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Project title:

**DEVELOPING OF THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY AND THE GREEN MEETINGS SERVICE
CONSEPT BY ECO SIMULATION OF MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE**

Acronym:

Introduction

Sustainable development is one of the major global trends at the moment and all companies and institutions must be able to react to various demanding challenges in order to guarantee their own success, well-being and quality of life of future generations. Climate change is a massive threat that can cause serious global problems for nature and human-kind. The change of consumption patterns of modern industrialised societies is a crucial issue in an attempt to seek an optimal level of consumption and economic activity. Reducing energy and material consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and eliminating energy wastage are among the main goals in the European Union (EU).

The meetings industry faces the challenges and issues of sustainable development as any other industrial sector. The European meetings industry has to find solutions adapted to the urgent and universal problem of the global change. Generally, the enhancement of sustainable development and growing importance of corporate social responsibility demand that the meetings industry is prepared to react to future challenges in every aspect. One threat is that travelling and the movement of people will be restricted in different ways in the future due to tightening regulations and legislation.

However, there are only few convention centres within the meetings industry that have a comprehensive green strategy and do actions that aim to extensive environmentally responsible meeting services and facilities. One problem is the lack of commonly accepted green meetings certifications or standards. At the moment, there are more than 130 different environmental standards. (Greening the Hospitality Industry Conference, Feb 24-26 2009, Pittsburgh). Hence, it is frustrating to find suitable and reliable standards for implementing sustainable actions.

Still, green meetings can be seen as a way for differentiation and market advantage in the market because only few convention centres can offer green meeting concepts at the moment. In the future, green issues can be a question of continuance and existence of the meeting business. It is important to act in a proactive way and adapt new, innovative ways of doing green business.

Consumers and customers are becoming more and more conscious of environmental issues and they want to buy and supply environmentally friendly products and services. The general attitudes of people and their consuming behaviour are directing business to increase environmental efficiency. According to Amy Spatrisano (President, GMIC) 80 % of the buyers value environmental matters in their buying decisions (Greening the Hospitality Industry Conference, Feb 24-26 2009, Pittsburgh).



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Why this project?

The purpose is to manage changing external environment that is strongly affected by the global climate and economic changes. The aim is to find new success factors and to guarantee competitiveness and economic activity of the meetings industry in the future. The aim is to support convention centers as SMEs to adapt environmentally responsible business processes, products and services. The aim is to benefit technological and business innovations that can make adaptation process effective and efficient for the industry.

The purpose is to increase knowledge on environmental issues and sustainability factors and to find out the potentials of the industry. The purpose is to avoid unnecessary investments, to demonstrate the role and the importance of the sustainable management performance, to impact on the guidance of human resource management (HRM) and customer relationship management (CRM) from environmental issues point of view.

In general, simulation has been used in heavy industries such as forest and shipping industries. Therefore, taking simulation into so called light service sector brings its own additional value and eco-innovative business models and solutions may emerge. The purpose is to promote the meetings industry to be a forerunner of the service sector by adopting new environmentally friendly products, processes and service within business operations and the whole supply chain.

The simulation supports decision-making process of environmental management. The environmental management can be enhanced due to increased knowledge on environmentally responsible actions. The limited resources of SMEs can be used more effectively and efficiently (doing the right things right) and all the key environmental issues related to meetings and actors involved in meetings and events can be recognised. Thus, it is possible to reduce environmental impacts.

The simulation is a challenge because it requires not only a model of the supply chain of services but also a model of the management of the people. The challenges are compounded with a model that will work everywhere. Yet, the simulation process gives the opportunity to vary, modify and compare different service and infrastructural facility solutions by project partners. The strength of the simulation is that we can include into simulation process all variations observed in different convention centres and we can point out all environmental best practises, environmentally friendly operational systems and processes.

Project Objectives

The fishbone model 'What factors make conferences environmentally friendly?' by the Green Meetings project team in Lahti University of Applied Sciences illustrates how complex and multidimensional is the meetings industry. The meetings industry covers many different stakeholders and actors. Therefore, a holistic business model may give a new way to the greening of the meetings industry.

The meetings industry has an opportunity to work together with different stakeholders in order to produce environmentally responsible services and products. The objective is to



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analyse current indicators for decision-making that help the users to deepen their understanding of environmental and sustainable development issues and that are suitable for their needs. In that way, other industries involved must also take environmental aspects into consideration and new development can move significantly towards the common goals of sustainability and competitiveness.

The main objective of the project is to have **a holistic and comprehensive model for the implementation of green meetings** that provides tools for both the meetings industry and industries that are involved with the meetings industry as stakeholders. Thus, the purpose is to produce competitive advantage to the whole business sector. The objective is to explore and depict in detail how different convention centres are producing their services, how their service processes work in practice and how environmentally responsible their current way of doing business is. Description will include services, facilities and building as well. In order to be successful in that attempt, simulation will be utilised in adapting the comprehensive model for green meetings.

Work Packages (preliminary titles and descriptions)
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Work Package 1: Management (responsible partner: Lahti University of Applied Sciences)

Work Package 2: Supply chain simulation (responsible partner: ?)

Phase 2.1: Facilities and energy efficiency data analysis (responsible partner: ?)

Analysis of current situation of partner convention centres as case companies and collection of existing necessary data (e.g. measurement of energy, development plan and implementation, analysis of procurements, interviews/detailed process model, examples of good practices and procedures). Decision on targeted concrete part of supply chain is made by partner during the writing process of the project plan.

Phase 2.2: Applied process development and preparation of simulation

(responsible partner: Lahti University of Applied Sciences)

Validated process model development, simulation manuscript, virtual environment technology applications, testing of simulation model, analysis

Phase 2.3: Implementing and training the virtual technology (e.g. second life) of the simulation model and testing the environmental management simulation in the convention centres (responsible partner: Lahti University of Applied Sciences)

Implementing the technology, training the users, testing the simulation model, feedback analysis, further development, producing an animation film for the use of customer relationship management (CRM)



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Work Package 3: Evaluation of the sustainable impact (responsible partner: expert company x)

Analysis of the simulation testing phase, further development recommendations, calculations of the environmental impact

Work Package 4: Updated service design business plans for convention centres (responsible partner: ?)

Updated business plans for free use of convention centres through selected head organisations.

Work Package 5: Dissemination (responsible partner: ?)

Additional information

Grant Programme: CIP - Eco-Innovation

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eco-innovation/index_en.htm

(submission deadline 10.9.2009)

Budget: The total budget of the project would be approximately 1 500 000 €. The partner budgets would be approx. 50 000 - 100 000 €/ convention centres and 200 - 300 000 €/other partners, depending on the actions the partner is involved in. The own contribution is 50 % of the partners budget and it can be covered by different types of financing (more information in the Financial guidelines in the programmes web-pages).

Duration: 3 years

The total number of partners is 5-7 out of which 1-2 are from Finland.

With this partner search we are looking for:

- **2-3 convention centres** to be partners (action under WP 2/2.3 is mainly operating as a pilot companies testing the simulation process, taking part in simulation training, data producing and taking part in WP 5 dissemination activities)

- From the same regions as the convention centres we are looking for **2-3 universities/research institutions/network organisations** or other such organisations to be partners in this project. These partners will be responsible of WP 2/2.1, and WP4. They will also take part in the dissemination activities.

- We are also looking for **one eco-efficiency expert organisation or a consultancy company** to be a partner, who will be responsible of the WP3: Evaluation of the sustainable impact.

The partners should come from 3-4 different EU countries.



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All expressions of interest should be addressed to the following e-mail address no later than August 10th, 2009.

niina.ihalainen@lamk.fi

tel. +358 44 708 0083

IMPORTANT PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FOR PARTNERS

All partners must deliver the following documents no later than 20.8.2009 to the coordinating partner. More detailed instructions and descriptions of the documents can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eco-innovation/docs/call09/CIP_Eco_innovation_Guide_proposers_2009_FINAL.pdf (page 41)

All partners:

1. Legal documents (LD)
2. Legal entity sheet (LE)
3. Declaration by the applicant (DEC)

Private companies:

1. Financial Statements (BS, for balance sheets)
2. Simplified financial statement (SFS)

More information on the project:

Lahti University of Applied Sciences
Innovation Centre
Project Manager Niina Ihalainen
niina.ihalainen@lamk.fi
Tel. +358 44 708 0083

<http://www.lamk.fi/english/>