



Sustainable Travel for Tour Operators

Positively Impact the Destinations You Visit

Introduction

Concern about the impacts of travel and tourism is steadily increasing, and so is the demand for sustainable business practices. Despite the current economic climate, 40 percent of U.S. travelers say they would choose travel service providers who demonstrate environmental responsibility over those who do not (*PhoCusWright, 2009*).

Sustainable travel is no longer a niche market – it is the future of the tourism industry. Improve your bottom line by becoming a part of this market shift. By going green, you will:

- **Improve Profitability** - Sustainable business practices deliver improved financial performance. The Dow Jones Sustainability Index 2008 report confirms a positive, strategically significant correlation between corporate sustainability and financial performance.
- **Increase Market Strength** - In the U.S. alone, more than half of all adults say that when given a choice, they are likely to select a travel provider that uses more environmentally friendly products and practices (*US Travel Association and Y Partnership, 2007*). And, nearly one-third of travelers will pay for green travel premiums, but these savvy consumers are looking for practices that go above and beyond cursory measures (*PhoCusWright, 2009*).
- **Attract Talent** - Today's workforce values sustainability, with 80% of young professionals interested in a career that has a positive impact on the environment (*The Wall Street Journal, November 13, 2007*).
- **Preserve the World's Best Destinations** - More travelers are looking for authentic and exotic experiences. It is imperative for our industry to preserve our environmental and cultural heritage, to protect profits today and ensure the livelihood of future generations.

Destination Stewardship

A tour operator's attitude toward sustainable tourism and their itinerary selection – from activities and guides to food, lodging and transport – have an effect on the places and people they visit, and will leave a lasting impression on their guests. Tour operators who actively pursue sustainability have a positive impact on the destinations they serve, and influence their guests to follow suit.

Who We Are

Sustainable Travel International (STI) is a leading non-profit organization whose mission is to promote sustainable development and responsible travel.

STI provides tangible, solutions-oriented programs to help tour operators protect the environment, preserve cultural heritage and contribute to local economic development. *Leave the world a better place®*.



As the “face” of the tourism industry, tour operators deal with a number of unique challenges in their efforts to operate more sustainably. The members of STI's executive management team are former tour operators, so we can identify with these challenges as they relate to both office and field operations. Whether you are new to the world of sustainability, or a seasoned veteran, we will help you take your commitment to the next level.

How We Can Help

STI has more experience than any other organizations in helping tour operators implement practical, market-tested programs that generate bottom line results. The journey down the path toward sustainability starts with a commitment to making a difference, with progress made by taking an incremental approach.

The following programs are designed specifically for tour operators, and are listed in order from low cost, turn-key solutions to programs requiring a more significant time investment.

Membership - STI Membership provides access to information, tools, expert advice, and exclusive benefits to help you grow your business, lower operational costs, and enhance positive impacts — all while supporting sustainable tourism development. We help our Members achieve their sustainability goals and earn a return on their investment. Visit our [website](#) to learn all about the benefits of joining STI.



Travelers Giving Back™ - STI connects tour operators and their guests to more than 850 pre-screened grassroots charity projects around the world. This program makes it possible for your clients to support quality philanthropic projects in the destinations you serve. Implementation options include personalized gift cards and online donation engines. Looking for something more customized? STI can help you develop your own successful philanthropic projects and giving back programs.



Carbon Management - STI works with tour operators to measure and reduce their carbon footprints. To help you manage unavoidable emissions, we offer customized web-based carbon calculators and a diverse portfolio of domestic and international carbon offset projects – all verified or certified by independent third parties. Whether you want to set up a voluntary offset program for your guests, or run a carbon neutral operation, STI works within your budget to deliver the ideal solution.



Eco-certification - STI's Sustainable Tourism Eco-certification Program™ (STEP) is perfect for tour operators wanting to publicly demonstrate their commitment to sustainability, and set their business apart from the competition. STEP is unique because it is educational in nature, practical as a measurement and management tool, and appropriate for tour operators of all sizes. Not interested in certification? STI's Self-assessment Tool helps you implement a sustainability framework or refine your existing approach.



Advisory Services, Education and Training - STI has more than 30 years of experience in the tourism industry. We work on all types of consulting projects, from designing and implementing sustainability plans and policies, to green supply chain management and developing destination stewardship initiatives. We are proud to offer a variety of education and training solutions from executive education courses and distance learning programs to hosting conference workshops and webinars.

Reasons to Start Working with STI Today

- **Leadership** STI occupies an important niche, and our programs provide return on investment for supporting sustainable tourism development, while meeting the needs of all sectors of the travel and tourism industry.
- **Credibility** Our widely recognized brand, non-profit status, and innovative programs have helped build market credibility and establish STI as a global leader in sustainable tourism development.
- **Transparency** To address issues related to accounting, accountability, and true sustainability benefits, we work with other non-profits to implement our programs, and references are available upon request.

To learn more about us and to discuss your options:

Phone: U.S. - 800-276-7764, International - +503-488-5500

Email: info@sustainabletravel.com **Web:** www.sustainabletravel.com

Locations: US - Canada - UK - Spain - China – Australia - Brazil