



BS 8901 Sustainable Event Management

CASE STUDY FAVERSHAM HOUSE GROUP

Summary

Needs

- To address sustainability
- To establish a formalised system to encompass the three elements of event management
- To demonstrate to customers and employees their commitment to sustainability

Benefits

- Increased stakeholder confidence
- Greater environmental credibility
- Improved relations with local authorities
- Better event planning and delivery

Background

Faversham House Group (FHG) was established over 40 years ago and is one of the UK's leading independent media companies. It publishes fifteen business to business magazines, nine websites, various related directories and special supplements and organises events, exhibitions and conferences.



Customer Needs

With ever increasing pressure from stakeholders and authorities to address sustainability, independent certification to BS 8901 will undoubtedly enhance the competitive stance and environmental credibility of any organisation involved with the events industry.

Such is the case for FHG which has recently shown its commitment to sustainable events management by implementing BS 8901. "As one of the UK's leading publishing and exhibition organising companies, we wanted to demonstrate to our employees and customers that we have a robust management system in place," says Amanda Barnes, Chief Executive of FHG. "Sustainable event management is critical to our future business so it is imperative that our systems reflect best working practice and a commitment to sustainability.

Benefits

There are some key commercial benefits that organisations can achieve by certification to BS 8901. Implementing BS 8901 will help organisations to:

- Continually improve sustainable performance within available budgets
- Reduce carbon emissions and waste, improving the resource efficiency of the entire event supply chain
- Improve social impacts such as community involvement and fair employment
- Secure local investment and long term viability
- Improve communications and enhance relations with stakeholders and suppliers adding value to both parties

FHG is one of a number of organisations that were involved in BSI's pilot programme for BS 8901, helping to define and improve the standard before it was launched. Having been through the development process, FHG had a clear understanding from the start about how seeking third party certification to BS 8901 would benefit its business.

"The BS 8901 standard provides a structured and effective framework for us to do that," continues Barnes.

"The management system we have put in place is not just for our benefit, but has wider implications for society as a whole. BS 8901 gives us an opportunity to integrate a number of our initiatives into a formal structure allowing us to be economically viable in a truly sustainable way."

Barnes explains that FHG's management system framework focuses on three stages of event management; event conception and planning, execution of the event itself, and post-event activities. Using BS 8901, the organisation has been able to establish a formalised system which encompasses all three areas of event management and is adopted for all FHG events, internal and external.

The implementation of any management system can seem somewhat daunting, both in terms of resource and time required, however FHG was able to build upon activities and processes already in place within the organisation. "Adoption of BS 8901 was easy in some ways as we do so much of the work already," says Barnes. "With our portfolio of environmental magazines and events, we are already aware of what we should be doing, what we could be doing better and how to achieve it. What we were doing less well was the record keeping and formalising of the project.

We undertake a lot of the processes already but had no written documentation to support it. However, a sustainable event management system gives us a good basis for starting correctly from the beginning when auditing and reviewing."

FHG has gained certification to BS 8901 in just six months, but like any management system the processes are subject to regular and continual assessment. "We believe we have been able to achieve this so quickly because the culture is embedded in what our business does already," says Barnes. "The concept isn't new for us, it is simply a change in approach."

BSI's Role

As an independent assessor, BSI has given added credibility to FHG and the achievement of certification to BS 8901.

"After all our hard work, we needed independent assessment to prove the credibility of our achievements both internally and externally," states Barnes. "As a leading exhibition organiser and magazine producer we need to lead the way and not just be seen as a follower. Our professional status means that our staff, exhibitors, visitors and all of our stakeholders expect us to be at the forefront of new initiatives and government schemes, and certification by BSI to BS 8901 helps confirm this."

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