



Benefits of Green Seal Certification for Hotels

Presentation to Boston Green Tourism

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Topics Covered

- **Key characteristics of sustainable hotels**
- **Key environmental and economic benefits**
- **Proving your green credentials and value of certification**
- **Brief on Green Seal and its hospitality program**



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Key Characteristics of Sustainable Hotels

- **Energy/water conservation and management**
- **Waste minimization, management**
- **Avoid hazardous substances**
- **Responsible purchasing, policies**
- **Establish green team to institutionalize**



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Key Environmental and Economic Benefits of Green Hotels

GS-certified hotels (examples):

- Invested \$20,000 in upgrades and now saves \$225,000 per year**
- Increased revenue from green business by \$5.6 million over past 5 years**
- Achieved reductions of 25% in natural gas costs and 18% in electricity costs**



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Key Environmental and Economic Benefits (con't.)

- **Nearly 50% waste reduction**
- **Additional documented savings in water use, waste hauled, paper used, etc.**
- **Booked over \$200,000 can directly tie to GS**
- **Cities like Chicago and Los Angeles promoting green hotels and bringing in convention business**



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Proving Your Green Credentials

- More consumers and companies seeking green hotels – can be requirement of RFPs
- Independent validation more credible
- Best is 3rd-party certification based on scientifically valid standards, open process



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The Value of Certification

- **Opens doors to a new market of green consumers**
 - ✓ “Super Greenies”—Gen X, high-income, higher spending lifestyle
 - ✓ Certification makes it easier for them to find your hotel
- **Helps you meet corporate and government bids**
 - ✓ Purchasers and meeting planners are required to select the greenest options
 - ✓ A certification makes it easier to respond to requirements
- **Proven reductions in your environmental footprint**
 - ✓ Hotels use less energy, water, chemicals and create less waste
 - ✓ Cut waste by nearly half



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The Value of Certification (con't.)

- **Positions your property ahead of the competition**
 - ✓ **Guests increasingly factor greenness into their choices**
 - ✓ **AAA, Travelocity, Expedia indicate certified properties**
 - ✓ **Puts you in an elite group of environmentally active hotels**
- **Helps improve guest and employee satisfaction**
 - ✓ **Guests expect to see concern for environment, health**
 - ✓ **Shows staff that you care about their health and community**



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What To Look For In Certification

- Program run by organization without conflict-of-interest
- Standard development process involves stakeholders, including public
- Transparency in criteria, methods, and data used
- Requirements based on life-cycle impacts, best science
- Promotes leadership levels in sustainability
- Open access to licensees of all sizes, all countries
- Includes regular site audits of facility, authority to do so
- Certification mark is trademarked and use is policed
- Requirements are periodically reviewed/updated, considering technology and market



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Guidelines for Ecolabels

- ISO 14020 Environmental Labels and Declarations – General Principles
- ISO 14024 Type I Environmental Labeling – Principles and Procedures
- Global Ecolabelling Network membership requirements
- American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Guidelines
- US EPA criteria for third-party certifiers
- Consumers Union criteria for “What Makes a Good Ecolabel”
- US FTC Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims



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Green Seal's Mission

Green Seal is a non-profit environmental organization that uses science-based programs to empower consumers, purchasers, and companies to create a more sustainable world.



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Green Seal's Experience

- **Over 21 years of experience in promoting environmental leadership in the marketplace**
- **Covers a variety of product/service categories using multi-attribute (life-cycle) approach**
- **Unbiased, science-based, third-party credibility**
- **No financial interest in products, companies**
- **Recognized as a leading seal of environmental certification by Federal and local government, media, and business leaders**
- **ANSI-accredited, ISO-compliant**



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Green Seal's Certification Program

- **Standards covering 338 categories**
- **Many recognized by market as the green standard for the category**
- **Over 3500 products/services certified**
 - **range from windows, electric chillers, and lodging facilities to institutional cleaners, paints, paper, personal care products, etc.**



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Green Seal's Green Lodging Program

- Active program since 1995
- Purchasing Guide (*Greening Your Property*)
- Certification Program for hotels
- Special projects (e.g., suppliers project)
- AH&LA Environment & Engineering Committee
- Participation in conferences, workshops
- Articles in *Lodging*, *Nat'l Hotel Exec Magazine*



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Standard for Lodging Properties (GS-33)

- **Covers Waste Minimization; Energy Efficiency, Conservation, and Management; Management of Fresh Water Resources; Waste Water Management; Hazardous Substances; Environmental Purchasing Policy**
- **Has entry level (Bronze) plus Silver, Gold levels**
- **Adopted by Chicago, Los Angeles, States**
- **Standard freely available on Green Seal Web site**



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Standard for Lodging Properties (GS-33) (cont'd)

- **Standard has number of product-related requirements**
 - **for example, criteria for paint, tissue and writing paper, cleaning chemicals, laundry and dishwashing detergents, pesticides**
- **Compliant products are readily available from leading hotel suppliers**



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GS Lodging Certification Process

- **Prepare your property based on GS-33**
- **Provide required documentation –
Guidebook available on GS-33 Web site
page**
- **GS audit takes better part of one day**
- **Follow-up re deficiencies, often in
purchasing, materials, organization**
- **Corrections required for final approval**
- **Overall process takes several months**



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Sample of GS-Certified Hotels

- **Individual properties from such brands as Westin, Ritz Carlton, Hilton, Sheraton, Intercontinental, Fairmont, Doubletree, Marriott, Embassy Suites, Hyatt**
- **All Great Wolf Lodges**
- **Retreats, conference centers**
- **Several National Park lodges**



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Value of GS Certification

“What a journey! ... And I mean that in a really positive sense.”

- Cindy Boulton, Area Managing Director, Radisson Hotel,
Los Angeles (LAX), CA

“We have been working hard on accomplishing this goal and are very proud to have finally achieved it.”

- Gus Castaneda, General Manager, The Mark
Spencer Hotel, Portland, OR

“Green Seal certification is a milestone achievement for us, and we are proud of our commitment to sustainability.”

- Keri Robinson, General Manager
Sheraton San Diego Hotel, San Diego, CA



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Value of GS Certification (con't.)

Display Your Leadership with Green Seal™

Ideas For Promoting Your Certified Property



Quick Ways to Spread the Word About Your Green Leadership

- ✓ Publish a press release
- ✓ Use the Green Seal Mark in ads and marketing materials
- ✓ Create a promotional video
- ✓ Track and share your savings
- ✓ Get involved with community green activities
- ✓ Inform your local Chamber and CVB
- ✓ Make sure you are listed on green travel sites
- ✓ Educate staff with a Green Seal webinar
- ✓ Encourage staff to spread the word
- ✓ Reward your "Green Team" for their success
- ✓ Celebrate with a special staff event
- ✓ Notify management of your accomplishment
- ✓ Include the Green Seal Mark on internal messaging
- ✓ Have a "Green Party" with guests
- ✓ Put the Green Seal Mark on lobby signage
- ✓ Use the Mark on all printed materials
- ✓ Order plaques for the lobby
- ✓ Use info sheet and towel cards in rooms



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Certification Fees

- Fee schedules for hotel certification on Green Seal's Web site
- Fee covers evaluation (incl. audit) and license to use Green Seal certification mark
- Average hotel (250 rooms): \$1750 (Bronze level); \$2500 (Silver level), \$2500 (Gold level)
- Small hotel: \$1450-1950; Large hotel: \$1950-3000
- Annual monitoring and fee



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Conclusions

- **Greening your hotel involves many aspects, but all are practicable**
- **Benefits can be significant, both to environment and your bottom line**
- **Consumers increasingly seeking green, but want independent and credible certification**

Thank You!



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