

an inconvenience store truth

By Chris Blasinsky

TYPICALLY, WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD “GREEN” in the convenience and petroleum retailing industry you think of profits, cash or in-store sales. But today “green” means something else to retailers who are taking a proactive approach to implementing sustainable business practices that are not just good for the environment, but also their bottom line.

Going green is not a new concept — recycling and energy-efficient lighting and equipment have been around for several years. However, as the spotlight widens from saving on energy costs to trying to save the planet, the issue of sustainability is becoming more and more important — and customers are increasingly showing their support with their wallets. Retailers who don’t acknowledge this change in consumer attitude and business practices will be left behind.



SeQuential, a gas station and convenience store in Eugene, Oregon, embraces sustainability with innovations both inside and outside the store.

CONVENIENCE STORES FALL BEHIND

Let's be blunt: Convenience stores are not on the cutting edge of promoting sustainable business models. Considering that convenience stores are located in nearly every community across the United States, this is a huge disadvantage for the industry and could lead to competing channels winning the hearts of the new crop of green-minded consumers.

Take Wal-Mart. In January 2007, the world's number-one retailer opened its first high-efficiency store in Kansas City, Missouri, one that uses 20 percent less energy than a typical Wal-Mart Supercenter. The concept was developed two years ago at experimental stores in Texas and Colorado, where they tested environmentally friendly technologies that reduce Wal-Mart's two main energy consuming units: heating and air

conditioning (HVAC) and refrigeration. At the Kansas City store, the two systems are fully integrated so that 100 percent of the heat rejected by the refrigeration system is reclaimed into the HVAC, which is then converted into energy.

Grocery chain Giant Eagle remodeled a 67,000-square-foot store in April that became Pennsylvania's first certified green supermarket. Designed to consume 20 percent less energy, the store features increased insulation, natural lighting and electricity produced by green energy sources such as wind power.

In Loveland, Ohio, grocery chain Kroger opened a new store with 75 skylights above the aisles to allow for more natural lighting and reduced energy costs. Motion detectors shut off lights when store areas are vacant and the store uses compact fluorescent lights that require less electricity. The store also recycles exhaust to help heat water and has concrete floors that can be cleaned with plain old water.

In May, Meijer opened a new store in Allen Park, Michigan, with environmentally friendly and sustainable features, such as high-efficiency light fixtures, an energy-efficient HVAC system and water-efficient sinks and toilets. The store, the company's third this year, also gave leftover building materials, such as concrete, wood, metal and cardboard, to local recycling plants. During construction, Meijer also used recycled materials such as concrete, wood, plastics and carpeting.

Safeway recently announced its first solar-powered store at a unit in Dublin, California, where an acre-wide rooftop

solar array provides energy for the 55,000-square-foot store.

Obviously, retail channels have clearly taken the lead on implementing sustainable business models, but very few convenience and petroleum retailers are on the cutting edge — or even ahead of the curve. Perhaps it's a matter of navigating the options and design elements that make a store green. Or, perhaps many retailers may already be in the process of exploring how to implement sustainable business practices. Whatever the case, there are a few stores on the right path.

A BP station in Baltimore, Maryland, is communicating a "drive locally, think globally" message to customers with a store specifically designed to protect the fragile ecosystem of the Chesapeake Bay. The store is in the process of installing what's called a "living roof," a roof that contains soil and plant materials to absorb rainwater. This roof can help eliminate about 65 percent of water runoff that contains pollutants, which ultimately make their way through local sewers to the Chesapeake Bay. The store also uses high-efficiency lighting and recycles water used in its carwash.

In October 2006, The Pantry opened a new green Kangaroo store in Gainesville, Florida, constructed with low-toxin materials recycled from the car dealership that previously occupied the site. The store features day lighting and low-voltage fluorescent light fixtures as well as an electrical vehicle charging station.

When the Kangaroo store opened, Peter Sodini, chairman and CEO of The Pantry, said that construction costs were about 15 percent higher than traditional



"Instead of cleaning up fuel spills with cat litter, we use cornhusks. Unlike cat litter, cornhusks don't weigh anything and absorb more. With the cornhusks, you end up with about 30 gallons of black muck that we send off to the recycler."

— MIKE LEWIS, PEARSON FUELS

construction methods, but that the payback "should be quick because we will be using 25 percent less energy than a conventional built store."

He called the store "a model for the convenience store industry."

SeSequential, a gas station and convenience store in Eugene, Oregon, might be the most innovative of the bunch. The station features many sustainable design elements, including passive solar architecture, a living roof and a solar array canopy, all of which reduce energy usage and filter water runoff from the site.

Outside, the convenience store embraces sustainability by featuring a seasonal organic produce stand displaying locally harvested fruits and vegetables. SeSequential has made every effort to source local, organic products — even the fountain cups and straws can be composted. The wooden product fixtures were donated by the Eugene REI store, and refinished by the same local carpenter who built the cabinets and countertops.

In an effort to educate consumers, an interactive information kiosk provides information about the biofuels, solar canopy, living roof and bioswales.

Here's something to consider before throwing out cardboard waste with the daily trash: "In many communities, paper companies pay for cardboard, so if all you're doing is throwing it away, you're losing money. . . . You may as well be tossing sacks of money in the dumpster."

— SCOT CASE, TERRACHOICE ENVIRONMENTAL MARKETING

SeQuential customers can even watch how much electricity is being produced from the solar panels.

WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

The umbrella issue of sustainability can be confusing, and maybe that is part of the reason why more retailers and convenience stores have not taken on the challenge of converting or building sustainable stores. Perhaps the biggest obstacle is deciphering what the term means. In basic terms, the dictionary defines sustainability as a method of "using a resource so that the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged."

The business definition of sustainability, on the other hand, is a bit more specific and covers three areas that, when combined, ensure a solid sustainable business model:

1 Economic development: improving the quality of life through conservation efforts, preserving natural resources and promoting a cleaner environment

2 Environmental protection: recycling and implementing programs that reduce waste, conserve energy and reduce harmful greenhouse gases

3 Social responsibility: whether individually, as a business, organization or government, it's taking on the responsibility of improving the quality of life — "doing right" by society

In many respects, sustainability is as much about doing the right thing and conserving resources as it is preventing and — where possible — reversing environmental deterioration by meeting the needs of today without jeopardizing the welfare of future generations.

Sustainable principles "are going to be the new scorecard" for which businesses will be measured, predicts Don Carli, senior research fellow at the Institute for Sustainable Communication, who led a May 16 webinar titled "Green, Loyal...and Profitable." These measurements include the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED certification, a nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high-performance green buildings. By obtaining LEED certification, a business becomes recognized in the community and nationwide as an environmentally responsible, profitable and a healthy place to work. The Pantry in Gaines-

ville is the first convenience store in the United States to achieve this LEED certification.

LEED-certified buildings are those that:

- ▶ Have lower operating costs and increased asset value
- ▶ Are healthy and comfortable for occupants
- ▶ Reduce waste sent to landfills
- ▶ Conserve energy and water
- ▶ Reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions
- ▶ Qualify for tax rebates, zoning allowances and other incentives
- ▶ Demonstrate an owner's commitment to environmental stewardship and social responsibility

"Part of the reason why retailers are going for LEED certification is that they want to be on the cutting edge of making sure they're appealing to their customers," said Ashley Katz, communications coordinator at the U.S. Green Building Council. "Eco-friendly is a hot topic right now, and people who are driving hybrids and fuel-efficient vehicles are typically frequenting stores that embody their values — especially if stores are built with a green message in mind. Building green has a host of environmental benefits, but it's also good for a business's bottom line."

Businesses that are proactively becoming environmental stewards through green building design include PepsiCo, which operates the Blue Ridge Gatorade facility in Wytheville, Virginia. This 950,000-square-foot facility is LEED certified at the gold level, which makes it the largest food and beverage facility in the world to achieve this designation.

> www.buildinggreen.com >> www.eere.energy.gov >> www.climatecounts.org >>

The plant's design maximizes the use of supply water and optimizes wastewater treatment efficiency, which saves more than 100 million gallons of water per year. PepsiCo's Gatorade distribution center in Tolleson, Arizona, has also achieved a gold-level LEED designation; in addition, a Gatorade plant under construction in Pryor, Oklahoma, has been designed to meet LEED standards.

LEED evaluates buildings in five areas: sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources and indoor environmental quality. To become a LEED-certified building, the U.S. Green Building Council uses a 69-item checklist for these five areas; projects have to meet the minimum criteria of 26 points. For example, a building earns points if it has bike racks and lighting fixtures that shine light down into parking lots instead of up in the sky. Points are also earned for energy-efficient lighting and appliances, and the use of renewable or recycled building materials. Depending on the number of points a project receives, the building is awarded certified (26 to 32 points), silver (33 to 38 points), gold (39 to 51 points) or platinum (52 to 69 points) LEED certification.

The first fueling station in the United States to be submitted for LEED certification is Helios House, located in downtown Los Angeles. BP converted a fueling station into this "living laboratory" for green building technologies. The facility, called Helios after the Greek sun god, is an experimental gas station that tries to be more eco-friendly with its architecture, and helps educate the public

Although bottled water is a huge seller in most convenience stores, give consumers a choice: sell bottled water and offer filtered tap water for consumers who want to reuse their own container. Or, sell a refillable container that is branded with a store logo.

— SCOT CASE, TERRACHOICE ENVIRONMENTAL MARKETING

on environmental issues. Its roof holds 90 solar panels and a rainwater collection system used for landscape irrigation. Most of the site has been built with recycled materials, including a crushed glass and concrete mix that creates a unique sparkling effect. According to BP, Helios House exceeds current environmental standards for on-site water collection and uses 16 percent less electricity.

Residential construction has also hopped on the green design and amenities bandwagon. In Washington, D.C., The Alta at Thomas Circle is the first new residential building in the District to become LEED certified. The building features a green roof, energy-efficient appliances, floor-to-ceiling windows that increase natural lighting and bicycle racks for non-motorists.

In Savannah, Georgia, Melaver Inc. received silver LEED certification for its Shops 600 project at the Abercorn Common shopping center, which also features the first LEED-certified McDonald's. Ultra-low flow fixtures, toilets and waterless urinals make the shopping center 30 percent more water-efficient than a regular center. Its highly reflective white roof

deflects heat and makes the center cooler, and high-efficiency light fixtures and HVAC equipment make this center 30 percent more energy-efficient than a typical center, saving tenants money on utility bills. Eighty-five percent of construction debris, totaling more than 6,000 tons, was recycled or reused. Low volatile organic compound paints, sealants and adhesives help improve indoor air quality.

SAVE \$\$\$ AND THE EARTH

LEED certification is just one example of a sustainability benchmark, and for many retailers, it might seem a bit too much to take on all at once. However, there are effective and simple business practices that the convenience and petroleum industry can easily implement — from a marketing and cost-savings standpoint.

"Our industry is way behind as far as LEED certification. We seem to always go toward the least common denominator as far as development," said Mike Lawshe, president of convenience and petroleum industry new store construction, remodeling and re-branding consulting firm Paragon Solutions in

www.ase.org >> www.begreennow.com >> www.carbonfund.org >> www.greenbiz.com

About one-sixth of all the electricity generated in the United States is used to air condition buildings.

WWW.EPA.GOV



Fort Worth, Texas. "It's changing though, and there are some retailers like BP and The Pantry that are leading the change. But there are sustainability measures that even the small independent retailers and one-store operators can do."

Lighting

How many retailers does it take to change a light bulb? If one retailer replaces a light bulb with an energy saver light bulb, he or she can save \$30-\$40 on the electricity bill, in addition to using two-thirds less energy — and the bulbs last up to 10 times longer.

If a business wants to implement a cost-saving green solution, start with what's hanging overhead.

"Just swapping out your light fixtures and changing to electronic ballast with T8 bulbs can dramatically reduce your energy cost and increase your light level," said Lawshe, cautioning retailers to install energy-efficient lighting without reducing the actual amount of fixtures.

By reducing the number of lights "all of a sudden you've got a dark and dingy looking store — especially if the natural lighting coming in during the day is low. But you can change the older fixtures to more energy-efficient fixtures such as track lighting that highlight the areas you really want to emphasize. Visually it will look like it's much brighter, but it will be much less amperage used on a daily basis," Lawshe said.

New lighting technology such as LED (light-emitting diode) is a cost-effective solution to reducing electric bills and

promoting sustainability. According to General Electric, when compared to older, traditional lighting sources, LED technology enables greater reliability, reductions in maintenance costs and up to 90 percent energy cost savings. And the technology is growing. GE's Web site cites that the LED

industry grew nearly 50 percent year over year between 1995 and 2004.

"Another example of LED technology is cooler door lighting. The life of the LED is ten times what the old bulbs are, the light level is significantly better and energy savings are tremendous," said Lawshe. "Vendors should also be able to provide retailers with statistics and figures so they can see how LED lighting would make sense in their stores."

Operations

Sustainability effectively starts with something as simple as energy-efficient

Alternative Fuels Advocate

Mike Lawis, general manager of Pearson Fuels, knows a thing or two about alternative fuels. His business model brought the state of California its first ethanol station, San Diego's first biodiesel station and San Diego County's first dual pressure natural gas station. Today, Pearson's offers customers ten different vehicle fuels. His business model is ahead of the curve, and as alternative fuels like ethanol, which burns cleaner than gasoline, continue being touted as "environmentally friendly," retailers may want to hear what Lawis has to say.

Lewis firmly believes that E-85 will become mainstream, although much of the challenge is selling it. "With biodiesel, which has no oil in it, people will pay 30 or 40 cents a gallon more for biodiesel than regular diesel. We sell hundreds of gallons a day of biodiesel and customers thank us for it. But with ethanol, if it's more expensive than gasoline, we sell none and get complaints from customers about the higher price. The ethanol customer is a price-sensitive customer."

Ethanol customers may be fickle, but Lewis also believes that demand for growth

will change public perception. "We're not making one more drop of oil in the world and we're making millions of gallons of ethanol. In the long run it will be less expensive and you don't need to educate the public when ethanol could be \$4 a gallon versus gasoline at \$6 a gallon. How many years down the road will this start happening? I don't know. It could be 15 years, but it's coming.

"A lot of the concerns or assumptions about ethanol are correct — there isn't a lot of volume in it, and if you build it they will not necessarily come. To some point, you have to be visionary and put your head above the crowd. Remember that following the crowd got us to a 6-cent [fuel] margin with Visa and MasterCard taking all of the profit."

Even though ethanol is price-driven, and its consumers are sensitive to the cost per gallon, the opposite is true for biodiesel, which Lewis has learned draws loyal customers to his store. "I would encourage anyone who has the ability to dispense biodiesel to do so. It's a great way to reach out into the community and to have true advocates for the environment and the fuel become your advocates."

lighting, which in turn helps lower utility bills — but it doesn't stop there. By looking around their operations, retailers can find other areas to consider as well.

"If you really challenge yourself, nearly every piece of equipment in the store can be used more cost-effectively," said Lawshe. For example, icemakers can be set on timers so that they're only operating during a store's non-peak hours when customer traffic is light and overall energy demand is lower. "If your icemaker is working all night and ice is consumed during the day, you're essentially reducing your energy costs... Little things like that that don't cost anything and make a difference," he added.

The challenge with sustainability is getting people to think about their operations from a radically different perspective. Then it becomes easier to identify the benefits — to the bottom line and your image — and take steps toward a more sustainable business. For example, in an effort to build a sustainable business model, Wal-Mart looked at their operations through "the lens of sustainability," said Scot Case, vice president of TerraChoice in Reading, Pennsylvania, who has consulted on projects for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Wal-Mart.

"We've heard people say to think outside of the box. Sustainability is a different type of box," said Case, adding that when Wal-Mart executives look at their business through so-called sustainability "goggles," what they see is money all over the floor. "They become busy picking up money off the floor while their competitors never even see it. The convenience store industry has access to the same type of opportunities."

One of those opportunities is the car wash, which is improving to become more water efficient and environmental friendly.

A gallon of gasoline weighs just over six pounds. When burned, the carbon contained in the fuel mixes with oxygen in the air and produces nearly 20 pounds of carbon dioxide.

WWW.HYBRIDCARS.COM



Said Case: "If you are looking at your business through a sustainability perspective and concerning yourself with the amount of resources that you're using... you're going to be more concerned about the amount of water it takes to clean each car and the chemicals used during the wash. And as it turns out, retailers will find that there are less expensive technologies available that are more water efficient and use less hazardous cleaning chemicals."

Other opportunities to green your operations include heat-blocking window film. According to the International Window Film Association, window film can lower energy costs by reducing glare and harmful UV rays and blocking the sun's heat, which means a building's temperature is gauged by the HVAC system and not the position of the sun.

Foodservice

Foodservice equipment and appliances are another area to pinpoint if you are looking to reduce energy costs. For example, nearly every appliance in the United States carries an Energy Star label, which is the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) voluntary labeling program that identifies and promotes energy-efficient products that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Look for these labels when purchasing or replacing appliances in your stores.

Another cost-saving and energy-saving area inside the store for retailers to consider: the grab-and-go foods display case.

"Inside a convenience store, the single serve packaged beverages are behind closed doors so that they stay cold, yet all of the sandwiches, cheeses and fruits are in a completely open cooler display. The air conditioning units in these displays aren't just keeping the case cold, they're air conditioning the entire store. Why aren't retailers putting glass doors on these displays? If they did, they would be saving money by reducing the amount of energy needed to keep those food items fresh," said Case.

When asked if having grab-and-go items behind closed doors would hurt sales or make them seem less convenient, Case suggested the contrary. "What we're seeing is that this does not hurt sales — people have made some assumptions, but haven't actually tested them," he said. "I think what you'll find is that there is a cost benefit trade off. How much energy do you have to save before the cost of one extra sandwich sale is no longer relevant? If putting doors on the display case cuts your energy bill by \$30 a month and only results in the loss of one sandwich sale, isn't that worth it?"

Taking a page from the grocery store industry, convenience retailers will find that grocers are reducing the amount of open display cases because they've already realized the biggest threat to their profits is rising energy costs. "By not having all of the dairy products in open displays and putting the milk, eggs and cheeses behind cooler doors, grocers are reducing their energy costs," said

Keeping your tires inflated properly can improve gas mileage by more than 3%.

WWW.CLIMATECRISIS.NET



Case. "It's a matter of looking at ways to do more with less. You want to grow your sales while decreasing the cost of energy."

WHERE TO GET HELP

Retailers who want to go green don't have to go it alone. Two years ago, convenience and petroleum retailer Bob Beal, president of R&B Systems Inc. in Spokane, Washington, implemented a sustainable business practice that

has reduced energy consumption at his fuel islands by two-thirds. And his local utility company helped offset the costs.

By retrofitting his existing canopy lighting at three sites, Beal was

able to reduce energy consumption on the fuel islands and gain lighting that was brighter and more concentrated and made the site look more appealing to customers. Inside the store, he further reduced energy costs by installing motion sensor lights in the restrooms, and in the office he installed programmable thermostats on the heating and cooling unit to keep usage down during off-peak business hours.

"There is a lot of money available for retailers to undertake energy efficient

programs," said Beal. "In my case, I was able to have 35 to 45 percent of the costs picked up. Combine that with the savings, the payback was realized in about year. You're doing something that is not only good for the environment, but good for your wallet."

By researching programs and grant money available in the community, Beal found that his utility company would help offset the cost of retrofitting his canopy lighting. "Everyone wants to have the latest and greatest products and services, especially if they don't cost as much," he said. "What many people may not realize is that there are programs available, such as through your utility company, where they will come out to your site, survey what you can and can't do and then help pick up some of the costs spent to update the fixtures."

Where Do You Rank?

By some standards, sustainability is the new scorecard for measuring consumer businesses. Nonprofit groups such as Climate Counts evaluate, rank and share the sustainability efforts of approximately 60 large companies — many of which are NACS Hunter Club and supplier members. The group also provides a downloadable pocket guide for consumers that lists each company's ranking.

The Climate Counts Company Scorecard allows consumers to "see how serious companies are about stopping climate change" and how they stack up against their competitors. On a point scale of 0 to 100, Climate Counts uses 22 criteria that measure each company's climate footprint, how they are reducing their impact on global warming, whether they support "progressive climate legislation" and whether they publicly disclose their sustainability actions "clearly and comprehensively."

"The higher the score, the greater the company's commitment to fighting global warming," notes Climate Counts. The group breaks down companies into the following sectors:

- ▶ **Apparel/Accessories**, such as Nike, The Gap and Liz Claiborne
- ▶ **Beverages/Beer**, including Miller Brewing, Coors and Anheuser-Busch
- ▶ **Electronics**, such as Canon, Nokia, Apple and Toshiba
- ▶ **Food Products**, such as The Coca-Cola Company, Kraft Foods, Kellogg, PepsiCo and ConAgra
- ▶ **Food Services**, such as Yum! Brands, McDonald's, Burger King and Starbucks
- ▶ **Household Products**, such as Procter & Gamble, Avon and Colgate-Palmolive
- ▶ **Internet/Software**, such as Yahoo!, Google, ebay and Microsoft

▶ **Media**, such as Time Warner, Viacom, Disney and CBS

"All companies have a long way to go, but even now, you can definitely make choices that reflect your values," notes Climate Counts.

Meanwhile, CPG companies are making waves with sustainable business models. PepsiCo topped the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's quarterly list of the Top 25 U.S. users of "green" electricity for the second-straight quarter (as of July 2007). Companies rounding out the top five include Wells Fargo & Co., Whole Foods Market Inc., the Pepsi Bottling Group Inc. and the U.S. Air Force. In March, EPA named PepsiCo as a 2007 Energy Star Partner of the Year for outstanding energy management and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

You can also call upon services that will help calculate the “carbon footprint,” or overall energy consumption, of your business. Businesses and even homeowners are using this process to promote their sites as being “carbon neutral,” meaning they are reducing their impact or “footprint” on the environment by eliminating harmful carbon emissions through what’s known as carbon offsets. “Carbon offsets are undertaking activities that might mean something as simple as planting a tree,” said Case.

Services that calculate a business’s carbon footprint identify all of the environmental impacts of an operation. “They’re also paying what is referred to as an environmental tax to offset their carbon emissions. That tax might go towards investing in renewable energy resources, such as solar or wind power, or buying renewable energy credits,” said Case, adding that most local tax authorities provide financially beneficial incentives for businesses to purchase renewable energy and that most communities have a renewable energy network that tracks which incentives are available to that specific market.

“When you calculate your carbon footprint, you’re identifying how much electricity you use, how much fuel you use, what percentage of electricity is going towards lighting and HVAC, etc. Basically, you’re identifying sources of waste, gaining valuable insights into how you’re spending your money and realizing opportunities to simultaneously reduce your carbon footprint and cut energy costs,” said Case.

When undertaking this process, Case noted that many retailers discover that their largest expenses come from lighting and refrigeration. “If this is true for your operation and you learn that there are technologies out there that will reduce those costs by about 60 percent,

National Reusable Bag Day is April 21. Encourage customers to choose a reusable bag instead of disposable paper or plastic when shopping.

WWW.REUSABLEBAGDAY.ORG



you can quickly calculate how that will produce a return on investment. It’s not just a financial ROI, but an environmental ROI.”

JUST DO IT

With businesses that operate in nearly every community across the United States, the convenience and petroleum industry is in prime position to lead the retail industry with affordable, practical and effective sustainable business models. If you aren’t thinking about sustainability and what it means for your future and your customers, it’s time to start.

From a marketing perspective, promoting a sustainable business model could make or break a consumer’s decision to frequent a particular type of store: Do they go into the grocery store that’s boasting of an energy-efficient and environmentally friendly building or the convenience store that’s touting, well, nothing?

“Ask yourself this: What are you communicating to your customer and the end-user? What are you doing as far as recyclable materials within the store and how are you communicating a recycling program to your customers? These are outward things that might not get a return on investment, but they will certainly help your public image,” said Lawshe. “They’ll see that you are making a conscious effort to be sustainable. But if you hide and do the ‘see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil’ when the concept of going green comes up, then you’re speaking volumes.”

Forget about the stereotypes: “Going green” is not a term exclusive to tree-huggers. The issues of sustainability and implementing green business practices are important to anyone who wants to become a part of the solution, reduce energy consumption, protect resources and save money.

“Business owners are realizing that there is a competitive advantage to building sustainability models,” said Case. “It will change this industry much the same way electronic cash registers did and lead towards additional financial savings and additional business opportunities.”

Going green, becoming sustainable and protecting the environment for future generations — these are big issues to absorb, but they are changing the entire retail landscape across all channels of trade. And this article is only the tip of the iceberg. Remember that sustainability is not an end result: it’s a journey that is shaping the road to reaching more successful business models. Put your sustainability goggles on and really look at your operation.

“There were horse and buggy manufacturers who said the automobile would never be a success,” said Case. “These folks put all of their time and energy into improving the carriages, saddles and harnesses. But the world changed around them and now they’re all out of business. The same is happening in the sustainability space. People who are not going green will soon be financial unviable. Go green or go bankrupt.” ◉