

WEDDINGS AND SUSTAINABILITY: A CASE STUDY EXAMINING GREEN
BUSINESS PRACTICES AT GREEN WITH ENVY EVENTS

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ABSTRACT

WEDDINGS AND SUSTAINABILITY: A CASE STUDY EXAMINING GREEN BUSINESS PRACTICES AT GREEN WITH ENVY EVENTS

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Green with Envy Events is a sustainable event planning company based out of San Diego, California. This company was used when conducting a case study examining sustainable wedding practices. The research was gathered using internet research, academic journals, and information from the Green with Envy Events website. The company demographics were examined and the company's sustainable practices were analyzed by comparing various aspects to a complete checklist. It was found that there are numerous sustainable materials and services that can be used, that sustainable materials and services are a better option than non-sustainable materials and services, and that the company utilizes these practices in all of their events. Green with Envy Events is an excellent example of a sustainable events company. Recommendations include updating the website, including more photos of sustainable examples, and becoming more active on social media sites.

Keywords: sustainability, green, wedding, event, environment, San Diego

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Background of Study

In the past decade, green practices and sustainable materials have become increasingly more prominent, specifically in the realm of special events. Although many environmental scientists have been informing the population of the consequences of global warming and rapid resource consumption for years, there has been a sudden surge of international environmental interest that has spanned from individual households to large corporations. The American Institute of Physics (AIP, 2013) estimates that the first serious speculations regarding the harm that global warming could cause happened in 1965 at the Causes of Climate Change conference in Boulder, Colorado. Almost 40 years passed before citizens began to realize that global warming is a real and serious issue. Scientists have suggested ways to lessen one's "carbon footprint" as well as an entire corporation's impact on the Earth, and introducing sustainable practices and materials into events is a small yet meaningful step. As Dickson and Arcodia (2009) stated, "Properly managed, events can recycle excess materials and supplies in useful and meaningful ways, and they can do so using methods that result in minimal impacts to the environment" (p. 236). While mega-events such as the Olympics and international conferences have begun enforcing green standards among planners, sustainable techniques in weddings can also make an impact without compromising the couple's vision. There are numerous adjustments that can ultimately lower the carbon footprint a wedding can produce and instill motivations in wedding guests to bring these practices

into everyday life. Society is slowly recognizing the negative impact that is being left on the earth but without applying these practices, no improvements will be made to provide a healthy, sustainable environment for generations to come. The purpose of this study was to examine sustainable wedding practices at Green with Envy Events.

Review of Literature

Research for this review of literature was conducted at Robert E. Kennedy Library on the campus of California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. In addition to books and other resources, the following online databases were utilized: Academic Search Elite, Hospitality and Tourism Complete, and Expanded Academic ASAP.

Event planners can attribute many of the advances in their field to research gathered regarding the sustainability of events. There is little research on the subject; however, the research that is available for public viewing offers ideas and benefits of “green washing” events in both the public and private industries. The recent international interest in the health of our environment has prompted speculation on how damaging and wasteful events can be. Because of this, many organizations are implementing new guidelines that require certain materials or regulations that will promote sustainability in events without compromising the design or success. This review of literature will provide insight on the promotion of sustainable event practices in the industry, the importance of sustainable facility and venue management, and will identify the factors that lead to a lucrative and sustainable event.

The event industry is frequently utilized in private and public settings and those who may not have previously been introduced to its importance are becoming more familiar with the incorporation of events. However, the introduction of environmentally friendly events is a relatively new concept. Morelli (2011) described environmental sustainability as “a condition of balance, resilience, and interconnectedness that allows human society to satisfy its needs while neither exceeding the capacity of its supporting ecosystems to continue to regenerate the services necessary to meet those needs...” (p. 23). This newfound knowledge has captured the attention of many, including environmentalists and scientists alike. According to Dickson and Arcodia (2009), “...the event industry has attracted attention and there is now an increasing international debate about how to encourage the industry to become more environmentally sustainable” (p. 236). There have been numerous ideas offered that would assist with the sustainable aspects of an event, but the difficulty is enforcing these guidelines among event planners and corporations. In the wedding industry, individual planners have the option to utilize these guidelines and make the ultimate decision to incorporate them into their weddings. One way of enforcing this is to implement a set of policies that must be adhered to in order to be a part of a certain professional organization. However, as Dickson and Arcodia (2009) state, “...some of the suggestions provided in these guides were not entirely feasible or economical for all practitioners” (p. 242). Specifically for weddings, many venues do not allow any alterations to their basic equipment or set up and would not be willing to allow a planner to adhere to these guidelines. Adema and Roehl (2010) remind planners that it is critical to acknowledge that event design is not static. Different

aspects must be considered for each individual event. Also, not all planners have the desire to become more sustainable. Dickson and Arcodia (2009) explained:

Reading guides and this sort of information may have the opposite effect to what is intended, as some may be put off by the level of effort/responsibility that is needed or develop perceptions of the cost increases that are more than what they may actually be in reality. (p. 242)

However, a more basic set of rules that could then be adjusted to fit specific situations may be a more fruitful alternative. Benjamin (2011) adds that “...more often than not, clients are now adding sustainability to the agenda when discussing events” (p. 30).

Enforcing education on the matter may prompt a more serious look into creating universal policies and inevitably successfully “green wash” the events industry.

While there are numerous aspects of event planning that can be adjusted to meet sustainable standards, the venue is by far the most effective way to decrease an event’s carbon footprint. Koukiasa (2011) reaffirms this by stating, “...it can be argued that the venue where the event will take place is the most influencing factor regarding its overall sustainability value” (p. 218). Many venues have begun to take measures towards greening their facilities and in the corporate world, many conference centers and hotels advertise their sustainable facilities and attract a customer base that is looking to hold green meetings. Taks, Chalip, Green, Kesenne, and Martyn (2009) determined that “It is the experience of the destination itself that is most likely to result in flow-on tourism” and “event organizers...should blend the event experience with the destination” (p. 123). This means that incorporating sustainable aspects into an event facility can be the most important aspect of the event as it will leave lasting impressions that will be memorable

and bring people back to the venue, thus increasing profits. Another benefit, as Koukiasa explains, is "...a sustainable venue design approach can broaden and support the venue's group of stakeholders by strengthening the facility's reputation, stimulating the local economy, contributing to regeneration possibilities, as well as providing legacy value" (p. 219). These aspects demonstrate the benefits of a sustainable facility, as it provides advantages for both the facility and the event planner. Companies looking to rebrand themselves as an environmentally friendly organization purposefully seek out venues that offer these sustainable aspects. Building a reputation that incorporates that fact can enhance the venue's reputation and attract clientele who also hold these values. Koukiasa (2009) explains how to reach a cost effective and ecologically aware facility through: "metering, monitoring, and targeting, reporting and evaluation, and benefits" (p. 222). Metering, monitoring, and targeting is a paraphrase for benchmarking and creating data to show a facility's progress through their green washing. Reporting and evaluation is effective in showing the facility's potential clientele the sustainable assets that they offer and how it may compare with other similar venues. This environmental performance report can also be evaluated by an organization that can certify the venue is reaching sustainable standards. Benefits can mean reaching a wider client base and demonstrating resource efficiency that can save both money and time. Draper, Dawson, and Casey (2011) reinforce this importance of a sustainable event when they discuss the five important themes in an event, the second being site selection. Draper et al. reference the research of Crouch and Louviere (2004), which states, "Most of the information on site selection relied on anecdotal and experiential evidence, surveys, reviews, and conceptual studies" (p. 119). The integration of sustainable facility management is essential to the

success of a booming green industry and simple studies as stated by Crouch and Louviere can bring forth improvements that could ultimately be the push towards a sustainable facility. Even without authorizing conceptual studies, simply implementing and becoming LEED certified is a beginning point in establishing a venue as a green facility. Murphy (2010) summarizes the requirements for LEED certification:

There are different levels of certification ranging from just plain certified to silver, gold and platinum. But even the lowest level of certification requires investment in green technologies for both new construction and existing structures. New buildings must be built with green materials and to strict standards of efficiency while existing buildings must invest in retrofitting projects that significantly reduce energy and water usage. All LEED certified buildings must also improve indoor air quality, maintain extensive recycling programs and reduce the overall carbon footprint of the building. (p. 31)

LEED certification is becoming a pillar in being recognized as a green facility and is a guarantee to begin building a reputation in the green business industry. Incorporating green practices and materials will appeal to event managers, showcase long term benefits in both costs and renovations, and build a strong reputation for an advancing events industry.

The desire to incorporate sustainable practices into events varies depending on the event planner and the desire to present the event as sustainable. There are numerous incentives, however not all companies require planners to follow sustainable guidelines; rather they focus on economic stability. Merrilees and Marles (2011) state “The motivation to adopt or not to adopt environmental practices within business operations

falls into two main categories, namely ethical or commercial considerations” (p. 362).

The demand for sustainable events is constantly increasing, however not all planners can see the benefits, either ethical or commercial, that can be associated with green washing an event. Lawton (2011) explains, “...event managers were overwhelmingly concerned with physical and safety risks at the expense of other risks (i.e., social and environmental)” (p. 313). Especially with events that have a large amount of attendees, planners seem to bypass sustainable practices in fear that they will have to sacrifice design in order to establish this reputation. When looking at the examples of weddings, many couples decide that a green wedding is not economical or necessary because they are only hosting one event. However, numerous weddings happen every weekend in individual cities and the amounts of waste and carbon emissions can quickly add up. A motivation that drives many planners or companies to host green events is that they want to establish a reputation of being trendy and sustainable. Lawton (2011) explores a large scale corporate event that was “geared towards maximizing patron and exhibitor satisfaction” (p. 314). She states, “No evidence of green washing existed since this event did not purport to be or profile itself as a green event according to their policies, marketing literature, or website” (p.314). It is obvious in an example such as this that numerous companies will expect to gain the same profits or business regardless of updating their business techniques to maintain or establish a new customer base.

Incorporating sustainable techniques into business operations is key to ensuring a current and impressive portfolio that will attract up and coming businesses to partner with. However, some organizations thrive in a sustainable mindset and attract a large market based on this event advertising. Laing and Frost (2010) looked into the Byron Bay

International East Coast Blues and Roots Festival and found that they follow six strategic goals: “building institutional capacity, a culturally relevant festival, a festival that respects, transforms, and grows local community, a zero waste festival, carbon neutral initiatives, and a festival site that is a functioning, healthy, and natural ecosystem” (p. 262). This festival is an exceptional example of strategies and guidelines that can be put into place in order to successfully execute a sustainable event. There are numerous factors that assist in creating a green event but implementing small changes is a good start to revitalizing a reputation in an exceedingly aware industry.

Practices that lead to a sustainable event, the necessity of utilizing a green venue, and different methods that may sway event planners or companies towards a sustainable event are all useful ways that work towards creating a successful environmental management event plan. Sustainable events are the future of the events industry and these articles provide the starting point for introducing this concept to companies and event planners alike.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine sustainable wedding practices at Green with Envy Events.

Research Questions

This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What are sustainable wedding materials and services that can be used?

2. Why are sustainable materials and services a better option than non-sustainable materials and services?
3. Does Green with Envy Events provide sustainable materials and services regardless of the consumer's interest in sustainable practices?

Delimitations

This study was delimited to the following parameters:

1. Information on sustainable practices was gathered from Green with Envy Events and internet research.
2. Availability and use of sustainable materials and services were analyzed.
3. The data were collected during the fall of 2013.
4. Information for this study was gathered using internet research, journal articles, and a case study method.

Chapter 2

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine sustainable wedding practices at Green with Envy Events. This chapter includes the following sections: description of context, description of instrument, and description of procedures.

Description of Context

A case study was conducted on Green with Envy Events in San Diego. Green with Envy Events is one of approximately 350 wedding planning companies in San Diego County.

Wedding Wire (2013) features premier wedding planning companies based out of San Diego County. These companies work out Carlsbad, Chula Vista, Coronado, Del Mar, El Cajon, Encinitas, Escondido, Imperial Beach, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, National City, Oceanside, Poway, San Diego, San Marcos, Santee, Solana Beach, and Vista. (Wedding Wire, 2013). Green with Envy Events, listed on Wedding Wire, is based out of San Diego but works with couples across San Diego County. There are 3,177,063 people residing in San Diego County, 47.6% of which are white (United States Census Bureau). 32.7% are Hispanic or Latino, and Asian people account for 11.6%. Persons under 18 years old also amount to 22.9% which leaves a high percentage (almost 80%) who are eligible to be married.

Description of Instrument

The instrument utilized in this study was a case study matrix developed by the researcher (see Appendix A). The matrix was developed by considering the details necessary when determining whether a company integrates sustainable practices or not. The matrix lists various ways to be sustainable, including use of sustainable materials, use of sustainable services, offer of rentals, offer of full or day of coordination, offer of a green checklist, potential partnerships with sustainable companies, goals of working towards sustainable business practices, and green web hosting. The matrix then gives the option to provide specifics and details about the factor being analyzed.

A pilot study was implemented in order to determine the success of the existing matrix. When examining various companies and comparing them with the matrix, there were changes made so that the matrix was more functional. Using three events companies based out of San Diego County, each aspect was determined using these options. The first two companies that were analyzed produced results that suggested altering the matrix to add in partnerships with sustainable companies. Working towards becoming more sustainable in business practices was also added to the matrix. Lastly, the matrix was adjusted to add if the website is hosted by a green web host. This pilot study was altered throughout the process to create a more accurate portrayal of San Diego County event coordination companies.

Description of Procedures

A case study was conducted on Green with Envy Events in San Diego. The instrument utilized in this study was a case study matrix developed by the researcher. The

timeline of this research began with analyzing the company demographics. This summarized the mission and goals of the company and how sustainability is incorporated into each of their events. Once the demographic was analyzed, the researcher began implementing the previously mentioned matrix and compared the information from Green with Envy Events. Numerous adjustments were made in the matrix and these changes were also considered when analyzing Green with Envy Events. This information was qualitative and provided a detailed description of the aspects discussed in the matrix. Sustainable materials, sustainable services, providing rentals, full or day of coordination, green checklists, the partnerships between sustainable companies, goals towards sustainable business practices, and green web hosting were all considered during this process. The end results determined whether the specified company engaged in sustainable practices. The sustainable practices of Green with Envy Events were analyzed through accessing the Green with Envy Events website.

Chapter 3

PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine sustainable wedding practices at Green with Envy Events. A case study approach was utilized to examine Green with Envy Events and their sustainable business practices. This chapter includes the following sections: company background, the green checklist, and sustainable business practices.

Company Background

Green with Envy Events is owned by Carlee Gerardi and Laura Rankin, who graduated from the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising and University of California, Los Angeles, respectively. Green with Envy Events was established in 2009 and is co-dependently managed. Carlee and Laura work as senior event planners and employs assistants to work the day of the event. Weddings that are coordinated by Green with Envy Events occur across San Diego County, including Carlsbad, Chula Vista, Coronado, Del Mar, El Cajon, Encinitas, Escondido, Imperial Beach, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, National City, Oceanside, Poway, San Diego, San Marcos, Santee, Solana Beach, and Vista. Green with Envy Events offers both day of coordination as well as full wedding coordination which begins the planning process numerous months to a year ahead of time. Green with Envy Events also offers a complete green checklist which outlines details and location, food, invitations, transportations, flowers, music and DJ, photography, and waste reduction. Green with Envy Events manages a blog which

displays photos of events, wedding decoration ideas, flower combinations, and ways to make both events and everyday life a little more sustainable.

The Green Checklist

Green with Envy Events provides green services and materials which are outlined on a green checklist posted on their website. Areas that they cover include details and location, food, invitations, transportations, flowers, music and DJ, photography, and waste reduction. The first area of sustainability in events that is covered is the location and venue. They recommend choosing an outdoor location to maximize natural resources and reduce energy consumption or if it must be inside due to the season, choose an LEED certified venue. Consumers can also choose locations close to public transportation which reduces transportation costs and pollution as well as eliminates the risk of drunk driving. Some venues also give a portion of their fees back to the community through museums, park and nature reserves, art galleries, or community centers. Alternative lighting in the venue such as soy, beeswax, or recycled candles or LED/solar lighting can reduce costs and energy. Furthermore, using a venue that already is involved in sustainable business practices ensures that they will assist with creating a green event.

There are many options that can be utilized in regards to food at an event. Organic, seasonal, locally grown, and cruelty-free food is always an option that can be beneficial to incorporate into a menu. Natural and non-processed foods are something that should be considered everyday but can be used at an event to improve the menu. There should always be vegetarian options available for guests who require so. Pre-selected meals and courses can also eliminate leftover food, however if there is leftover

food, it can be donated to local homeless shelters or food banks. Finger foods as appetizers can eliminate the use of utensils, thus reducing the amount of waste. There are numerous catering companies and bakeries in the San Diego area that utilize organic, local food and incorporate sustainability into their business practices. Partnering with or using these companies can make a huge difference in the cost and waste amounts that an event can create.

Alternative invitations are another way to eliminate waste. Using “e-vites,” telephone calls, emails, or social media don’t use any paper or ink and can still convey a tasteful and informative message. Recycled paper can be used if paper invitations are non-negotiable, and to add a twist, one can use seed paper which can be planted into the ground after, producing a variety of flowers or plants. Creating an event website or blog allows the event hosts to inform the guests of all the information they may need as opposed to a limited amount that can fit on an invitation card.

The next area that Green with Envy Events covers in their green checklist is finding sustainable transportation. Choosing a location that is in a nearby proximity to the majority of the guests will reduce transportation costs and pollution. Hosts can also promote alternative travel by utilizing trolleys, public transportation, shuttles, or carpooling. Vehicles that run on alternative fuel, such as biodiesel, are also beneficial to reducing environmental pollution and should be advised. As for flowers, live plants can be utilized and planted in the area to reduce waste that may be caused by leftover flowers. Guests can also take home flowers after the event to put them to use instead of creating more waste. Another alternative is donating them to senior homes or community centers. Using candles, lamps, or other décor instead of flowers can eliminate waste as well.

Working with local vendors is an easy way to bring green practices into a wedding as it stimulates local economy and uses local resources.

There are few ways to improve a sustainable event in regards to music and DJ's but certain details can reduce energy consumption. Alternative energy and eco-speakers can limit energy use as well as hiring a live band instead of a DJ. Supporting local artists is extremely beneficial when organizing a sustainable event. Using an iPod can reduce energy use and lower costs associated with planning an event. Ensuring that music is played at a relatively low volume and is stopped at 10:00pm will reduce noise pollution as well. When hiring a photographer, look for one that incorporates green business practices. Also, avoiding disposable cameras and only using digital photography can reduce energy and costs. Having the photos saved on a computer or hard drive and printing only those that are necessary will reduce ink and paper waste. Hiring local photographers and videographers also stimulates the local economy.

Lastly, waste is a large factor when planning an event. The mantra, "reduce, reuse, recycle" can be applied to everyday life but is especially important in the context of a wedding. Clearly marking recycling bins and garbage bins is a good way to ensure guests will recycle what they can. Outlining that cans and bottles go in one bin, food in another for composting, and paper plates and cups in another should make the distinction clear. Using linen napkins and tablecloths is another great way to reduce waste. Using ceramic plates and glass beverage glasses will reduce waste as they can be reused by multiple parties. All of these factors are necessary in planning a sustainable event and will reduce waste and energy consumption.

Sustainable Business Practices

Green with Envy Events advertises sustainable practices on their website. Their name is the first suggestion that their company relies on sustainable business practices. The introduction to the owners shares their view on events and green practices, which is that events should leave a lasting impression on the guests and not the environment. The company aims to create unique and special events while eliminating large amounts of waste. In regards to the matrix, Green with Envy Events provides sustainable services and materials information on the aforementioned green checklist. Green with Envy Events does not offer rentals through their company, however, have recommendations to work with certain companies once a meeting is scheduled. They offer both full and day of coordination. This company also holds partnerships with other green catering and floral companies which can be detailed when coordinating an event with the company. Examples of these companies include EcoCaters, an organic and sustainable catering company, and Organic Elements, a sustainable floral company. Green with Envy Events recommends working with these fellow sustainable companies in order to lower the carbon footprint of the event and to ensure a completely green event. This company also offers a discounted rate when pairing with these recommended companies.

Green with Envy Events is hosted by a green web hosting company called GreenGeeks. This company is an eco-friendly site which purchases wind energy credits to balance out the power they use to run the site. GreenGeeks ensures they use the most efficient servers as possible to lower energy consumptions and works to operate cool systems in order to lessen the energy it takes to cool down computer systems. In their corporate offices, they recycle all paper, print only what they need, use auto-power off

lighting, and shut down all power systems at night. Many of their employees also telecommute and thus reduce carbon emissions and reduce air pollution. They advertise that companies who use their services run a 300% green website.

Chapter 4

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was targeted towards researching the sustainable business practices utilized by Green with Envy Events. This concluding chapter will include the following: a summary of the study, a discussion of the findings, limitations, conclusions based on research questions, implications of the findings, and recommendations for future research.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine sustainable wedding practices at Green with Envy Events. Green with Envy Events is a San Diego-based events company that focuses primarily on creating and executing sustainable events through green business practices. Information for this study and sustainable wedding practices were gathered from the Green with Envy Events website, internet research, journal articles, and by utilizing a case study method. The data were collected during the fall of 2013. Background information was collected regarding key elements to successful sustainable events, which included the promotion of sustainable event practices in the industry, the importance of sustainable facility and venue management, and identification of the factors that lead to a lucrative and sustainable event.

The method utilized for this study was a case study approach applied alongside a matrix. The researcher began by analyzing the company demographics and then used a pilot study to make any necessary adjustments so that the matrix may function better. The

researcher then determined whether the specified company satisfied the factors listed on the instrument, which in this particular study was a checklist. This qualitative information was compiled and established the results of the case study.

The findings of this case study demonstrated the depth of sustainability that is utilized by Green with Envy Events. Green with Envy Events provides potential clients with a green checklist that offers a variety of sustainable materials and services to employ to ensure a green event. This company offers both full and day of coordination, has lasting partnerships with other green companies that can be recommended to future clients, and the Green with Envy Events website is hosted by a green web hosting site.

Discussion

This case study presented numerous ways to integrate sustainable materials and services into a wedding. These include specifics in details and location, food, invitations, transportations, flowers, music and DJ, photography, and waste reduction. As Benjamin (2011) stated, more planners are adding sustainability to the agenda in events. This is evident in the checklist that is found on Green with Envy Events' website. This checklist provides numerous ways in different aspects of an event to lower energy consumption, lower costs, and reduce carbon footprints. Green with Envy Events discusses this in their mission statement and offers advice on how to accomplish this in their green checklist. Green with Envy Events' checklist also reinforces proof of how important facility selection can be while looking to plan a sustainable event. They establish that using outdoor venues that offer natural décor, LEED certified facilities, and alternative lighting and energy sources are all various ways that choosing the correct venue can make a

difference. This information is supported by Koukiasa (2011) stating that the venue can be the most influential factor regarding overall sustainability. Green with Envy Events' suggestions on sustainable materials and services are maintained by the journal articles researched in the literature review. Overall, the findings are consistent and provide constructive solutions that will benefit a sustainable event.

This tells the researcher that there are numerous ways to integrate sustainable materials and services into events to lower energy consumption, lower costs, and reduce carbon footprints. There are different motivations that can drive event planners to bring sustainable practices into their events, as Merrilees and Marles (2011) explain, mostly ethical or commercial considerations. Regardless of what encourages sustainable practices, the important message is how to improve in each area of an event without raising costs. The researcher has contributed by compiling research that explains the factors of a sustainable event and how to improve each factor. Finding research that discusses the promotion of sustainable event practices in the industry, the importance of sustainable facility and venue management, and identifying the factors that lead to a lucrative and sustainable event provide background information that narrows down how to “green wash” an event. Offering simple sustainable tips to event planners will inspire them to begin making small steps towards sustainable events. Recommendations include continuing to modify the green checklist by adding any new ideas that can make an event more sustainable and adding photos to the website gallery that showcase evidence of sustainability in their events. Adding photos can show event planners what a difference utilizing these sustainable tips can make both in function and form.

This case study presents evidence that sustainable materials and services are a better option than non-sustainable materials and services because they lower costs, reduce energy usage, reduce carbon emissions, and provide a unique event that can be neutral or beneficial to the environment. Adding sustainable materials and services to events are beneficial in numerous ways. In addition to lowering costs and reducing energy usage and carbon emissions, environmental sustainability is becoming a trend that many people value when judging an event. The event industry is notorious for massive quantities of waste, and utilizing recycling and composting is a valuable way to reduce waste and exhibit sustainable aspects to attendees. Adding a recycling and composting bin next to garbage cans will show attendees that the event they are attending is working towards environmental sustainability. Because society is becoming exceedingly aware of their environmental footprint, some organizations thrive in a sustainable mindset and attract a large market based on sustainable event advertising. There is a population of people who attend events or frequent places that advertise they are green and sustainable. This provides the opportunity to market towards those people and hold a unique event that will provide lasting impressions. As the website states, the goal is to leave lasting impressions on the guests and not on the environment. This analysis establishes that sustainable materials and services are a better option than non-sustainable materials and services.

This examination tells the researcher that there are numerous benefits to incorporating sustainable materials into events. The obvious benefits are lowering energy consumptions, lowering costs, and reducing the carbon footprint. In addition, there is an opportunity to provide a unique experience that will showcase easy sustainable ways to improve an event. This can leave a lasting impression on event guests and inspire them to

make similar changes both in everyday life or when planning an event of their own. All of these findings are confirmed by background information on the benefit of sustainable events as well as providing ways to better an event through sustainable techniques.

Recommendations include that future research should examine the financial differences between sustainability based event companies and event companies that do not employ sustainable practices. Budgets are a necessary factor to consider when planning an event and showing that adding sustainable practices will not raise costs will encourage event planners to utilize various techniques that have been offered.

Green with Envy Events provides sustainable materials and services regardless of the consumer's interest in sustainable practices, as showcased by the website. This company, as previously stated, is a sustainable based events company. The name automatically provides insight into the types of events they hold and delving into the website continues to show evidence that Green with Envy Events works hard to uphold their reputation of a sustainable company. Their mission statement is "celebrations should leave a lasting impression on the guests, not the planet." Their goals state that they produce stylish events that minimize the impact on our earth without sacrificing any of the client's personal style and vision. They also strive to eliminate waste wherever possible. As Dickson and Arcodia (2009) state, many of the suggestions regarding how to make an event sustainable are not feasible due to high costs. However, Green with Envy Events incorporates most if not all of these factors into their events regardless of the financial burden it may cause to the company. Green with Envy Events is also hosted by a green web hosting site. This site purchases wind energy credits to balance out their power usage and employs sustainable practices in their corporate office. This site

advertises that those who use their website run a 300% green website. While this particular company works to uphold their reputation, many companies do not market themselves as a green company or make small efforts to maintain a green status. However, Green with Envy Events markets themselves as a green company and thus incorporates sustainable materials and services into their events whenever possible.

This information tells the researcher that Green with Envy Events is a company that prides themselves on their sustainable business practices. They inform potential consumers of their mission and goals upon entering the website and provide a green checklist to those who may need it, regardless if they hire the company for their services. Green with Envy Events markets to those who are interested in planning an event with the goal of leaving a small impact on the environment. They also work to provide tasteful and unique events that may inspire attendees to bring sustainable practices into their own lives. Recommendations include updating the Green with Envy Events website to become more appealing to the younger generation by updating the theme and adding social media links. Other recommendations include becoming more active on the website's blog and social media outlets to continue notifying followers of their green practices. Lastly, the researcher recommends that the company considers explaining the significance of using a green web hosted website.

There are multiple limitations that could hinder the results of this study. Research of this subject was restricted to online means and the quantity and quality of the information may have been impacted. The researcher was not able to communicate directly with the company so there may have been valuable information that was not included in the study. Because the researcher worked in the events industry at the time of

this study, the findings may have been impacted through subjective bias. Lastly, because sustainability in events is a relatively new concept, there was little academic research available on the subject. Despite the limitations, this study gives some insight into a successful sustainable events company that incorporates sustainability into all aspects of their business. This study should not be generalized to all event planning companies.

In conclusion, this case study was extremely insightful in analyzing the techniques and products that accompany a purely sustainable events company. Green with Envy Events was a valuable resource in examining business practices that produce quality, unique, and sought after events. The information that this company provides to the general public as well as the techniques they incorporate into their events including materials and services are extremely helpful in both events and daily life. These aspects combined result in Green with Envy Events being an excellent representation of a sustainable events company.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. There are a variety of sustainable wedding materials and services that can be applied to specific aspects of events such as details and location, food, invitations, transportations, flowers, music and DJ, photography, and waste reduction.
2. Sustainable materials and services are a better option than non-sustainable materials and services because they lower costs, reduce energy usage, reduce carbon emissions, and provide a unique event that can be neutral or beneficial to the environment.

3. Green with Envy Events provides sustainable materials and services regardless of the consumer's interest in sustainable practices because they are a green based company whose mission states that they desire their events to leave a lasting impression on the guests and not the environment.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Become more active on the Green with Envy Events blog and various social media outlets.
2. Update the Green with Envy Events website to become more appealing to the younger generation by updating the theme and adding social media links.
3. Add photos to the website gallery that showcase evidence of sustainability in their events.
4. Consider explaining the significance of using a green web hosted website.
5. Continue to modify the green checklist by adding any new ideas that can make an event more sustainable.
6. Future research should examine the financial differences between sustainability based event companies and event companies that do not employ sustainable practices.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Instrument

Incorporation of sustainability based on website	Details and specifics
Use of sustainable materials	
Use of sustainable services	
Offer of rentals	
Offering full or day of coordination	
Green “checklist”	
Partnerships with sustainable companies	
Working towards sustainable business practices	
Green web hosting	