

# Green Luxury: A Viable Pair: Marketing the Chateau Lake Louise as Environmentally Responsible in an Effort to Capitalize on the Growing Green Consumer Demographic

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## ABSTRACT

The Chateau Lake Louise has been a destination for the luxury-seeking vacationer for over a century. Situated on the bank of Lake Louise, the hotel is a prominent attraction within Banff National Park – the country’s first and most visited national park. With the growing emphasis placed on environmentally-conscious developments, more and more companies are opting to “go green” as well as an accompanying increase in corporations’ marketing strategies to persuade consumers that their product is more ecologically mindful than their opponents. Two major stereotypes of green products have made some companies wary to market themselves as environmentally friendly. The past decade has brought about great advances in environmentally-friendly consumer goods and services, yet many remain hesitant to shift their advertising campaigns to incorporate green initiatives. As a leader in environmental sustainability the Chateau Lake Louise has the opportunity to break ground in a new field of marketing: green luxury.

## INTRODUCTION

In 1992, The Green Travel Sourcebook explained the origins of the concept of Green:

Back in the mid-1970s, the Europeans appropriated the word *Green* to describe those of us who are vitally concerned about the environment, world peace, cultural integrity, and a generally higher, gentler quality of life, and are willing to sacrifice something in order to bring about favorable changes. (Grotta and Grotta 2)

However, as Green becomes more and more mainstream, the focus has shifted from individual sacrifice (time, money, quality) towards collective sustainability – that is,

people are adjusting their habits to promote environmental sustainability, and demand that companies behave similarly. Companies have been slow to pick up on their consumers’ goals of curtailing their individual environmental influences, but are now starting to relate the growing demands for eco-consciousness with profitability. There is a new market available to companies: the “elusive Green consumer,” as he has come to be known (“The Light Green Consumer”).

The problem with Green consumers is that they are fickle, they don’t fall into demographical trends, and they are easily turned off by overtly Green advertising of the elusive Green consumer is solved, profits will

soar.

The Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise – a resort in the Banff National Park in the Albertan Rockies – has implemented a long list of environmental practices in order to keep the surrounding Lake Louise region, a popular tourism destination, pristine and naturally beautiful. However, they have opted not to market themselves as Green, contending that their sustainability programs are not a factor in why guests decide to stay at the hotel (Budgell); if the Chateau Lake Louise were to capitalize on the Green tourism market, they would control an overwhelming percentage of those who recognize ecological concerns when choosing a vacation site.

- Is it possible to market something with such a luxurious, formal history in conjunction with an ideology often equated with personal sacrifice?
- Can the Chateau Lake Louise be represented as both lavish *and* environmentally responsible, and what do they stand to gain from this advertising makeover?

## THE GREEN CONSUMER

The Green Consumer is a relatively new market profile that has stemmed from the Green political movement of the 1970s and placed strong emphasis on ecological conservation and environmental sustainability (“Green Politics”). The Green Consumer is an individual who recognizes the importance of decreasing his or her impact on the environment, and makes purchases accordingly.

## THE CONCEPT OF GREEN

There are several components to Green ideology, and though 97 nations have one or multiple formal Green political parties, there is strong agreement about what it is to truly be Green. In 2001 *Six Principles* was drafted at

the Global Greens conference; The Global Greens Charter indicates the core values of Green ideology, and in 2002 the *Six Principles* were implemented as the official stance of the Green Party of Canada:

- Ecological Wisdom
- Social Justice
- Participatory Democracy
- Nonviolence
- Sustainability
- Respect for Diversity

## Defining the *Six Principles*

These are the definitions of the *Six Principles* constructed by the 2001 Global Greens Charter:

### *Ecological Wisdom*

- o We acknowledge that human beings are part of the natural world and we respect the specific values of all forms of life, including non-human species.
- o We acknowledge the wisdom of the indigenous peoples of the world, as custodians of the land and its resources.
- o We acknowledge that human society depends on the ecological resources of the planet, and must ensure the integrity of ecosystems and preserve biodiversity and the resilience of life supporting systems.

### *Social Justice*

- o We assert that the key to social justice is the equitable distribution of social and natural resources, both locally and globally, to meet basic human needs unconditionally, and to ensure that all citizens have full opportunities for personal and social development.
- o We declare that there is no social justice without environmental justice, and no environmental justice without social justice.

**Participatory Democracy**

- o We strive for a democracy in which all citizens have the right to express their views, and are able to directly participate in the environmental, economic, social and political decisions which affect their lives; so that power and responsibility are concentrated in local and regional communities, and devolved only where essential to higher tiers of governance.

**Nonviolence**

- o We declare our commitment to nonviolence and strive for a culture of peace and cooperation between states, inside societies and between individuals, as the basis of global security.
- o We believe that security should not rest mainly on military strength but on cooperation, sound economic and social development, environmental safety, and respect for human rights.

**Sustainability**

- o We recognise the limited scope for the material expansion of human society within the biosphere, and the need to maintain biodiversity through sustainable use of renewable resources and responsible use of non-renewable resources.
- o We believe that to achieve sustainability, and in order to provide for the needs of present and future generations within the finite resources of the earth, continuing growth in global consumption, population and material inequity must be halted and reversed.
- o We recognise that sustainability will not be possible as long as poverty persists.

Concisely, Green Consumers seek out products that place added emphasis on being ecologically conscious. Julia Hailes, co-author of the *Green Consumer Guide*, calls this “the triple bottom line: economically viable, environmentally sound, and socially responsible.”

**Shades of Green Consumers**

Though many (incorrectly) assume that the Green community is made up of eco-conscious liberals, there is actually no significant correlation between Greens and any point on the political spectrum. While Green political parties are usually classified as leftist, the Green Consumer does not always align with party lines. Green Consumers cross all demographics, regardless of their age, gender, political affiliation, or social standing. Associations between the Green community and established liberal/conservative political parties are common, and the latter tout environmental beliefs alongside their already-established policies; these relationships are termed Blue-Green or Red-Green, accordingly.

Just as there are varying degrees of extremism or moderation within political parties, the same holds true for the Green Consumer. Economists have cleverly devised “shades” of one’s “Greenness” that determine just how far one would go to keep in line with Green consumerism; the darker the shade, the more dedicated the Consumer is to the Green ideology.



## GREEN TOURISM

The World Tourism Organization reported that over 800 million tourists traveled in the year 2005 (“International Tourism”), and by 2020 this figure should jump to 1.6 billion, making tourism both “the largest and fastest growing industry in the world” (World Wildlife Foundation). Tourism grosses over \$6.5 trillion USD annually (WTTC) and creates 230 million jobs worldwide; tourism is also among the top five export industries in over 150 countries, with it being the number one export in 60 (World Tourism Organization, “Tourism”).

Green tourism has not been bypassed in this frenzy; hundreds of Green tourism travel agencies market eco-trips across the Green spectrum, ranging from volunteering in Latin American schools to rock climbing the Himalayas, from whale watching in the Pacific to visiting historically significant cities in the Middle East.

### Green Tourism in Alberta

Tourism plays a huge roll in the Albertan economy, grossing \$5.13 billion CAD in 2005 and supporting over 103,000 jobs in the province (“Tourism in Alberta”). Of those who visit Alberta, the majority of non-Canadian tourists desire to sightsee, visit parks and historic sites, and shop.

Western Alberta is home to four national parks: Banff, Jasper, Kootenay, and Waterton Lakes. Yoho National Park, located in British Columbia, also borders Banff and Kootenay parks. Visitation from these parks made up over 51% of all Canadian National Parks attendance in 2007, attracting some 6,707,875 guests. Furthermore, Alberta was the only province whose tourism attendance has risen every year since 2003 (“Parks Canada”).

The tourism industry in the Albertan Rockies advertises natural beauty as the main attraction, offering “rugged peaks and ranges...alpine meadows, emerald lakes, wild waterways, untrammelled backcountry wilderness and some of the best hiking and skiing in the world” (*Travel Alberta*).

Banff National Park (BNP) is a prime location for Green Tourists, being the most visited location in Alberta (“Parks Canada”) and drawing nearly 3.3 million guests in 2007 (“Banff National Park”). BNP is an ideal location for Green travelers because the availability of the natural scenery and the convenience of a major international airport some 90 minutes away. BNP offers numerous outdoor activities, including hiking, mountain climbing, nature watching, and canoeing. There are also several destinations based within the Park to discover, most notably the popular town of Banff and the heavily photographed Lake Louise.

Activities Among Overnight Pleasure Visitors - By Market			
Overnight Person Visits	Canada	USA	Overseas
Activity	%	%	%
Visit Friends/Relatives	54	15	33
Attend Festivals/Fairs	9	10	10
Attend Cultural Events	19	46	48
Attend Sports Events	14	7	10
Shopping	48	77	92
Sightseeing	46	81	93
Nightlife	18	28	36
Visit Parks/Historic Sites	35	78	91
Outdoor Sports/Activities	53	40	45

## Expectations of Green Tourists

Though the spectrum of intensity of Green Tourists varies greatly, there are some expectations that nearly all eco-travelers anticipate, all of which coincide with the Global Greens Charter *Six Principles*. All hotels are expected to conserve energy and water and reduce waste and manage it responsibly.

According to the International Ecotourism Society, eco-conscious tourists also expect their respective hotels or accommodators to:

- Minimize impact
- Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect
- Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts
- Provide direct financial benefits for conservation
- Provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people
- Raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climate ("Definitions and Principles")

Some of the most common Green practices of hotels include using alternative energy sources, recycling, introducing low-flow toilets and lower-pressure showerheads, buying locally grown organic foods, and implementing energy-conserving technologies like electricity-efficient light bulbs and occupancy sensors that turn lights, air conditioning, and televisions off when guests leave the room.

## Profitability of the Green Tourist Demographic

There has been a great deal of debate regarding just how profitable the Green Consumer is; many studies from the late 1990s and early 2000s have shown that while consumers claim that environmental sustainability is an important purchasing factor, the truth is that it was not. This "empty-

promise" phenomenon can be attributed to the problems that Green products have been scorned for two overarching flaws since they arrived on the market: choosing between higher prices or lower quality. Businesses recognized the fickleness of their customers, usually opting to ignore the artificial Green demands.

While this may have worked in the past, consumers have started acting on their requests for sustainability. The recent surge in interest for eco-friendly products has driven companies to produce more affordable, higher quality products for a rapidly increasing market. According to an Association of British Travel Agents survey, "45% of travelers now feel it is 'very important that their holiday does not damage the environment'" (Endersby 17). Ecotourism has grown between 20-34% annually for the past fifteen years (Mastny), and it is projected that "sustainable tourism could grow to 25% of the world's travel market [by the year 2013], taking the value of the sector to \$473.6 billion USD a year" (*Mintel Report*).

The Green Consumer is no longer an exclusive purchasing market and is becoming increasingly profitable. Consider some facts compiled by the International Ecotourism Society:

- More than two-thirds of U.S. and Australian travelers, and 90% of British tourists, consider active protection of the environment and support of local communities to be part of a hotel's responsibility (Hamele)
- 20%-30% of European travelers are aware of needs & values of sustainable tourism. 10%-20% look for 'green' options, and 5%-10% demand 'green' holidays (Hamele).
- In Germany, 65% (39 million) of travelers expect environmental quality; 42% (25 million) "think that it is particularly important to find

environmentally-friendly accommodation” (Hamele)

- Nearly half of those surveyed in Britain said they would be more likely to go with a “company that had a written code to guarantee good working conditions, protect the environment and support local charities in the tourist destination” (Tearfund).
- A survey of U.S., British, and Australian travelers revealed that 70% would pay up to \$150 more for a two-week stay in a hotel with a “responsible environmental attitude” (*Travelbiz*).
- In a U.K. survey, 87% of travelers said their holiday should not damage the environment; 39% said they were prepared to pay 5% extra for ethical guarantees (MORI).

### THE GREEN STEREOTYPE

Many companies have opted to avoid marketing themselves as Green, namely because of the negative connotations that have historically accompanied the concept. For years, the notion of Green implied certain unfavorable traits, reflecting poorly on both the product and the consumer. Green products are seen as either more expensive than non-Green products, or of lesser quality if priced competitively. The incentives to “go Green,” both from a consumer and business standpoint, were risky – protecting the environment meant jeopardizing one’s reputation. For years, there was no widespread demand for Green products; only those gravely concerned with ecological responsibility were making environmentally friendly purchases.

### Validity of the Stereotype

Unfortunately, the stereotype of the past was fairly accurate. Green products were, more often than not, far more expensive than regular

ones and there was an overwhelming sense of doubt regarding their quality. A Roper survey found that “42% [of consumers] feel that environmental products don’t work as well as conventional ones,” indicating an early distrust for the Green product market (“‘Green’ Sales Pitch”). To add conviction to the stereotype, Green products were scarce, rarely making shelves anywhere but upscale, health-oriented stores, thereby fueling the idea that Green Consumerism was exclusive to the wealthy.

While great advances have been made to make environmentally-friendly products both affordable and trustworthy, combating the label is still an uphill battle. Therefore, a rise in ecological education has been credited with the birth of mainstream environmentalism. A revolution among consumers of all backgrounds has proved that the Green Consumer is a psychographic rather than a demographic; that is, rather than follow a demographic pattern of race, sex, age, or social status, Green Consumers share similar social beliefs.

### Problems with Being Labeled Green

Being labeled as Green can have a negative impact on a business, both as a result of the outdated stereotype and because of a flood in the market for Green products. There are the aforementioned risks of being environmentally-friendly (cost versus quality), along with a new strain of hazards that threaten companies who label themselves Green.

*Greenwashing* is a term coined to describe the influx of misleading Green marketing, leading consumers to confusion. A play on the word “whitewash”, greenwashing deceives consumers with wordy or inaccurate language, misleading claims, or any other deceptive methods used to confuse consumers into thinking they are purchasing a Green product when in reality they are not (“It’s Not Easy”). Some consumers have recognized this tactic, and have formed a collective sense of distrust

towards Green companies that cannot prove their legitimacy.

Consumer skepticism is growing. Because there is no international standard of what constitutes being environmentally friendly, anyone can claim to be eco-conscious with any minute practice (“Marketing”); for example, a hotel that recycles or practices a program where guests can decide to reuse towels can label themselves as being Green, consequence free. There is no standard, no criterion, for being Green; this has led to an increase in consumer uncertainty and cynicism.

### **Benefits with Being Labeled Green**

From an environmental standpoint, it is easy to see the benefits earned from a true Green company. It is imperative that its clients see it as sincerely interested in the environment; if a company’s actions appear artificial, customers will lose faith in the legitimacy of its ecological stewardship (“Marketing”). If a company can do this, it will be touted as a leader in the field, inevitably leading to more frequent, highly positive public relations and community accolades for sustainability. This will undoubtedly lead to more press coverage, more human interest, and more incoming revenue, which repeats the cycle. Lyndall De Marco, International Tourism Partnership Executive Director, claims: “Those able to meet the challenge of operating in a more sustainable way will avoid criticism, be looked upon with respect, gain customer loyalty and thereby compound their competitive advantage” (Endersby 17).

### **Can Green Be Luxurious?**

High quality, environmentally-friendly product lines have been an increasingly popular consumer request. Organic and other eco-conscious products have even been adopted by generic supermarket brands as a way of getting in on the Green movement (“More Consumers”), and a March 2008 Mintel survey

found that as much as 36% of consumers make Green purchases “regularly”, up from 12% in August 2006 (“Americans Go”). Premium, affordable Green products are being introduced much more frequently, and consumers are taking notice of the recognizable benefits of purchasing said products. The increasing pressure for widespread environmentally-conscious products has led serious attention in a previously ignored market. No longer does buying Green automatically imply the second-rate, “nuts, twigs, and berries” creation it once did; Green products are now becoming genuine competition for conventional ones (both in price and customer approval), and greater senses of consumer satisfaction and environmental activism promote the growth of the industry in ways that ‘regular’ products cannot capitalize on.

## **OVERVIEW of BANFF NATIONAL PARK**

### **BANFF NATIONAL PARK**

Banff National Park (BNP) was established in 1885 as Canada’s first national park. It covers 6,641 square kilometers of Southwestern Alberta, and is one of the five national parks situated along the Canadian Rockies (“Banff National Park”). The Park attracted nearly 3.3 million visitors in 2007, making it the most visited national park in Canada (“Parks Canada”). In 1984 BNP was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site; the 851 locations on the list are labeled as “properties forming part of the cultural and natural heritage which the World Heritage Committee considers as having outstanding universal value” (UNESCO).

### **Tourism Interest**

There is a great deal of human interest in the Canadian Rockies and BNP. There are several points of interest to take advantage of the natural beauty of the park, as well as a

variety of entertainment opportunities both within the town of Banff as well as in the Park. A survey outlining park visitors' most popular activities include driving and sightseeing (54%), eating in a restaurant (45%), shopping (35%), sightseeing and landmarks (32%) and hiking (27%) ("2003 Survey").

The exploration of the Western Albertan Rockies came as a result of the addition of British Columbia to the nation in 1871, and in 1875 the Canadian Pacific Railroad company was contracted to build a transcontinental railroad. After the discovery of the natural hot springs, a 26 square kilometer area was set aside as Canada's first national park in 1885, and two years later the park was expanded to 674 square kilometers. The CPR built the Banff Springs Hotel and the Chateau Lake Louise in 1887 and 1890, respectively, as a means of appealing to railway travelers en route to the West.

BNP is home to at least five species of reptiles and amphibians, 39 species of fish, 55 species of mammals, and 260 species of birds ("Natural Wonders"); visitors are attracted to the 1600 kilometers of hiking trails, the most of any Canadian mountain park (Marriott).

BNP accounted for over one quarter of all Canadian Parks visitation, attracting more guests than any other single province; BNP is the most popular of the five Canadian mountain parks, constituting nearly half of all the Rockies' visitors ("Parks Canada").

### Development Regulations

BNP is unique to many other National Parks in that it allows permanent human settlement within the park. The town of Banff, BNP's largest municipality, was home to 7,437 permanent residents in 2007 (*Banff Website*, "Town Hall"). Because it is both a nationally protected park and a UNESCO World Heritage property, certain regulations have been put in place to protect its environmental integrity. Some of the aforementioned policies include:

- Businesses operating partly in the town and partly elsewhere in BNP must have two licenses, one issued by Parks Canada and one from the Town of Banff.
- A new business or an existing business that is expanding, increasing intensity of use or doing exterior renovations will usually require a development permit.
- Businesses that expand or increase intensity of use must provide additional parking and housing as a condition of development approval.
- A building permit is typically required for any interior or exterior renovations to businesses.
- A sign permit will be needed to install, alter or relocate any exterior signs associated with the business.
- In accordance with Banff's unique commercial growth management strategy, any business that is proposing to add new floor area requires a commercial use development allotment. (*Banff Website*, "Doing Business")

### BANFF NATIONAL PARK/LAKE LOUISE BRAND

BNP and Lake Louise brands blend wild, natural beauty with refined, high-quality accommodations. With that, a great deal of emphasis is placed on sustainability; because all of the local businesses are subjected to rigid park environmental protection laws, BNP can protect an atmosphere promoting human and natural interaction. BNP markets itself as having "protected natural environment, unparalleled scenery, and historical, recreational and cultural diversity" as well offering "unspoiled natural surroundings which are accessible, safe, and comfortable" (*Banff Lake Louise Tourism*, "Brand Strategy"). A great deal of emphasis is placed on educating the guests of the parks to their environmental

responsibilities, citing that “travel consumers want to be ‘emotionally moved,’ educated, challenged, involved, entertained, and even surprised” (*Banff Lake Louise Tourism*, “Experimental Positioning”).

It is stressed both at the Banff-Lake Louise Tourism website and at their home office in Banff, AB, that BNP is a prime travel destination because of the strict environmental regulations placed on businesses in the area; they ensure a positive, sustainable vacation site because while other naturally-scenic tourist destinations are being overdeveloped, BNP “will remain protected by law forever” (*Banff Lake Louise Tourism*, “Brand Strategy”).

In short, Banff-Lake Louise Tourism advertises BNP as a pristine, magnificent tourism destination; their slogan boldly proclaims it as “The World’s Finest National Park” (*Turn Up the Volume*).

#### **BANFF NATIONAL PARK ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES**

The town of Banff has been very progressive in its environmental practices. As the town is located within BNP, certain restrictions have been imposed to impede further development inside the protected reserve. Banff has also implemented a number of ecological plans for its citizens and visitors to participate in, including a vigorous recycling program, energy efficiency program, composting program, and the No Net Negative Environmental Impact principle which attempts to alleviate the stresses placed on the National Park by the large number of human inhabitants (*Banff Website*, “Locals”). The town of Banff is also restructuring its public-transit system in favor of a more Green approach, introducing bio-diesel/electric hybrid buses that will be in place this year (*Banff Website*, “Town Hall”).

Banff is resolute in its determination to keep the Park unspoiled. Its community website states that “the Town of Banff has both an opportunity and an obligation to strive

toward becoming a model community for environmental stewardship,” demonstrating the principles that Banff upholds are of the utmost concern (*Banff Website*, “Locals”).

#### **OVERVIEW of the CHATEAU LAKE LOUISE**

The Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise (CLL), one of Fairmont Hotels & Resorts’ (FHR) 27 Resort properties, lies on the Eastern shore of Lake Louise in Banff National Park. Comprised of 497 rooms, CLL caters primarily to businesses looking for conference rooms, independent travelers, and tour groups.

#### **THE CHATEAU LAKE LOUISE BRAND**

CLL has always catered to an upper-class, luxury-seeking guest. It was originally built in 1890 by the Canadian Pacific Railway company, serving as a “hotel for outdoor adventurer and alpinist” (*The Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise*, Fairmont Hotels and Resorts).. CLL was initially built as a log cabin, but the first recognizable structure of the hotel was constructed in 1911. Expansions throughout the twentieth century have brought the hotel up to its current size and capacity.

CLL has always advertised itself as a stylish, attractive destination. It first accommodated the wealthy passengers traveling along the Trans-Canadian railway, and since then has boasted an impressive guest list over its 117 year history (“Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise”). CLL’s website boasts a number of these prominent figures and celebrities:

Right from the start, holidays in Lake Louise have meant mountain climbing, horseback riding and gazing at stars - both natural and human. A top location within western Canada’s continuing reputation as “Hollywood North,” early movies shot in Lake Louise include 1928 “Eternal Love” starring John Barrymore, 1942 “Springtime in the Rockies” with Betty Grable and Carmen Miranda and 1944 “Son of Lassie.” Literally

hundreds of stars have come here for filming or vacationing, including Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Alfred Hitchcock, Marilyn Monroe, Christopher Reeve, Angie Dickinson and many of the latest celebs - whose privacy we like to protect.

As early as 1912, when the British Prince of Wales (King Edward VIII, who abdicated) included a hike to the Lake Agnes Teahouse as a part of his "morning exercise" the Chateau has also welcomed dozens of royals including Prince Rainier of Monaco, Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Phillip, Queen Margrethe of Denmark, King Hussein and Queen Noor of Jordan. You never know who you might see on a stroll around the lake... (Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise, "Hotel History")

Clearly there are no attempts at concealing the hotel's icon-renowned standards.

### MARKETING STRATEGY

Currently, CLL markets itself nearly entirely on its extravagant comfort, placing great emphasis on its proximity to Lake Louise. CLL is the only hotel whose rooms have views of the Lake, resting just meters from its Eastern shore. It calls itself "a diamond in the wilderness," highlighting the relationship between the upscale resort and its pristine natural setting (*The Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise*, Fairmont Hotels and Resorts).

CLL applies numerous environmental sustainability practices, though few of these are made public. The hotel has made a conscious choice not to publicize their actions. Jackie Budgell, CLL's Environmental Manager, explains the reasons for disregarding the Fairmont's environmentalism as a marketing tool:

Because of our location on the shores of beautiful Lake Louise, and within Banff National Park, the majority of our guests EXPECT us to be as environmentally friendly as possible. And they also expect us to uphold the luxury standards that are expected of a Fairmont Hotel. As more and more people come to realize the importance of protecting the environment, more and more environmentally friendly alternatives to

regular products are becoming available, allowing us to provide a sustainable solution without sacrificing luxury standards. (Budgell)

### ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES

CLL has received critical acclaim for its environmental practices. Some of the eco-conscious projects they have implemented include:

- Purchasing green power, which accounts for 50% of the property's electricity needs. (Green power is derived from renewable sources including wind power, run-of-the-river hydroelectricity, and biomass, has minimal environmental impacts and produces little or no greenhouse gas emissions.) ("Fairmont Hotels & Resorts Continues to Lead by Example")
- Introducing low flow toilets, shower heads, and tap aerators to save water.
- Introducing LED lights to replace less energy efficient 5 watt holiday lighting.
- Purchasing local, organic, and sustainable food choices.
- Switching plastic takeout containers to biodegradable and compostable potato and corn based alternatives.
- The Fairmont Corporate 'EcoMeet' program has introduced a strict waste-reduction program, eliminating disposables in favor of reusable materials. (Budgell)

Furthermore, CLL has been recognized with several awards:

- Awarded the 5 Green Key Eco-Rating by the Hotel Association of Canada, 2005. (CLL is the only 5 green key rated hotel in Canada)

- Environment Canada's Centre for Pollution Prevention, 2005. (Selected to be a case study for good environmental practices)
- Neilson Active Holidays (Thomas Cook) "Responsible Tourism Award" 2005
- Award for Heritage Excellence, Banff Heritage Tourism Awards 2004
- The November 2004 issue of *National Geographic Traveler* magazine surveyed specialists in sustainable tourism and destination stewardship and created an index, on a 100-point scale, for 115 places worldwide and found Rocky Mountain Parks to be 6<sup>th</sup> out of 115 locations in the world. CLL, which is located within UNESCO World Heritage Site Rocky Mountain Parks scored in the top-third of the score range and was said to have one of the most comprehensive environmental programs in North America. ("Fairmont Hotels & Resorts Green Partnership Program Awards")

## **MARKETABILITY of GREEN TOURISM at the CHATEAU LAKE LOUISE**

### **PRACTICALITY OF MARKETING TO GREEN TOURISTS**

Because Green marketing campaigns have been met with varying success, it is difficult to precisely identify what techniques work best for attracting Green tourists. However, with virtually zero competition in the Green market from rival hotels, CLL can act as a leader in marketing comfort and ecological sustainability as a pair: if Green marketing is less successful, CLL can return to its old ways, but if it succeeds it will have a significant advantage over its competitors, thereby acting as a forerunner in the environmentally-conscious tourism market.

### **MARKETING GREEN ALONGSIDE EXPERIENTIAL TOURISM**

There has been a shift in how people vacation. People are no longer content with simply traveling to a destination; they want to become involved with the location. "Experiential tourism shows rather than describes; it allows the tourist to be an active participant in the experience" ("Experiential Tourism"). A 2006 study by the International Tourism Society claims that typical "sun and sand resort tourism" has reached its market zenith and is unlikely to show future growth; oppositely, "experiential tourism—which encompasses ecotourism, nature, heritage, cultural, and soft adventure tourism, as well as sub-sectors such as rural and community tourism—is among the sectors expected to grow most quickly over the next two decades" (*International Ecotourism Society*). Similarly, over one half of American travelers assert that "travel experience is enhanced when they learn as much as possible about local customs and culture" (*International Ecotourism Society*).

CLL can capitalize on the public's desire to be involved by simply including guests in the sustainability practices. Whether this means giving guests the option of recycling, educating them on the Fairmont's dedication to preserving the Rockies, offering more guided nature walks, or simply presenting information on the history of the First Nations' earth-sensitive activities in the region, CLL can pair Green tourism and Experiential tourism.

Appreciating the economic value of the Green tourist is advantageous, but if CLL were to recognize the requests of the Experiential tourist as well and blend the two into one overarching demographic, the results would be profitable: in 2001, some \$38.4 billion USD were spent by 66 million United States nature tourists ("Experiential Tourism"). The success of the Experiential industry is not one to be overlooked; combining environmentalism and experientialism will inevitably lead to higher profits and more consumer interest, and CLL

will be tagged as a vanguard in this new merger of classes of tourism.

### MODIFYING THE BRAND IMAGE

As previously noted, CLL brands itself nearly entirely according to its luxuriousness and surrounding natural beauty; very little is mentioned about the environmental practices of the hotel. The current status of CLL's environmental practices is a promising one, yet it is rarely highlighted in CLL's marketing. Though a leader in environmentally-friendly luxury resorts, CLL has remained hushed about its actions. In order to attract the Green tourist in higher volumes, certain adjustments must be made to the hotel's branding.

### Third Party Certification

The most effective combatant against consumer suspicion as to the legitimacy of CLL's Greenness is to have it certified by a third party. Karen de Asis, adjunct faculty of the Asian Institute of Management, reviews the confidence accompanying an outside environmental organization's approval:

Third party certifications from reputable green bodies help provide consumers an assurance of the product's green integrity. There are worldwide eco-seals and country-issued seals. Whichever eco-seal is used, eco-marketers must ensure that the certifying body or organization is recognized and respected by environmentalists. With the seal comes the obligation to educate consumers in which criteria or measure was the seal extended.

There are several opportunities for CLL to become officially recognized by any number of non-partisan certification boards or environmental practitioners.

### Waterkeeper Alliance Celebrity Endorsement

The Waterkeeper Alliance (WA) was founded by Robert F. Kennedy Jr. in 1999

("Celebrity Ski Event") as a means of promoting clean and sustainable water practices ("Alec Baldwin"). It has been marked as the "world's fastest growing environmental movement, with member organizations throughout North and South America, Europe and Australia," ("Celebrity Ski Event") having "grown from 25 grassroots programs to a global network of 157 member programs" (*Fraser Riverkeeper*).

A major fundraising event for WA has been an annual social event put on by BNP, attracting environmentally-concerned celebrities and public donors alike. CLL and the Fairmont Banff Springs have been hosting the occasion for several years, attracting such high-profile guests as Dan Aykroyd, Alec Baldwin, Michael Douglas, Kelsey Grammer, Meg Ryan, Martin Sheen, William Shatner, John Travolta, Robin Williams, and Catherine Zeta-Jones ("Hollywood Stars").

The weekend event gathers a large amount of money for WA, having raised more than \$1 million USD in 2007 ("Celebrity Ski Event").

Because CLL has already proven itself as a worthy host of WA supporters, famous WA promoters and advocates may vouch for CLL's ecological stewardship; the use of Hollywood environmentalists will add further public attention to CLL.

There are several advantages to utilizing WA icons in marketing CLL as Green:

- Attracting celebrity endorsements will be far easier for CLL than for a company that the stars are not familiar with.
- Payment for celebrity services in Canadian ads can be inexpensive when compared to those in the United States; "endorsement fees [in Canada] are usually 10 percent of those paid in the United States as a result of...smaller market size" (Kotler and Cunningham 603).
- CLL will be included in the fashionable Hollywood Green

movement, creating the increasingly-trendy image of environmental responsibility held by celebrities and fans (Bergan).

### Public Education

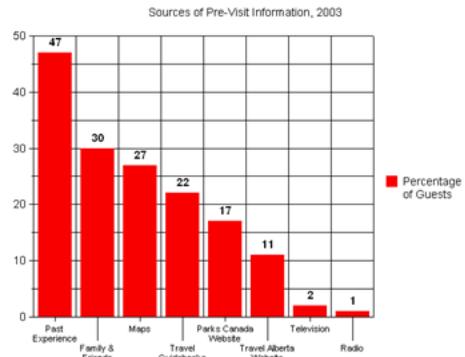
The simplest and most effective way to market to potential Green tourists is quite straightforward: get the word out to the public. Educating the consumer is the most surefire way to retain customers and attract Green consumers who remain wary about the Fairmont's environmental policies.

According to Jacquelyn Ottman, a pioneer in Green Consumer research, there are "four universal Green consumer needs: the need for information, the need for control, the need to make a difference, and the need to maintain current lifestyles" (Pettie). CLL can capitalize on these needs through one simple solution: informing their guests of the Fairmont's sustainability practices and environmental accolades.

Educating CLL visitors about its environmental practices is ultimately the most effective manner of gaining recognition for the Green Fairmont brand. In the tourism industry, customer reviews create an enormous impact on a company's success. *Marketing* magazine stresses client education as a main goal of all businesses, stating that "nothing beats word-of-mouth" (McElgunn). *Marketing's* polls illustrate that talking to friends and coworkers is the most influential factor in a person's vacation planning. To add further emphasis to this claim, a 2003 survey of Canadian Rockies National Park visitors sponsored by Parks Canada has found that non-partisan education makes up a great majority of park-goers' decisions to visit.

Visitors put great stock into the recommendations of their friends, relatives, and independent travel guidebooks ("2003 Survey"). This, paired with the travelers' positive past experiences, account for a majority of guests' decisions for visiting the

park. Therefore, it is incredibly important that CLL inform their guests of the hotel's dedication to the environment if it wishes to capitalize on the growing Green market.



### The Chateau Lake Louise's Message

Jackie Budgell, Environmental Manager at the Chateau Lake Louise, expressed the hotel's standpoint regarding Green marketing:

We have received allot [sic] of publicity from the opening of this new building and our monitoring commitments, but we do not necessarily "market" ourselves to be green. We do not put effort into our green programs solely to receive publicity, but more because we (the colleagues and management) value and respect where we live. In order to ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy Lake Louise the way we do, we understand that we must protect our environment as much as possible. Maybe we should market our efforts more, but for the most part I think that travellers [sic] are becoming more environmentally responsible and are choosing our property based on the efforts we've put forth.

The viewpoint of our marketing is not that "hey were [sic] green, come stay with us" it's more along the lines of "we value our environment and our location and we do whatever we can to protect it, you should too".

All in all, I would say that environmental conservation is not really a big part of a marketing strategy. People don't come to Lake Louise to hear about what Fairmont is doing, they come to Lake Louise to SEE Lake Louise. We just do what we can to make sure that Lake Louise remains beautiful and majestic so that people will still want to come year after year.

The word does get out through various press releases about the things that we're doing, and maybe in the future we will start to publicise [sic] our environmental initiatives a bit louder. The ultimate goal is to set the example so that other businesses will follow.

While admirable, this strategy does not address the fact that consumers want to know what kind of things the companies they support are doing to protect the environment. A 2007 survey discovered that "45% of respondents say that advertising is their favorite way to learn about a company's corporate responsibility and environmental policy, beating out methods that include Web sites and packaging" (Mahoney). There is a sense of personal satisfaction and environmental activism among consumers that recognize the purchases they've made are more ecologically friendly; this will in turn create sensations of gratification and pride when choosing to stay with Fairmont.

The message CLL must convey is that:

1. Environmentalism is a major concern of the Fairmont brand
2. Guests' comforts are not conceded; ecological consciousness does not compromise luxury

This may prove to be challenging, as many people still maintain the idea that Green products are of lesser quality. However, in promoting itself to the growing Green tourist market, CLL also has an opportunity to create a unique advertising campaign. This advantage may be profited from, as there is no competition from other hotels attempting to market to Green tourists. A balance must be formed in order to inform guests without jeopardizing the business of those who see Green as inferior.

#### Balancing Environmentalism and Lavishness

The balance between marketing environmentalism and marketing superior

quality together is a delicate procedure. While guests want to know what kind of Green applications CLL employs, their preconceived notions about Green initiatives may overrule rational judgment. An example of this would include the hotel's low flowing shower heads – though they save up to half the water consumed by regular shower heads and guests cannot detect a difference, some may groundlessly assume that these do not provide the same levels of comfort or cleansing ability as standard ones ("Low Flow Shower Heads").

The message CLL needs to transmit is that Green and luxury are a viable pair. For over a century the focus has been placed on upscale comfort, but the resort now has a chance to break ground in a new sector of hotel marketing: sustainable lavishness. Deliberately appealing to those with strong ecological principles will attract the growing percentage of Green-minded Canadian Rockies vacationers, and those not interested in the hotel's practices can disregard them.

The balance between environmentalism and luxury does not need to be an equal one. CLL has always, and will always, attract guests looking for a high caliber resort; though publicizing their Green actions will improve tourists' views of the Fairmont brand and increase public awareness of companies' responsibilities to the environment, Green marketing will not be the sole factor in guests' decisions to stay there. It may, however, be a factor when choosing one upscale resort over another.

#### Delivering the Information

CLL should employ its Green marketing campaign across several mediums. The graph illustrating BNP Sources of Pre-Visit Information (chapter 5.3.2) shows that television and radio have been relatively unsuccessful in attracting visitors to BNP; consequently, more travel-oriented advertising mediums should be used to reach a broader audience.

Because of the great popularity of booking hotels online, CLL should dedicate more effort endorsing its environmental stewardship via the internet. Currently, online lodging reservations generate nearly \$20 billion USD annually, and “trends show a 36% growth rate in online booking each year” (“Why You Should Have Online Booking”). FHR maintains a webpage offering information about its Green awards and official company policies regarding environmentalism ([http://www.fairmont.com/EN\\_FA/Environment](http://www.fairmont.com/EN_FA/Environment)), but data is limited; in order to receive any information more detailed than a colorfully uninformative brochure or company ecological program overview (presenting less than 200 words on the subject), a person must formally request a Fairmont Green Press Kit. This press kit does not offer specific examples of sustainability at each Fairmont site, but rather presents broad, generalized information about company policy and recent acclaim that FHR has won. CLL’s environmental website directs guests back to FHR.

Guests want CLL’s ecological information readily available. There needs to be a link from the CLL homepage directing interested visitors towards CLL’s environmental policies, practices, and plans; by simply making the data available, guests will be able to learn about CLL sustainability goals and make an informed choice to stay with an ecologically-conscious hotel.

The message that CLL is Green-friendly should also incorporate proven traveler-effective mediums. Travel guide books (e.g. *Frommer’s*, *Lonely Planet*, *Fodor’s*) provide a wealth of knowledge about an area’s popular tourist destinations, and detailed summaries of lodgings heavily influence a traveler’s decision to stay at one hotel over another. There is no mention of CLL being environmentally conscious in either *Frommer’s* Banff or *Fodor’s* Banff guides, but even a footnote citing CLL as Green can only aid in marketing the Chateau as progressive and sustainable.

Because of CLL’s elegance and high-status, it is highly unlikely that a tourist will decide to stay at the hotel based on fly-by advertising such as local newspapers or billboards; however, these methods do provide inexpensive information to thousands. CLL may not see high returns based on these strategies alone, but a seed of knowledge will be planted in those who see the advertisements, sparking further interest and investigation.

Marketing CLL as Green should also educate current guests. Delivering the actual information of CLL’s environmental practices to current visitors needn’t be more than a single laminated sheet of paper outlining the resort’s current sustainability programs. Prior to check-in, a brief summary of the Fairmont’s projects could be placed in each guest’s room, printed in his/her native language, with a note requesting that the copy be left for the next occupant. The guests are then able to peruse the information at their leisure, if so inclined. There is no preachy lecturing; the facts are presented and the visitor is invited to browse them as they wish. The introduction of CLL facts to current visitors will increase both public awareness and word-of-mouth reviews, generating positive impressions and repeat business.

### **Benefits of Green Marketing**

Several benefits will come out of marketing to the Green Tourist; CLL, BNP, and the tourists will all be rewarded because of the decision to market the hotel publicly as environmentally conscious.

The benefits reaped by CLL are obvious: “excellent public relations, a marketable competitive advantage, and higher profits” (Saunders and McGovern). The company will benefit as a result of its customers associating the Chateau with environmental stewardship – this will inevitably lead to higher traffic towards the resort because of its unique sense of social responsibility, which will warrant

more press coverage, garnering even more customer interest, and the cycle continues.

The tourists that enjoy CLL's environmental policies are rewarded handsomely: first and foremost, the hotel ensures that they will have an unspoiled trip to Lake Louise, both during the present trip and in future visits. The tourists are also given the chance to enjoy a more experiential vacation, learning the intricacies of the Lake Louise protectionism agenda; they are included as part of the solution, not the problem, of resort waste and the mismanagement of resources. The sense of pleasure and gratification will last well after the guests have returned home, and they will enjoy the fact that they supported an institution genuinely interested in preserving its natural surroundings instead of simply utilizing them for commercial gain.

Benefits enjoyed by BNP as a result of the introduction of marketing the CLL as Green are plentiful. The public will appreciate CLL's interest in BNP and in publicizing their practices; if a major company like the FHR can take an interest in BNP, surely the individual citizens and visitors of the Park will take some pride and ownership in their surroundings.

The Park also wins competitive battles: for one, the Chateau will be the sole upscale resort in the Canadian Rockies catering to the Green tourist, and will be in a position to pinch revenues from other destinations that do not tout their environmentalism. Within the Park, competition among other upscale resorts will force opponents to convert to more sustainable, eco-conscious practices, or else be left behind in the wake of surging conservationism. When the hotels compete over who has the most effective means of sustainability, the Park (along with everything in it) benefits.

### **Overcoming the Green Stereotype**

Educating the public that the Green stereotype has been eradicated may be challenging; however, with some clever marketing, CLL can shape travelers'

perceptions of comfortable sustainability. The stereotype of Green products being of lesser quality will be an unlikely concern, as CLL would be altering its marketing strategy and not actually changing its practices. CLL would be as luxurious as it was prior to the new branding, and people will expect all of the old, comfortable characteristics of the resort.

Some may be unconvinced that a large resort like CLL actually supports the environment. Only through a persistent stream of information and accreditation will people begin to accept the Fairmont as a company genuinely concerned with BNP's best interests in mind.

### **RECOMMENDATION for ACTION**

Reflecting on Julia Hales' "Triple Bottom Line" (economic viability, environmental soundness, and social responsibility), the Chateau Lake Louise has the opportunity to enhance its role as a world forerunner in sustainability-based tourism. The image of a high class resort has been cemented with a century of positive reviews, but now the hotel has the opportunity to become recognized as a leader in luxury environmentalism. Though the hotel's directors find little merit in creating an environmentally-based marketing campaign, it seems quite apparent that the benefits associated with CLL labeling itself as Green heavily outweigh the risks. If done properly, CLL has the capability of drawing a massive amount of identifiable support for its actions simply by promoting what it has already been doing for years.

### **GREEN MARKETING AND THE TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE**

Hales' Triple Bottom Line is a definitive measurement of how successful an environmentally-conscious advertising strategy can be. The three components – social responsibility, environmental soundness, and economic viability – offer both the consumer

and the company a gauge as to how effective the organization is running. By utilizing Hales' guide, the balance between profitability and sustainability is one that can be specifically determined, quantified, and evaluated.

### **Social Responsibility**

CLL can demonstrate its progressive attitudes towards conservationism by including the company's positions on the subject as a major advertising theme. It has been proven that consumers are eager to know how their spending is helping the environment. Many consumers are not just curious about the sustainability practices of the companies they choose to support. As the worldwide Green movement has grown in both popularity and accessibility, the push for corporate environmentalism has become demanded of by travelers. It has become such a mainstream phenomenon that businesses have become expected to uphold the strict ecological standards that their clients require, rather than simply offering them as an added bonus.

In terms of recognizable gains for CLL, public opinion will always carry a great deal of power. To repeat International Tourism Partnership Executive Director Lyndall De Marco's quote, "those able to meet the challenge of operating in a more sustainable way will avoid criticism, be looked upon with respect, gain customer loyalty and thereby compound their competitive advantage" (Endersby). It is clearly in the best interest of CLL to continue its environmental actions, and especially to highlight its relationship with the national park; positive media publications and public opinions will ultimately draw more profitable advantages, and relations between the hotel and the community will strengthen. Appealing to the emotions of the public by expressing the connection and respect CLL gives to BNP will undoubtedly gather additional acknowledgment and appreciation. This mutual partnership will foster improved viewpoints of CLL, which will inevitably

attract more visitors and enhance their individual stays at the hotel.

### **Environmental Soundness**

CLL has done well to ensure that it keeps its environmental footprint to a minimum. It has proven its dedication to preserving the integrity of Lake Louise and BNP, and has been awarded several accolades for its commitment to ecological safeguarding. The Park's environmental soundness that CLL has helped uphold cannot be measured quantifiably; however, the peace of mind and sense of pride with being both successful and responsible should not be overlooked.

Though helping the environment may be the "right" thing to do, CLL is ultimately a business. Altruism may be a popular secondary endeavor, but the hotel's top priority will always be its bottom line. A surefire way to guarantee that people visit – and return – to Lake Louise is to ensure that it is as beautiful tomorrow as it is today. As a result, the hotel plays an active role in keeping natural splendors unspoiled. CLL Environmental Manager Jackie Budgell put it best: "people...come to Lake Louise to SEE Lake Louise" (Budgell). What better incentive does CLL have to keep the environmental soundness of its backyard than attracting more guests?

### **Economic Viability**

Perhaps CLL's greatest motivator to portray itself as Green is to appeal to its visitors and potential visitors. People want to know that their purchases are helping (or at least not harming) the environment. That being said, it would be an exceedingly lucrative move on CLL's part to advertise themselves as a leader in Green luxury vacationing. The tendency to purchase environmentally responsible products and services is increasing rapidly with each year, and the hotel has been presented with the unique chance of blending conscientious sustainability with unsurpassed comfort.

Furthermore, because CLL has all of these environmental applications already in place, there would be no additional cost to add merit to its claims of ecological consciousness. They would simply reconstruct their advertising campaign to call attention to their already-in-place initiatives. There would be no lofty initial expenditures to make such a claim, either; CLL would merely express the actions and projects that have already been in place for years.

#### **ADDRESSING THE CHATEAU LAKE LOUISE'S RATIONALE**

There must be an apparent justification behind not changing CLL's marketing campaign. After reviewing Budgell's reasoning as to why CLL does not actively advertise its Green achievements, there appear to be two explicit explanations to forego marketing the hotel as environmentally responsible. There is further evidence to suggest two implicit, unofficial but understood positions CLL may hold in regard to its lack of Green marketing.

Budgell presents a moderately indifferent take on CLL's lack of environmental advertising. She asserts that the hotel "[does] not put effort into our green programs solely to receive publicity, but more because we (the colleagues and management) value and respect where we live. In order to ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy Lake Louise the way we do, we understand that we must protect our environment as much as possible." Budgell also appears to believe that the majority of people are already aware of CLL's environmental actions and therefore do not need to reinforce them. "Maybe we should market our efforts more, but for the most part I think that travellers [sic] are becoming more environmentally responsible and are choosing our property based on the efforts we've put forth" (Budgell).

Along with the two expressed rationales for not broadcasting their actions, CLL may be acting in accordance with two common

reasons many companies choose not to market themselves as environmental activists. The first of which is the "empty promise" phenomenon, which asserts that consumers believe that Green products must be lacking in quality in order to reach the strict qualifications of being labeled ecologically friendly. CLL may also be acting in accordance with the old axiom "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." The Chateau Lake Louise is an extremely successful hotel, and if the marketing department has created such a profitable product without stating their environmental accolades already, then why start now?

#### **VALIDITY OF THE CHATEAU LAKE LOUISE'S REASONING**

Each of the previous arguments, though sincere, still leaves challenges that have not yet been met by CLL's marketing department. As far as the first point of contention is concerned, CLL's respect for its surroundings and humanitarian attitude are respectable; however, involving the public in the hotel's affairs would only add to the excitement for this increasingly popular cause. The hotel asserts that it is merely opting to protect the environment for its purist benefits and to preserve the area's attractiveness. This may certainly be an underlying principle, but surely they identify more financially-based incentives for maintaining sustainability. It may seem unfair to play with the emotions of the consumer, but from a purely dollars and cents inspection, it is unmistakably in the hotel's best interest to guard their major attraction as best they can.

Budgell's secondary argument, that the consumer has previous knowledge of CLL's environmental activity, may be somewhat accurate. The hotel offers brochures that present their list of sustainability practices and ecological awards in its main lobby. However, this does not address the vacationers who remain uninformed of CLL's initiatives. Those searching the hotel's environmental policies

online must navigate through pages of FHR policy and procedure before finding the site regarding sustainability. If CLL does not widely publicize their initiatives, then those unfamiliar with the hotel's projects remain in the dark.

The two tacit claims against announcing CLL environmentalism are very common concerns of many corporations, but their credibility may also be challenged. The "empty promise" phenomenon of the 1990s has been a decreasingly valid argument. It was once true that being Green would usually create a sensation of inferior quality among consumers, but that trend has been buried with the advancement in recent technologies. It is been proven that shoppers who once contradicted themselves when the time came to make their purchases are now more genuine when they claim to be excited about buying Green. The dissolving of the "empty promise" phenomenon has not been wholly realized or believed by manufacturers or industries, which still sense some hesitation when marketing themselves as eco-friendly. While a certain number of consumers may still fall prey to the phenomenon, it is a significantly reduced percentage of those from the past. Companies like FHR must recognize the shift in consumer attitudes and trust that their Green products may be even more sought after than more conventional goods.

The final claim CLL may hold, that they have been doing fine without environmental marketing, is accurate. FHR certainly realizes that an attempt to improve on a system that already works is pointless and may even be detrimental. However, the prospect of exceeding customer expectations must be reason enough to include environmentalism within CLL's marketing design. Consider the statistics compiled in regard to the profitability of the Green tourist demographic from 2.2.3. If nearly 40% of British travelers would pay 5% more for a room that offered ethical guarantees (MORI), CLL could increase its annual returns by well over \$200,000.

CLL Room Price Range: \$299 - \$1299  
(Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise  
Green Partnership Program)

Average Double Occupancy Room Price  
[(High Season + Low Season) / 2]:  
\$400

Average Canadian Hotel Occupancy Rate,  
2008: 65.7% ("2008 National Market  
Report")

$(\$400 / \text{night}) \times (497 \text{ available rooms}) \times (365 \text{ days}) \times (0.657\% \text{ occupancy}) = \$4,767,323.4$

$\$4,767,323.4 \times (1.05\% \text{ price increase}) = \$5,005,689.57$

Difference when 0.05% price increase applied:  
\$238,366.57

Such a tremendous financial gain cannot be overlooked; it is undoubtedly in the hotel's best fiscal interests to consider marketing their Green achievements to an openly excited and willing consumer base. There will be marketing costs involved, but these will be in keeping with the current marketing budget. Rather than increase the amount of advertising, CLL would simply shift some of its attention to cover its Green initiatives; the supplementary profits could be used however the company sees fit.

#### **TARGET MARKET AUDIENCE**

In terms of marketing strategy, the question might now be "how", but rather "whom". It could be suggested that current or past guests of CLL have familiarized themselves with the brand and would be unwilling or unable to reshape their opinions of the hotel based on a new advertising campaign. Those who have already been enticed to stay at CLL have already made up their minds about the brand and, from a business standpoint, do not need further convincing as to why they should travel to the hotel. However, those considering staying at

CLL who may be unaware of the hotel's efforts would be receptive to information regarding the company's emphasis on environmental awareness. Potential guests might not know enough to assume anything at all about the Greenness of CLL. This would provide the company with the opportunity to inform its guests about their Green program in a neutral setting, thereby allowing the customer to make their own assessments about the company without feeling like the information is being forced upon them. This encourages additional interaction between the company and its client, which will most certainly allow for dialogue and eventual compromising between the two parties.

### CONCLUSION

When all the information is displayed, the rewards heavily outweigh any risks the Chateau Lake Louise might face in shifting their marketing strategy to incorporate their Green projects. By incorporating their environmental concerns into a new marketing strategy, CLL will appeal to ecologically-conscious travelers, improve environmental awareness, force competing hotels to increase their sustainability practices, and boost public relations with Banff National Park and Park visitors. The answer to our question, can the Chateau Lake Louise be represented as both lavish *and* environmentally responsible, seems very plausible.

### AUTHOR'S NOTE

When I was first constructing this paper during the summer of 2008, very little information was available as to the Green facilities the Chateau Lake Louise had in place. There was a generic Fairmont Hotels and Resorts tri-fold brochure outlining the basic principles that the company supported. It advertised the Eco-Meet program, but apart from that it was exceptionally difficult to track down any resources that identified the hotel's individual environmental activities. Since then, the Chateau Lake Louise has published a great deal of reports, statistics, and facts regarding their Green policies. A fully encompassing webpage, complete with several links to relevant material, is now easily accessible. Among noting

the company's guiding principles towards ecological responsibility, it also highlights Fairmont's developing Green Partnership Program (the overarching standard all Fairmont properties support), as well as the Chateau Lake Louise's environmental policy, programs and initiatives, corporate partnerships and affiliations, awards, endorsements, and steps the hotel is taking towards promoting increased sustainability in the future. This information can all be found at the following address:

[http://www.fairmont.com/EN\\_FA/AboutFairmont/environment/GreenPartnershipProgram/Index.htm](http://www.fairmont.com/EN_FA/AboutFairmont/environment/GreenPartnershipProgram/Index.htm)

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