

Green Storytelling

**Green Growth
Conference + Expo
October 13, 2010**

Green Storytelling



Green Storytelling

“If companies did an inventory of everything going on within their organizations, they would find a wealth of examples with which to build their sustainability credentials.”

Brandweek, August 31, 2010

Green Storytelling


- Characteristics of a Good Story
 - A single theme, clearly defined
 - Style: vivid word pictures
 - Dramatic appeal
 - Appropriateness to audiences

Green Storytelling

"The Power of **the anecdote** is so great...No matter how boring the material is, if it is in story form...there is suspense in it, it feels like something's going to happen.

The reason why is because literally it's a sequence of events...you can feel through its form [that it's] inherently like being on a train that has a destination...and that you're going to find something..."

— Ira Glass

 **Herman Miller**

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY



What's your story?



Green Storytelling

To prepare your sustainability story...

- Appoint a senior-level sustainability steward
- Communicate sustainability's importance throughout the company
- Engage your employees
 - Educate
 - Involve
 - Maintain your commitment

Green Storytelling

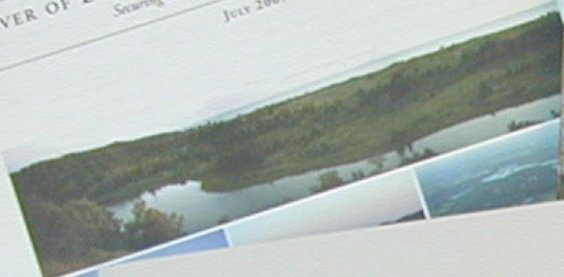
To prepare your sustainability story...

Look around your industry and elsewhere*

- Who tells a good sustainability story?
- What makes it truthful and compelling?
- What would your company's version look like?

***Join the USGBC, W. Mi Sustainable Business Forum and/or similar groups to learn, share and be inspired**

FEVER OF DEVELOPMENT, FRONTIER OF RECOVERY
Securing the Sangre de Cristo Coastal Region
July 2007



HermanMiller

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY



patagonia environmental initiatives 2009

Shaw
FLOORS

Shaw Industries Group, Inc.
Corporate Sustainability Report 2009

where sustainability is personal



Green Storytelling

To prepare your sustainability story...

Identify a theme/overarching message. Own it.

Examples:

- A History of Thinking & Acting Sustainably
- Our People Make it Happen
- Our Innovative Approach

Always return to the theme.

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To prepare your sustainability story...

- Look around, look within (the company)
 - Is there a department engaged in sustainable activities that nobody's aware of?
 - Community outreach, an industry innovation, notable efficiencies, possible thought leadership?

Remember the Triple Bottom Line

- People
- Planet
- Profit

Green Storytelling

To prepare your sustainability story...

Look for your company's true stories

- Challenges overcome, problems solved
- The heroes who stepped up
- Your process of transformation
- Your company's history
- Your company's journey to sustainability

Green Storytelling

Your Sustainability Report, Website,
White Paper, etc.

Don't be afraid to

- Inspire
- Educate
- Recruit
- Convert

But...

Green Storytelling

Your Sustainability Report, Website,
White Paper, etc.

1. Tell the truth, minus exaggeration.
2. Provide Metrics – Set targets and establish performance indicators at the outset of a project.
3. Monitor and verify.
4. Follow GRI or ISO guidelines.

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GRI Guidelines

Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is a network-based organization that has pioneered the development of the world's most widely used sustainability reporting framework and is committed to its continuous improvement and application worldwide.

In order to ensure the highest degree of technical quality, credibility, and relevance, the reporting framework is developed through a consensus-seeking process with participants drawn globally from business, civil society, labor and professional institutions. www.globalreporting.org

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ISO Guidelines

The ISO 14000 series of standards has been designed to help enterprises meet their environmental management system needs. They consist of a set of documents that define the key elements of a management system that will help an organization address the environmental issues it faces. The management system includes the setting of goals and priorities, assignment of responsibility for accomplishing them, measuring and reporting on results, and external verification of claims.

www.iso.org

Green Storytelling

Finally...

Give your sustainability story a singular human voice.

- Conversational
- Compelling: Don't be afraid of a little drama (minus false statements)
- Avoid: Corporate-speak, industry jargon, writing-by-committee

Green Storytelling

“You’re glumping the pond where the Humming-Fish hummed! No more can they hum, for their gills are all gummed. So I’m sending them off. Oh, their future is dreary. They’ll walk on their fins and get woefully weary in search of some water that isn’t so smeary.”

Dr. Seuss, *The Lorax* ©1971, 1999
(and following image)

Thank You!
Chuck Otto
Corporate Sustainability
Communications

