



at the **2009 ARPA Conference and Energize Workshop**

Session E2 – Greening Festivals and Events

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It isn't easy being green but green is not just a colour anymore... It is a mandate, a plan, and part of the fabric of your organization's soul. The road to green is not without its obstacles though. Here are some lessons learned by the Calgary Folk Music Festival on its green journey.

1. Identify your priorities

Go green but that can't be the only priority. Figure out what you need to balance. The five pillars of municipal sustainability are a good place to start:

- Government
- Economic (Fiscal)
- Environmental
- Social
- Cultural

2. Embrace the work

Being green takes some effort so suck it up and do the work...but get help. Identify partners who are committed to your program and can make administering it easier.

3. Big ideas and baby steps

- Do set a big goal, e.g. host a zero waste event
- Do not try to accomplish this in one leap
- Do take little steps
- Do succeed in taking little steps
- Do keep taking little steps until you have achieved your big goal

4. Simplicity

Come up with easy solutions to your problems rather than importing an imperfect solution to another organization's issue. Make your program as easy as possible for patrons, employees, volunteers, everyone involved in implementing and using the program.

5. Education

First teach yourself. Learn from partners, peers and other programs. Then teach others and keep teaching long after you think you need to.

- Share why a change in behaviour is important.

- Teach the behaviours required of your participants.
- Share the results participants can expect and have contributed to, e.g. waste reduced by X kgs.
- Adjust your education program as your green program evolves.

6. Testing

Does it work on a small scale? Best test it out first. Testing gives your organization a chance to see what works but more importantly to identify unintended and unforeseen challenges.

7. Show off

A progressive sustainability program can garner great media attention but if you don't call the media who will? Be proud of your achievements and celebrate them. Not only will patrons turn their heads, staff and volunteers will feed off the momentum and success too. What better way to start working on the next phase of the program?





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