



# UFI Sustainability Development Award 2017

**Category: Best Sustainable Exhibiting**

**Entry:** Scan Display

**Project:** The South African National Convention Bureau's Sustainability Village at Meetings Africa 2017

*Finalist Submission*



# 1 Background



# Background

## The Show

Meetings Africa is an exhibition focused on developing Africa as a prime destination for the global conferencing and events industry. Attendees include international buyers, local professional conference organisers, and events companies based throughout the continent and globally.

## The Brief

The South African National Convention Bureau, the owner of Meetings Africa, chose *Sustainability* as the theme for 2017. They decided to do away with the 'pause' meeting areas that were previously incorporated into the show, and replaced them with the 'Sustainability Village', showcasing a number of local arts and crafts vendors.

## Background

### The Concept

The Sustainability Village used a gift voucher concept, whereby hosted buyers and speakers were given a voucher and could choose a gift from one of the local vendors marketing their goods at Meetings Africa.



The gift voucher concept was first introduced to the local market at the International Federation of Exhibition and Event Services (IFES) Master Class, which took place at the Cape Town International Convention Centre in 2016.

This approach circumvents the problem associated with event gifts – they are often unwanted and end up as waste. This is not because event gifts are not thoughtful, but because they are (through necessity) bought in bulk and simply cannot satisfy everyone's tastes and needs.

## The Supplier

Scan Display strives to be a leader in the Southern African exhibition and display industry, not only in terms of delivering the highest quality service and products, but by doing so in a sustainable and environmentally-friendly manner. Therefore, we worked closely with a local sustainability association, the Event Greening Forum (EGF), to develop a solution that ensured that the Sustainability Village was not only 'green' in its design and structure, but also in its concept.



In order to achieve this, the EGF sourced local vendors from within a 50km radius of Johannesburg who produced a range of locally-made, African-inspired items. The vendors displayed their goods and marketed them to hosted buyers. This allowed the Meetings Africa team to support local SMMEs (Small Medium and Micro-Sized Enterprises) while giving the hosted buyers the opportunity to choose a gift that meant something to them.



## 2 Stand Design

## Stand Design

A modular design was used for the Sustainability Village. The stand was designed in such a way that it could be re-used in different configurations and different stand sizes at future exhibitions.

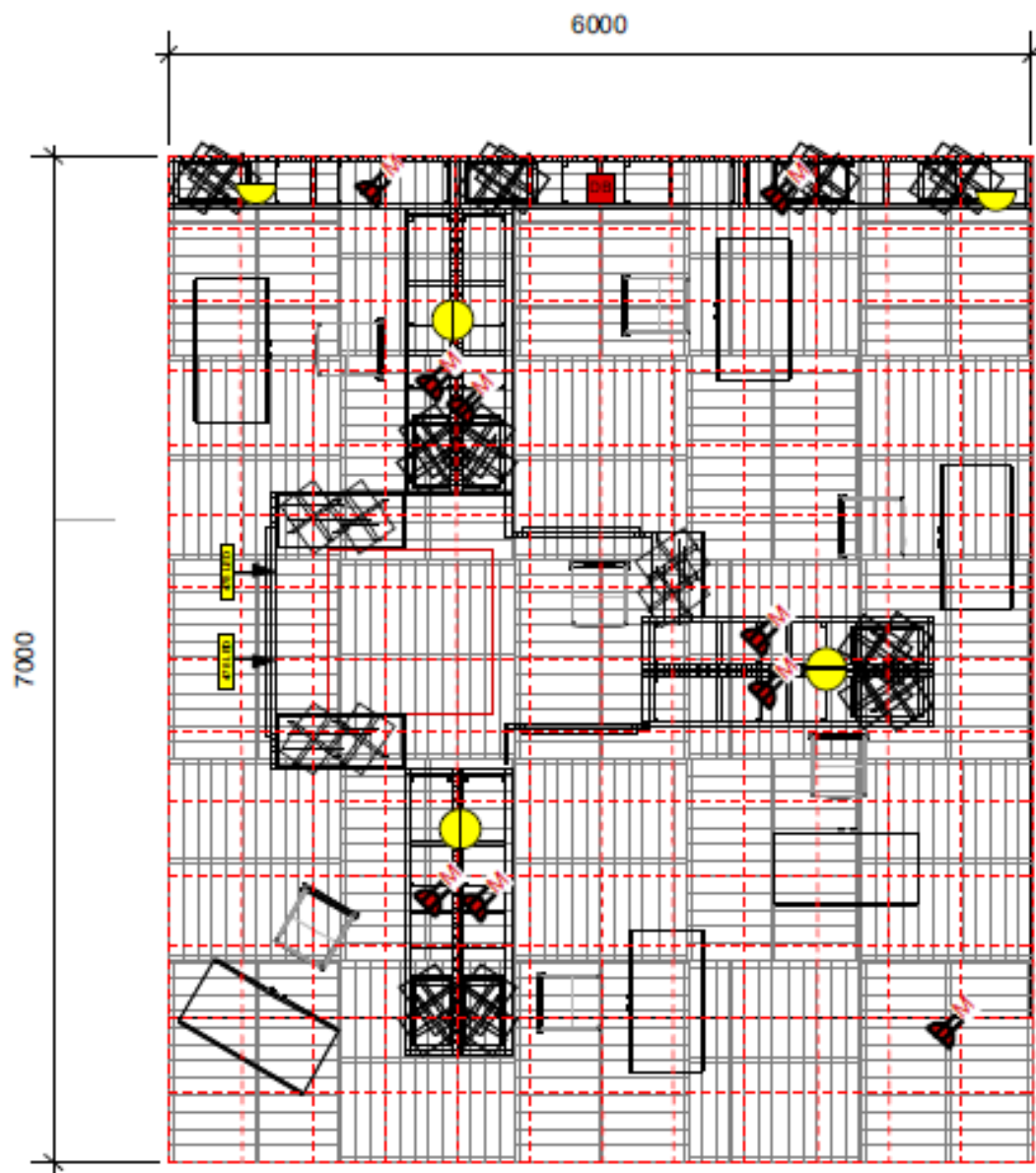


The floors of the Sustainability Village were created from wooden pallets. These were originally sourced in 2014 from a warehouse in Johannesburg that no longer needed them. The wooden wall structures were created from pine and have since been rented out as part of Scan Display's custom stock.

All custom elements have been reabsorbed into Scan Display's stock. This allows for re-use, minimising the impact on the environment.









Raw pine was chosen as the stand material, avoiding the use of any paint or harmful chemicals. The raw pine was sourced from a local Johannesburg supplier.

LED lighting was used on the stand to decrease energy consumption.

Local plant hire company, Treemendous, supplied Dietes Grandiflora (also known as the African Iris) which is indigenous to South Africa. These plants, in conjunction with the wooden elements, gave a natural, earthy feel to the Sustainability Village.







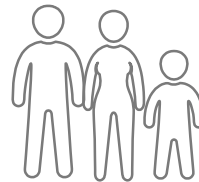
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# Economic, Social and Environmental Impact

## Economic, Social and Environmental Impact

The Sustainability Village generated economic benefits for the vendors who sold their goods and marketed themselves at this high-profile event, which attracted over 300 qualified hosted buyers from around the world.

All vendors were carefully selected to ensure that they both operated from and manufactured their goods within a 50km radius of Gauteng. Therefore, they were creating employment for people from local communities. The vendors empower disadvantaged communities through skills-sharing and job creation.





The vendors that were selected for Meetings Africa 2017 included:

**Pone Creative** supplied handmade notebooks from various local crafters, all inspired by African culture but with a contemporary twist.

**The Skills Village 2030** supplied a range of unique jewellery and homeware.



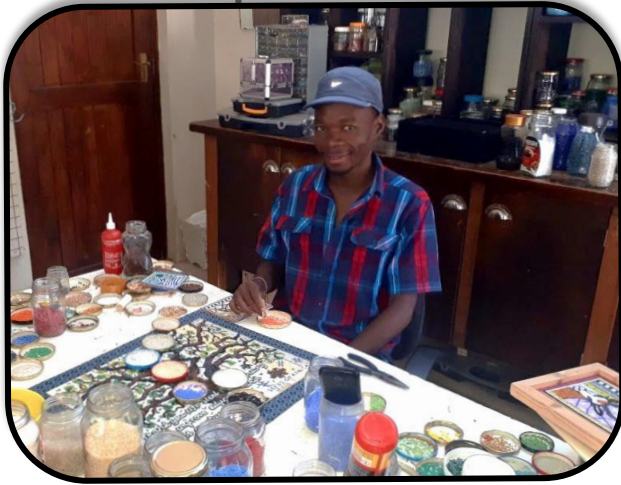


**Jacobs Well Economic Development** runs a community-based sewing centre, which provides skills development and employment opportunities for around 35 ladies at a time. They create a range of corporate gifts, handbags and laptop bags.

**Little Green Number** recycles billboards into bags. Their products are 100% handmade, durable and weather resistant.







**The Bead House** was established in 2007 as a self-help initiative. It provides the marketplace, skills, training, support and raw materials necessary to enable the creation of unique and vibrant art.

**uBuntu Crafts** supplied a wide range of unique crafts and beautiful wares, handmade locally by master weavers and crafters.





The planet was also protected by reducing gifting waste, and limiting transport requirements through local procurement.

The South African National Convention Bureau procured Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) to power the Sustainability Village. Scan Display and the South African National Convention Bureau purchased trees, which were planted by Food & Trees for Africa in a local community, to offset the carbon emissions generated from creating the Sustainability Village.



The different sections of the Sustainability Village stand were prebuilt at the Scan Display factory in Johannesburg and were delivered to the venue 17km away using a 3-ton truck. Rigid planning schedules were implemented to ensure as few trips as necessary. This decreased the carbon footprint created by transportation.



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# Marketing Collateral and Communication

## Marketing Collateral and Communication

The hosted buyers received a voucher for the Sustainability Village in their welcome packs, with a letter explaining how the voucher system worked.

The Sustainability Village was promoted via social media and press releases, encouraging visitors and exhibitors at the show to purchase the vendors' goods.



All the graphics in the Sustainability Village were printed on fabric, allowing them to be re-used at future events. Those graphics that could not be re-used were donated to Sealand Gear, a Non-Profit Organisation that upcycles fabric into clothes and bags.





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# Lessons Learnt

## Lessons Learnt

Sustainable event management should incorporate socially and environmentally responsible decision-making into the planning, organisation and implementation. However, the social impact is often neglected. The Sustainability Village incorporated all aspects of sustainability: economic, environmental and social. It captured the essence of greening in everything from the Village concept to the materials used to construct the stand.



The Sustainability Village also provided a platform for SMMEs to gain invaluable exposure to local and international PCO's and organisers. Several of the vendors have since secured business from the exposure that they received, indicating that the Sustainability Village concept had a positive impact on the local economy.





The Sustainability Village concept has since been used in South Africa at several industry events such as the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry (UFI) Conference 2017, the Event Greening Forum Conference 2017 and Africa's Travel Indaba 2017.