



## VERGE Hawaii: Asia Pacific Clean Energy Summit 2017

*Conference Sustainability Program*



## Background:

The GreenBiz Group (GBG), as the producer of VERGE Hawaii: Asia Pacific Clean Energy Summit, strives to create conference experiences as sustainably as possible. In its first year at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki, GBG partnered with the hotel, vendors, and attendees on its sustainability program and achieved 40 points on the HGBP to reach the Kaulike Level, the second of four levels. GBG is proud of its achievement in 2016 and are excited to further its sustainability programs to pursue a higher level with the 2017 VERGE Hawaii: Asia Pacific Clean Energy Summit. The vision and strategy for the GBG conference sustainability program includes five pillars: innovation, engagement, responsible sourcing, resource conservation, and waste reduction; traditions of the Hawaiian culture. In addition, there was a panel session titled “Greening Hawaii’s Businesses and Events” with speakers from the Hawaii Ecotourism Association, Hawaiian Legacy Tours, and the Hawaii State Energy Office.

## Innovation:

- ✚ A microgrid powered our 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, Hawaii Regional Manager for OpTerra , explained how a microgrid powered the VERGE Hawaii 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 review sessions and for those who weren’t able to attend VERGE Hawaii.

## 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 Hawaii's 100-percent clean energy goal by 2045 and much more.
- ✚ We asked attendees to help achieve the sustainability goals by taking public transportation when possible. To support this effort, GBG 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
- ✚ The Hilton Hawaiian Village participated in achieving the 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 participate in achieving the sustainability goals by:
  - Minimizing paper materials and opting for electronic versions
  - 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)
- ✚ GBG's partners were essential to responsibly sourcing energy (described in Engagement section above)
- ✚ GBG printed its signage, banners, and backdrops on 100% recycled PET fabric on reusable bamboo frames that we use at every event
- ✚ GBG printed its 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, our partners, and our attendees were essential to reducing our waste (described in Engagement section above)
- ✚ We used reusable name badge holders for all attendee badges
- ✚ We used electronic communication for conference promotion, registration, announcements, and updates

#### **Resource conservation:**

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

For more information on the event, visit <https://www.greenbiz.com/events/verge/honolulu/2017>