

SUCCESS STORY

Boutiquehotel Stadthalle

Awarded the EU Ecolabel for tourist accommodations in 2007

Location: HQ – Vienna, Austria

Service advertised: throughout Europe

Competent Body with which application was made: Austrian CB

Interviewee: Claudia Plot – Director



ABOUT



- ★ In 2002, Michaela Reitterer renovated the building that would become the world's first city hotel with a zero energy balance in 2009. Depending on the weather, the 130 m² solar installation supplies enough electricity and energy to power the hotel and heat the facility's water. The green vines and lavender garden intertwined on the building's walls and roof insulate the hotel while creating an aesthetically pleasing view.
- ★ During the harvest season, lavender is collected to create sachets, and homemade apricot jam from the region of Wachau is distributed to guests. Additionally, the water well in the garden assists in powering the hotel's flushing toilets and irrigates the hotel's garden. This haven for eco-tourists has won numerous sustainability awards and was recently crowned 2013's "Most Popular Hotel in Austria" by HolidayCheck.

WHY EU ECOLABEL?



- ★ "After obtaining the Austrian Ecolabel, our Competent Body suggested that we apply for the EU Ecolabel to reap the advantages of both labels. We thought it was an excellent idea to spread our sustainability message throughout the entire European continent via this certification".

BENEFITS



- ★ "With the adoption of the EU Ecolabel, we began to build an international reputation as a sustainable and trusted hotel. This reputation steadily solidified as an increasing number of suppliers approached us with their eco-friendly products, ready to become partners. Thanks to this, our market expanded to the point where we now welcome international eco-friendly travellers on a regular basis".

APPLICATION PROCESS



- ★ "Having already applied for the Austrian Ecolabel, we were better prepared to smoothly go through the EU Ecolabel application process. Furthermore, it was helpful that a business partner and loyal guest stood alongside us to motivate our team through the EU Ecolabel application process. His support was beneficial, especially since he was familiar with the EU Ecolabel scheme".

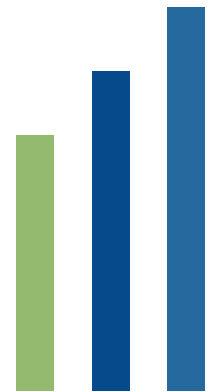
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AT/25/020

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Michaela Reitterer, owner of Boutiquehotel Stadthalle, poses next to her hotel's solar panels on the lavender-covered rooftop.



CHALLENGES

- ★ During the application process:
 - ★ "The information available on the EU Ecolabel website was rather basic in 2007, therefore it was difficult to obtain quick information at first".
- ★ After being awarded the EU Ecolabel:
 - ★ "Some guests are not always aware about the difference between ecolabels and organic certifications, which has sometimes led to confusion. We have had to make sure that these types of misconceptions do not lead to wrong expectations among guests. Nevertheless, we actually have experienced more advantages than challenges".
- ★ How these challenges were overcome:
 - ★ "We appreciated receiving the great deal of indirect support once we were awarded the EU Ecolabel, especially from (climate-related) authorities. We eventually were treated and regarded as role models, which meant a lot of press coverage; the level of publicity that we obtained justified our efforts in obtaining the EU Ecolabel".

MARKETING

- ★ "Our marketing efforts stem from our website (www.hotelstadthalle.at/en) and extend through our social media platforms and our Green Guest Club. This club is a loyalty programme which allows our regular guests to collect "Green Points" and pay a range of hotel services with them. To appeal to the international eco-tourist, we translated our website into seven different languages (German, English, French, Italian, Spanish, Hungarian and Czech).
- ★ Additionally, since our hotel has won various sustainability and eco-tourism awards, past and potential guests can rest assured that we always strive to live up to our hotel's environmental mission and positive customer satisfaction reviews.
- ★ Satisfied guests have also greatly facilitated our outreach, as word of mouth has spread positive news about our hotel".



ADVICE

- ★ "If you believe in the environment and want to contribute to a greener planet, you should apply for the EU Ecolabel. The certification goes hand-in-hand with higher customer satisfaction. Since being awarded the EU Ecolabel, we receive positive feedback from our clients who express their appreciation for our green performance".
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