

EFFICIENCY EDUCATION APP

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

MGM Resort International's sustainability and operating staff have long focused on retrofitting and upgrading building equipment, but recognized the opportunity to drive sustainable behavioral change throughout their employee base. MGM Resorts serves as the largest employer in the state of Nevada with 62,000 employees.

Each property has a sustainability ambassador and a Green Team, yet leadership realized the need for a new strategy to engage individual employees across various functional areas and jobs. To support this mission, MGM Resorts' developed a highly interactive, custom web-based platform called MY Green Advantage to educate and encourage efficiency actions among employees. By utilizing a program that engages individual employees in changing their behavior to improve efficiency, MGM Resorts is able to reach more aggressive energy and water conservation goals.

Since 2013, MGM Resorts employees have completed almost 700,000 efficiency actions resulting in estimated savings of over 7 million kWh of energy, 200,000 gallons of fuel, 16 million gallons of water, and 10 million pounds of carbon dioxide emissions through 2014.

ORGANIZATION TYPE

Hospitality

BARRIER

Employees unaware of opportunities to reduce resource use do not behave in ways that maximize efficiency

SOLUTION

Design a web and mobile tool that encourages employees to act to reduce resource use

OUTCOME

Over 700,000 employee efficiency actions resulting in more than 7 million kWh of energy savings

POLICIES

MY Green Advantage has been integrated into MGM Resorts' corporate strategic plan and

policies. In 2014, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategic goals were declared for all MGM Resorts' properties. Each resort's goals include achieving at least 15% staff participation in MY Green Advantage. MGM Resorts' company-wide CSR strategic goals are also aligned with executive incentive programs.

PROCESS

MGM Resorts partnered with WeSpire, a sustainability software company, to create MY Green Advantage. The idea was to transform sustainability from a serious topic into a fun, energizing initiative with real impacts. The customized web-based platform engages employees using social media, gamification, and sustainability education to drive behavioral change at home and at work.

Not only does the tool present a customized list of suggested sustainability actions for each user based on the property where they work, it also quantifies environmental impacts by calculating energy, fuel, water, waste, air pollutant emissions, and dollar savings from each action carried out by an employee. Quantifying the impact of each action makes the platform's benefits more tangible and further motivates users.

Employees earn points, recognition, and rewards for actions they complete. Users can view their own activities and their ranking as individuals compared with other individuals, or as a resort-level group compared with other MGM Resorts' properties. They can also view and comment on their peers' activities through the program, which is optimized for mobile use so that those who have smartphones can access it on the go.

MY Green Advantage taps into the power of healthy competition by encouraging employees to take pride in outdoing their peers for a good cause. MGM Resorts has a strong culture of competitive spirit, so this is a good cultural fit for the company. The program attracts not only employees who have an inherent interest in environmental protection but also those who are naturally competitive.

In addition to capitalizing on friendly competition, MGM Resorts uses recognition to drive additional employee energy actions. The company's sustainability team has learned that recognition is as valuable to employees as financial or material rewards. The team expected to need a large annual budget for incentives to persuade employees to participate in the program, but has found that invitations to special events, back-of-house "walls of fame", inclusion in special sustainability projects and working groups, and profiling employees in property newsletters and executive meetings to be just as motivating as flat screen TVs and gift certificates.

OUTREACH

MY Green Advantage was launched very strategically via a multi-layered outreach approach over the course of a full year. MGM Resorts' Corporate Sustainability Division was thoughtful about how they presented and promoted the program to internal stakeholders and employees.

First, the sustainability team garnered executive support by presenting to each property's operating committee, collecting their feedback, and tailoring the launch based on their operational knowledge. The company's Executive Corporate Social Responsibility Committee, which is comprised of C-

level executives, Property Presidents, and the Board of Directors, was also engaged in the process.

Through these conversations, the sustainability team recognized and worked to overcome several potential barriers to employee participation in MY Green Advantage:

- Many MGM employees do not have desk jobs with regular access to computers. To overcome this, MY Green Advantage was installed on computer kiosks at each property. Many of the kiosks were already available for employees to receive company news and review benefits information, but some entirely new kiosks just for MY Green Advantage were installed in quiet areas and break rooms to ensure easy access during employee breaks. Employees can also access the platform from their mobile devices and home computers.
- The MY Green Advantage application requires an email address for registration, but over 80% of MGM Resorts employees do not have company email. This issue was addressed by allowing employees to use a personal email address or use MY Green Advantage kiosks to create a new personal email account in order to participate in MY Green Advantage.
- English is a second language for 32% of MGM Resorts employees. To address the language barrier, the company is working to internationalize MY Green Advantage, which has made content on the platform available in Spanish.

Each property was then responsible for launching the platform to its own employees with a comprehensive online and offline communication plan leading up a launch event. Following each launch event, properties deployed various campaigns to drive immediate and ongoing engagement with the platform.

New MGM Resorts' employees are introduced to MY Green Advantage on their first day on the job during the company's corporate orientation. The tool's importance is then continually reinforced throughout the employee experience from the property orientation to company events.

Following the launch events, MGM Resorts has kept employees engaged by refreshing content regularly. The tool contains over 700 different suggested actions, it is able to provide fresh content to users instead of displaying the same actions over and over – it would take an employee a long time to cycle through all the actions available. The MGM Resorts sustainability team has found that because of these features, interest in MY Green Advantage is self-perpetuating and employees naturally remain engaged over time.

Companywide content also changes in accordance with environmental events like Earth Day, World Water Day, and America Recycles Day. Property-specific content is updated to remain relevant to each property's environmental strategic goals and each property designs and manages its own contests and campaigns, which can include a focus on actions of a particular category (for example, water) in a certain month or other time-frame.

MY Green Advantage sign-in page. It can also be viewed at mygreenadvantage.com.

Image of Suggested and Trending Actions Page in MY Green Advantage

Image of Teams and Impact Page in MY Green Advantage

Personal Score Page in MY Green Advantage

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Employee communications that MGM Resorts used to promote the MY Green Advantage platform:

- [MY Green Advantage Employee Launch Poster](#)
- [MY Green Advantage Flyer](#)
- [MY Green Advantage Gold Strike Newsletter](#)

MEASURING SUCCESS

WeSpire's staff scientists use a robust algorithm to quantify 5 core environmental impact categories, including energy, waste, water, fuel, and CO2 emissions. These impacts are calculated for each of the 1,000 actions in MY Green Advantage. The WeSpire data comes from reliable third-party academic, government and nongovernmental sources. These include peer-reviewed journals, Energy Information Administration data and reports from organizations like the Union of Concerned Scientists.

The algorithm includes life cycle analyses (complete assessments of all of the eco-impacts of a given action, service or product, from start to finish) when they're readily available or when they constitute a significant portion of an action's impacts.

Each of the actions in MY Green Advantage is assigned a point value based on its environmental benefits, but MGM Resorts focuses less on total points and more on the number of actions completed so that all employees have the opportunity to be recognized for their efforts regardless of whether they have the means to, for example, install solar panels at home, which earns users a hefty 500 points.

MY Green Advantage also has a user-friendly reporting engine through which sustainability staff access engagement metrics, content trends, and environmental metrics. Through this portal, the company has learned that employees are especially drawn to certain topics such as personal energy consumption and food sustainability. Based on this intel, the team has tweaked content to emphasize healthy living and methods for reducing energy use in personal life. In this way, MGM Resorts uses measurement tools to make its sustainability program more engaging and effective by aligning it with employee interests.

Because employees report efficiency actions on the honor system, the company ensures that the highest standards of honesty are being upheld by spot checking actions and conducting audits, going so far as to design content so that it is auditable. Auditable content includes job-specific actions and location-specific actions.

Tools:

Sample Management Panel

Sample reporting capabilities

OUTCOMES

MGM Resorts set a goal of 250,000 actions by the end of 2014, but the number has already surpassed 700,000. In addition, most properties exceed the 15% participation goal; 20% of employees across the company, over 12,000 workers, use MY Green Advantage. This high participation has yielded savings of 200,000 gallons of fuel, over 10 million pounds of carbon dioxide emissions, and over 7 million kWh of energy.

MGM Resorts employees have completed over 700,000 efficiency actions, saving:

- 200,000 gallons of fuel
- More than 10 million pounds of carbon dioxide emissions
- More than 7 million kWh of energy
- Over 16 million gallons of water

Top 10 actions completed:

1. Turn off lights
2. Turn off faucet while brushing teeth
3. Wash full loads of laundry
4. Wait to run dishwasher until full
5. Wash load of laundry in cold water
6. Unplug cellphone charger when fully charged
7. Turn off water while washing hands at work
8. Use reusable towel or dishwasher instead of paper towels

9. Close window shades to save heating or cooling energy
10. Use a reusable mug

The ratio of efficiency actions performed at MGM properties vs. at employee homes is approximately 1:1, as determined with internal tracking methods. While actions related to employees' personal lives and homes consistently generate more interest from employees, MY Green Advantage drives savings both at home and at work. The popularity of the "home" actions propels employee interest in work-related efficiency behavior.

Results at each property differ based on current focus and campaigns as well as inter-departmental and cross-property competitions. The top performing resort is Bellagio with 34% of employees participating, and information on the performance of each resort is circulated throughout the company to drive inter-property competition.

Prior to the rollout of MY Green Advantage, many employees found sustainability intimidating and didn't understand the personal role they can play in reducing the company's environmental impact. The tool makes sustainability accessible to employees of all levels by breaking it down into user-friendly, bite-sized pieces that are relevant to individual employees of all types.

Key learnings from employee feedback:

1. Employees are engaged and appreciate the information.
2. Employees want to be heard and appreciate a forum in which they can provide feedback and ask questions.
3. Recognition is as important as incentives.
4. Collaboration between executives, corporate social responsibility staff, property staff, and front-line employees is crucial.
5. Leadership involvement with sustainability efforts is a good proxy for general leadership effectiveness: the properties that have strong leadership involvement in MY Green Advantage perform the best on other measures as well.

Beyond environmental benefits, MY Green Advantage has also improved employee engagement in general by creating a new communications channel between employees and MGM Resorts. The company has limited channels for communicating with employees, and MY Green Advantage has provided an invaluable forum for employee interaction and feedback. The platform allows employees to suggest ideas for new actions, and over 200 employee suggestions have been submitted to date.

