



Communicating Green Energy at Events



About this fact sheet

A Greener Festival and Powerful Thinking have developed this Energy Factsheet to provide inspiration about communicating with your audience about energy, and to share examples from leading festivals. A Greener Festival is a not-for-profit company committed to helping music and art events and festivals around the world adopt environmentally efficient practices.

Why is it important to consider energy?

- » The UK Festival Industry uses in excess of 12million litres of diesel annually.
- » 99% of the energy we use at festivals contributes to carbon emissions.
- » Power can represent up to 70% of an event's carbon footprint excluding audience travel.

What are festivals doing to power themselves sustainably?

- » Using low carbon alternatives such as solar, wind, waste vegetable oil, hybrid or pedal power!
- » Reducing demand, fuel and costs.
- » Communicating with their audiences about energy sustainability.
- » Leading and testing new innovation.
- » Lowering energy consumption by using energy saving initiatives.

Why is it important to talk energy with audiences?

- » 56% of audiences think festivals have a negative carbon footprint.
- » 90% think that this was the responsibility of the organisers.
- » 49.8% of audiences would pay an increased ticket price to reduce the festival's environmental impact.
- » 43.1% of audiences said that they had changed their behaviour as a result of green initiatives or ideas they had discovered at festivals.

Source: Audience Research Study 2012 – AGF and Bucks New University.

How are festivals communicating and engaging with audiences?

1. Leading by example

Croissant Neuf Summer Party, Shambala Festival, Wood, Oya Festivalen, Boom Off-Grid and Sunrise Celebration all pride themselves on powering their events without using diesel. This is great for the environment and great for their publicity. But at some festivals, even very environmentally aware events, it's not obvious to audiences how or where power is coming from. Making this visible onsite, demonstrating this priority and promoting your event as renewable is a great way to get audiences involved. Solar panels don't have to be hidden away! Pedal power can be fun and highly visible.

2. Lowering energy consumption

Installing and communicating energy saving initiatives such as using LED lighting or reducing water waste are important in reducing energy use. These steps can be included on your website and published in your environmental policy so that your audience can see your commitment and understands why there is a limit on the showers, reduced noise and an ambient late stage.

3. Permanent renewable power installations

Glastonbury and Bonnaroo Festivals have invested in solar arrays for their permanent sites. Bonnaroo funded this using an audience 'opt in' donation scheme. This enabled them to achieve their goal while promoting the campaign and giving their audience an opportunity to help. This also highlights the willingness of audiences to get involved to support projects when they can see a clear beneficial objective. Both schemes gathered widespread positive publicity. The Glastonbury scheme powers 40 local homes when the festival is not on.

4. Entertaining and interactive solutions

Whether it's cycling to blend a smoothie, dancing for your lighting or demonstrating the science to charge a mobile phone there is fun to be had while learning about energy. There are many interesting innovations. Electric Picnic hosted www.sustainabledanceclub.com, Mr Motivator led morning dance sessions to capture kinetic energy and contribute to the events power supply, while Bestival has championed www.pavegen.com that harvests kinetic energy from a footstep and is suited to places with a high footfall.

- » **Solar powered cinemas** - provide cinemas with renewable power in remote locations whether it's a small intimate experience like www.thesolcinema.org or the wonderful www.groovymovie.biz. Perhaps you prefer to create something yourself? Using resources from companies such as www.fireflysolar.net or www.windandsun.co.uk it is possible to create an experience that is off-grid and engages with your audience.
- » **Pedal Power** - encourage your audience to provide the energy source www.magnificentrevolution.org, www.powwow-pedal-power.org.uk and www.bike-power.co.uk offer this service.
- » **Education** - cultural and environmental programming e.g. 'as the world tips', art installations, performances, workshops and films that highlight the issues and provoke thought and discussion at an event as well as working with campaign groups and charities that are promoting energy conservation e.g. www.1010global.org/uk
- » **Showcasing science** and what might be possible in the future. Indian Summer Labb demonstrates the latest developments in science for sustainability at Indian Summer Festival in the Netherlands. Bestival have outstanding scientific showcases in Tomorrow World, and of course the pioneering Green Futures field at Glastonbury has been leading the way in off grid entertainment, education and inspiration for decades!
- » **Communication** - what would like your audience to know? Social media, tickets, website, competitions, promotions, campaigns, collaborations, synergies and the site itself all provide channels to share your message.
- » **Mobile phone recharging**: yes, we all use them - and people want to stay in touch now - so phones need recharging. Can you provide a sustainable solution which is also a service? www.the-electric-hotel.com use solar, wind, people and water power to recharge mobiles on-site at a number of festivals including Shambala and Waken Open Air. Friends of the Earth and Electric Pedals also provide a bike powered charging service.