



## Post Event Wrap-Up Report

Association Green's goals for our first *Get Green Already* Conference were as follows:

1. To supply the meeting and hospitality industry with green budgeting and measurement information
2. To host an environmentally friendly meeting
3. To promote Virginia Beach and the Hampton Roads area as a green destination
4. To establish ourselves as the go-to green meeting services organization

The *Get Green Already* conference brought together 26 DC area meeting planners as well as 47 hospitality industry professionals interested in going green. This strong showing made clear that the desire and need for information is great.

Partnering with the Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Virginia Beach Convention Center on our first event provided Association Green great name recognition to launch our organization. AG is the Green Initiatives Division of Organization Management Group Inc. OMG is an outstanding provider of management services to for-profit and non-profit organizations.

As we continue to grow and expand this event, we will continue to measure its footprint and compare to years past.

The follow section breaks down each component of the conference and reviews how we were green and ways to improve on how we weren't. Many thanks to [www.meetgreen.com](http://www.meetgreen.com) and [www.greeneventsource.com](http://www.greeneventsource.com) for providing checklists on what and how to measure.

## **Accommodations (if applicable)**

Familiarization tour attendees stayed in the Westin Hotel in Virginia Beach Town Center. The hotel is located 9 miles from the meeting venue. The hotel is Virginia Green certified.

## **Communications**

Registration brochures as well as onsite pamphlets were printed on paper that was certified with both the Forest Stewardship Council and Green Seal. The paper contained 30% recycled post-consumer fiber.

The 20 x 30 poster signage, known as Earth Board, was sponsored by Signs By Tomorrow Chesapeake. The Earth Board is rigid cardstock manufactured with 100% recovered fibers, with an average 35% post consumer waste and lined with a bright white clay coating for printing. It is also 100% recyclable, has clean brown edges, and is extremely durable. The signs were kept generic and date free so that they may be reused for next year.

- ✓ All signage was kept and will be reused for next year. That equates to six 20 x 30 Earth Board signs and nine 11 x 17 directional signs that was diverted from the landfill.
- ✓ Leftover onsite pamphlets that were left in the meeting room, as well as event related office paper, were recycled. That equates to 306 sheets of paper that were recycled.
- ✓ No mass mailings were done. Our target audience was emailed the pamphlet or was directed to the conference website.
- ✓ All speaker presentations were emailed to attendees after the event.
- ✓ Of the 49 lanyards that were distributed to attendees, 38 badges were returned and will be reused.
- ✓ Conference surveys were emailed to attendees.
- ✓ As a thank you, speakers received a donation in their name to the National Arbor Day Foundation. In total, 200 trees were planted.

## Areas of Improvement

- ❖ Online registration will be available to attendees next year.

## **Destination**

One of our goals for this event was to promote Virginia Beach and the Hampton Roads area as a green destination. Virginia Beach is centrally located in the Hampton Roads community.

## **Food & Beverage**

Distinctive Gourmet, a division of Boston Culinary Group, has been the exclusive on-site caterer of the Virginia Beach Convention Center since May 2005. To develop the menu for this event, they partnered with several local farms including S & H Produce from Princess Anne Farmers Market and Mattawoman Creek Farms for the fresh local organic produce such as the green and red leaf lettuce and onions they used in the salads. Together, they determined what is available based on the crop this year and the weather's impact on the crop. They also maintain a vegetable garden on the facility grounds that is in its third season of growing fresh herbs including the basil that was used in the butter sauce and the mint that was used in the iced tea. Another local purchase was the Smithfield Ham for the bacon vinaigrette salad dressing. The main entrée was Virginia Snapper, a fish found on the Sustainable Seafood Guide as a good alternative.

- ✓ Water refreshment stations were provided along with glassware.
- ✓ Leftover food from lunch amounted to roughly 30 pounds, all of which was composted onsite.
- ✓ Table linens and cloth napkins were used for lunch.
- ✓ Table decorations were unique in that we rented glass vases and placed recyclable materials in each. Of the 6 vases created for the event, 2 contained recyclable glass, 2 contained energy efficient light bulbs, and the remaining 2 contained crushed aluminum soda cans. A single gerbera daisy protruded from each.

## Areas of Improvement

- ❖ During lunch, water and beverages will be filled upon request. They will not be pre-set for any attendees.
- ❖ Cream and sugar servings will not be individually wrapped. Bulk containers will be provided.
- ❖ Eliminate flowers from centerpieces while still maintaining an eye-catching table display.

## **Transportation**

Familiarization tour attendees were transported to and from the venue in a biodiesel bus. Other attendees drove in their personal vehicles to attend this one day event. Using Conservation International's website, [www.conservation.org](http://www.conservation.org), the estimated carbon emitted for this event was 2.1 tons.

### Areas of Improvement

- ❖ Provide complimentary bus fare for to the venue for people living in the Hampton Roads area.
- ❖ Offer conference attendees the opportunity to offset their carbon using a certified carbon offset organization.
- ❖ Measure the carbon emitted and diverted from the event.

## **Venue**

For our first conference, the Virginia Beach Convention Center was selected. Completed in 2007, the Virginia Beach Convention Center's commitment to being environmentally responsible is conveyed throughout several departments including operations, housekeeping, food & beverage, landscaping, maintenance and administration.

- ✓ The building has an active recycling program through TFC Recycling for paper, plastic, aluminum and cardboard.
- ✓ State of the art lighting and HVAC systems are programmed based on the event schedules to minimize usage and conserve energy during non-peak times.
- ✓ The 50 acre site is landscaped with over 2,000 trees and shrubs and the automated irrigation system measures rain accumulation and limits irrigation demand. Storm water is retained on site and mitigates solid surfaces of building and pavement.
- ✓ The housekeeping staff uses environmentally friendly housekeeping products including toilet paper and hand towels, Green Seal Certified cleaners, vacuums and floor scrubbers.
- ✓ The convention center is currently in the process of achieving a LEED Certified Silver designation.

### Areas of Improvement

- ❖ Continue to expand upon the measurement of the event's waste and diversion rates by collaborating with facility staff and catering company.