



The EarthWISE Bulletin

The Sustainable Business Bulletin

Marion County

Volume 2, Issue 6

Winter 2011

Important dates:

- Dec. 21 Winter Solstice
- Dec. 25 Christmas
- Jan. 1 New Year's Day
- Jan. 14-16 Mid-Valley Home Show at Oregon State Fair
- Jan. 17 Martin Luther King
- Feb. 14 Valentine's Day
- Feb. 15 Mid-Valley Green Awards Nomination Deadline
- Mar. 9 Sustainability Summit at Keizer Civic Center
- Mar. 13 Daylight Savings begins
- Mar. 21-25 Spring Break
- Apr. 9 Mid-Valley Green Awards at Salem Conference Center

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10 Ways to Make Your Message Resonate with Green Consumers

by Shel Horowitz

So many businesses want to jump on the green bandwagon -- but too often there's a lot of room for improvement in the ways they focus their messaging.

Effective green messaging successfully combines education with marketing. For the consumer who is already green-aware, it provides proof that your company is "walking the walk" in going green.

But for the consumer who may not yet be fully aware of all the ramifications, you must play an educational role. Your messaging has to show why the points you raise are important, what they mean for sustainability, and how consumers can feel part of the solution by choosing you.

Here are 10 guideposts for formulating those dual-purpose messages. If you need help beyond what's here, feel free to contact the author directly at shel@principledprofit.com.

1. Combine Appeal to Consumer Self-Interest with Appeal to a Higher Good

Consumers feel really great about supporting companies that not only have a social and environmental mission, but also deliver the goods: low prices, high quality, healthy ingredients or other benefits. Here are two examples from completely different industries:

Ice cream maker Ben & Jerry's uses packaging, advertising, its website, and pretty much every other communication channel to combine a message of superior product quality with social and environmental messaging, starting right from its very public mission statement.

Household paper manufacturer Marcal is also very good at this. On its website, you can see an emphasis on the environment starting with saving one million trees -- recognition that the company switched to recycled fibers all the way back in 1950 -- and plenty of information about consumer-focused features like hypoallergenic qualities, non-chlorine whitening and "just the right combination of strength, absorbency and softness to handle every job."

This message would be even stronger if retooled to focus not on the features, but on the benefits. For instance, non-chlorine whitening reduces both water pollution and skin irritation.



Getting it right the first time is important

2. Acknowledge -- and EXPLAIN -- Your Green Certifications

Have you taken the time, trouble and expense to get Fair Trade and/or organic certification? Is your building LEED certified? Do you use Forest Stewardship Council certified paper? Do you have some other seals of approval from recognized authorities, or endorsements from famous environmentalists? Be sure to mention these achievements in your messaging -- and take a moment to say what they mean and why they're important.



Green labels that matter

3. Stand Tall with Your Values

The person who said "nice guys finish last" was a liar! Don't hide your light. Caring about the planet, about ethical business practices, about your customers' and stakeholders' well-being is good for your integrity, and also good for your bottom line. Tell your story honestly and well, and the market will reward you.

4. Embrace the Big Picture

If your business is forward-looking and moving on big-picture issues like zero waste/cradle-to-cradle, or if you've installed solar or wind and slashed your carbon generation by 80 percent, help build consciousness about why you took those steps, and why that commitment makes you an excellent choice. Don't underestimate your audience; a big chunk of them will be eager to know what you're doing. Get some ideas from carpet giant **Interface Carpets**.

5. Make Sure Your Messages Use Environmentally Friendly Media

I once received a book of green tips from a well-known financial guru. The tips were good, but the book jarred me. It used extensive full-color printing throughout the book, and was obviously done in a very large run. I couldn't help wondering just how green this book really was, even if it was printed on recycled paper.



If you're creating a full-color marketing piece such as a brochure, consider distributing it as a PDF. It's cheaper for you, much better for the environment, and consistent with the green message you want to convey. If you're trying to build sustainability cred, don't wrap each part individually, then bag the whole

thing, then box the bag, then shrink-wrap the box.

6. Know Your Market

Take the time to find out what's important to your customers, and how you can advance their goals. Survey, observe, or just plain ask. And commit to implementing changes based on the responses.

7. Engage Your Customer

Once a one-way street called "push," marketing is now much more effective when it creates dialogue, participation and engagement. Social media, user feedback sites, campaigns for social and environmental agendas are just a few ways to get your customers talking to you -- and eventually talking about you, very positively.



Not the best way?

8. Consider Cause Marketing Partnerships

Working with the right charity partners can advance everyone's goals. You can funnel money toward a deserving cause, get promoted actively to their contact list and use your commitment to generate all sorts of benefits from free media attention to customer goodwill.

9. Meet Challenges the Right Way

Too many companies are so afraid of criticism that they engage in cover-ups -- and do they ever get criticism when they're found out! Much better to learn from British department store chain Marks & Spencer, which took criticism of its environmental practices as a challenge to do better, and now measures its progress, publicly, on 100 different sustainability indices.

10. Be Honest ... Don't greenwash

All the green messaging in the world won't build your credibility unless it's true. If you say you're using nuclear power (a very un-green technology) to avoid burning fossil fuels, you've lost any shred of respect among those who've studied the issue. If you're an oil company that claims to be "beyond petroleum" and then you kill 11 people on a defective oil rig that spews vast quantities of goo into the water for the next four months, don't expect the marketplace to cut you any slack.



Adapted from Green and ethical marketing strategist Shel Horowitz's award-winning eighth book, **Guerrilla Marketing Goes Green: Winning Strategies to Improve Your Profits and Your Planet**, (co-authored with Jay Conrad Levinson). Visit www.guerrillamarketinggoesgreen.com to get your copy and more than \$2000 in extra goodies.

!An energy saving opportunity for Salem businesses!

City, Energy Trust of Oregon, Salem Electric, and West Coast Bank Launch Salem Commercial Lighting Loan Pilot Program



In November, The City of Salem launched a new program for commercial building owners and tenants which provides financing for energy efficient lighting upgrades in existing commercial buildings. The City will use \$120,000 of its Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) funding to buy down the interest rate of participating loans to 1 percent. Assuming a \$5,000 loan average, EECBG funds will buy-down the interest rate for approximately 117 loans.

West Coast Bank, West Salem branch will service the loans. Salem Electric and Energy Trust of Oregon will provide a 50 percent match. For Salem Electric customers, the building owner or any licensed, bonded contractor can perform the lighting improvements. For PGE customers, work must be completed by one of their Trade Allies.



Applicants will need to meet West Coast Bank's underwriting requirements and those required by the utilities. An energy audit will be required pre and post project to prove that the required savings has been achieved.

Program information and an application can be obtained from Salem Electric, West Coast Bank, or the City's Urban Development Department. For more information please contact Annie Gorski at 503-588-6178, agorski@cityofsalem.net or visit www.cityofsalem.net/sustainability and click on "Community Energy Strategy."

Call to Serve



Marion County's Solid Waste Management Advisory Council is seeking new members.

Open positions are available for a public health representative as well as three citizen-at-large positions. Among the issues the advisory council works on are waste reduction, protection of the environment, increasing public education concerning waste issues, and improving operations of solid waste management facilities.

The 16-member council meets once a month to develop, review, and recommend plans that support an integrated, financially sound waste management system which protects public health and the environment. Meetings are generally held on the fourth Tuesday of each month from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Application forms are available at the Marion County Business Services Office, 325 13th St. NE, Salem, OR 97309 or call 503-589-3295. Applicants should be at least 18 years old and residents of Marion County.

2011 MID-VALLEY GREEN AWARDS

Nominate your favorite organization!

2ND
ANNUAL

CATEGORIES:

- Recycler of the Year – individual/family, business
- Green Apple Award – educator/outreach
- Sustainable Business/Organization of the Year – small, large
- EarthWISE Business of the Year
- Green Building of the Year

Deadline for nominations is midnight, February 15, 2011. For more information and a nomination application go to www.fselc.org or call 391-4145.

SPONSORED BY THE FRIENDS OF STRAUB ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER, MARION COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS, AND GARTEN SERVICES.



LAST YEAR'S WINNERS:

- RECYCLER OF THE YEAR:** STEVE DEPINA
- RECYCLING BUSINESS OF THE YEAR:** HABITAT FOR HUMANITY MID-WILLAMETTE VALLEY RESTORE
- EDUCATION/OUTREACH:** LINDA NISIKA
- GREEN BUILDING OF THE YEAR-NEW:** BILYEU CONSTRUCTION OF SALEM RESIDENCE AT 14TH & NEBRASKA
- GREEN BUILDING OF THE YEAR-RETROFIT:** TRAVEL SALEM
- SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR (SMALL):** PRINGLE CREEK COMMUNITY
- SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR (LARGE):** LIFESOURCE NATURAL FOODS
- EARTHWISE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR (2 CHOSEN):** SAIF CORPORATION AND DESANTIS LANDSCAPING

Time to recertify already?

These Earthwise businesses just did



United Way of the Mid-Willamette Valley



NORPAC Plant 7 in Salem



Bentley's Grill

NORPAC Plant 5 in Brooks





Garten Services



The Grand Hotel in Salem



D & O Garbage

Factoid Department

Marion County led all other Oregon counties with the best recycling rate in 2009. That makes four years in a row in the #1 spot. The recovery rate was 58.2%.

The recovery rate in 2008 was 58.4%. What happened?

The good news: Marion County generated about 17,000 tons of garbage less in '09 than in '08. That works out to about 1,261 pounds of waste per every man, woman, and child.

Some of us just throw away more than others.

90% of Marion County households participate in curbside recycling. It's too soon to know how much the new organics (food composting) program is collecting.

Seattle has just passed a law that will create a phone-book opt-out system and requires directory publishers to pay for phone book recycling.

Phonebook publishers have filed suit to block it.

L.A. County (CA) has just enacted a ban on plastic bags in the unincorporated areas of the county. Paper bags will cost shoppers a dime.

San Francisco is debating the expansion of their plastic bag ban beyond large grocery and pharmacies to include all retailers.

Ask Mister Sustainability

Question: I would love for our business to become EarthWISE certified but we don't even recycle! What can I do to get this ball rolling?

Great question—it has two parts: the political and the technical. The political part is fairly simple; you need management buy-in. Support from the top is critical in getting both the go-ahead to proceed and to succeed. Just ask, and ye might very well receive.

As a guy who hates to reinvent wheels of any sort, I'll quote from the City of Portland's playbook regarding the technical side of Recycling 101. It goes like this:

Step 1: Identify your champion This is the person responsible for starting/maintaining a business' recycling system and being the contact for the program. It could be you!

Step 2: Recycle all paper, bottles, and cans Make calls to your garbage hauler (or property manager if applicable) to set up recycling for all paper, bottles and cans.

Step 3: Make recycling easy Label recycling containers and decide where to place them. Make recycling containers as easy to find as garbage cans.

Step 4: Train your team Set up a time to let your managers and co-workers know about your updated system and how it works.

Step 5: Throw away less Plan at least one activity that helps your business use and dispose of fewer items. Double-sided printing or reusing shipping containers are great examples of ways to reduce waste.

And, of course, if you need help with any of this our EarthWISE staff is here to help. Just call.

EarthWISE Member Directory

*denotes new member

Construction

Advantage Precast, Inc.
Barnwood Naturals, LLC
Carlson Veit Architects, P.C.
CB | 2 Architects
Cherry City Heating
Cherry City Remodeling
dalke construction
Jet Industries
LCG Pence Construction



Financial

Bank of the Cascades - Hawthorne Branch
Oregon Community Credit Union
Wilshire Credit Corporation

Food

Bentley's Grill
BrucePac - Silverton* & Woodburn Plants*
Cascade Baking
Jonathan's
Kerr Concentrates, Inc.
Kettle Foods
NORPAC Foods - Stayton, Brooks, & Salem Plants
Sabroso Company
Spring Valley Dairy
Truitt Brothers, Inc.
Willamette Valley Fruit Company

Government

Champoeg State Heritage Area
Marion County Dog Shelter
Marion County Public Works—Silverton Campus
Oregon Department of Energy
Oregon Dept. of Administrative Services - 20 Buildings
Oregon Exposition Center
Oregon Lottery*
Oregon State Capitol
Oregon—Salem Motor Pool
Salem Fire Department
Salem Housing Authority
Salem—Information Technology
Salem—Public Works Willow Lake WPCF
Salem - Urban Development's Airport Division
Salem - Urban Development's Director's Office
Salem - Urban Development's Parking Services
Salem Public Library
Woodburn School District

Landscaping

DeSantis Landscapes, Inc.
The Garden Angels
Green Acres Landscape, Inc.

Medical

Holly Chamberlain D.D.S., L.L.C.
Chiropractic Physicians, P.C.
Willamette E.N.T. & Facial Plastic Surgery, LLP

Not For Profit

Garten Services, Inc.
Marion-Polk Food Share
SAIF Corporation
Saint Edward Catholic Church
United Way of the Mid-Willamette Valley
Willamette Lutheran Retirement Community

Professional/Services

AAA Cleaning Service - Metro, Inc.
AJ's Auto Repair, Inc.
Cascade Employer's Association
Compex Two Computers
Kristin LaMont, Attorney at Law P.C.
Lancaster Mall Operations
T-Mobile

Real Estate & Commercial Properties

Sperry Van Ness Commercial Advisors
The Epping Group/Creekside Corporate Center

Recycling/Solid Waste

Agri-Plas, Inc.
D & O Garbage Service Inc.
Marion Recycling Center
Pacific Sanitation

Retail/Wholesale

Capital Sewing & Vacuum Center
Hillyer's Mid-City Ford
Power Equipment Systems

Tourism

Grand Hotel in Salem
Salem Conference Center
Travel Oregon
Travel Salem

The last word

Still thinking about the paper or plastic dilemma?

Well, it still comes down to bringing your own bag. From just an energy standpoint, using a reusable canvas bag is **14** times better than plastic without factoring in the littering, landfill, recycling, and foreign oil dependence issues with plastic bags. Using the same energy perspective, canvas bags are **39** times better than paper. Again, this number is conservative, since it assumes that a canvas bag is used 500 times over its lifetime. Some of my canvas bags have been around over 6 years and show no signs of slowing down anytime soon.



Adapted from www.daily.sightline.org's Paper vs. Plastic—the Final Analysis blog by Justin Brant

To learn more about the EarthWISE business assistance program, visit our website at www.mcrecycles.net or give us a call, 503 365 3188. We're eager to work with you.

If you would like to be added to the Sustainable Business Bulletin email list send an email to: Earthwise@co.marion.or.us with "add Sustainable Business Bulletin" in the subject box.

To be removed from the list, put "remove" in the subject box.

