window of any Indian train and face a line of bare bottoms doing their business on the tracks. Meanwhile, diarrheal diseases kill 700,000 children every year, most of which could have been prevented with better sanitation.

"In the West, such things are a nuisance, but people don't lose their lives," said Christopher Elias, president of global development at the Gates Foundation. "People don't immediately realize the damage done by infections coming from human waste."

India has been encouraging rural communities to build toilets, and last year launched a \$1.6 billion program to help. But

building sanitation systems in developing countries is not easy. Flush toilets are not always an option. Many poor communities live in water-stressed areas. Others lack links to sewage pipes or treatment plants.

To be successful, scientists said, the designs being exhibited at the Toilet Fair had to go beyond treating urine and feces as undesirable waste, and recognize them as profit-generating resources for electricity, fertilizer or fuel. Traditionally, people have gone into communities and said, "Let's dig you a pit." That's seen as condescension, a token that isn't very helpful. After all, who is going to clean that pit?

The designs are mostly funded by Gates Foundation grants and are in various stages of development, though others not created as part of the Gates challenge were also exhibiting. Some toilets collapsed neatly for easy portability into music festivals, disaster zones or illegal slums. One emptied into pits populated by waste-munching cockroaches and worms. One Washington-based company, Janicki Industries, designed a power plant that could feed off the waste from a small city to produce 150 kilowatts of electricity, enough to power thousands of homes. The University of the West of England, Bristol, showcased a urine-powered fuel cell to charge cellphones overnight. Another team from the University of Colorado, Boulder, brought a system concentrating solar power through fiber optic cables to heat waste to about 300°C. Aside from killing pathogens, the process creates a charcoal-like product called biochar useful as cooking fuel or fertilizer.

"At the core are really interesting scientific principles, so translating this into scientific advances that people can relate to is really exciting," said one of the project leaders, Karl Linden, professor of environmental engineering in Boulder. "Biochar is an important subject for scientists at the moment, since it can be used to sequester carbon in the soil for 1,000 years or more." A team from Beijing Sunnybreeze Technologies Inc. also brought a solar-biochar system, but with the solar panels heating air that will dry sludgy human waste into nuggets that are then heated further under low-oxygen conditions to create biochar.

One company from the southern Indian state of Kerala was not as concerned with providing toilets as with cleaning them. Toilets are more common in Kerala than they are in much of the country, but no one wants to clean them, said Bincy Baby of Eram Scientific Solutions. "There is a stigma. The lowest of the low are the ones who clean the toilets," Baby said. Eram's solution is a coin-operated eToilet with an electronic system that triggers an automated, self-cleaning mechanism. With 450 prototypes now looped into sewage systems across India, electrical engineers are lining up for jobs as toilet technicians. "Now, they're proud of their jobs."

Daigle, Katy, "Toilet tech fair tackles global sanitation issues," Associated Press, Houston Chronicle, March 23, 2014

DESALINATION IS NOW A BILLION DOLLAR INDUSTRY

Despite some early March rain in California, the late season moisture will sadly fall far short of that which is needed to pull the state out of its four-year drought. Attention has consequently turned towards how California will ensure reliable water supplies in years ahead, should precipitation levels remain below average. One source that will grow in importance is desalination. Environmental Leader reported earlier this month that the components alone for desalination activity will constitute a \$5 billion industry by 2015, and while

this spend would not be confined to California, the McIlvaine Co. report describes the state as being at the epicenter of global desalination activity.

According to SFGate, the San Francisco Chronicle's online news outlet, 17 desalination plants are in the planning stages in the state of California, and of these, the largest one in Carlsbad, near San Diego, is two years away from completion. When the plant is switched on, it will be the biggest desalination facility in the Western Hemisphere, taking water from the Pacific Ocean and turning it into around 50 million gallons of potable water daily—serving 110,000 customers in San Diego County. The process of desalination for the Carlsbad plant involves "reverse osmosis," which entails forcing salty or brackish water through screens to filter out contaminants. The cross-flow membrane equipment involved in the filtration process constitutes a \$3.06 billion market.



Covington, Phil, Triple Pundit, triplepundit.com/2014/03/desalination-now-billion-dollar-industry-report-shows/, March 31, 2014

TEXTILE RECYCLING GUIDELINE

By Patricia Griffin, President, Green Hotels Association

When attempting to do a brief phone survey asking what happens to a hotel's retired bed and bath linens, I got a response that was essentially "it's against our brand's policy. Our brand does not allow anything paid for by the hotel to be sold or given away" implying that it could/would be negative for the brand's reputation. The lady said the retired linens were used as cleaning rags, perhaps dyed black and "completely used up before they were thrown away." She said, "No one would have any use for what is thrown away." Yet, we know textile wholesalers would love to have those linens unless they're greasy, very dirty or covered in paint.

At least 95% of all textiles are recyclable, but currently only 15% of textiles are actually recycled. In my 20 years of working with greening hotels, I believe this huge, almost invisible textile industry has been operating under the radar screen too long. We need to educate and inform hoteliers that their retired bed and bath linens have value and can be sold, or, minimally, shipped at no cost to a recycler.



Green Hotels Association has been instrumental in getting American Hotel & Lodging Association to add the following guideline to their website at ahla.com/Green.aspx?id=36228.

Implement a Textile Recycling Program

Each year, a typical hotel recycles over one million pounds of standard recyclables such as cardboard, glass, metal and plastics as well as hazardous materials such as fluorescent bulbs, batteries and lighting ballasts. An overlooked component to any hotel recycling program may be recycling textiles. 95% of all textiles are recyclable, but only about 15% of textiles are currently being recycled in the US according to the US EPA.

Post-consumer textile recycling is one of the oldest, most efficient recycling industries in existence. Textile recyclers add tremendous value through the labor-intensive sorting, separating and recycling of second-hand textiles into three main categories: fibers; reclaimed wipers; and used textiles. For hoteliers, textiles can be bed linens, sheets, pillow cases,

towels, comforters, blankets, napery, and curtains. In terms of value to hoteliers, they may only be paid for certain more desirable items such as sheets and towels. But there is savings from not disposing of these items by sending them to a landfill.

What happens to recycled textiles? What can be done with these textiles when you replace them? Sheets, pillow cases; bath, wash, hand and kitchen towels along with cotton or cotton-blended table linens may be used to make industrial wiping cloths. Other textiles such as bed spreads, comforters, and curtains might be used in developing nations for the same purpose, but in a home setting. Many of the world's poor live on just a few dollars a day and low-cost textiles for the home are desirable. If any of the textiles cannot be used for their intended purpose or if they are not suitable for wiping cloths, the textiles can be processed by a textile recycler into fiber. This grinding process shreds the material into tread-like yarn. This material is then formed into insulation for automobile sound proofing, carpet underlayment, and other stuffings.

What are the steps for hotel textile recycling? First, determine what textiles you have to recycle by creating an inventory which will determine the value of your items. A wholesaler will want to know what textile items you have and the total weight. Further information, such as condition and fabric content (cotton, polyester, rayon, etc.) could be helpful. Do you have 40, 400 or 4,000 lbs. of white sheets or terry toweling? Some recyclers may be willing to pay for used textiles, while others may not. The two determining factors affecting the price a recycler is willing to pay are 1. what the actual textile items are, and 2. the freight expense to move the textiles to the recycling facility. If your items have value to the recycler, they may pay you for the items as well as pay for shipping. In some situations they may pay for shipping only. If you don't have enough quantity or the right items to entice a recycler, you would do well to donate the items to a local non-profit. Most non-profit collectors of used textiles have relationships with large-scale textile recyclers. Large non-profit collectors have warehouse space to store large quantities. The mix of household and institutional used textiles is more enticing to these recycling companies than hotel textiles alone.

What hospitality retired textiles have the most value? Terry towels and other cotton items have the most value, and the more you have, the more recyclers will want them. Some recycling companies will send the hotel 4'x4'x4' fabric containers which will easily fit on a pallet. The hotelier will place the retired linens in the fabric container on a pallet and prepare it for shipment back to the recycler. The recycler may pay for the textiles as well as pay for the shipping. Companies that don't have the shipping bags will accept textiles in any boxes you have available.

Where can you find a textile recycler that wants used hotel textiles? The Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association (SMART) is working to increase the quantity of textile waste that can be recovered while developing new uses, products and markets for products derived from pre-consumer and post-consumer textile waste. Once you have an inventory of the linens you want to recycle, call Heather at SMART Headquarters at (443) 640-1050, Ext. 112 or e-mail her at heather@kingmgmt.org to learn how your textiles can be recycled. Be aware that local wholesale textile recyclers are not the only businesses who may want your items. Smartasn.org will be helpful in getting word to their members that your hotel's retired textiles are available. You may want to specify that inquiries should be via e-mail only.

What textiles are not recyclable? Any textiles that are wet, damp, mildewed or contaminated with oil, paint or another hazardous material are unacceptable. Be sure your items are 100% dry (no damp sheets). Stains and torn items are perfectly acceptable.

Resources

Please visit <http://earth911.com/recycling/> to determine where in your zip code you can recycle anything.

In the U.S., the EPA estimates more than 25 billion pounds of textiles are generated annually. The agency also reports more than 21 billion pounds of post-consumer textile waste ends up in landfills every year.

What Crisis?

Turkey's Hotel Builders Forge Ahead Development Is Booming, With 75 Hotels in the Pipeline

Construction workers perched 440 feet above the Bosphorus in the East-meets-West megalopolis of Istanbul are building one of Europe's most expensive hotel rooms, a 4,596-sq. ft. penthouse that will rent for €20,000 a night (\$27,500) and crown the new 28-story Raffles Istanbul when it opens in July. Guests moneyed enough to bunk in the sumptuous Presidential Suite need not walk through the lobby and zip up by elevator like average patrons: They can alight in style much closer to their digs on a 118'-diameter helipad, complete with heated floor, that has been erected atop the 181-room, \$225 million hotel.



Turkey's currency is tumbling, investor confidence eroding and interest rates soaring amid a stalling economy, splashy corruption headlines and a volatile political situation. But hotel development is booming, as 75 hotels with 11,376 rooms are in the pipeline. Moreover, global hospitality companies—which manage and operate signature hotel brands, typically in partnership with local Turkish investors—say they are undeterred by recent events. In fact, some executives are bullish. With tourism remaining strong, they are looking for additional expansion opportunities. “Our intention is to continue aggressive growth over the next few years and double the portfolio all over again,” says Patrick Fitzgibbon, SrVP for development for Hilton Worldwide Holdings Inc.

Today, Hilton operates 24 hotels with 5,826 rooms in Turkey, more than double its 10-hotel inventory in 2007. In January, the company opened the 829-key, 34-story Hilton Istanbul Bomonti Hotel on the site of a storied beer factory. Sporting a giant column-free ballroom that can hold 6,350 guests, the Bomonti lays claim to the title of Istanbul's largest hotel.

But hotel-industry executives say they are buoyed that recent unrest doesn't appear to have had a major impact on tourism. There were about 34.9 million foreign visitors in 2013, up 10% from 31.8 million in 2012, according to Turkey's Ministry of Culture and Tourism. In December of last year, the most recent month for which figures are available, there were 1.4 million visitors, up 7.4% from December 2012.

Occupancy rates in Turkey's 1,533 hotels averaged 63.2% in 2013, down 2.3% from the previous year, while average daily rates were \$148.58 with the revenue per available room at \$93.93, according to STR Global data. By contrast, political turmoil in Egypt has brought occupancy down to 44%.

Meanwhile, the luxury end of Turkey's market performs more robustly than that snapshot suggests, some hoteliers say, with occupancy rates exceeding 85% by some estimates. Germans, Russians and Britons are leading the charge. Turkish Airlines also operates more than 70 weekly flights between Tel Aviv and Turkey. Hipster hot spots already are proving popular with Israeli tourists. That includes the new Mama Shelter Istanbul, the moderately priced, 81-room boutique.

The rapid growth of Turkish Airlines is another indicator of the boom in the hospitality industry. Known by its Turkish initials as THY, the flag carrier jets to 105 countries and more than 200 international destinations and unveiled plans last year to double the size of its fleet by ordering or optioning 117 planes from Airbus Group and 95 from Boeing over the next six years.

"Historically, Istanbul was underserved by hotels, but our hoteliers now are starting to catch up" and finally are developing lodging properties on the Asian side of the city, not only the more traditional European side, says Alp Ozaman, THY's regional marketing manager for New York. It used to be "unthinkable" for business travelers to stay overnight in Asia, he adds.

One of the major players pushing development eastward is Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Inc., which on Tuesday announced that it was partnering with a real-estate development company owned by Turkey's Cevahir family to develop the 160-room Sheraton Istanbul Atasehir in a planned financial district on the Asian side of the Bosphorus.

The company also is bringing its first St. Regis to Turkey, complete with more than 16 multilingual butlers available to every guest for personalized services 24 hours a day. Sitting amid a row of fashion houses in the exclusive Nişantasi district on Istanbul's European side, the 118-room hotel is set to open July 1.

"Many countries where we operate go through political unrest and social and financial growing pains," says Michael Wale, Starwood's president for Europe, Middle East and Africa. "But we're not building for five years. This is a long-term capital-intensive business, and we're building for 40 or 50 years into an evolving, vibrant, thriving economy." Stoking tourism has been one of the most ambitious development projects in Istanbul's recent history, the \$2.5 billion, 6.7 million-sq. ft. Zorlu Center, a four-tower complex that includes high-end residences, the new Raffles, 180 luxury retail shops, office space and the \$350 million Zorlu Center Performing Arts Center."

Feiden, Douglas, "What Crisis? Turkey's Hotel Builders Forge Ahead," The Wall Street Journal, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304585004579417603153911642>, March, 2014

Green benefits run the hotel gamut Hoteliers from properties big and small can—and should—reap the benefits of sustainability.

The Crowne Plaza Copenhagen Towers and Beechenhill Farm reside on opposite ends of the hospitality spectrum. The former is a 366-room, branded new-build just outside a major city center. The latter is a centuries-old bed and breakfast, cottage and converted barn for up to 14 people located in a national park. Yet for all their differences, the driving philosophy is remarkably similar: Deliver big guest experiences on small ecological footprints.

The principle is one all hoteliers should work toward. But at what cost? It all depends.

The owners of the Crowne Plaza Copenhagen invested an additional £3 million (\$5 million) in upfront development costs to implement state-of-the-art, sustainable systems in the hotel, which opened in 2009. Highlights include a groundwater system that uses naturally cooled or heated water to "fuel" the building's HVAC and a "solar park" that drives significant electrical savings, said GM Allan Agerholm. The result is an experience indistinguishable from less ecologically attuned Crowne Plazas—with none of the additional costs passed on to guests.

"You will not be met with an environmental or green fee as an excuse for the sustainability," Agerholm said. The property's owners instead are recouping their investment through notable cost savings, he explained. "That makes it a no brainer because the payback on the return on investment is there."

Less definitive were the savings a top-to-bottom green retrofit of Beechenhill's properties would yield, said owner Sue Prince. "We spent a ridiculous amount of money on our project," she said, including a biomass wood pellet boiler that cost £70,000 (\$116,571) alone. While the property is seeing a slow-but-steady return as a result of energy savings, government incentives and other credits, the motivating factor was more a matter of conscience than cost, Prince said. "We wanted to feel good in our business and be . . . totally confident in what we were offering," she said.

Sustainability supporting demand: Sustainability initiatives bring with them other benefits. Chief among them is exposure. The Crowne Plaza, for instance, has become something of the poster child for Copenhagen's broader carbon-neutral movement. The hotel has appeared in countless media outlets, including CNN. GM Agerholm attributes that attention to the hotel's rapid ramp-up, which occurred as the broader market was experiencing a freefall. Within nine months of opening, the Crowne Plaza was matching its more established peers in market share despite its location on the outskirts of town. "I don't think we would have been able to do that if we had not commercialized sustainability in the way that we did," he said.

The Beechenhill has made a considerably smaller splash, although the property has received awards from various hotel and green councils. Owner Prince attributes 10% of the property's demand to its green credentials. Beyond that, the credentials reinforce a belief that is becoming increasingly important for many guests, she said. **"Many guests say that green issues are very, very important for them. That is something like 70 or 80% of guests saying that it is an important thing.** However, that isn't to say 70 or 80% come to us because we are a green place. They come to us because we do a good job and they have a fantastic holiday," she explained.

In addition to accommodations, the Beechenhill encourages guests to explore the Peak District National Park through various partnerships and programs. As an organic farm, Prince also hosts locally sourced weddings and events in a converted hay barn. Offering such holistic holidays that tie into the local community is an oft-forgotten element of sustainability, said Jeremy Smith, a communications specialist focusing on ecotourism. "All hotels are extremely well-positioned to prosper by supporting the communities and environments in which they are based," he said. As case

in point, he described the efforts of a resort in the Maldives where guests can help rebuild the surrounding coral reef ecosystem by reusing old rebar, air conditioning units and other metallic structures from the hotel.

Comparing apples to apples: Missing in the push toward sustainability was a uniform system of measurement, which became crucial as more corporations began evaluating green credentials in their meetings request for proposals. That's where the International Tourism Partnership comes in, said Head of Programmes Fran Hughes. The group partnered with some of the world's largest chains to develop the Hotel Carbon Measurement Initiative (wtcc.org/activities/environment/hotel-carbon-measurement-initiative/), which allows individual properties to measure their carbon footprint for apples-to-apples comparison. More than 17,000 hotels have adopted the HCMI around the globe, she said.

"Price, quality and location are always going to win," she said of the factors that drive bookings, "but there's increasingly a correlation between those hotels which go the extra mile on the environmental front" and the quality of the guest experience. As Prince said, "Our vision is to please you so you return while pleasing the planet and pleasing ourselves, too."

Mayoc, Patrick, Editor-in-Chief, "Green benefits run the hotel gamut," hotelnewsnow.com/Article/13312/Green-benefits-run-the-hotel-gamut#sthash.R8Ml8yDW.dupf

HOTELS MOVING INTO OLD BUILDINGS

Reuse and recycle are taking on new meaning for hotels. The Lamb's Theater, a longtime fixture on West 44th Street inside the Manhattan Church of the Nazarene, is now the luxury Chatwal Hotel. In Philadelphia, the previously empty Lafayette Building near Independence Hall opened in 2012 as the Hotel Monaco. In New Orleans, new life is being breathed into the Cotton Exchange Hotel off Bourbon Street. As the hotel industry shakes off recession doldrums and new hotels are being built, the once-standard chain hotel has a sibling, hotels repurposed from existing buildings like offices, warehouses and hospitals.

Behind the push is the changing taste of younger travelers, who flock to cities and are bringing an urban sensibility to their accommodations. "Travelers don't want consistency and reliability to come at the expense of authenticity," said Henry Harteveltdt, a travel analyst for the research firm Hudson Crossing. The adaptive-use hotel is a presence in smaller cities like Amarillo, TX, Pittsburgh and Stamford, CT; as well as big cities like New York, Washington, Boston and New Orleans.



Trading began at the New Orleans Cotton Exchange in 1871. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977. "Brands have realized standardization doesn't mean as much to guests as it did in the past," said Bjorn Hanson, of New York University.

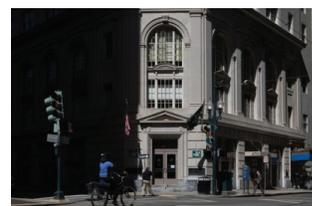
Executives at Marriott estimate that 10 to 20% of their Courtyards opening this year will have had other uses. The Kimpton chain estimates at least a dozen of its 60 properties are repurposed buildings. And in Europe, the InterContinental Hotel Group converted 82 of 187 buildings from 2010 to 2013. For guests, forgoing the standard hotel template can mean architecturally intriguing features, like odd-shaped hallways, rich history and character, as well as better amenities like a restaurant that draws patrons from the surrounding

neighborhood. But for those accustomed to homogeneity, the experience may be mixed.

John W. Eskew, who runs a design firm in Bridgeport, CT, found that the wall heater in his room on a recent visit to the four-year-old Hotel Zero Degrees in Stamford made a loud hum that made it hard to sleep," he said. The building was previously a YMCA dormitory. (The developer and owner says new individual wall units were placed in rooms when the hotel was renovated.) Still Mr. Eskew gave high marks to the hotel management for their responsiveness.

Experts say it can often be quicker and less expensive to repurpose an existing building than to build a new one. Even when the cost is higher, "the tax advantage evens that out," said Janis Milham, Sr. VP for modern essentials and extended stay at Marriott International.

Some chains turn to the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentive Program of the National Park Service, administered with the IRS. It grants tax credits of up to 20% that can be used to help finance the rehabilitation of historic buildings to preserve their character. (The federal program, which is available in all 50 states, can also be piggybacked onto state historic tax credits that over half the states have.) A historic building need not be converted to a hotel, although about 4.5% of the tax credits are used for that purpose.



One developer who has used the program is Mehul Patel, chief executive of NewcrestImage, a developer in Irving, TX. He converted the Fisk Medical Arts Building in Amarillo, TX, to a Marriott Courtyard in 2010. He said the project in Amarillo created a sense of nostalgia for some guests. "They understand history and respect it," he said. He has turned his attention to the 150-year-old Cotton Exchange in New Orleans. He expects to begin work directly and will spend more than \$10 million in improvements to the building. He anticipates the hotel will become one of the first AC Hotels in the US, a three-year-old European chain that is a joint venture between Marriott International and the Spanish hotel Group AC Hotels. "Technology allows us to be more efficient than previously," he said.

Some guests are not convinced. Rob Bullock is the executive director of the Government Finance Officers Association of British Columbia. In mid-February he stayed at the Cotton Exchange Hotel before a cruise. While there he noted noise traveling through the walls and up from the street. The beds were hard. He wrote in an e-mail: "The staff was great. They listened intently and tried their best to resolve things. They brought us more pillows, extra sheets, but the hotel was sold out and there was little else that could be done." On the return trip he opted for a competitor's traditional chain hotel where the bed was more comfortable. He doesn't plan a return to the Cotton Exchange. Mr. Patel says the scheduled renovation will include new beds, interior windows, bath fixtures and room walls.

In Europe, the InterContinental Hotel Group has embraced repurposed buildings for economic reasons. "Banks are much more comfortable providing financing for buildings that are already there," says Miguel Ruano, VP for design and engineering, Europe-IHG. The Marseille-Hotel Dieu, which opened last April on the site of an 18th-century hospital that had been vacant for decades, also includes a collection of

artifacts found during renovation.

Even the federal government is tiptoeing into repurposed hotels. Last June, after a competitive bidding process, the General Services Administration reached an agreement to lease the Old Post Office building, at 12th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, to the Trump Organization for 60 years with the option to renew. The chain estimates it will spend \$200 million converting the building to a luxury mixed-use development, including a hotel, museum, visitor center and retail space.

Experts say the architectural features and details can convey more of a homey feel, a sense of individuality. "In saying to a taxi driver, please take me to a specific hotel, the guest is telling the driver something about themselves," says Mr. Harteveltdt.

Zipkin, Amy, "Hotels Moving Into Old Buildings," Business Day, nytimes.com/2014/03/11/business/hotels-moving-into-old-buildings.html?_r=0, March 10, 2014

An End to Toilet Paper?

The convenience of toilet paper is a comfort many Americans can't picture themselves living without. America is the world's largest market for toilet paper. Americans per capita use 23.6 rolls per year, totaling about 7 billion rolls a year for the country. Unfortunately, using toilet paper is not the most sustainable practice.

The production of toilet paper results in the harvesting of millions of trees. An average eucalyptus tree makes 1,000 rolls of paper, which means that millions of trees must be harvested in order to satisfy the United States' addiction to toilet paper alone. The type of wood byproducts used determines the type of toilet paper created. Toilet papers advertised as "quilted" and "fluffy" are made from old-growth and virgin wood fibers.

The non-sustained destruction of forests is not the only environmental problem with toilet paper. Dioxins are a byproduct of bleaching toilet paper. Though direct usage of toilet paper with dioxins may not cause any health issues, when the toilet paper is flushed down the toilet into the sewage system the dioxins can find their way into the environment.



So as you are reading this article you must be wondering what the alternative is to using toilet paper. Below are listed some of the more

sustainable alternatives that you should at least consider before you buy your next roll.

Re Useable Wipes - You may have heard about reusable toilet paper on TLC's show on the cheapest people. But using reusable wipes isn't only cheaper than using toilet paper, it is also more sustainable. Instead of having a roll of toilet paper by the toilet, people who use reusable toilet wipes keep a stack of homemade cloth wipes which can be made from cut up old sheets or t-shirts. After using the wipe, the wipe can be placed in a closed container lined with a laundry bag which can be washed in a washing machine once or twice a week.

Though reusable wipes need to be washed, which requires the use of energy and water, the creation of toilet paper in the mill also requires water and electricity, while also releasing chemicals to the environment. Using wipes made from cloth can be softer than the softest toilet paper.

It may feel like a large commitment switching from toilet paper to reusable wipes but many people are extremely happy about the environmental impact they make by switching.

Bidets - One of the reasons Americans use so much more toilet paper than our European counterparts is because in many parts of Europe bidets are extremely common. A traditional bidet is separate from the toilet and is like a wash basin that shoots water for cleaning, but modern "attached bidets" can be connected to the toilet without having to install a separate bidet. Modern bidets also contain other features that make users less likely to use toilet paper, some of them blow warm air to help the user dry off.

Toilet Paper Made from Recycled Paper - If the option of using reusable wipes or getting a bidet seems too weird for you, at least try out toilet paper made from recycled paper. According to the EPA, if everyone in the United States exchanged only one roll of regular toilet paper for a roll made from recycled paper, it would save 470,000 trees. Imagine how many trees could be saved.

<http://blog.enn.com/?p=3921>

FREE MOBILE GREEN APPS

Incorporating sound environmental decisions in our daily lives has been made easier with the availability of several green apps for the mobile device. Below is a list of five useful environmental apps that are free and feature discussions and motivators for carbon footprint identification and reduction, climate change, global forest cover, product scoring based upon environmental impact, and environmental actions all aimed at making better choices for sustainable living.

Commute Greener - Concerned about your carbon footprint? Commute Greener (<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/commute-greener-not-facebook/id339635647?mt=8>) helps you track your personal CO2 emissions. Input the travel distance and mode of transportation, and Commute Greener will do the calculations. Improvement is the key: users set goals to reduce their transportation emissions over time. For those users who are motivated by competition, a game can be made out of who can reduce their carbon footprint the most through communication with other app users.

Skeptical Science - For those environmentalists that still come across others in their social circles that deny, dismiss or minimize climate change, Skeptical Science (<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/skeptical-science/id353938484?mt=8>) becomes a useful tool for dismantling any argument to the contrary. This app offers relevant science and argumentative counterpoints to win over a skeptic—or failing that, provide grounded science-based information to establish a credible argument for deeper conversation and consideration.

Global Forest Watch - Though not currently available specifically as a phone app, Google has recently unveiled the Global Forest Watch (<http://www.globalforestwatch.org/>) website app for tracking deforestation around the globe. The website provides interactive maps of the world showing where trees have disappeared since the year 2000. Google hopes to bring awareness to deforestation as a result of this app.

GoodGuide - Although avoiding consumerism is still the best environmental choice, buying some items is inevitable. When shopping is necessary, the GoodGuide (<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/goodguide/id294447660?mt=8>) app can help the consumer make environmentally informed purchases. Users

scan an item's barcode with their phones to see environmental ratings of the product. The app rates more than 170,000 products to help consumers with many of their purchases.

Rippl - Rippl (<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/rippl/id557768728?mt=8>) provides its members with helpful tips to pursue a more sustainable way of living. The app provides action-focused environmental suggestions and practical solutions for following through. Awareness of these green actions challenges the way we live and conduct our business, but this app motivates by tracking progress.

Phone apps make green living more convenient and accessible than ever.

Robin Blackstone, ENN, http://www.enn.com/green_building/article/47085, February 25, 2014

"7-Eleven killed the minibar."

The sentiments of one hotel manager in Hong Kong could well extend to hotels around the world. The hotel minibar, loved and cursed at by millions of desperate midnight snackers/ drinkers, is on the decline.

Hilton Hong Kong installed the world's first hotel minibar in 1974 by stocking liquors and fridges in each of its 840 rooms. The move reportedly led to a 500% increase in room-service drink sales and a 5% boost to the company's net income that year. Soon, the minibar became a near-universal industry standard. But Hilton recently started backtracking in some of its properties, removing the booze and leaving the fridges in its rooms,



for guests to fill themselves. Other hotel giants, including the Grand Hyatt, Starwood and Marriott brands, are also phasing out this once ubiquitous in-room feature from some of their properties.

<http://edition.cnn.com/2014/04/07/travel/hotel-minibars-decline/>

GERMS ON THE MENU

Restaurant menus may harbor more germs and bacteria than any other surface in food-service location. According to studies, menus can have bacteria counts as high as 185,000 per square centimeter—far more than a toilet seat. The reason? Scores of people touch restaurant menus and yet they are rarely cleaned.

Green Hotels Association

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Of course, people don't get sick every time they touch a menu. But if the infectious dose is high enough, or the person touching the menu is a young child or has a compromised immune system, the likelihood can be significant. According to Matt Morrison, communications director for Kaivac cleaning systems, restaurant patrons should "wash their hands after handling the menu."

The following are other so-called germ-centers in restaurants, along with suggestions on how to lessen the health threat they present.

Seats - Seats are one of the germiest spots in a restaurant. "They are rarely cleaned, and when they are, they are often quickly wiped down using a soiled towel," says Morrison. **Solution:** Do your best to not touch the seats with your hands, or wash your hands before eating.

Ketchup bottles - Scores of people touch these, and they are rarely wiped down with an antibiotic cleaner. **Solution:** Hold the bottle with a napkin when using.

Lemon slices - A study by Passaic County Community College found that nearly 70% of the lemon slices placed in drinks or on dishes in restaurants carried potentially harmful microorganisms, typically because they are often not washed or properly washed before they are cut. **Solution:** Using a napkin, squeeze the juice out of the lemon, but do not drop the rind into your drink.

"Restaurant managers should select healthier dispense-and-vac or spray-and-vac cleaning methods," says Morrison.

<http://www.cmmonline.com/articles/233211-beware-of-germs-on-the-menu>

Member News - AirBnB.com

A 3-year Partner Member B&B recently reported: "I don't know what we're going to do. Have you heard of airbnb.com? The competition is impossible. Last year there were 10 listings in our small town. This year there are 359 listings in the area—some offering rooms for \$75 a night! We may have to close."

FINAL WORDS . . .

Heaven is under our feet, as well as over our heads.

Henry David Thoreau