BS 8901:2007 Specification for a sustainable event management system

BS 8901:2007 *Specification for a sustainable event management system with guidance for use* sets out the requirements for planning and managing sustainable events of all sizes and types, supplemented by guidance on how to meet, and surpass, these requirements. BS 8901 encompasses the entire range of events ranging from large scale conferences and unique events such as the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games to music festivals and air shows. It is aimed at:

• Event organizers
• Venues
• Organizations and/or individuals in the supply chain

BS 8901 provides guidance in the form of easy to understand practical information designed to assist the user to implement the requirements and those in event management to manage their environmental, financial and social risks and impacts spanning all aspects of event management.

BS 8901 can help:

• Companies to improve sustainability performance within available budgets
• Reduce carbon emissions and waste, improving the resource efficiency of the entire event supply chain
• Present opportunities for more efficient planning and encourage the re-use of equipment and infrastructure
• Users take stock of the environmental impacts such as carbon footprint, waste management and effects on biodiversity; social impacts such as community involvement and fair employment; and economic impacts such as local investment and long-term viability.

To order your copy of BS 8901, please visit www.bsigroup.com/BS8901.

About BSI

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BS 8901 for events management
BS 25999-1 for business continuity management
BS ISO/IEC 27001 for information security management
BS EN ISO 9001 for quality management
BS EN ISO 14001 for environmental management
BS OHSAS 18001 for occupational health and safety management
BS EN ISO 22000 for food safety

BSI is part of BSI Group, a global independent business services organization that inspires confidence and delivers assurance to customers with standards-based solutions. Originating as the world's first national standards body, the Group has over 2,250 staff operating in over 100 countries through more than 50 global offices. The Group's key offerings are:

• The development and sale of private, national and international standards and supporting information
• Second and third-party management systems assessment and certification
• Product testing and certification of services and products
• Performance management software solutions
• Training services in support of standards implementation and business best practice.

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Google Case Study

Zeitgeist conference 2009

Zeitgeist – The general intellectual, moral, and cultural climate of an era.

The main objectives of the annual conference Zeitgeist hosted by Google, were to build and create stronger business relationships and to be seen as a thought leader.

The focus for the 2009 Zeitgeist conference was to examine the current state of the environmental world; and how businesses can work together to influence and facilitate change. Given this conference theme, it was natural for Google to run the event in a sustainable manner.

The Zeitgeist conference was used as a practical illustration for the implementation of BS 8901.

Self-certification

Google were confident that they had strong evidence of the implementation of BS 8901 Specification for a sustainability management system for sustainable events and chose to self-certify. As part of this evidence, Google created and issued documentation that was made available for comment by their stakeholders, these included;

• Sustainability development policy
• Identification key issues and objectives
• Stakeholder engagement and issue log
• KPIs and targets
• Evidence of implementation on site
• Summary of achievement made available to stakeholders using an online reporting system **www.eventsustainability.co.uk**

Google Zeitgeist took place on the 17th, 18th and 19th May 2009 at The Grove Hotel Hertfordshire, UK. It was attended by over 500 guests made up of Google employees, business partners and guest speakers.

The event content included guest speakers such as HRH The Prince of Wales and the HRH Prince of Asturias, Crown Prince of Spain, with a rainforest themed evening dinner.

The sustainability implementation was organized by Organise This Ltd, a sustainable event management company. Steps taken to achieve compliance included benchmarking the event; using the online event tool and the BS 8901 framework to deliver the objectives.

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Organise This

Google

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BSI: Standards   ·   Information   ·   Training   ·   Inspection   ·   Testing   ·   Assessment   ·   Certification

raising standards worldwide™

BS 8901 is a standard for the "Specification for a sustainability management system for sustainable events with guidance for use." This means implementing a way of working that considers environmental, economical, and social impacts. BS 8901 can be self certified, or second- or third-party certified.

The BS 8901 process involves several key stages:

Setting the scope

Before embarking on the implementation BS 8901, an organisation must first establish the scope of what is to be covered by their sustainability management system. Google set the scope for their management system to cover one event, Zeitgeist. Google can amend and extend their scope in the future and will consider implementation of the standard at the 2010 Zeitgeist conference.

Identifying issues

Google held meetings and workshops with their internal staff, supply chain and consulted industry best practice to determine and rank their key sustainability issues. The largest issues identified by Google were waste identification and measurement; stakeholder engagement, transportation mileage; internal education and awareness of sustainability.

Setting objectives and targets

From the key issues identified, realistic objectives for Zeitgeist were set; in conjunction with these objectives measurable targets were set so that performance could be evaluated after the conference. For each of these objectives numerous Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were identified and for each of these KPIs a quantifiable target was established. Examples of these for each objective were;

Objective	KPI	Target
Identify and measure waste generated from the event	Identify waste streams	100%
Educate stakeholders on sustainability	Communication to Zeitgeist supply chain	100%
Measure all transport mileage	Measure overseas flights from travellers who are not already in the UK	90%

Stakeholder engagement

A vital part of the BS 8901 process is to engage all stakeholders with sustainability issues. Google consulted their stakeholders at all stages of the process, Brand Fuel worked to support the implementation of BS 8901 and as a result found their way of work changing to reflect increased sustainability.

"The BS 8901 is the future for event management; we recognised that it was vital to work within the BS 8901 to aim to deliver a sustainable event"

Kay Pratt, Producer, Brand Fuel

Roles and responsibilities

Vish Patel was identified as the sustainability champion within the Google team and given sustainability as an added area of responsibility. According to the standard, the system requires top management agreement, obtained in this case, by Nikesh Arora, President of Global Sales Operations and Development.

Implementation

The implementation stage is where steps must be taken to ensure the objectives set earlier in the process are met. Examples of steps taken by Google to achieve their objectives included:

- Regular recycling stations including crew areas
- Separate outdoor waste sorting areas
- Mileage recorded for attendees and staff
- Flowers used were given to crew members
- Generators for marquee used anti-idling policy
- 'One' water used which donates profit to African well schemes
- Smaller bulbs used in conference projector which meant less energy used
- Conference stage is reusable for the annual Zeitgeist conference
- Guest passes made from sustainable resources and recyclable.

Non-conformity

Throughout the process, the Google team reviewed non-conformities; non-conformity is when the team looks at what is working and what is not and the actions that can be taken to rectify these with the aim of achieving their objectives. This was achieved through reviewing documentation such as the sustainability development policy, task lists and through communication with the supply chain.

Benchmarking

Part of the benchmarking process included the collection of measurements from the conference as well as evidence of implementation. Google used an online sustainable event management tool to monitor their measurements. See results below based over 3 days;

Sustainability measurement from www.eventsustainability.com

Item	Measurement
Linen	7264 pieces travelled 20 miles
Refuse waste (landfill)[1]	0.75 tonnes
Electricity	1595 Kw H
Gas	7640 Kw H
Water	661 cm3
Paper recycling	0.21 tonnes
Aluminium recycling	0.011 tonnes
Plastic recycling	0.028 tonnes
Glass recycling[2]	0.84 tonnes
Overseas delegate travel mileage[3]	840,388 miles
UK delegate mileage[4]	14,474 miles
Speaker mileage	837 miles
Food mileage	1092 miles
Onsite mileage	8,082 miles

1 based on average of 7kg per refuse sack
2 based on an average of 40kg per bin
3 based on return flights
4 based on journey per person via car

Management review

Google put in to place an event debrief after the event that identified whether the sustainability objectives were achieved. The results showed that Google achieved the following in relation to their objectives:

- Waste streams were identified and measured
- Mileage was recorded for overseas and UK delegates
- Education of stakeholders on sustainability

Google will use the results of the 2009 Zeitgeist conference as a benchmark for future sustainable events in the UK and Europe where they aim to set sustainable objectives to include;

- Easily accessible venue for delegates
- Reduction of carbon emissions
- Food composting in venues
- Reduction in landfill waste.

"It's essential that businesses identify areas in which they can be more sustainable, as Zeitgeist this year focuses on the state of the environmental world, we thought it was essential we adhered to the BS 8901 system to deliver a sustainable event."

Vish Patel, Google

Conclusion

One of the event objectives that Google set out to achieve through the Zeitgeist conference was to be seen as a thought leader. By implementing BS 8901, Google is at the forefront of helping to change the way the event industry plans and implements events.

Further information

Google: **http://www.google.com/about.html**

Zeitgeist 2009:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Se-wIHw9XQM

Organise This: **www.organisethis.co.uk**

BSI: **www.bsigroup.com/bs8901**

'Could the internet help us to change the Zeitgeist of the remainder of this century, could Google, help to provide that catalyst for action that is so urgently needed.'

HRH The Prince of Wales