

Condé Nast Traveler

1 Hotels Will Tell You How ‘Green’ a Guest You Are

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An Intention Tree at 1 Hotel Central Park placed in front of the hotel for Earth Day. (Courtesy 1 Hotel)

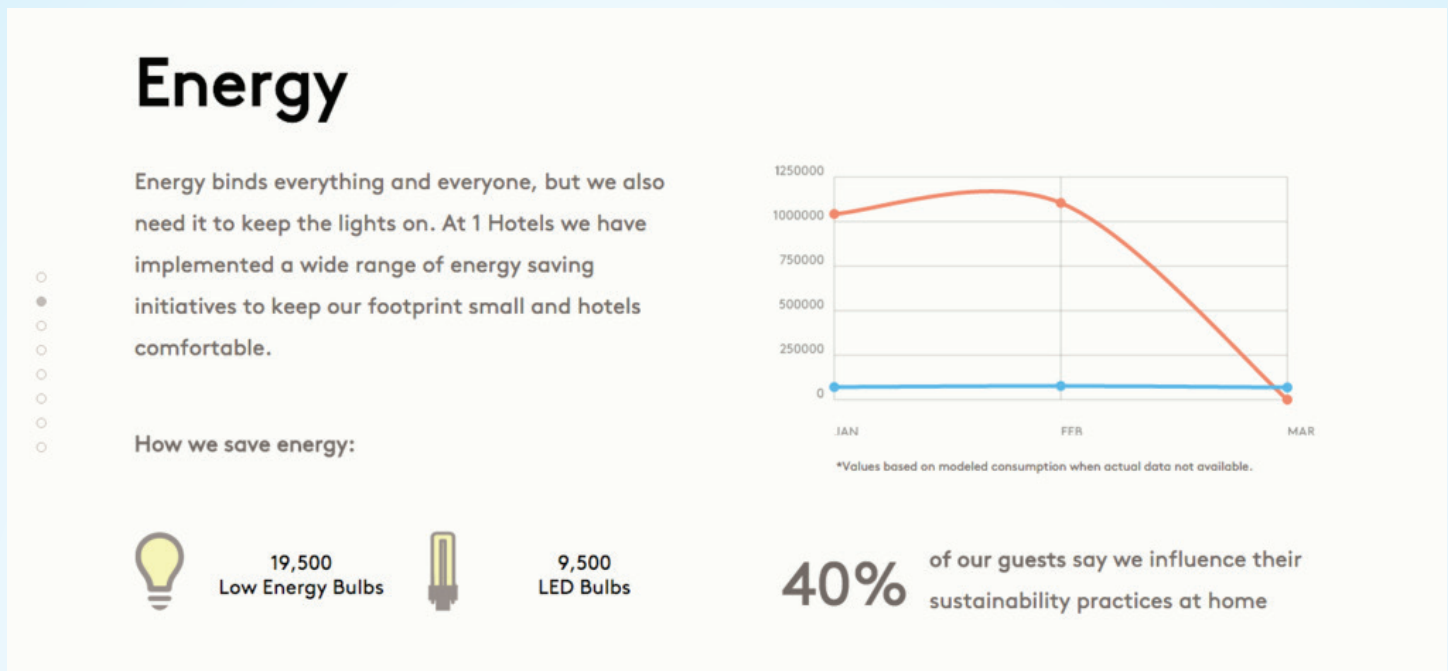


When Barry Sternlicht’s 1 Hotels debuted last year on Miami’s South Beach, sustainability was very publicly at the heart of its mission. The travel world responded with reserved curiosity. The hotels themselves—a second opened on Sixth Avenue in Manhattan last August—drew rave reviews (1 Hotel South Beach made our own Hot List of the best new hotels of the year). But this eco-friendly business—

was it just a gesture, or was there something more going on?

Quite a bit more, it turns out. As of today, in honor of Earth Day, 1 Hotels has begun to show us exactly what. They’ve created a “Transparency Dashboard,” accessible on the web, to visualize the performance of their sustainability programs. The dashboard shows charts on water and energy consumption, along with stats from a recent survey of 1 Hotels guests.

1 Hotels' Q1 2016 energy consumption, displayed on their new "transparency dashboard." (Courtesy 1 Hotel)



It's interactive, too: Users can choose to see data only from the South Beach hotel, only from the Central Park hotel, or from both. They can also opt for per-guest metrics, such as how much water the average visitor consumes during a stay.

It's just the beginning, according to Michael Laas, director of impact for SH Group, which operates 1 Hotels. While some of data comes in real time (1 Hotels uses acoustic sensors to measure waste, for example, from which they get up-to-the-minute measurements on composting), others don't; and so for now, the dashboard's stats are compiled quarterly. "We're constantly looking to get more data, interpret it immediately, make things as autonomous as possible," Laas says. "We want this to become a living tool, where people see consumption on a real-time basis and can begin to understand that sustainability is a lifestyle."

Why now? "Earth Day is the most important day of our

year," says Kane Sarhan of Starwood Capital, which owns SH Group. "We celebrate it in big ways." Like "intention trees" in front of both the South Beach and Central Park hotels, which invite people to attach ribbons inscribed with their Earth Day intentions. Or a 5k Walking Tour of sustainable destinations like the Lowline and the Natural Gourmet Institute in NYC, sponsored and hosted by the Central Park property. Or a collaboration with CitiBike Miami on a "clean up the beach" ride.

"We're looking for ways to engage people with sustainability in a direct, hands-on, and personal way," Laas says. "Transparency is part of our mission. We want to set a new standard for how brands can be held accountable. This is a way for people to see how we're doing, and we hope that will start a conversation about sustainability generally. We're trying to build a movement that can have tangible, quantifiable impact. Engagement is at the heart of it."