

## Go green, save green: Sustainability strategies are crucial to future business growth

*Businesses that want to thrive in the modern world can meet public expectations, save money and help the planet with sustainable practices like efficient transportation schemes.*

Going green isn't a passing fad for businesses - it's an invaluable tool that can be used to protect the environment, contribute to the bottom line and show the public that sweeping statements about values are more than just words. While some companies have gone the greenwashing route just to save face, forward-thinking businesses are realizing that sustainable practices can actually increase profits while contributing to a better future for all.

Sustainability is based on a simple principle: that everything we need for our own well-being and survival depends on our natural environment, whether directly or indirectly. If we're going to live well, and ensure that the needs of future generations will be met, we must create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony.

So why should companies concerned about their immediate needs expend effort on a topic as broad as sustainability? For one thing, a recent executive survey analyzing responses across 24 industry sectors found that two-thirds of respondents reported an increase in sustainability-related inquiries from their shareholders and investors over the past 12 months.

That means tackling sustainability now is a crucial way to manage risks in the future. As sustainability continues to rise in importance, demands for accountability are increasing, not just from consumers but also from employees, policymakers, suppliers and other entities who can make a big impact on a company's ability to thrive.

The single most important way to go about becoming more sustainable is to measure greenhouse gas impact, both internally and externally. Companies are looking to find new ways to cut back the amount of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from primary activities, the impact of the energy they purchase from off-site providers, and other outside factors, including transportation. Simply put, emissions are a liability as public and political concerns about climate change continue to grow.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), transportation accounts for 28% of all greenhouse gas emissions. Many companies overlook transportation as an opportunity to reduce environmental impact and lower supply chain costs. In fact, a shift in the way goods are delivered, from trucking to intermodal rail, not only reduces greenhouse gas emissions but can also cut 10-40% off a company's transportation costs.