



CHARLOTTESVILLE BETTER BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Blue Moon Diner Concierge Service

Global Sustainability, Fall 2011

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this project is to assist Better World Betty with the Charlottesville Better Business Challenge through our concierge service to challenge participant, Blue Moon Diner. As concierges our function is two-fold – to sustain momentum and excitement for the Better Business Challenge and to collaborate with this local restaurant as it implements practices and earns points in the areas of energy, water, waste, transportation, purchasing, and leadership. In an initial meeting with Laura Galgano, manager of Blue Moon Diner, we assessed the diner's level of sustainability using the Better Business Challenge Scorecard and created a plan of action for Blue Moon to implement additional sustainable practices. As concierges we identified and accomplished five "Action Items" to assist Better World Betty and advance Blue Moon's success in the Challenge.

Our first Action Item was the creation of the "Blue Moon Goes Green Competition Timeline" to keep Laura organized and on track with her efforts. This document includes important dates, deadlines, and objectives and helps ensure Blue Moon's continued success in the competition beyond the scope of our involvement as concierges this semester. For our second action item we created a series of signs that encourage sustainable behavior of diner patrons and staff. We shared these signs with Laura to post in Blue Moon and with Better World Betty to make them available to other businesses in the competition. In order to showcase Blue Moon's unique sustainability efforts and provide a video "Spotlight" for the Better Business Challenge website, we created a short video as our third action item. Our fourth action item is product research on reverse osmosis water filtration systems for Blue Moon to reference for future purchasing decisions. We have made this resource available to other businesses as well through the Better Business Challenge website. Our fifth and final action item is a graphic highlighting Midtown businesses' participation in the Better Business Challenge to be used by the BBC and Blue Moon. This map is useful for promotion of both Blue Moon and the Better Business Challenge. Through these five action items, we successfully helped Blue Moon move forward in their pursuit of sustainable business practices and advanced the efforts of Better World Betty's Better Business Challenge.

INTRODUCTION

The commercial and corporate sectors of the Charlottesville community lack cohesion in sustainability efforts. Businesses contribute a substantial portion of the waste and energy consumption of the city. Although this is not the intention of the business owners and is perhaps even ethically disconcerting for them, the bottom line is making profit, and sustainability does not always fit nicely into this agenda. Enter: our friendly neighborhood community partner, Better World Betty!

This non-profit's aim is to provide the networking and enthusiasm necessary to accomplish sustainability goals within the business sector of the Charlottesville community. The most recent effort of Better World Betty is the Better Business Challenge, a friendly sustainability competition intended to incite change and encourage implementation of sustainable practices in Charlottesville businesses. Terry Kent, founder of Better World Betty and project director of the Better Business Challenge said, "We believe the Challenge is the perfect avenue to encourage businesses to look at their business practices and see if they can utilize resources more efficiently and save some money. It's also a meaningful and positive way to collectively engage in our community in important effort to promote good corporate citizenship." Over 100 businesses agreed to be a part of the challenge in which they track their progress and earn points in the areas of energy, water, waste, transportation, purchasing, and leadership. Better World Betty has a large outreach but, as a small nonprofit, lacks the manpower necessary to make this competition a success. As "concierges" we provided some of the necessary legwork for Better World Betty by keeping up the momentum and excitement of the Better Business Challenge. We worked with Blue Moon Diner as it implemented changes to increase its efficiency and overall sustainability.

The stakeholders in this project are Better World Betty, Blue Moon Diner, and the Charlottesville community as a whole. Better World Betty aims to be an established leader for networking sustainable action within the Charlottesville business sector. By orchestrating a successful competition, they will gain not only name recognition, but also a stronger platform to launch similar campaigns for change. Better World Betty hopes to bridge the Corner, Midtown and Downtown business sectors and act as a uniting factor in steps toward a more holistically sustainable business community. They also have an obligation to the stipulations of their grant award, and must seek to meet those goals in order to ensure future funding and the long-term success of their non-profit. Businesses seek to benefit financially and capitalize on the good publicity and bragging rights that accompany their participation in the Better Business Challenge. For Blue Moon Diner, seeking profit ethically is of great importance. The restaurant is a part of a larger community and recognizes Charlottesville's desire to seek sustainable practices. Through the Better Business Challenge communication barriers are breached and a more supportive network is developed within the business sector. The Charlottesville community as a whole also has a stake in this challenge. The over-arching culture of Charlottesville seeks a more sustainable future and by supporting the challenge and encouraging local businesses to participate, individuals can make an impact in sustainability efforts outside their own home.

Through our participation as concierges in the Challenge, we acted to provide the extra boost needed for Blue Moon to achieve greater sustainability. As a network of support inside the existing Better World Betty structure, we provided Blue Moon with not only encouragement and enthusiasm, but tangible contributions including a detailed agenda for the duration of the competition to keep their efforts on track, signs to encourage sustainable behavior among patrons and staff, a video showcasing the business's sustainability success, a comprehensive list of purchasing recommendations for environmentally friendly appliances, and a graphic highlighting Midtown's participation in the challenge. As we helped Blue Moon succeed in their sustainability efforts, we also contributed to the success of the Better Business Challenge and thus the overall sustainability of our Charlottesville community.

BODY

Our project design was largely determined by the structure of the Charlottesville Better Business Challenge Concierge Program. This program laid out a detailed timeline and clear guidelines for our collaboration with Blue Moon Diner. According to this schedule we met with Blue Moon in person twice over the course of the semester and corresponded regularly by email. In our first meeting with Laura Galgano we completed the Challenge Scorecard, talked about the business's needs, and brainstormed ways that we could help them become a more sustainable business. In our second meeting we assessed progress and re-evaluated efforts and goals. We also had two in-class meetings with our Challenge Mentor, Tom Cassidy of Better World Betty, at which we discussed obstacles and reported progress. Our communication with the Challenge Team extended beyond these meetings to a Google Document that we updated regularly with notes from meetings and the Concierge Log where we reported completed Action Items. Action Items – actions that translate into Scorecard points and increased sustainability for Blue Moon Diner – were another component of the schedule laid out by the Challenge and the essence of our project.

After evaluating the level of sustainability at Blue Moon Diner using the Better Business Scorecard we determined what Action Items we could take on in collaboration with Laura to earn more points in the Challenge. Blue Moon Diner already qualified for many of the points in the scorecard so it was somewhat challenging to come up with additional measures to be taken. First and foremost our goal as concierges was to help Blue Moon Diner be more sustainable. As such, the needs of Laura Galgano and Blue Moon were of greatest importance in determining our project design. However, because our business partner for this project is not only Blue Moon Diner but also Better World Betty and the Better Business Challenge as a whole, we wanted our concierge service to Blue Moon to also benefit the Challenge. As such, we made an

effort to choose action items that both improved Blue Moon's score and sustainability now *and* extended beyond the scope of our limited concierge service. Our project design was constrained by the timeframe of the semester, Laura's availability and willingness to participate, and the schedules of those involved at the Better Business Challenge. Therefore, we determined that the best approach would be to take on action items that could be completed with little effort on the part of Blue Moon but offer high return in terms of scorecard points, would have effects that extend beyond our semester-long participation, and would benefit both Blue Moon and the Better Business Challenge as a whole.

The five Action Items below represent our contribution to Blue Moon Diner's participation in the Better Business Challenge and our project design for this sustainability project.

Action Item 1 – Blue Moon Goes Green Challenge Timeline (Appendix A)

This spreadsheet outlines important dates and sets deadlines for tangible goals throughout the Challenge. At our first meeting with Laura she expressed that one of her greatest needs in the Challenge was for someone to keep her accountable and consistent in her participation. This timeline, although not a product that can be used by the Better Business Challenge as a whole, benefits the challenge nonetheless in that it encourages continued participation by Blue Moon throughout the Challenge. This Action Item does not correspond directly to any points on the scorecard but instead represents an important step in planning to accomplish a variety of tasks that do count for scorecard points and increase sustainability.

Action Item 2 – Sustainability Signs (Appendix B)

These signs are meant to be engaging reminders that encourage sustainability-minded behavior among diner patrons and staff. Laura expressed an interest in such signs early on in the process as a simple measure to make her business more sustainable and earn a few easy points on the scorecard. These signs, which encourage water and energy conservation and capture the spunky character for the Diner, were delivered to Laura to be posted in her restaurant. We have also made them available to other businesses in the Challenge, benefitting Blue Moon and the Better Business Challenge alike.

Action Item 3 – Video Spotlight

Our Video Spotlight of Blue Moon's CLAW event to benefit the Quality Community Council highlights their support of this sustainability-minded non-profit. The Quality Community Council has several community gardens around Charlottesville and works to make Charlottesville a healthier and more sustainable community. Charlottesville Ladies Arm Wrestling is an event hosted by Blue Moon four times a year in the parking lot behind the Diner. Our video includes a brief interview with the owner, Laura Galgano, in which she talks about the Challenge, QCC, CLAW, and expresses her enthusiasm for sustainable initiatives. This spotlight, which was posted on the Charlottesville Better Business Challenge Website, provides encouragement to Blue Moon through good publicity and benefits the Better World Betty by demonstrating participation in and enthusiasm for the Challenge.

Action Item 4 – Reverse Osmosis Water Filtration Purchasing Recommendations

This document contains overviews of five different reverse osmosis water filtration systems. Laura expressed at our first meeting that she was interested in purchasing a RO system for Blue Moon Diner. These water filtration systems are an environmentally sound method of providing high-quality filtered water in that they avoid all the waste, pollution, and fossil fuel use associated with bottled water and water coolers. While Blue Moon does not sell bottled water as a matter of principle, Laura was interested in alternative ways of providing tasty filtered water for Diner patrons. Recommendations take into account GPD (gallons per day) needs, affordability, and quality. This information will help Laura make an environmentally responsible purchase in the future. This document will also be made available to other businesses via the Better Business Challenge.

Action Item 5 – Midtown Businesses Challenge Participation Graphic (Appendix C)

This graphic highlights the exceptional participation of Midtown businesses in the Better Business Challenge. As a Midtown business owner, Laura is invested in the Midtown business region and wants to emphasize these businesses' sustainability efforts. This graphic will be displayed in Blue Moon and used by Laura as she sees fit, as well as posted on the Charlottesville Better Business Challenge Website. Like the Video Spotlight, this graphic provides encouragement and good publicity for good sustainable business practice.

Below is a record of the Challenge points for which we collaborated with Blue Moon. This includes those points for which we were directly responsible, and those that we encouraged Laura to accomplish and included on the Blue Moon Goes Green Challenge Timeline. This is represented graphically in Appendix D.

Energy

collecting utility bills with LEAPs software 2

List of Appliances – 1

List of energy efficiency action items – 1

Third Party professional energy audit – 5

Tell us what you have done – light signs - 1

=10

Transportation

=0

Water

Reviewing bills – 2

Conducting Inventory of water fixtures – 1

Rain water collection =4pts

Water conservation signs – 1

= 8 total

Waste

reviewing trash bills – 2

water filter – 1

composting program – 2

=5

Purchasing

Review purchasing records -2

tell us what you have done – future list – 1

=3

Leadership

Publicized participation – 1

Hosted workshops – 2

Community sustainability event (CLAW &BIKE Events) – 2

Underwritten sponsorship of community campaign or effort related to sustainability – 2

Organized event for the challenge – 5

Mini Web video – 4

=16

overall total = 42

CONCLUSION

As a concierge team, we successfully met the expectations laid out at the start of the semester with Teri Kent from the Better Business Challenge and Laura Galgano from Blue Moon Diner. We completed five action items that translate into points in the Better Business Challenge and greater sustainability for Blue Moon Diner. This work is measured in terms of points earned on the Better Business Challenge Scorecard as documented in the Body section of this report. We also fostered a relationship between Blue Moon Diner and Better World Betty and appropriately documented our work as requested by our contacts through Better World Betty. This documentation includes a shared excel timeline with Laura Galgano, and a shared Concierge Log with Tom Cassidy and Teri Kent through Google Documents. We published and distributed our media – signage, graphic, and video spotlight – through email so that they can be used on the Better World Betty website and be used by Blue Moon in the restaurant and other businesses as seen fit by Tom and Teri.

FUTURE WORK

Fortunately, the overall timeline of the Better Business Challenge extends Blue Moon's efforts for sustainability past the conclusion of the semester objectives of Global Sustainability. Although the role of the concierges ended in December, the "Blue Moon Goes Green Challenge Timeline" we created with Laura Galgano encompasses the yearlong scope of the project. For Blue Moon, the largest action item yet to be implemented is their garden. This includes rain barrels, herbs, and vegetables grown on site for private and business use and a composting system. One hopeful outcome of this effort is that Blue Moon become a leader among the restaurants participating in the Challenge and showcase the benefits of vegetable gardens in creating a more sustainable Charlottesville. With the garden underway in the Spring, Blue Moon also hopes to host a workshop for the Challenge on gardens, perhaps inviting members of the Quality Community Council to share information with other business owners about how gardens can be incorporated into their sustainable business practices.

Blue Moon understands that their efforts to become more sustainable and to be a steward for Charlottesville and the Midtown business sector will extend past the May deadline of the Better Business Challenge. Better World Betty established the Concierge Program to act as a catalyst for the businesses' efforts during the challenge. As concierges, we have assisted in planning, researching, and documenting our business's efforts for the first half of the challenge and outlined and researched for their expressed needs for the spring semester. These include product research and comparisons on reverse osmosis water filtration systems, as well as a timeline including bill collection and garden implementation. It is our hope as well as Better World Betty's that this will encourage continued enthusiasm in making sustainable business decisions and help Blue Moon earn more points and leadership roles as the Challenge reaches an end.

One way that Blue Moon will continue their sustainable community engagement is by hosting and participating in community events such as CLAW and Charlottesville Bike Week every year. Blue Moon has attended every workshop hosted by Better World Betty and will continue to look for opportunities of this kind in the future. Blue Moon looks to healthy sustainable business practice as a way to encourage customers to support Midtown as a socially and environmentally conscious Charlottesville business destination.

Many of the action items completed for our project – the sustainability signs, reverse osmosis water filtration research, and Midtown business graphic – can be used by many other businesses in this year's Better Business Challenge and in the future. In this way our efforts extend beyond the scope of our individual concierge service to Blue Moon Diner.

Better World Betty is an organization focused on inciting sustainable change in the Charlottesville community. Although the business challenge will end in May, their efforts will not. While the concierges may not be working one on one with businesses across Charlottesville, Better world Betty has an established a team working toward maintaining relationships with the businesses participating in the challenge. There is certainly potential for the challenge to become an annual event or for Better World Betty to create new support networks through collaboration between the University and Charlottesville businesses. Regardless, the Better Business Challenge has raised awareness about the improvements that can be made by individual businesses to support the general health of the larger community.

LESSONS LEARNED

As concierges, implementing our project provided many learning experiences we would not have otherwise confronted in a traditional classroom setting. Because the class structure of Global Sustainability set us up with a business partner, Better World Betty, and because that business partner then set us up with different business partners, in our case Blue Moon, there was a rather complicated chain of communication throughout the project. Luckily, Better World Betty is a very enthusiastic and dedicated non-profit with clear goals and a comprehensive scorecard for the Better Business Challenge. Without that level of clarity and dedication to the concierge team, it would have been a much more difficult project to implement. Tom Cassidy was our Better World Betty direct support and was timely with responses and ideas as the project progressed. On the other side of communication, we were lucky to be matched with a business that was sustainability minded already and had many ideas and enthusiasm for taking a leadership role in the challenge.

Our goals as outlined at the beginning of the semester were to assist Blue Moon on their expressed needs to successfully participate in the Challenge. These needs were identified and clarified throughout the semester. In the beginning we had hoped to be more involved in Blue Moon's garden project. However, it became apparent that Laura already has a good handle on that project and that our efforts were better spent elsewhere. We also helped to research energy efficient appliances to provide a list of recommendations to assist purchasing decisions when the restaurant's appliances need replacing. However, as a busy business owner, Laura did not have the time or energy to provide a list of appliances used in the restaurant. This action item would have proven more trouble for Blue Moon than it was worth. Instead, we looked into reverse osmosis water filtration, another topic that Laura wanted information about as she considers purchasing such a system for the restaurant.

While working with Blue Moon, we would have liked to get footage of the garden, but the diner will not break ground until the spring. Instead we filmed the CLAW event benefitting the Quality Community Council. Although this event was not explicitly related to the Challenge, we highlighted connections between the non-profit that his event supported and the goals of the Better Business Challenge. Our video showcased the way Blue Moon is supporting sustainability by supporting this sustainability oriented non-profit in a creative and engaging event.

If we were to do this again, establishing even clearer expectations between Better World Betty and Global Sustainability would be beneficial for all involved. This would have alleviated much of the stress we faced when trying to match timelines and expectations with our individual business partners. That this was the first year of the Better Business Challenge presented the obstacle of initiating and sustaining new relationships. We as concierges had to simultaneously get to know the personality of the business we were assisting and the personality of the business owner we are working with, in order to implement ways in which this unique business could capitalize off of their participation in the challenge.

Although we were able to assist Blue Moon Diner successfully and complete five Action Items, the overall project had some inherent frustrations. Because the University operates on a semester schedule and the

Better Business Challenge is a nine-month process, we as a concierge team cannot see our project through to the end of the challenge. We planned our action items specifically to accommodate this discrepancy but leaving loose ends is something that would make any dedicated concierge frustrated. It would be preferable for the concierge program and academic involvement to line up in a more seamless manner with the Challenge timeline.

The general difference in deadlines escalated some of the communication difficulties we faced. Both of our business partners, Better World Betty and Blue Moon, are working toward a May deadline, which makes writing up reports such as this in December a difficult task. We must continuously balance expected accomplishments with implemented action items. Similarly, our products such as the video and signs did not always receive the feedback we needed to feel as though we were meeting everyone else's expectations as concierges. An example would be our video, with deadlines for our reports looming, we had still received no feedback from Better World Betty and we had to make a decision to share our work with Blue Moon without the "okay" from our Challenge contacts. Therefore, one of the main lessons learned from this project was the importance of timely communication when seeking change. Overall this project afforded us an opportunity to learn many important things about balancing expectations and communication when working with multiple business partners.

Appendix A – Better Blue Moon Goes Green Challenge Timeline

Time Line	objective	details	status
October			
23 -- 29	timeline/ gather bills/ complete online scorecard	compile dates and objectives/ look over past records for 2nd meeting	Laura is inputting data into EPA portfolio as she compiles bills etc. will use BWB service if she burns out on doing it herself
November			
30 -- 5	Nov. 9 Meeting/ LEAP eval	2nd meeting : 4:50 In diner/ plan date for LEAP	Laura has contacted LEAP to plan assessment - date tbd
6 -- 12	Nov. 10 lunch and learn	energy saving procedures and tips time: 11-1pm : City Space downtown	missed. day got crazy
13 -- 19	media push	draft sustainability signs for interior 11/16 CLAW video shoot 11/19 7pm	
20 -- 26	wrap up	edit claw video and submit to BWB; compile research on appliance replacement and OSMOSIS WATER FILTRATION(!) and submit to Laura	
December			
27 -- 3	wrap up continued	potential second video (garden groundbreaking); submit midtown graphic to Blue Moon and BWB	
4 -- 10			
11 -- 17			
18 -- 24			
January	finish the p & p's	professionals and paperwork - evals, bills, changing services	
1 -- 7			
8 --14			
15 -- 21			
22 -- 28			
February	plan hosting workshop	see if space could accommodate wrkshp	
29 -- 4			
5 -- 11			
12 -- 18			
19 -- 25			
March	Garden implementation		
26 -- 3			
4 -- 10			
11 --17			
18 -- 24			
25 -- 31			
April	work on garden		
1 -- 7			
8 -- 14			
15 -- 21			
22 -- 28			
May	finish reports	scorecard check	
29 -- 5			
6 -- 12	Charlottesville Bike Week!	leadership points for participating!	
MAY 15 - END	turn in scorecard	deadline for implications of scorecard actions!	

How to Handwash? SUSTAINABLY



0
use a little water and
turn it off!



1
use a little soap



2
and scrub



3
ba



4
dub



5
dub...



6
and a little more...



7
under the nails...



8
rinse and turn it off!



9
just one paper towel



healthy people, healthy
planet!



make a bulb happy...

turn off the lights!



You are in control.

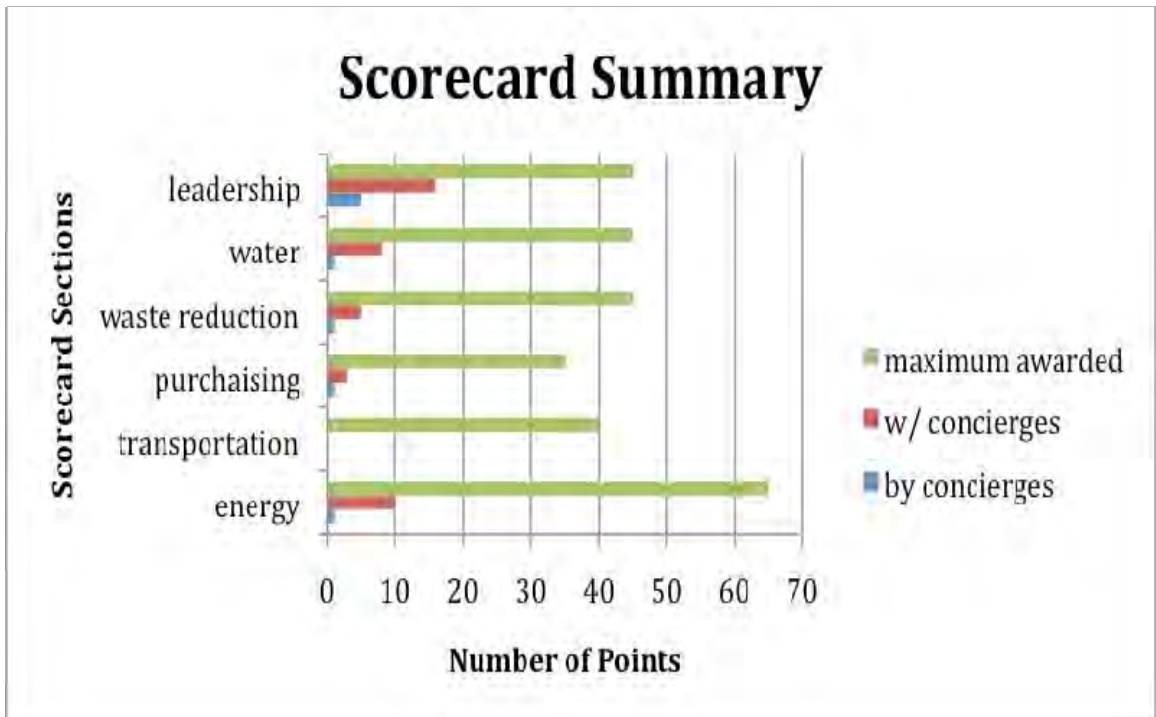
Be water smart.



Appendix C – Midtown Business Challenge Participants Graphic



Appendix D – Points Earned Graphic



Appendix E – Acknowledgements

Thank you to Teri Kent, Tom Cassidy and Natalie Eller at Better World Betty; Laura Galgano at Blue Moon Diner; and Harriett Jameson, Carla Jones, and Pheobe Crisman from the UVa Global Sustainability class.