



ANTI-GREENWASING COMMUNICATIONS CHECKLIST

The EU released a Green Claims Directive which is aimed at stopping greenwashing and uplifting true sustainable businesses. These greenwashing laws ban claims that a product is eco-friendly without proof. This has made it more complicated for hotels and hosts to understand how to communicate authentically.

To help your hospitality business, we've created an anti-greenwashing checklist that is easy for you and your team to follow.

Be honest & transparent ✓

Are you purposely hiding information? Even if it doesn't paint your company in the best light, the last thing you want to do is gloss over it. Guests know that hotels aren't perfect, so admitting faults and recognizing solutions is part of growth. In other words, avoid greenhushing.

Evidence ✓

Do you have facts and figures that highlight and support your efforts? Use real evidence and data to support what you are doing, and to show guests that you are honest. Go a step further and use evidence from independent 3rd parties.

Track your data ✓

Are you tracking everything you do? Tracking is what gives you evidence, and evidence is what gives you honesty. From big implementations to small daily actions, tracking everything will provide you with the transparency you need to avoid greenwashing.

Use visuals as a communication aid ✓

Are you using visuals to illustrate your sustainability journey? From diagrams to infographics, visuals can help your team and guests better understand the message you are trying to communicate. The visuals you choose will reflect your hotel, so use authentic photography rather than stock images to ensure your visuals match your message and support your claims.

Keep your promises ✓

Are you keeping your promises? If you've promised it, then do it. Guests want to see action. For example, don't claim carbon neutrality solely through emissions offsetting schemes without a transparent carbon reduction strategy. If you've promised to become carbon neutral then create your strategy and act on it.

✓ Educate yourself and your internal team

Are you and your internal team on the same sustainable page? Ensure that there is a consistent internal information flow and everyone is up to date on sustainable policies, initiatives, and messaging. You can easily track this by creating an internal position that is responsible for sustainability who can ensure information is open and regularly updated and exchanged.

✓ Accuracy

Have you made sure that the information you are communicating is true, accurate, and not exaggerated? Be truthful about the steps you are and aren't taking in your hospitality business.

✓ Verify your certifications

Have you chosen a certification that is verified and reliable? Green certifications can add to the credibility of your claims, but you need to do your research before investing into a certain certification.

✓ Report your data regularly

Are you consistently reporting and updating your data? Things change and consumers know that, this means that your data must be frequently checked and updated. Publishing an annual impact report is a great way to keep your stakeholders informed.

✓ Be aware of your wording

Are you specific with your wording? You don't want to throw around sustainable buzzwords (e.g. organic, eco-friendly, ethical, fair-trade), while avoiding vagueness (e.g. sustainable, natural, certified). Clearly explain what makes your hospitality business sustainable, while avoiding the use of jargon to try to boost your company's appeal. Simple, understandable language promotes trust.

✓ Apply this checklist

Have you applied this checklist to all areas of operations, communications, and marketing, not just advertising?

@ What is greenhushing?

Greenhushing is the deliberate concealment of information about sustainability practices from stakeholders for fear of being labeled greenwashers. By underreporting the steps you are taking in the right direction, the result is that guests and your other stakeholders miss the chance to be informed, educated, and inspired.

@ What is greenwashing?

Greenwashing is when a company purports to be environmentally conscious for marketing purposes but isn't making any notable sustainability efforts. Companies can greenwash even when they have good intentions. By avoiding greenwashing, you ensure consumer trust.