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TO: Board of Directors
FROM: SLA Staff
DATE: 5 November 2007
RE: SLA's Green Initiative

Recommendation: That SLA begin efforts to become an environmentally sensitive organization at the membership, board, volunteer leadership, exhibition, and staff levels.

Background Information: Staff and the Board have been approached by the Environmental Resource Management Division to investigate strategic ways that SLA can "go green" in 2008 and beyond. In addition, at the SLA Annual Conference and INFO EXPO in Denver members heard and were inspired by Al Gore to take action to help the global environment.

A. What does "going green" mean?

"Green" is basically short terminology to say that something is "good" or "clean" for the environment.

B. Why the sudden change for our association now?

There are a lot of reasons, but the biggest reason is that the crisis of global warming has become a concern for everyday people throughout the world. High profile efforts such as Al Gore's film *An Inconvenient Truth* have put global warming in the international spotlight. VP Gore spoke at our Denver Annual Conference & INFO-EXPO in June 2007 and prompted members and staff to take a more serious look at our actions and operations.

C. What is the impact?

The first place that SLA can have a major environmental impact is associated with the Annual Conference & INFO-EXPO in Seattle in June 2008, as Seattle is known for its citywide environmental efforts.

This attention is translating into broad public support for various avenues of new products, services and technologies designed with the environment in mind. There are so many new initiatives and resolutions, in fact, that we are seeing an entire green economy emerge before our very eyes. Bags, badges, giveaways, and of course the obvious green buildings, hybrid cars and organic agriculture are all part of the rapidly growing manifest. "Going Green" is and has taken associations and the globe in a whole new direction with a whole new outlook.

D. What is in it for SLA?

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle should be our model.

1. The association will grow and have a broader market of concerned global citizens.
2. Attendees, exhibitors and staff will be a part of an association that is helping save the environment.
3. Exhibitors will want to participate in order to take advantage of this new initiative in the beginning stages.
4. Outside organizations will look up to SLA and will want to do the same.
5. New initiatives can be featured in magazines and other publicity.
6. It can save money for the association while helping the environment.

E. Here are some active and approachable steps to take to make SLA a “greener” conference.

- Print materials on recycled paper.
- Talk with the bag sponsor about the possibility of joining the SLA Green Initiative and offer environmental friendly bags or bags that could be re-used for shopping, etc.
- Talk with the sponsor of the lanyards about offering recycled neck wallets instead of the badge holder. If these are too expensive then offer recycle containers to recycle the badge holders after conference.
- Try to secure local services when available, i.e., print the Final Conference Program locally in Seattle, if possible, and financially appropriate.
- Work with local suppliers to provide local foods.
- When possible, left over food will be donated to local groups.
- If boxed lunches are offered, ask that they be in bags or other easily recycled packaging.
- Use water coolers instead of water bottles where appropriate. Get a sponsor to offer refillable water bottles.
- During the registration process, provide a link so attendees may purchase carbon offsets to help the impact their flights have on the environment.
- HQ will make a yearly donation to offset staff travel.
- Begin a campaign so attendees can make donations to an established charitable organization that deals with the “green” concept.
- Identify which conference hotels offer green programs and note them on the housing Web site.
- Use a “green” tag line to let everyone know that SLA is “green.”
- HQ and exhibitors send e-mails versus print communications, when possible.
- Staff will work with our show decorator to establish the green concept in whatever ways that we can accomplish our goals such as enviroboard, which is using inferior recycle board/signs.

- During the Annual Business Meeting have a few chapters/divisions discuss ways that their division/chapters went “green” and then advertise that information in IO, so that members are aware of what we are all doing.
- Inform Exhibitors of ways that they can go “green” especially with giveaway items and booth supplies.
- Improve the conference online planner for easier use, reducing paper usage.
- Investigate systems that will enable handouts to be downloaded prior to conference or pulled up via personal laptops during conference sessions. (For 2008, the convention center will have wireless access with no charge to attendees.)
- Consider replacing the huge final conference program with the mini, pocket program that we introduced in Denver. It would make a major statement to attendees that we’re going green. Use the Cyber Café computer kiosks and other electronic media in the convention center to provide complete program information. Sponsorship opportunities for the alternative communications would offset lost advertising revenue from the program book.
- Recycle materials from conference bags (offer recycling containers near registration for these materials).
- Eliminate some of the materials from the conference bags such as bag inserts from exhibitors and other vendors, including *IO* and other HQ flyers and put online.

Other possible initiatives:

- Information Center will continue to evaluate the replacement of print serial subscriptions where online versions are available, economically viable, and convenient for staff access.
- Encourage all members, especially those overseas to opt for electronic delivery of *Information Outlook* instead of printed copies. This would be a voluntary program that could be tracked in the new AMS. Advantages: reduction in use of paper, reduction in shipping/postage costs, fuel savings throughout the paper cycle (from felling trees to delivering printed copies to readers).
- Begin an awareness campaign to encourage members to keep their e-mail addresses current—to ensure everyone receives timely e-mails from HQ.
- Print materials on recycled paper.
- Design marketing initiatives as electronic or web-based to save on paper usage and delivery by post.
- Continue aggressive telecommuting policy for HQ staff.
- Provide incentives to staff to use public transport to the office.
- As economically feasible, replace light bulbs, office supplies, and other facility usage to reduce waste.