

# Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville

Retail Store Focuses on Greening Business and Reducing Carbon Footprint



In 2007, SSC conducted a Green Office Audit for Margaritaville, helping them to create a sustainability policy that provided a positive social and environmental influence for the Key West community. SSC spent two days onsite with the company and hosted a store-wide workshop on the concept of sustainability. As part of the audit, SSC conducted a carbon footprint analysis, developed a sustainability action plan, and provided a strategy document explaining the larger opportunities to embrace sustainability. Services provided also included a carbon footprint analysis, sustainability action plan, and stakeholder communications. The following is an article by Key West Citizen Staff, Anne-Margaret Sobota that summarizes the Margaritaville sustainability journey:

## **“The Green Mile: Key West Business Goes the Extra Mile to Operate with the Environment in Mind”**

It's hard to hear the word Margaritaville without the melody “Wasting away again in Margaritaville...” drifting to mind. But Margaritaville is trying to convince its employees and customers not to “waste away” if they can help it. Margaritaville Store employees have been working with a sustainability consultant to find ways to “green” the business and reduce its carbon footprint.

Sunshine Smith, who runs Margaritaville Store operations, said the company always has operated with the environment in mind, but wondered if more could be done. “We always did recycle,” said Denise Di Salvo, a Margaritaville Store employee and member of its Giving Back Committee, “It just wasn't as formal or as organized.”

A year ago, the Giving Back Committee decided to add Environmental Giving to its program of donating 5 percent of net profit back to the community every month. But wanting to do more to reduce waste, Smith contacted Jennifer Woofter of Washington D.C.-based Strategic Sustainability Consulting. Woofter's company specializes in helping other companies identify ways to become more green, and develop a strategic, step-by-step plan to accomplish each of its goals.

“There's a lot of organizations feeling like they want to go green, they understand why they should do it, but they're just not sure what that first step should be,” Woofter said. “One of the things we always do when we start with a client is we do a carbon footprint analysis to help them figure out as an organization, what is your contribution to the global problem of climate change.”

The carbon footprint takes into account things such as how big your office is, electricity bills, how many miles people are driving in their daily community, any air travel, water usage, how many computers are running and for how long, and business travel, among many others. From there, Woofter created a list of ways the company could reduce waste, and a timeline in which to complete each task. “The neatest part was to see what we've been doing already, and what things we could immediately and easily change,” Smith said. “I think the hardest thing for most people is ‘how do I start’ and ‘what do I do’.”

Margaritaville's unofficial green team has been busy tackling the other initiatives, including switching to rechargeable batteries and compact fluorescent bulbs, using eco-friendly cleaning products, recycling, encouraging employees to walk or bike to work, receiving faxes through e-mail, and cutting back on paper mailings. Employees also have started taking the practices into their homes. Margaritaville even provided shower timers to help reduce water use and reusable grocery bags.

“In Margaritaville's case, the staff is extremely enthusiastic,” Woofter said. “That speaks very highly of how motivated everybody is.”

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