

VERGE Hawaii: Asia Pacific Clean Energy Summit 2017

Conference Sustainability Program



GreenBiz



Background:

GreenBiz Group, as the producer of VERGE Hawai'i: Asia Pacific Clean Energy Summit, strives to create conference experiences as sustainably as possible. In the first year at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki, they partnered with the hotel, vendors, and attendees on their sustainability program and achieved 40 points on the HGBP to reach the Kaulike Level, the 2nd of 4 levels. They are proud of their achievement in 2016 and are excited to further their sustainability programs to pursue a higher level with 2017 VERGE Hawai'i: Asia Pacific Clean Energy Summit. The **vision and strategy** for the GreenBiz Group conference sustainability program includes five pillars: innovation, engagement, responsible sourcing, resource conservation, and waste reduction.

Innovation:

- ✚ A **microgrid** powered the main ballroom using 100% renewable energy to model resilience, interoperability, radical efficiency, and other key VERGE themes
- ✚ The microgrid included the following components provided by the following partners:
 - Overall project management, OpTerra Energy Services
 - EV charging station, sourced by OpTerra Energy Services
 - Biomass gasifier, All Power Labs
 - Biodiesel generator, Pacific Biodiesel
 - Blue Ion battery storage, Blue Planet Energy
 - Solar panel arrays, SunPower and Solexel
 - Wave Microgrid controller, Spirae
 - Brandon Hayashi, Hawai'i Regional Manager for OpTerra , explained how a microgrid powered the VERGE Hawai'i conference with clean energy, fed by locally grown macadamia nut shells (see video here)
- ✚ A **virtual event** included attendees who wouldn't normally be able to participate in the conference, as well as reduced long distance travel
- ✚ **Video recordings** of main stage sessions and GreenBiz Studio interviews are available on GreenBiz.com for attendees who'd like to rewatch sessions and for those who weren't able to attend VERGE.

Engagement:

- ✚ **Conference content** featured main stage presentations and conversations, breakouts, and facilitated networking opportunities among leaders in energy, sustainable business and policy in the Hawaiian community and beyond to help advance Hawai'i's 100-percent clean energy goal by 2045 and much more.
- ✚ **Attendees** were asked to help achieve the sustainability goals by: Taking public transportation when possible. To support this effort, the following was made available:
 - Public transportation timetables, maps, and routes
 - Secure bicycle and locker storage (offered by Hilton Hawaiian Village)

- ✚ Helping with recycling efforts by placing recyclable materials in recycling bins rather than trash
- ✚ Using a conference app in place of a paper conference program
- ✚ Minimizing food waste by taking only what they needed
- ✚ Requested that the **venue** , the **Hilton Hawaiian Village** , to help achieve sustainability goals by:
 - Offering sustainable food and beverage options, including:
 - All reusable dishware for food and beverage
 - Vegetarian and vegan catering options
 - Fish selected from certified sustainable fishing methods
 - Water pitchers and large dispensers instead of single-use plastic water bottles
 - Buffet meals instead of boxed lunches
 - Finger foods that were not individually wrapped and did not require utensils
 - Bulk dispensers for sugar, salt, pepper, cream, and other condiments
- ✚ Providing efficient and environmentally-minded conference venues, including:
 - Naturally lighted and ventilated spaces as well as using CFL or LED lighting when possible
 - Low flow fixtures on toilets and faucets
 - Using non-toxic cleaning supplies, such as Green Seal certified products
- ✚ **Vendors** and **sponsors** were asked to help achieve sustainability goals by:
 - Minimizing paper materials to hand out and opting for electronic versions instead
 - Bringing reusable signage and booth materials

Responsible sourcing:

- ✚ The Hilton Hawaiian Village was essential to responsibly sourcing **food and beverage** (described in Engagement section above)
- ✚ Partners were essential to responsibly sourcing **energy** (described in Engagement section above)
- ✚ Printed signage, banners, and backdrops on 100% recycled PET fabric on reusable bamboo frames that are used at every event
- ✚ Printed double-sided programs on FSC certified Mohawk Paper that was 100% post-consumer recycled, processed chlorine-free, and manufactured with wind power

Waste reduction:

- ✚ The Hilton Hawaiian Village, partners, and attendees were essential to reducing waste (described in Engagement section above)
- ✚ Reusable name badge holders were used for all attendee badges
- ✚ Electronic communication was used for conference promotion, registration, announcements, and updates

Resource conservation:

- ✚ The Hilton Hawaiian Village was essential in helping to conserve resources (described in Engagement section above)

Plans for 2017:

- ✚ This year, they plan to enhance the sustainability program to include waste benchmarking and composting, food donation and benchmarking, carbon offsetting, and water balancing, as well as eliminate conference programs and offer only a conference app instead. They continuously strive to improve all existing pillars of the programs as well as these specific plans.

Thank you from the GreenBiz team! About GreenBiz Group and VERGE Hawai'i: Asia Pacific Clean Energy Summit Produced in partnership between GreenBiz Group and the Hawai'i State Energy Office, VERGE Hawai'i brings together more than 800 key stakeholders — from government, military, utilities, corporate leaders, energy producers, entrepreneurs and other solution providers — to have candid, action-oriented conversations addressing the challenges and opportunities in transitioning to 100 percent renewable energy. In addition to more than 50 action-oriented sessions led by more than 100 industry leaders, VERGE Hawai'i offers numerous special programs that identify innovative technologies and nurture deeper partnerships between clean energy stakeholders, including the first VERGE Hawai'i Sustainable Tourism Summit, an expanded Interconnect Expo showcase, tours of a 100 percent renewably powered microgrid and in-person demos during the Startup Showcase.

For more information on the event, visit <https://www.greenbiz.com/events/verge/honolulu/2016>

