

Submission: The 2016 UFI Sustainable Development Awards

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To: Mr Christian Druart

From: Olivia Bruce, Marketing and Sustainability Manager
Olivia@cticc.co.za
The Cape Town International Convention Centre
Convention Square, 1 Lower Long Street, Cape Town
South Africa, 8000

UFI Sustainable Development Award

Best actions to engage participants around sustainability

Scope and Background

The Cape Town International Convention Centre has prided itself on creating extraordinary experiences for the past 13 years. Guided by core values of passion, integrity, innovation and excellence the centre aims to be a leading conference and exhibition destination worldwide. As a key player in raising the profile of Cape Town, South Africa as a desirable business and tourist destination, the centre also commits to robust social and environmental sustainability actions in order to promote responsible business and grow economic impact in the region and country. As such, the centre encourages the incorporation of sustainability principles at every touch point – from the management of the venue, to relationships with key community partners, to engagement with the centre's clients, employees and key suppliers.

In order to commit fully to sustainability, the CTICC has prioritised the triple bottom line: economic, environmental, as well as social sustainability. In doing so, the centre has achieved much progress over the past 5 years and continues to prioritise and develop new strategies. However, as a venue, the CTICC realised the need to engage with its clients in order to take sustainability to the next level.

Because the CTICC is a venue, clients play an enormous role in the continuation and delivery of sustainability objectives: they are the end users of electricity; the producers of waste; and creators of jobs. Due to this the CTICC developed and distributed information and resources to clients in order to increase awareness around sustainability. Secondly, sustainability team identified key clients – usually repeat events – to collaborate with on sustainability pilot projects. Over and above this, the Waste Champions Team – a interdepartmental group responsible for waste management at the CTICC – plays a key role during events.

The CTICC has carried out these projects with various event types, but for the purposes of this award, the examples of exhibition clients and projects will particularly be highlighted.

Detailed Actions/Solutions

Resources for client participation¹

The first actions that the CTICC took in order to engage exhibition clients around sustainability were to develop and distribute relevant resources. The idea behind developing these was to raise awareness amongst clients of the CTICC's sustainability commitment and provide information to encourage clients to follow suit.

With regards to waste, specifically, recycling is included in the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which are given to exhibition clients, and waste removal is charged separately per load. This encourages a reduction of waste from the clients' side, as well as subsidising the costs of recycling which otherwise would not be financially sustainable for

¹ Please see Annexure A for examples of some of the resources.

the CTICC. Clients are also rewarded for their own efforts by receiving a recycling certificate from the CTICC which specifies the amount of waste which has been recycled after their event.

In addition to SOPs, clients are given various brochures and other marketing collateral in order to assist them on the process. The CTICC Client Manual contains a section on sustainability and describes in detail the processes and commitments the CTICC has made. Two additional resources are used to encourage clients to take a step further and initiate a sustainable event: a sustainability Frequently Asked Questions document that covers various different aspects in detail, including waste, energy, water and social responsibility; and an Event Greening Checklist that helps clients with simple tasks that they can use to make their event more sustainable.

The resources made available to the clients allow those who are particularly committed or even vaguely interested to incorporate sustainability into their exhibition.

Waste Champions Team

Waste management during large events and exhibitions can be complex, particularly in a country where recycling is a relatively new practise. However, the centre realised the need to engage with various parts of the value-chain in order to fully maximise its own waste system to divert waste from landfill.

Pairing up with its in-house service providers (cleaning service and waste disposal companies), the CTICC created the Waste Champions Team at the end of 2013. The objective of this group was to have the relevant people from across the entire waste process together on a frequent basis to discuss waste challenges and achievements and also to iron out any difficulties and information in the system. As a result of this team, which is headed up by the Maintenance Manager, several successful waste initiatives at the CTICC have been implemented and improved.

Exhibition waste is something of a challenge in the industry, especially due to the fact that waste has to be dealt with quickly (particularly during breakdown, where there are short deadlines for break-down teams). Over and above this, waste streams can be unpredictable in an exhibition, due to the diversity of exhibitors. As such, the CTICC needed a solution to deal with exhibition waste quickly, effectively, and whilst diverting as much waste from landfill as possible.

As the above has demonstrated, the CTICC implemented innovative solutions on the entire value-chain in order to address the issue of exhibition waste. As such, patrons were made aware of waste separation front-of-house; cleaning and facilities staff were able to fully understand and comply with the system back-of-house; waste room staff implemented a bar-coding system in order to accurately record waste; and clients were made aware of the waste system and given incentives in order to minimise their waste. These measures, collectively, resulted in the below diversion rates from landfill, as demonstrated in the following section.

Key pilot projects

Having developed resources for clients, and created the in-house capacity to work effectively on greening exhibitions through the waste champions team, the CTICC set out to work with key clients on targeted pilot projects. The idea was to work with clients to enhance their experience and giving the clients value-adds whilst minimising environmental impact and maximising social impact, in order to encourage the active participation in sustainability. During 2015, the CTICC ran 4 notable exhibition pilot projects:

- World Travel Market Africa
- World Economic Forum on Africa and Grow Africa Summit
- World Veterinary Poultry Association congress
- Cape Wine Event

The table below describes what was piloted with each exhibition:

World Travel Market Africa (April 2015)
The World Travel Market Africa were aiming to run their event as an "energy neutral" event and brought carbon credits. The CTICC therefore was responsible for providing accurate energy data for the client based on the specific venues that were used.
World Economic Forum on Africa and Grow Africa Summit (June 2015)
The CTICC collaborated with the Western Cape Industrial Symbiosis programme (WISP) to run a waste reduction and diversion project.
World Veterinary Poultry Association Congress (September 2015)
The exhibition component of the congress consisted of various large stands that were provided by international clients, and as such were not going to be re-used. As such, the CTICC collaborated with the client to provide an extra skip for recyclable stands.
Cape Wine (September 2015)
The client, a large exhibition showcasing wine from the Western Cape, approached the CTICC and WISP to run a waste reduction and diversion project.

Results

The CTICC's effort with regards to engaging their clients to run more sustainable exhibitions has consisted of several aspects. Due to the fact that the centre is simply a venue, a large amount of sustainability impact is, technically, out of the CTICC's control. However, due to the concerted efforts that the CTICC is making, the centre is beginning to make progress with regards to assisting events to become more environmentally and socially responsible.

The resources produced for clients result in the clients' added awareness of the CTICC's sustainability principles and commitments, whilst offering simple suggestions for them to take forward the idea and implement it in their exhibition.

The CTICC also took an active stance with regards to events, and collaborated with clients that either showed interest or, were willing to participate in pilot projects. The notable exhibition examples, as mentioned above, were generally large successes.

The table below indicates some of the results of the pilot projects run with specific events:

World Travel Market Africa (April 2015)
The client was very pleased and impressed by the CTICC's accurate data recording mechanism.
World Economic Forum on Africa and Grow Africa Summit
Consolidated effort throughout the conference resulted in a fantastic impact of 83% diversion from landfill and R200k economic spinoff based on the goods that were recycled.
Client was very happy with result and asked for a thorough follow up and knowledge-sharing session to understand the project's applicability for international events. A full report was produced.
World Veterinary Poultry Association Congress
The CTICC engaged with WISP to find a solution provider (a small furniture business) and managed to ensure that the stand was recycled.
Cape Wine
The event achieved a desirable 75% diversion from landfill and a carbon saving based on the waste diversion. Full report was produced.

In particular, the case of the World Economic Forum on Africa is worth noting. The event, which consisted of a combined conference and exhibition, took place from the 2 – 6th June 2015 at the CTICC, incorporating the Grow Africa Summit. In collaboration with the Western Cape Industrial Symbiosis Programme (WISP), the CTICC focused on separation of recyclable from non-recyclable and compostable waste, as well as “upcycling” valuable waste such as wood. The project was a trial-run for an effective and concerted effort toward triple-bottom-line sustainability at the CTICC.

The project was an overwhelming success by three major counts: firstly, the event achieved an 83% diversion from landfill rate; secondly, this diversion is predicted to create an estimated over R 200 000 economic spin off for solution providers (and thus the Western Cape economy). Finally, the client was extremely satisfied with the result, and even requested that the learnings from the CTICC are shared with the organising committee of the main WEF in Davos in assisting them to obtain their ISO 20121 (sustainable events management) certification.

Conclusion

As demonstrated above, the CTICC believes it deserves the recognition of the UFI Sustainable Development Award for the continued active stance that it takes with its exhibition clients, in order to create greater awareness to, and commitment around, sustainability. The results are increased awareness in the industry as a whole.

Annexure A: Example of the CTICC's "Event Greening Checklist"

Full PDF Available from CTICC's Website: <http://www.cticc.co.za/green-your-event>

sustainability checklist for events

The CTICC strives to support the implementation of events in a sustainable manner. Please speak to your Event Executive with regards to your specific requirements. The following should be considered when hosting an event at the CTICC.



Planning

You need to have a plan on how you want to go green and a team to implement this.

- Do you have an environmental policy for your event? If so, please submit it to your Event Executive to ensure co-ordination.
- Do you have a green team or champion in place for your event? This really helps to ensure that your event greening is implemented in a practical manner.
- Have your staff received training around event greening practices and principles? The Event Greening Forum provides on-going training if you are interested.



Eco-Procurement

Procurement of products and services have a big influence on event greening and help support our local economy.

- Have you given preference to locally manufactured products and services to help build our local economy?
- Have you given preference to environmentally friendly products or services to reduce your environmental footprint of the event?
- Have you considered how you can REDUCE, RE-USE and RECYCLE when doing procurement for your event? Avoid goods that are excessively packaged and buy in bulk where possible. Avoid the use of single use disposable products such as polystyrene cups.



Energy efficiency

Electricity consumption has a huge impact on the carbon footprint of an event and at the CTICC we aim to be energy efficient.

- Would you like your lights to be switched to 50% during build-up and break down of events? Please arrange this with your Event Executive prior to the event to ensure that it is done on time.
- Would you prefer natural light, with the blinds lifted, instead of switching on lights in the venue? (where practical)
- Would you prefer natural ventilation, depending on the practicalities of the venue and its size
- Did you request and ensure that all unnecessary equipment (specifically at exhibitions) are switched off overnight



Waste Minimisation

The waste at an event can have a significant visual impact and needs to be handled with care.

- Would you prefer jugs or water coolers as opposed to the provision of disposable bottled water
- Would you prefer to have a multi-bin system implemented for your event
- Would you prefer that we use compostable cups and plates in our risk kitchen? This would require the provision of a compost bin to ensure that this is composted and not simply sent to landfill.
- Would you prefer to receive water in recyclable glass bottles from our in-house water bottling plant or water in plastic bottles from an external source



Food and beverages

The food consumed has a large impact on events and needs to be taken into consideration. Speak to your Event Executive about our menu options.

- Would you prefer local - seasonal and organic produce
- Would you prefer to focus on the provision of vegetarian food, or at least provide a vegetarian option with a meat option
- Would you prefer to promote healthy meal options, such as seasonal fruit platters, low GI and low fat food choices



Exhibitions

The venue, exhibition organiser and exhibitors all have a role to play to ensure that greening is implemented at an exhibition.

- Did you ensure that the 'green' message is clear and simple in the exhibitor manual
- Did you ensure that your banners and signs are generic wherever possible so that they can be reused in the future
- Did you ensure that the inserts into visitor bags were kept to a minimum or give delegates the option to choose what they would like (i.e. not giving tourist maps of Cape Town to local residents)
- Did you request your stand builders and exhibitors to provide energy efficient lights on the stands