

NO. 03

Sustainability Marketing Guide

INNOVATIVE IDEAS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES



The importance
of awareness and
education

Business must
show it's
changing

How to tell your
sustainability
story



Sustainability


WHY BUSINESS MUST WORK FOR THE PLANET

The environmental issues currently happening around the world have consequences that will affect everyone and it's more important than ever to act now. With pressure on companies from the client/customer expectation and the younger generation, the future for business is green. Industries must reduce carbon emissions by 40% by 2060 to stop the planet from warming over two degrees Celsius. If the temperature does rise by two degrees, more than 70 percent of Earth's coastlines will experience a sea-level rise greater than 0.66 feet (0.2 meters).

This will result in increased coastal flooding, beach erosion, salinization of water supplies and other impacts on humans and ecological systems. Nigeria's coast is one of the places in threat of worldwide flooding. It is very low lying and a rise in sea level of 1 to 3 meters will have a catastrophic effect on the human activities in these regions.

However, temperature rises are not the only issue. We are facing a global mass extinction, plastic pollution and the poison of land and soil. Innovation and action are going to be the key to the success of our future generations. Alongside this, spreading awareness of current issues is also very important. The more people understand, the more passion will be created for change. As a business, it is imperative to do the best you can to align your values and work ethos to be sustainable.

IN THIS GUIDE WE WILL COVER TOPICS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION WITHIN BUSINESSES, INNOVATION, TELLING A SUSTAINABLE STORY AND WHAT BUSINESSES CAN DO TO IMPROVE.



“People want to work for, buy from and invest in businesses they believe in.”

Business Must Show It's Changing

Businesses can affect the environment in many ways, directly or indirectly. Direct environmental impact from businesses include your workspace, manufacturing process and company values. Offices use a lot of energy to run, including their lights, generators, heating and cooling of electronics and wasted energy from components left on and/or overnight.

In addition, keeping up with the latest technologies, discarding old electronics into landfill and over excess of paper usage adds further damage. Indirect ways a company may be contributing towards negative impacts on the environment. For example; through greenwashing, spreading misinformation and encouraging harmful values such as fast fashion, over-consumption and a non-circular economy.

GREENWASHING IS A TERM COINED IN 1986 AND IS LOOSELY DEFINED AS A BUSINESS MAKING CONVINCING OR VAGUE CLAIMS ABOUT THEIR SUSTAINABLE VALUES TO DISTRACT FROM THEIR UNSUSTAINABLE PRACTICES.

This misleads customers into false information about which products are eco-friendly and which are not and may then end up supporting unsustainable brands. It can also end up damaging a company's reputation when called out, damaging the company's image.





The Importance of Awareness and Education

Before you begin your journey of improving and encouraging sustainable values, you must first make sure that you have a thorough understanding of environmental issues. This will be the foundation of your passion and help you consider where you can have the biggest impact.

Start by looking into the latest environmental news, read books, listen to podcasts to gather an all-rounded knowledge so you know why it's important to do this. This is advised with a warning as exposure to some of the harsh realities can lead to 'eco-anxiety' and apathy.

Once you feel confident about the facts and why you are doing it, start to educate your employees, and gain their input on how they think the business could improve its green credentials. Involve them with ideas and the process of improving your sustainability and any changes made within the workspace. Talk about reliable and factually correct information. Create information that is easy to understand through storytelling, graphics, videos and highlight key information or even offer incentives and then you can make some sustainable goals for your company to aspire towards.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

If you need help on how to improve on your business it can be worthwhile to refer back to the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).

"The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by 193 countries in 2015. They provide a shared plan for all countries to end poverty, spur economic growth and protect our planet's environment. The SDGs represent the first time that the private sector has been included as a partner in reaching the United Nations goals."



NO POVERTY



ZERO HUNGER



GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



QUALITY EDUCATION



GENDER EQUALITY



CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



REDUCED INEQUALITIES



SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



CLIMATE ACTION



INDUSTRY INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



LIFE BELOW WATER



LIFE ON LAND



PEACE JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

The First Five Steps On Your Sustainability Journey

In a letter sent out from the Advocates for the Sustainable Development Goals, 5 steps were stated to encourage and prompt companies to take a look at what their business is doing. You can read the full letter [here](#).

STEP 1 - YOUR COMPANY

Assess the impact of your company against the seventeen SDGs, and identify related risks and opportunities across your entire value chain.

STEP 2 - THE BOARD

Hold a meeting of the board (or the executive management team) to set goals and targets specific to your company that align with sustainable development.

STEP 3 - THE SHAREHOLDERS

Tell shareholders and other stakeholders the goals your company has set to contribute to the SDGs and progress made.

STEP 4 - THE EMPLOYEES

Engage all your employees in advancing the goals through their own work and distribute responsibilities across the entire organisation for achieving progress.

STEP 5 - THE PUBLIC

Show your commitment by including SDG icons and branding in your products, communication materials, and annual report.



Innovative Ideas For Environmental Issues

THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY HAS BEEN KNOWN TO THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE IN THE WEST FOR A WHILE NOW, CAUSING BURN OUTS AND DISENGAGEMENT.

Innovative ideas for problem solving and attention on the issues still currently arising are needed to revamp the spark within our communities. What is the best way to communicate facts and ideas to spread awareness? Original ideas can range from games, animations, unique ways to show information and more.

Crowd is currently working with US client, Footprint. They create biodegradable food packaging from plant based fibres to hopefully be used in the supermarkets and replace the mass amounts of single use plastic used within that industry. Together, we have come up with an innovative project to encourage young people to help reduce the amount of single use plastics. Working with football clubs and stadiums, we have launched Kids Kick Out Plastic. On this project we plan to unleash the boundless imagination of young football fans to create and develop new ways to reduce and eliminate single use plastic from football stadiums. Young fans will send in their ideas to be looked at by a panel of thought leaders within the fields of sustainability and football to judge the concepts for 20 winners to be chosen. [Read more about the project here.](#)

Encouraging young people to get involved, helps spread the message of single use plastics and gets the conversation talking. It will encourage them to learn why they need to help and what the issues are, without it being too daunting to learn about the whole of the climate crisis. We believe no idea is too big and working with young people will give us fresh and new ideas. The exciting part is we don't know how this project will end up and what it will lead to!

In March 2019, two dedicated non-profit organisations Plastic Oceans International, a long standing client of Crowds and Breathe Conservation - collaborated to 'Swim Against Plastic', a global campaign to raise awareness about plastic pollution. Crowd were also co-sponsoring the swim to show our support for such an important cause. Easter Island has one of the world's highest concentrations of microplastic and 20 tonnes of waste are produced per day due to growing tourism in the area. The aim of the event was to inform on the topic of plastic pollution and inspire people to care about the issue and desire to be part of the solution. Ferguson completed the swim in a record-setting time; swimming 40 miles in 19 hours and eight minutes, shattering expectations of what had been estimated to be a 24 to 32 hour challenge.

Crowd client, APCIORP have changed all of their investments and values to become more sustainable. They now abide by a strict policy regarding their exposure within the energy sector.

[ExtraAF](#) is a new sustainable fashion brand that has launched in the UK, with a mission to provide ethically sourced and produced clothing without compromising on style or current fashion trends. ExtraAF is sustainable through their slow fashion values, local factories, ethical working conditions, no waste and being 80% sustainable within their first year (the average sustainable retail brand is 40-45% sustainable). During the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, they changed their marketing plans by inviting influencers to shoot their launch video and photography in their own home. This ensured social distancing during the lockdown and no non-essential travelling for shoots. This also meant a lower carbon footprint would be produced without the need for a team to travel to a shoot.

Crowd client, Trina Solar, hosts online events on sustainable topics, such as renewable energies, latest products, innovation and technologies. They collaborate ideas and discuss innovation to help push for the creation of a new-energy, carbon-free world.

Having online events massively reduces the carbon footprint output. Thousands of people may normally travel to watch a talk or event but when travel is out of the equation, these emissions are greatly reduced. Not to mention the amount of power to run events and the amount of waste produced.



HOW TO TELL YOUR SUSTAINABILITY STORY

When creating a sustainable story for your brand, think of the process as a slow burn. Steadily forming the narrative and style to fit in with your brand. Begin the story by thinking about these questions:



Once these have been thought about, slowly introduce the concepts into the business strategy by bringing it together into a comprehensive sustainability communication framework. Be transparent and truthful about your commitments and ongoing communications.

Patagonia is a brilliant example of a sustainable brand. They have a strong sustainable story that has been slowly built and adapted over time. Starting out as a rock climbing tool business, founder Yvon Choinard always had environmental values at his core.

As a business, they regularly question what environmental values their company has and what effect the business may be having on the environment. In 1994 changed all of their fabrics to be made out of 100% cotton after finding out the negative impact their clothing was having.

They also fund environmental projects they are passionate about. Corley Kenna, Director of Global Communications and Public Relations at Patagonia said 'For us, it's more important to get the environmental story out than Patagonia the brand. Before all, we emphasize storytelling and spotlight the environmental causes we care'



Recognition

IT IS PROVEN THAT SHAREHOLDERS, CLIENTS AND CUSTOMERS WILL PREFER A COMPANY THAT HAS AN ECO-FRIENDLY AND ETHICAL APPROACH TO BUSINESS.

Entering awards as an organisation, gives proof and recognition to shareholders, clients and customers that the organisation has ethical and environmental purpose at its core. Crowd have partnered with OneEarth awards, an award to discover innovation, recognise positive contributions and promote awareness across industry and the third sector. This is alongside a panel of expert judges that have a range of sustainable and environmental backgrounds to support the decision making for the winners.

Furthermore, becoming a certified B-corporation is one of the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose, a business can get.

It is the only certification that measures a company's entire social and environmental performance and it has a rigorous application process that only about 1 in 3 will certify for. It is a reliable and recognized certification that will show to your audience your commitments and stakeholder impact for the long term by building it into your company's legal structure. [Learn more and about applying here.](#)



“The B Corp community is looking at the whole picture and planning longer term, which leads to innovation, thoughtful initiatives, and increased trust among stakeholders.”

ROSE MARCARIO
CEO, PATAGONIA INC.

Your Business Can Make A Difference

Following the advice from our white paper will help you on the first steps of your sustainable journey. There are also ways to start small changes to make your office more eco-friendly.

Become a paperless office, encouraging employees to send emails and arrange phone calls. Save energy throughout the office by switching off devices at night and encourage natural lighting or install motion sensor lights if natural isn't possible. Refuse and recycle packaging and encourage recycling throughout the office, including having the correct bins. Talk about using reusable boxes and water bottles for packed lunches instead of single use bottles and plastic food packaging.

Furthermore, as technology gets more advanced, we can switch to eco-friendly alternatives. Instead of flying to conferences, we can host online group calls, using platforms such as [Go Digital Expo](#) and therefore use less fossil fuels to fly around the world. Going online will also save you money and can increase productivity within your employees.

You could also consider a 4 day working week. A study conducted by Platform London found that moving to a four-day week by 2025 would reduce the UK's emissions by 20%, not to mention the mental health benefits for your employees.

Get involved outside of work; some businesses even organise community-based recycling schemes. And lastly, outside of your sustainable story, you could promote horticulture and sustainability within your staff and community by getting involved in things like tree-planting events or community gardening projects.

And if there aren't initiatives within your local area, look into organising some and creating your own. The power you have within a business can be used to set examples, drive change and promote green thinking.

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In this guide we have covered a lot of useful topics to get your brand started towards a sustainable journey. This will create not just a positive impact on the planet but the values of your company will be appreciated by consumers and employees.

KEY ACTION POINTS



SOURCES AND FURTHER READING

- 🔗 [The Negative Effects of Corporate Greenwashing](#)
- 🔗 [SDG Advocates Call on Business to Take Action](#)
- 🔗 [Environmental Awareness](#)
- 🔗 [Telling Your Sustainability Story](#)
- 🔗 [The Importance of Environmental Awareness When Running a Business](#)

- 🔗 [Why Global Temperatures Matter](#)
- 🔗 [Impact and Opportunities of Climate Change on Business](#)
- 🔗 [Make Your Business More Eco-friendly](#)
- 🔗 [Patagonia Company History](#)
- 🔗 [Four-day Working Week Would Slash UK Carbon Footprint](#)



Our international network of people can help you and your organisation meet your business objectives.



Crowd consists of an international team based around the world in key markets from San Francisco to Sydney. Our extended network can be called on to provide the best marketing industry expertise available to you, ensuring you are receiving best in breed service and campaigns that exceed expectations. Visit our website below and connect with us on LinkedIn to keep up to date with what we're up to globally. And if you're ready to have a discussion now, please reach out to your closest Crowd contact.

LET'S TALK ABOUT HOW WE CAN TRANSFORM YOUR BUSINESS

[THISISCROWD.COM](https://thisiscrowd.com)

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GET IN TOUCH WITH JUSTINE



"Now, more than ever,
the global tourism sector has a
responsibility to lead recovery and deliver
positive change at both the global and local
level. As we work together to restart tourism, visitor
experiences that respect culture and traditions and help
promote and protect unique and shared heritage will help
drive recovery and positive transformation."

ZURAB POLOLIKASHVILI
SECRETARY GENERAL OF UNWTO



**TELL THE WORLD
HOW YOU'LL PROTECT IT
SPEAK TO CROWD**



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