

## GREEN MEETINGS



For the sake of global warming and the environment, you should be. *Locavore*, the 2007 Oxford Dictionary Word of the Year, was first crafted to describe a food trend of using locally grown ingredients and protecting the environment by avoiding shipping. Based on its concept of using “local resources” to preserve the environment, the meetings industry should adopt a locavore philosophy with regard to event technology. Here’s why:

Everything has a *carbon footprint*. Transportation, including the shipping of technology gear, is a significant portion of a meeting’s environmental footprint. A single truck can contribute over 5 tons of carbon in a round trip.\* And, a single show can mean several trucks of gear.

For the meetings industry, transportation carbon emissions are completely avoidable when using locally sourced people and gear. Working with a company that has a broad national footprint and on-site local support in key meeting cities avoids freight transportation costs/emissions for equipment and airline costs/emissions for workers.



**A single truck of technology gear can contribute 5 tons of carbon...this is completely avoidable by using locally sourced people and gear**

By reducing energy use and changing our reliability on long-distance transportation, we can easily cut back our carbon footprints and become more *carbon neutral* – the 2006 Oxford Dictionary Word of the Year.

### **The Right Gear – from procurement to retirement**

The Convention Industry Council recommends meetings incorporate *Energy Star* compliant equipment whenever possible. One aspect of compliance, however, provides

a significant challenge: products burning electricity while idle must power down during periods of apparent inactivity. Obviously, complying with this basic requirement would be counterproductive for a projector, for example, running during a lengthy General Session.

In 2006, European countries approached these environmental challenges in a different way with the “restriction of hazardous substances” – or the *RoHS Directive*. RoHS mandates that levels of hazardous substances (like lead, mercury, cadmium) be significantly reduced when built into products, which appreciably simplifies recycling and reduces human and environmental contamination threats.

From procurement to retirement, the event technology team engaged by a facility must have knowledge of, and a commitment to, buying equipment that demonstrates efficient use of electricity, minimal use of hazardous substances, and practical recycling – Period. PSAV’s purchasing policies, for example, prioritize equipment that is Energy Star or RoHS compliant, and it mandates a certified safe disposal program for its electronic components.

The bottom line is this: Hospitality companies that promote “Green Meetings” need to first commit to being a socially responsible company, and team only with business partners that do the same. Only then are we meeting the demand for greener practices, and leading the way toward a greener future for the meetings and events industry.



*Digby Davies is President and CEO of PSAV® Presentation Services, the world’s leading event technology company.*

\*Based on a 1,400 mile trip each way on a 53 foot truck with 75% load, which gets 6 miles to the gallon on diesel fuel. Each gallon of diesel contributes 22 pounds of carbon dioxide.