



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONS
Representing over 1,000 liberal religious congregations



Greening the 2007 UUA General Assembly

EVENT AT A GLANCE:

Unitarian Universalist
Association
General Assembly

June 20 – 24, 2007

Oregon Convention
Center, Portland, Oregon
5600 attendees

CHOICES THAT MATTER

Our choices do matter. The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) believes that our decisions make a difference. This belief is expressed in how we choose to conduct our meetings, including the 46th Annual General Assembly, held in Portland Oregon, June 20-24, 2007.

Beginning with our 2005 General Assembly UUA has made a conscious effort to green our meeting practices by reducing waste, improving energy efficiency and practicing water conservation. UUA supports this work as we believe how we conduct our meetings is an expression of our organizational value to respect the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Through our practices we can educate and empower our attendees and suppliers and influence sponsors and exhibitors to be more conscientious global citizens. UUA is also able to contribute to the improvement of the meeting and event industry by using our purchasing power to support more sustainable practices. On a practical level, our green practices are able to reduce waste, improve efficiencies and avoid costs.

NEW & BETTER CHOICES IN 2007

- Participation in the carbon offset project increased by 13% over 2006, with an additional 900 people deciding to offset their carbon footprint.
- Waste tracking was improved and we succeed in diverting 67% of trash from landfills – overshooting our goal to achieve a 40% recycling rate.
- More organic and local food was provided than in previous years, 21% and 61% of meals respectively.
- Included specific provisions for environmental practices in the contract with the decorator, improving upon the post-contract voluntary compliance requested in 2006.
- Hotels were engaged in voluntary green practices, including post event reporting.
- UUA further reduced paper waste by increasing online communication to delegates and printing the conference program using 10-30% post-consumer recycled content paper.

CHOOSING TO BE GREEN

Having established a foundation of practice in 2005, UUA has worked to expand our green meeting practices in 2007 by integrating green clauses into our contracts with vendors. These clauses include specific actions that promote energy efficiency, air and water quality, water conservation, waste minimization, and environmental purchasing. UUA specifically attached green deliverables – including post-event reports – to payment of suppliers in order to promote compliance.

Energy Efficiency

- 1,750 attendees offset their emissions through a partnership with CarbonFund.org, amounting to approximately 35% of participants. This is an increase of 13% over 2006, or 900 more donors. This amounts to approximately 4.2 million pounds of carbon dioxide.
- The conference venue was instructed to reduce the lights, power and HVAC during move in and move out times in the exhibit hall and turn off lights in meeting rooms when not in use.
- The Oregon Convention Center (OCC) agreed to purchase renewable wind power equal to 9% of total energy use for the event.
- Six of nine host hotels confirmed hotel staff were instructed to practice energy efficiency by shutting blinds/curtains in guest rooms and turning off the lights in empty rooms.
- Although this was not tracked, indications are that attendees made good use of Portland's transit system to move to and from the conference venue.
- On-site office equipment did have energy efficient features.

Air & Water Quality

- UUA requested exterior cleaning at the OCC be conducted without the use of 2-cycle combustion engines.

- Four host hotels confirmed use of environmentally responsible cleaners. The OCC was also requested to use green cleaning products.
- The decorator was requested to:
 - o Use natural gas fork lifts and hand carts to move exhibitor freight in and out of the show to assist in the air quality.
 - o Partner with a local contractor to manage and use local labor in order to minimize transportation to from show site.

Water Conservation

- Caterers:
 - o Used water stations rather than individual bottles.
 - o Provided water in pitchers and did not pre-fill water glasses.
- Host hotels:
 - o Were requested to participate in a towel/sheet reuse program. Six of the nine host hotels confirmed provision of this service. Attendee use of the program was tracked, although participation varied greatly from 25% - 75%.
 - o Three hotels confirmed the presence of low flow or water conserving plumbing features in guest rooms.

Waste Minimization

- 67% of waste was diverted from landfills (by weight) through a recycling program at the convention center that accepted glass, metal, plastic, vinyl, wood, paper and grease. Diverted waste included:
 - o 24% cardboard
 - o 21% compost (15% post-consumer)
 - o 14% paper, plastic, cans
 - o 9% food donation



Recycling and composting stations at the Oregon Convention Center.

- The caterer was actively engaged in waste minimization:
 - Providing drinking water in large containers rather than individual bottles. This prevented the use of 50,000 plastic bottles.
 - Serving juice, ice tea, coffee and water in pitchers rather than individual containers.
 - Using china service or biodegradable disposable service ware rather than paper or plastic service.
 - Purchasing and serving condiments in bulk.
 - Donating left over food to the degree possible within safety and health regulations.
 - Composting food scraps and other biodegradable waste.
- In addition to the convention centre host hotels were requested to recycle. Six of the nine host hotels confirmed they recycled. Three were able to confirm a 51 – 75% recycling rate.
- Both exhibitors and the decorator took efforts to minimize waste by participating in recycling programs.
- Exhibitors took advantage of online kits and were encouraged to minimize give-aways and collateral materials, and purchase booths that had environmental features, such as energy efficient lighting and recycled signage. Where giveaways were provided exhibitors were requested to provide items that were sustainable, ethical and fairly traded.
- The decorator was requested to:
 - Use booth headers made from renewable forest by products with water-based ink.
 - Provide signs made of environmentally responsible components with applied and removable water base graphics.
 - Use carpet made from and fully recyclable into more fiber and backing or at least recycled after use.
 - Make available to exhibitors and show management biodegradable shipping and packing materials.
- Meeting organizers also made improved use of the web site to post conference and presentation materials as a way of curbing paper consumption. Communication with attendees was done using online methods wherever possible with 4500 prior GA attendees receiving conference information via email, eliminating all pre-conference printed mailings.
- In 2007 our conference program was printed using 10% post consumer cover content and 30% post-consumer text paper stock. Soy-based inks were used and the program was manufactured using biogas energy.
- Copies were printed double-sided and event orders were sent electronically.
- Signage from the 2006 GA was re-used.

Environmental Purchasing

- UUA requested a sustainable menu for the General Assembly, meaning we worked with the caterer to first secure local and organic food. Where this was not possible we sourced local non-organics, or organic non-local as a third preference.

- 61% of food served was local (by weight), meaning it was grown within 500 miles of the conference venue.
- 21% of food served was organic (by weight).
- The convention center was requested to use environmentally responsible cleaners and provide bathroom paper supplies with at least 30% post-consumer recycled content.
- The printing of the conference program was also environmentally-minded, using post-consumer recycled content and soy-based inks.

Economic Indicators

- China and linen service was provided to UUA at no extra cost.
- The caterer agreed to provide at least 25% of the food served from sustainable sources at no additional cost to UUA. Additional percentages were provided on a sliding scale, with 30-35% being provided at up to 5% additional cost to the UUA, 36-40% at 10%, 41-45% at 15% and 46-50% at 17%.
- Taking advantage of bulk water dispensers meant that UUA did not have to provide bottled water at a higher price.

EVENT REPORTS

In order to help UUA understand and track the environmental performance of their General Assembly Meeting Strategies Worldwide has prepared the following post-event reports. These reports have been created using the MeetGreenSM Calculator. Practices included in and measured by the Calculator reflect leadership-level green meeting practices that exceed Convention Industry Council green guidelines and US Environmental Protection Agency procurement policy. Each practice is weighted according to the positive environmental impact of a decision made. Minimum points are achieved for intention while maximum points are awarded for measureable action. For

example, requesting recycling at the convention centre receives minimum points, while tracking and achieving a high recycling diversion rate would receive maximum points. Reports show the percentage of total points possible achieved by the UUA. Having tracked three years of the General Assembly Meeting Strategies Worldwide is pleased to provide UUA with the following illustration of its overall environmental achievements in each of the following eight areas of conference management:

1. Destination Selection
2. Accommodation Selection
3. Transportation Selection
4. Meeting & Venue Selection
5. Food and Beverage
6. Exhibition Services
7. Communications & Marketing
8. On-site Office

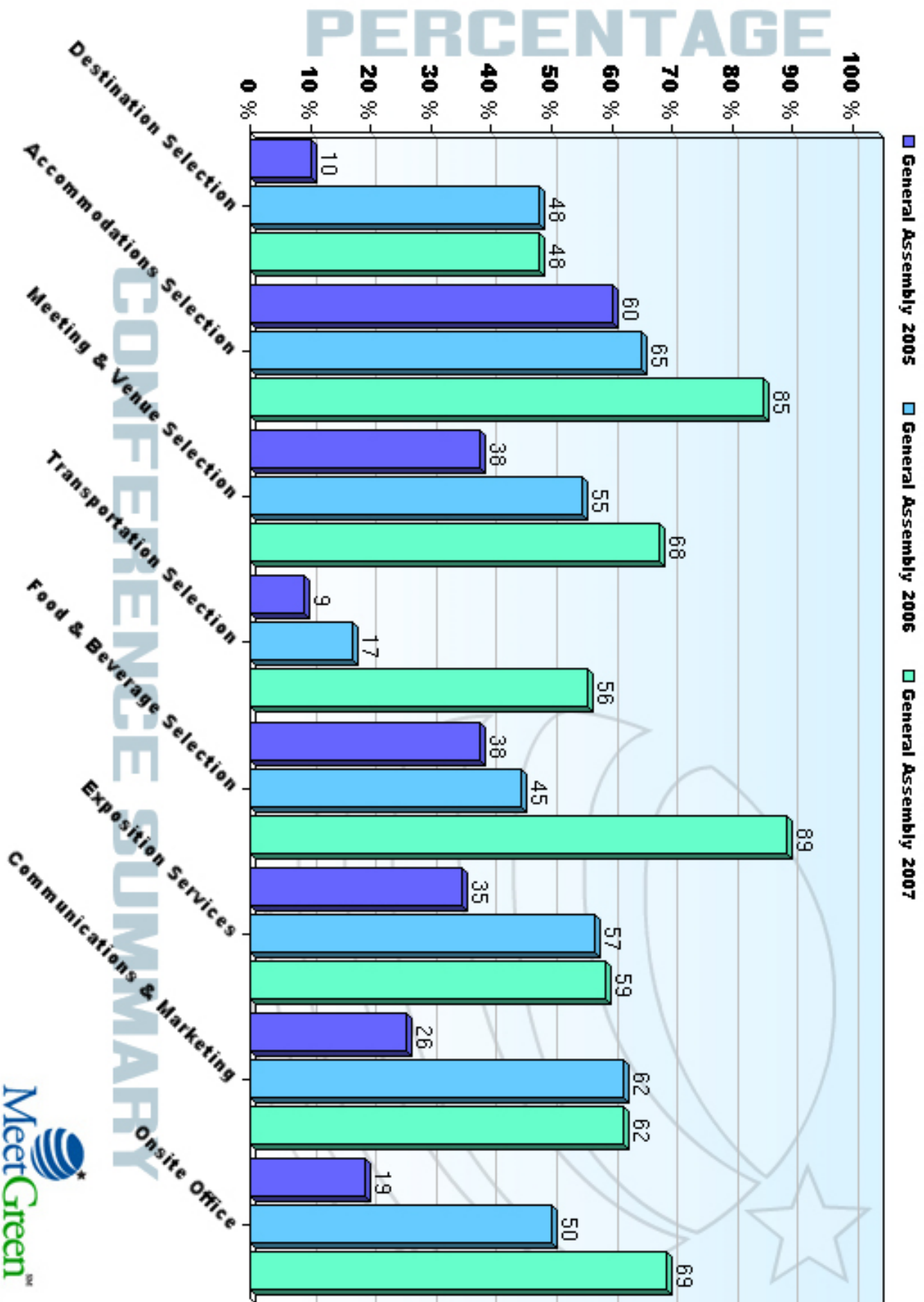
Conference Summary Report

The following Conference Summary Report shows the environmental performance of the General Assembly over the last three years in each area measured. As is indicated by the graph the UUA General Assembly 2007 improved most significantly in the areas of accommodation and meeting venue selection, transportation, food and beverage and on-site office. The conference did not falter in any section and performance was maintained in destination selection, communications & marketing and exhibition services.

Total Conference Comparison Report

This chart illustrates how the General Assembly has compared to all other conferences tracked by Meeting Strategies Worldwide in terms of total environmental performance.

Conference Summary Report

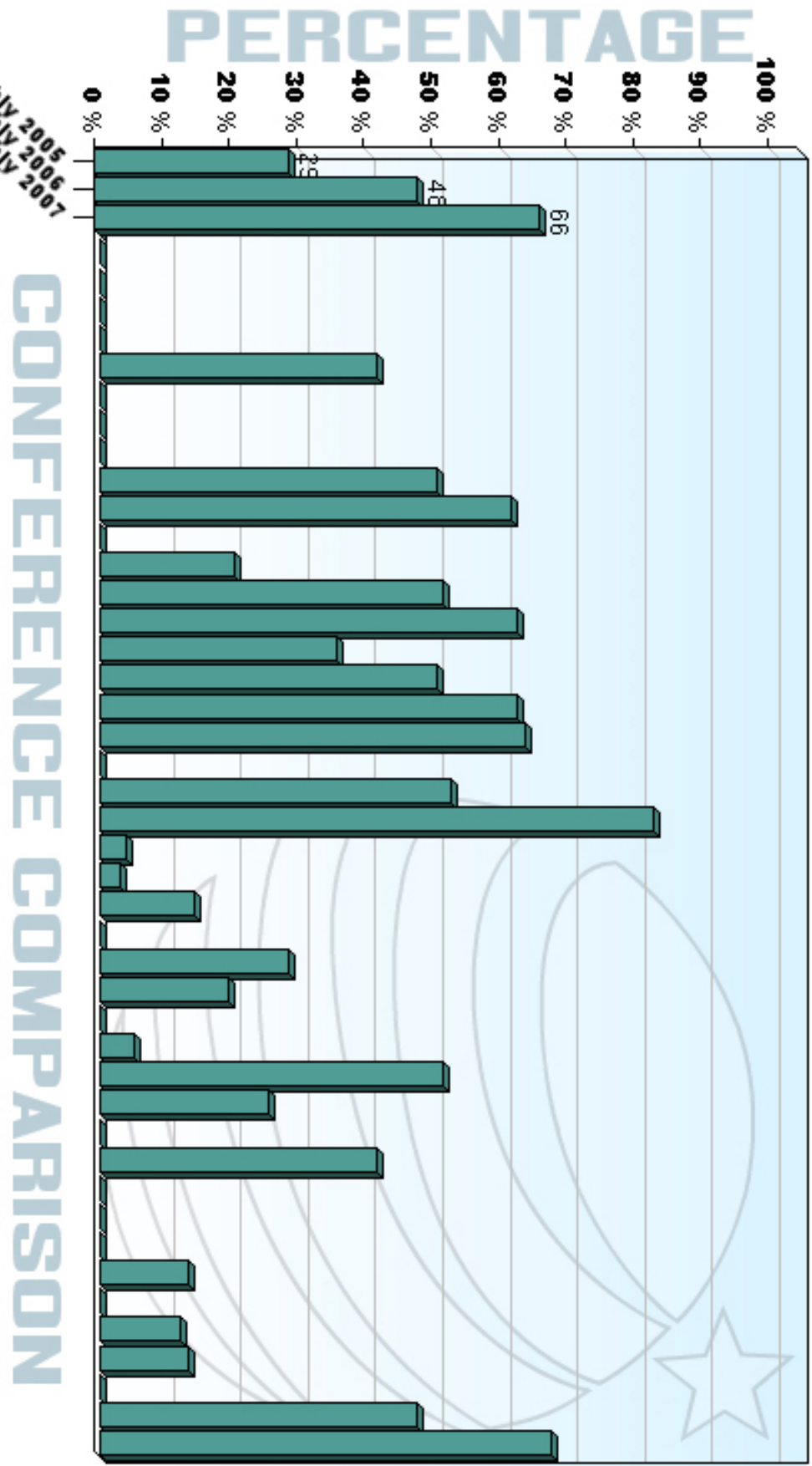


CONFERENCE SUMMARY



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Total Conference Comparison Report



General Assembly 2005
 General Assembly 2006
 General Assembly 2007



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Category Summary Reports

These charts (eight in total) illustrate the total MeetGreenSM scores in each of the eight categories of meeting management assessed by Meeting Strategies Worldwide.

Destination Selection

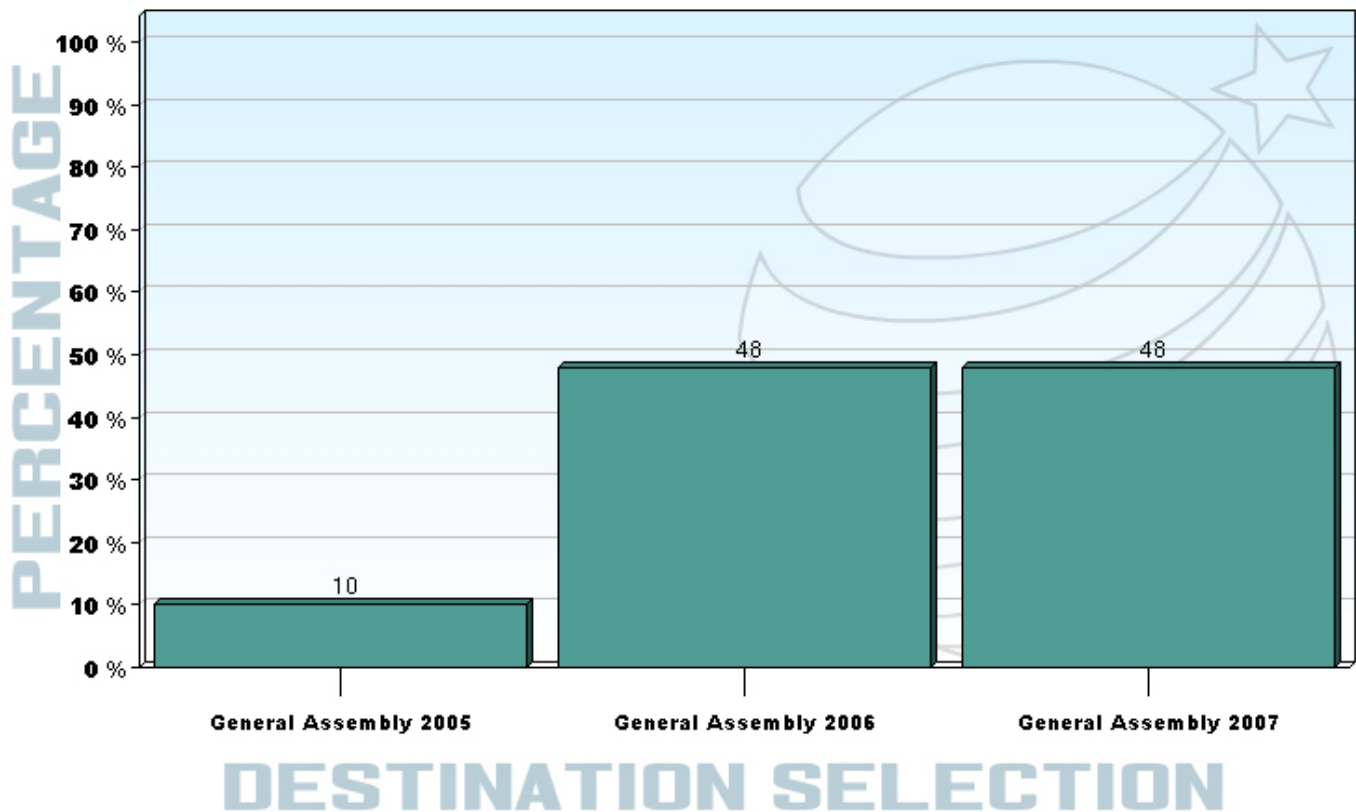
Choosing a green destination can make a huge difference in how easy greening a meeting can be. Green meetings should generally consider two aspects of the destination:

1. How close the city is to attendees' place of residence to reduce travel, and
2. The presence of vendors and venues that can accommodate environmental practices.

Choosing a destination close to attendees reduces the overall travel burden and emissions associated with the conference. Green destinations also tend to be home to venues and accommodations that already have green practices in place.

The performance of the General Assembly increased dramatically when UUA introduced a carbon offset to the event and integrated environmental clauses to their contracts with meeting vendors in 2006. Scores will increase in future as UUA gathers in cities that it has selected using environmental criteria. This practice was integrated into RFP's back in 2006 but will not take effect as a performance criteria until after 2009, when UUA will first meet in cities identified and selected using environmental considerations.

Category Summary Report



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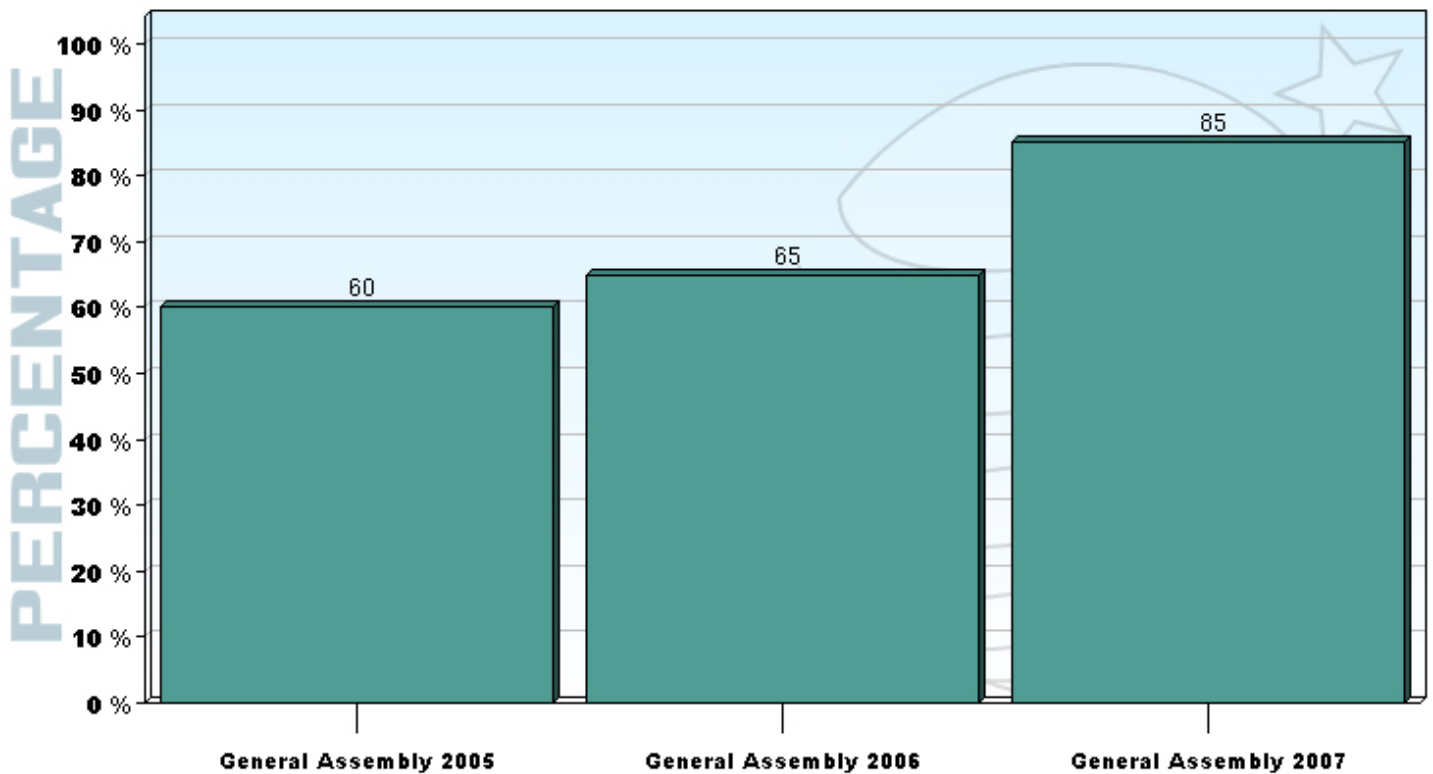
Accommodations Selection

Much like meeting venues, accommodation providers are able to participate in environmental practices by promoting energy efficiency, water conservation, waste minimization, and air and water quality on both a building design and operational level. Inventorying prospective hotels' environmental practice and contracting for compliance with requests for towel and sheet reuse, amenity donation, and in-suite recycling are a few of the practices considered under this section.

UUA has improved in this area steadily by communicating desired green practices to host hotels. Performance jumped significantly in 2007 as the baseline of green practices by hotels in Portland is much higher than cities previously hosting the GA.

To increase performance in this category UUA will need to contract with accommodation providers for specific green practices that are non-negotiable. In addition tracked participation by attendees in environmental programs at hotels will need to increase above 51 - 75%, as was the case in 2007.

Category Summary Report



ACCOMMODATIONS SELECTION



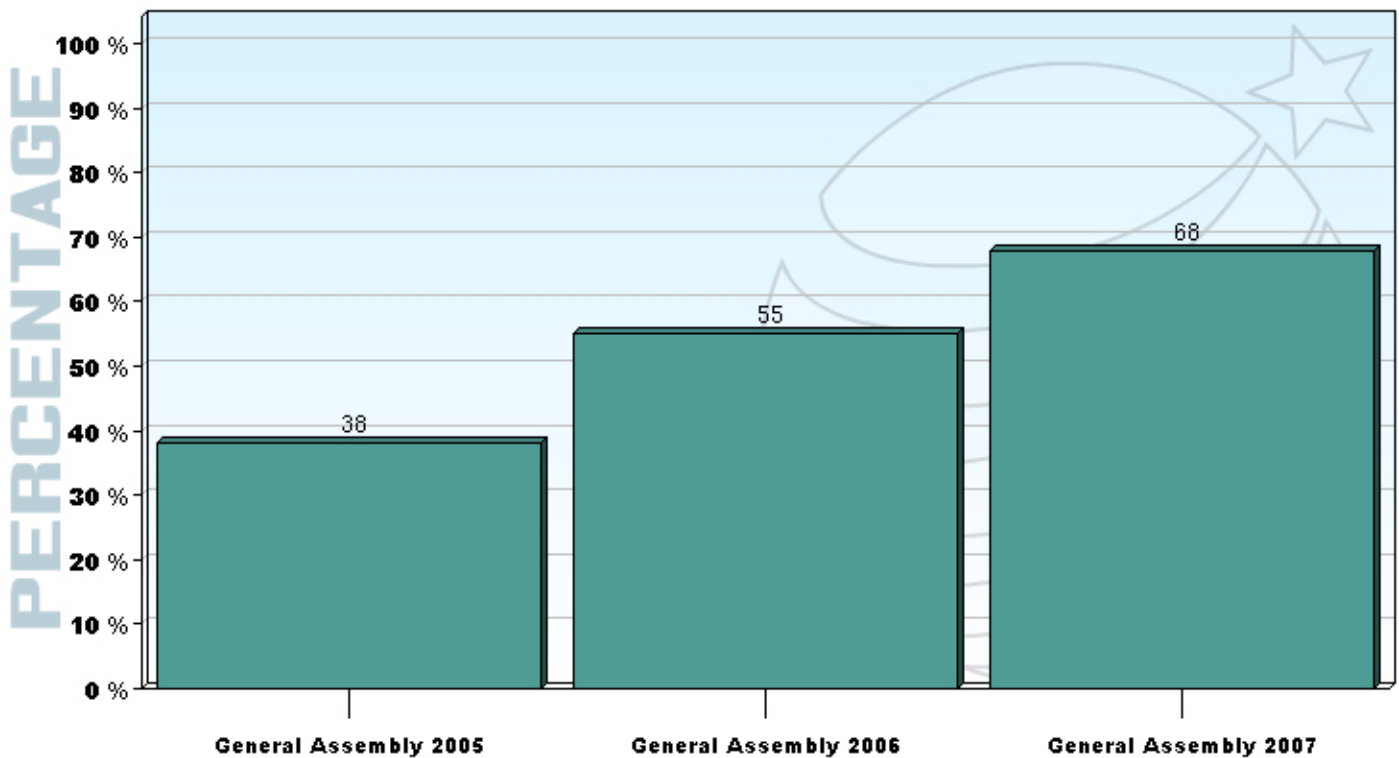
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Meeting & Venue Selection

Green aspects of a meeting venue include both construction features and operating practices. Although green features can be identified through a certification that assesses green building or operating features (such as LEED, GreenSeal or ISO 14000/14001) on-site event practices need to be verified to ensure energy efficiency, water conservation, air and water quality and particularly waste minimization through recycling programs. Selecting a venue that has established environmental policies or is willing to work with event organizers to implement policies is a key aspect of an event greening initiative.

Much like accommodations, performance in this area has improved steadily due to UUA's continued effort to request and contract for green practices that support recycling, energy efficiency and water conservation. The Oregon Convention Center scores highly in these areas, however can still improve in each of them. Increasing this score will require continued effort to improve waste diversion from 67% in 2007. Using a convention center that has water and energy conserving features in their washrooms will also help improve scores.

Category Summary Report



MEETING & VENUE SELECTION



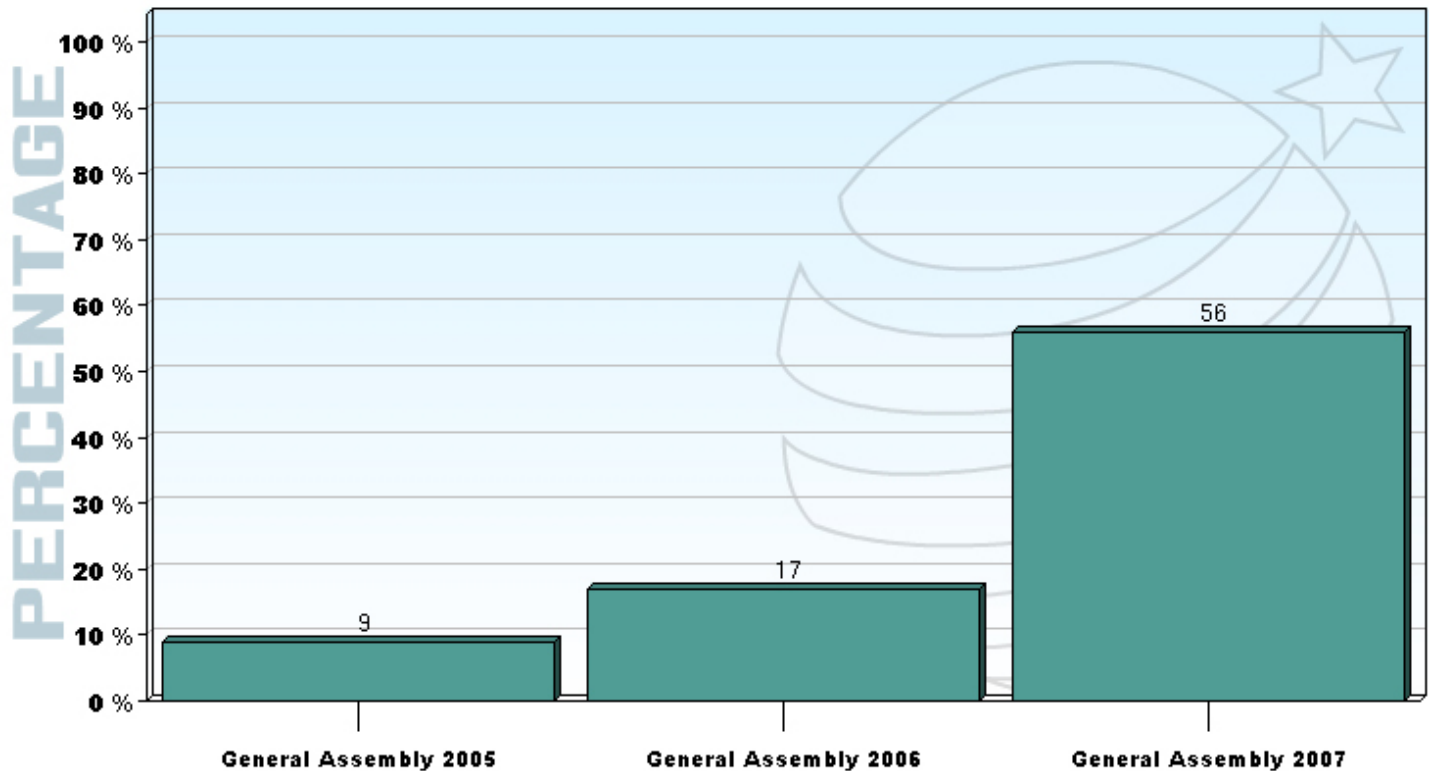
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Transportation Selection

The transportation footprint of a meeting includes travel of attendees to and from the host city, as well as their movement around the host city. Along with buildings, transportation is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions. Best meeting practice for transportation should consider how to both reduce transportation emissions and neutralize or offset those emissions that are unavoidable.

Scores in this area increased in 2006 with the introduction of a carbon offset program. Improved participation in the offset has further increased performance. As a higher percentage of emissions are offset with more attendees participating in the offset scores in this section will rise. UUA may also want to consider actively communicating public transit options to attendees and providing transit passes to participants.

Category Summary Report



TRANSPORTATION SELECTION



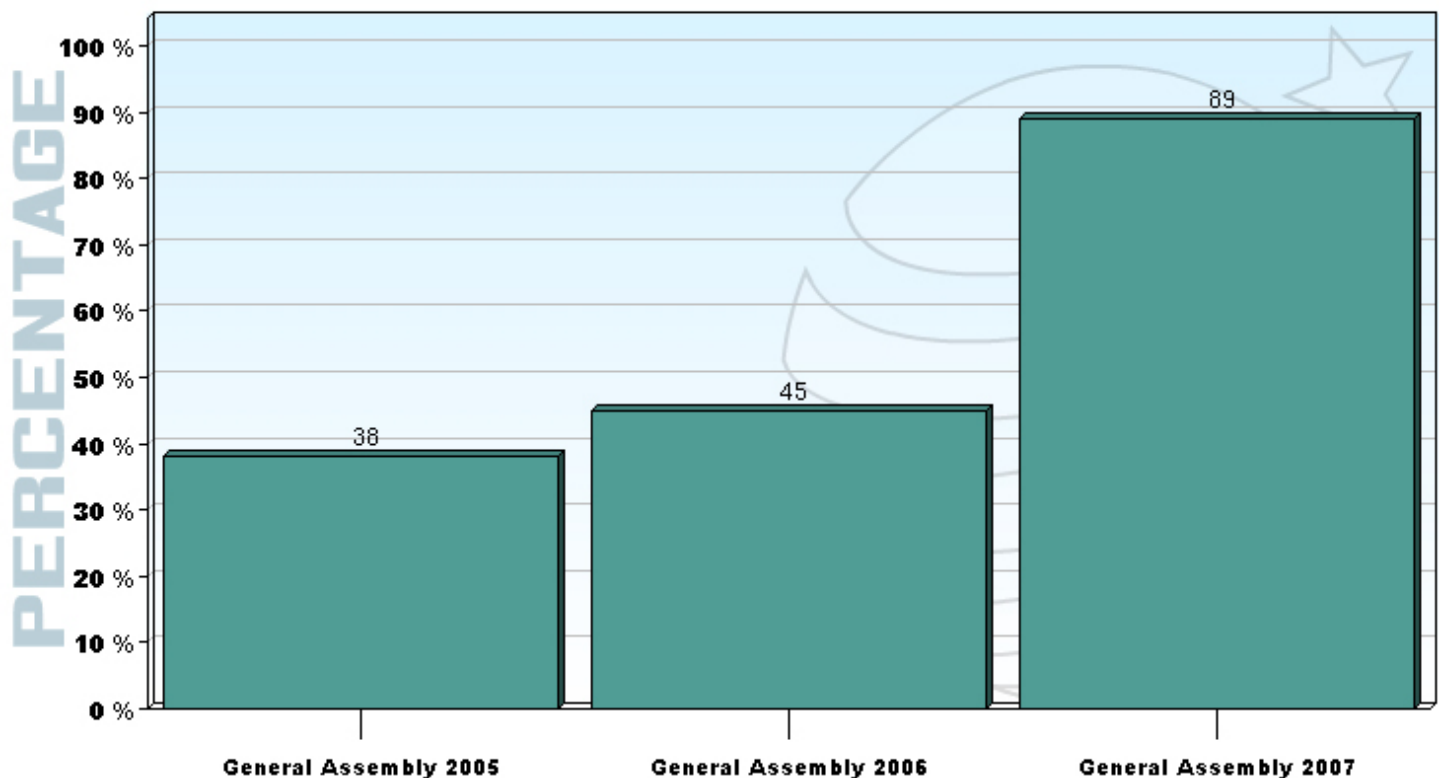
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Food & Beverage

Food and beverage has a complex and broad environmental footprint. Caterers are able to consider various ways to promote water conservation by not pre-filling water glasses, support environmental purchasing by sourcing local and organic food, and reduce waste by avoiding packaging and disposables, providing food in bulk and composting or donating un-used food.

As with the meeting venue, contracting with the caterer for green practices has helped to increase scores in this section. The most significant increase this year has come from the high percentage of local and organic food sourced for the event, as well as the provision of a donation and composting program. Scores can be increased by continuing to raise the portion of local organics provided and tracking the cost savings of serving food in bulk.

Category Summary Report



FOOD & BEVERAGE SELECTION



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Exposition Services

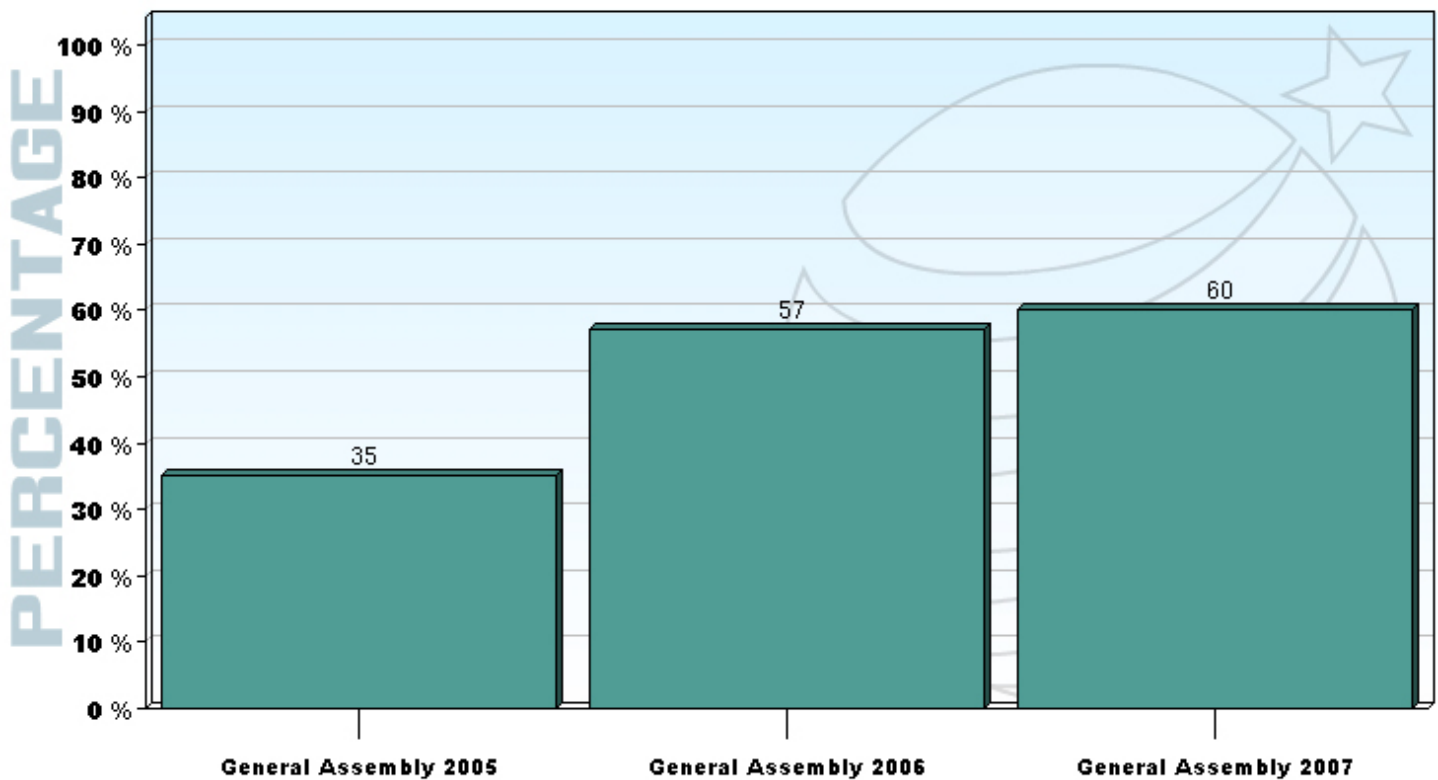
Exhibition production considers both the:

1. Practices of exhibitors, and
2. Policies and practices of the decorator.

Meeting coordinators are able to communicate and contract for environmental practices by both audiences to reduce waste.

Contracting with the decorator for green practices led to an increase in scores for this section in 2006. In 2007 minor increases came from the fact the OCC could accept more materials for recycling than the previous host city. In order to increase scores in 2008 UUA may want to consider how to encourage or require participation from exhibitors in green practices. Tracking data of how many exhibitors had green booth features, or how many left over items may have been donated could also help raise scores.

Category Summary Report



EXPOSITION SERVICES



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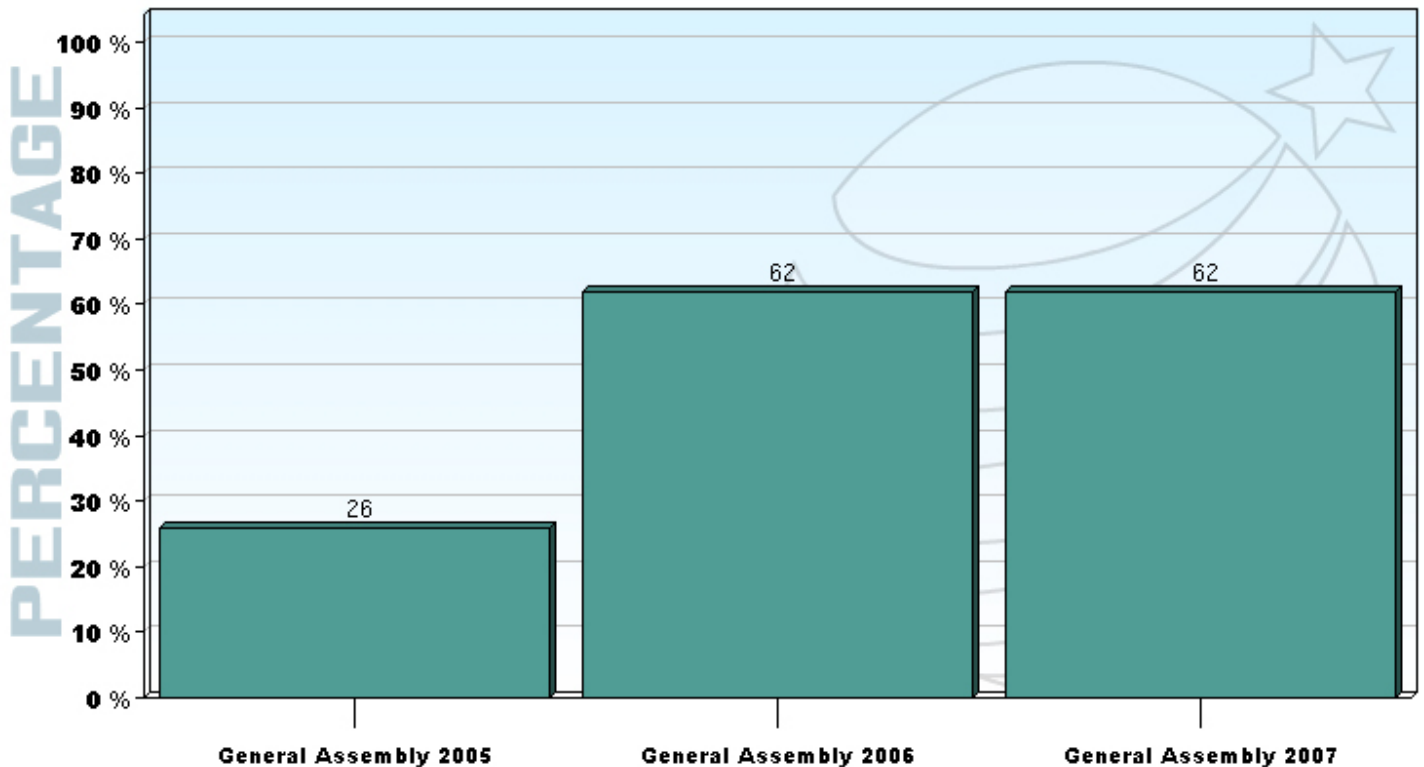
Communications & Marketing

Meeting organizers are able to consider green aspects of communications and marketing on two levels:

1. How to reduce waste and pollution while marketing a conference and communicating with key audiences, such as sponsors, vendors and attendees.
2. How to communicate the green practices associated with a conference to engage audiences and secure positive public relations.

UUA significantly curbed its printed materials in 2006 and continued to reduce paper use, print using post-consumer recycled content paper and vegetable based inks in 2007. As a result scores are similar between these years. In order to increase scores in this category UUA would need to consider making use of recycled content name badges, collecting and re-using badge holders and minimizing the printed program.

Category Summary Report



COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING



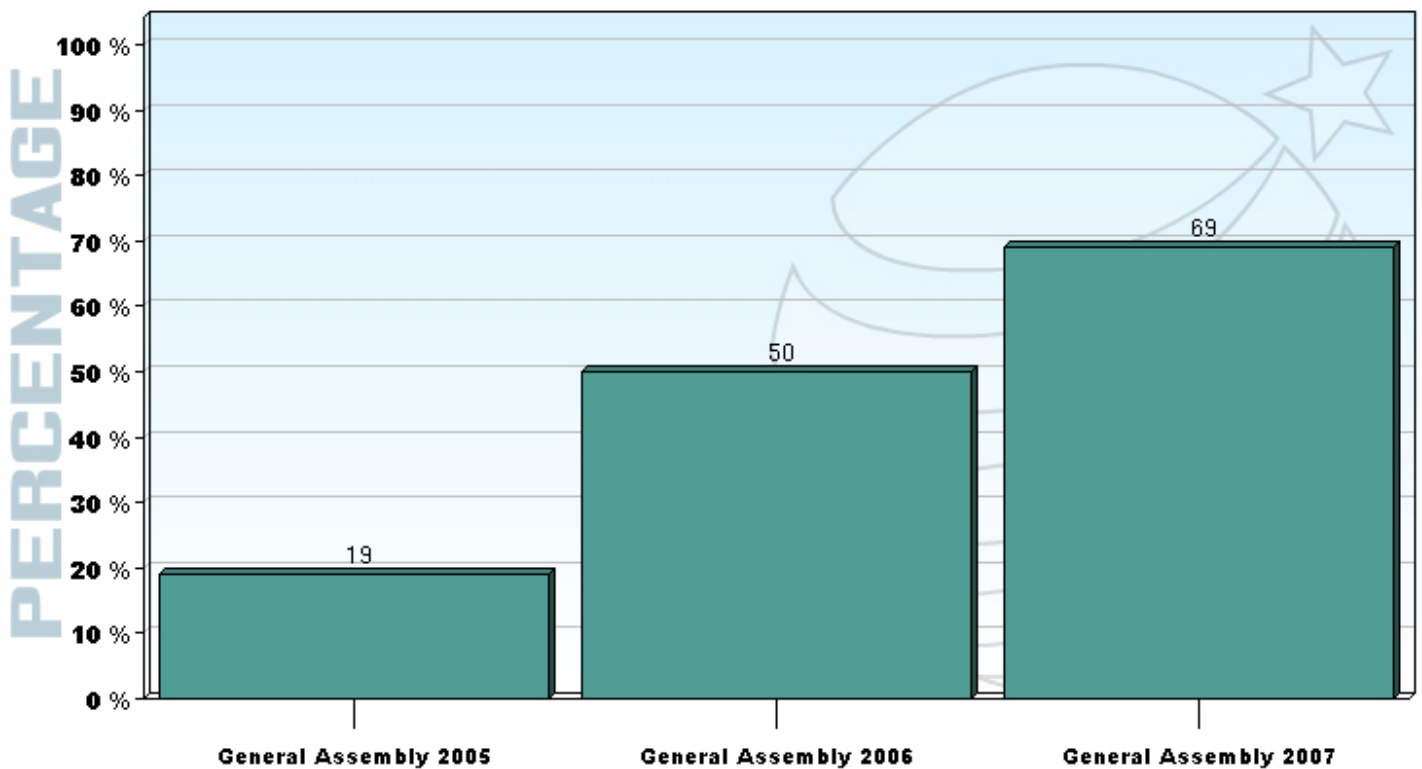
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On-site Office

On-site practices by meeting organizers are one of the last steps of the planning process, but integral to ensuring follow-through. This section measures the ability of event organizers to plan to reduce their office management impact on-site, by using energy efficient equipment and paper reduction strategies. Another key component is staff training to ensure environmental practices in all other areas are implemented once the conference starts.

The decision to re-use signage and packing materials, the practice of copying double sided and using energy efficient laptops and multi-purpose office equipment increased the GA's scores dramatically in 2006. In order to improve in 2008 UUA would need to require high content post-consumer recycled paper in its site office. UUA is also encouraged to convert all computers on-site to laptops if possible.

Category Summary Report



ONSITE OFFICE



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OUR CHOICE IS A COMMITMENT TO....

...Change

UUA takes a collaborative approach to greening its meetings, endeavoring to help our event partners change the way they do business by adopting a more sustainable approach. Vendors are encouraged to work in partnership with us to meet our greening goals, with specific practices included in contracts. UUA specifically requests all vendors to engage their staff and suppliers in the greening of the General Assembly. We also commit to educate our exhibitors and attendees of the special environmental practices we are undertaking.

The UUA also integrated climate change into our educational programming in 2007, providing a session entitled *Acting Locally: Public Policies to Reduce Global Climate Change*.

...Community

Our commitment to green meetings is an expression of our commitment to the communities UUA is a part of. Our 2007 General Assembly supported businesses in and around Portland. 61% of our food services was sourced locally. We also supported local charities by donating left over, un-served food to those in need. The OCC and two of our host hotels supported food donation programs. Host hotels were also requested to donate un-used guest-room amenities to charities.

...Conservation

UUA's green meeting practices express our commitment to conservation of our natural resources. UUA has significantly stepped up its green practices since the beginning of this initiative 3 years ago. Moving forward into 2008 we will consider the following ways to improve and expand our efforts:

Hotel engagement. Integrating our green requests into contracts with host hotels is a key opportunity for UUA moving forward. Hotels were requested to

voluntarily comply with green requests after contracts had been signed. Although most hotels complied with many requests, participation was not consistent and post-event reporting was incomplete. Creating a list of requested practices, clear contract language and perhaps tying post-event reporting to a donation 'penalty' may help to promote participation by hotels.

Communication. UUA has achieved significant success with its green initiative this year. There is an opportunity to communicate this success within and outside of UUA through press releases and announcements to UUA members. In the past UUA's green practices have been somewhat hidden, but in 2007 and into the future there is an opportunity to celebrate the success of this initiative.

Attendee Engagement. In addition to the carbon offset, UUA will consider other ways attendees may become engaged in the green initiative. This may include providing a list of attendee tips to help green the conference on the conference web site, attempting to provide transit passes for attendees, or facilitating ride-shares and carpooling through the conference web site. This could also include providing links to green meetings resources members may find of interest to adopt in their own congregations.

Our choices do matter, and UUA will endeavor to continue to make decisions that reflect our commitment to sustainable practices that respect the interconnected web of life.



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