Reducing Single-use Plastic in the Travel Industry

26 September 2019 – ANVR Better Holidays Event
Today’s Focus:

Practical ways to reduce single-use plastic:
1) Acknowledging the problem
2) Establishing a baseline of single-use plastic consumption
3) 4 key actions to drive change
4) Engaging staff and customers
5) Evaluating success
An average sized hotel can consume half a million pieces of single-use plastic every year.

Up to 15% of plastics in hotels are used due to habit and can be removed with almost no customer impact.

Travel and tourism businesses and consumers are confused about the solutions.
We did this!

• Trained customers to think that if it isn’t plastic wrapped it isn’t clean
• Put a bottle of water in their hands before they’ve even left the airport
• We now need to re-educate
• The most upmarket hotels and holiday companies are doing this already
1. Establish a baseline

• Understand your biggest impacts
• How much single-use plastic does your business buy and at what cost
• Use historic purchasing records
• From teabags to tyres - think beyond the obvious
2. Prioritise

• Research any pending legislation that may require you to prioritise particular items

• Identify any unnecessary items and commit to eliminating them

• Identify a further top 3, 5 or 10 single-use plastic items that can make the biggest impact (environmentally and financially) to tackle
If you can’t get an accurate baseline...

• Identify where your supply chain uses most single-use plastic – and what you can influence:
  o Transfers
  o Excursions
  o Hotels
  o Restaurants

• Obtain data from suppliers if possible

• Use estimates and accepted averages
  o e.g. Average tour participant uses 3 bottles of water per day
Drive change to reduce single-use plastic:

4 key process:
• Remove what you can
• Replace with more sustainable alternatives
• Question suppliers
• Collaborate with partners
Remove what you can:

- Review what is being given out and why
- Eliminate those items that aren’t needed
  - ‘Sanitization’ wraps, toothpicks, shoe shine blocks???
  - Miniature toiletries - make available on demand or invest in bulk dispensers (IHG)
  - Plastic straws (Disney)
Replace with more sustainable alternatives:

Swap single-use plastics for plastic-free or lower plastic options

• Kuoni - Brochure bags in home compostable plastic wrapping
• Virgin Atlantic - new amenity kit
• Martinhal Resorts - mini bar snacks
• Nielsen Holidays – reusable bags on sailing boats
Ask Questions...

- Market for ‘plastic alternatives’ has expanded rapidly with little regulation

- Bio-plastics in particular are commonly mis-sold – most need industrial processing

- Terms like compostable, biodegradable, recyclable are often wrongly used

- Question suppliers on product lifecycle...and keep questioning

- Due diligence is key to avoiding unintended environmental or social consequences
Collaborate:

Work with suppliers to facilitate plastic reduction
• Exodus Travel – Ban the Bottle Campaign

Develop partnerships that support your plastic reduction journey
• Dragoman Tours and Water2go
• Travel Without Plastic Guide and Toolkit

Support relevant initiatives
• Plastic Free Laos
• Beach cleans
Micro-plastics beach clean

• Day 3 of every Galapagos Tour
• People used to criticise Park authorities for the high levels of plastic waste, but take no action
• Now G Adventures travellers are using sieves to collect micro plastics
• Nesting beaches for green Pacific turtles on Floreana Island almost completely cleared
• Moving on to Santa Fe island - important habitat for rays, sea lions and turtles
Engaging Staff and Supply Chain Stakeholders

• Understand the issues on the ground
  o Cost implications – savings are not automatic
  o Practicalities – e.g. water sharing on tours
  o H&S – eg poolside cups, filter bottles
  o Legacy - Cocktail straws, trust around safe drinking water
  o Cultural norms – single-use plastic as a status symbol

• Anticipate challenges and be prepared to compromise

• Sometimes plastic is the best solution – shift focus to disposal
Engaging Staff and Supply Chain

• Invite key stakeholders to a meeting
  • Aid understanding by bringing all single-use items with you
  • Share the data from your cost/consumption exercise

• Discuss the impacts that changes would have on current processes, workload, customer satisfaction etc

• Agree a plan with goals and targets

• Equip staff to act as ambassadors (e.g. Keepcups at G Adventures)

• But don’t oversupply reusables
Engaging Guests

• Think about opportunities to communicate with guests (present and future).
• Which platforms are the best to reach them on?
• What type of content is likely to resonate with your target audience?
• Use different communications for before, during and after travel
Dear Guest,

Welcome to Hotel Normandy!

In your room you will find a glass water carafe in place of bottled water. This is part of an ongoing effort to reduce plastic waste. Each hallway has a filling station behind the door marked “water is free.” If you take the carafe with you, you will be charged $3.

It is continually our goal to provide the best hospitality experience for our guests. As such, bottled water will continue to be available upon request.

It is our pleasure to serve you. Please do not hesitate to let the front desk know if you need anything.

The Hotel Normandy Team

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**OUR STRAW INITIATIVE**

In an effort to decrease waste from entering our landfills, streams, oceans & beaches we have initiated a new straw policy!

**STRAWS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

New straws made from corn!

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**EXODUS’ PLASTIC FREE TRAVEL TIPS**

Reduce your plastic footprint with our 6 easy steps!

1. Take reusable, not single use plastic bottles, using glasses in the provided ceramic drinking water carafes refillable for free.
2. Refraining plastic on travels - your donations balance in the world, and taxable to the foundation.
3. Plastic straws include the most and are one-time disposable. Refuse them on boats, in your transportation means.
4. Wash out water bottles before using. Make sure to clean and coolest and keep a travel-friendly, portable glass or reusable bag when you go shopping.
5. Bring your own produce bag. This one is the one that’s being used. Remember your bag when you go shopping.
6. Respect all the avoiding plastic travel popsars in your travels and within your homes. Whether they can be disposed of properly.

#PlasticFree

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**TRAVEL WITHOUT PLASTIC**
G Adventures – Plastics Partnership Project

Encouraging customers to bring reusable bottles

https://vimeo.com/359624308/7027f59c63
Evaluate

• Consider trialling new products before rolling out changes in full

• Gather staff and guest feedback

• Monitor and record the impacts

• Keep abreast of any forthcoming legislation and with innovative plastic alternatives

• Share your successes
Travel Without Plastic tools:

THE PLASTICS REDUCTION GUIDE FOR HOTELS

let's reduce single use

www.TravelWithoutPlastic.com

THE LET’S REDUCE SINGLE-USE TOOLKIT

Investing in the Toolkit brings significant benefits:

- You will be able to identify where plastic is being used in your business and how much it is costing you.
- The training workshop templates and presentations will save you time and help you to engage your staff, whilst the expert communications guide provides everything you need to know to get guests on board with the changes.
- If you’ve already made a start on your plastic reduction journey, we’ll help you to accelerate change by ensuring you receive our regular newsletters featuring top tips and recommendations that are proven to work and that drive positive change.

We will proudly shout about your work on our website and include you in the portfolio of hotels working with us to reduce single-use plastic. But most importantly of all, your achievements will be counted towards our goal of reducing single-use names of plastic from the tourism industry.

You’re in good company!
Website: https://www.travelwithoutplastic.com
Email: info@travelwithoutplastic.com