



Preferred Hotel Group's 2021 Corporate Travel Sustainability Initiatives & Insights

As the world reopens and business travel resumes, there has been a significant increase in requests from corporate travel buyers for information on hotels' sustainability programming and commitments.

Based on a recent survey conducted with corporate travel buyers across various global markets and other third-party companies such as Booking.com and Sabre, Preferred Hotel Group's corporate sales team has identified a shift in behavior, whereby travel buyers are now focusing much more on sustainability in business travel, a trend that is reflected in their RFP programs and overall interest in what hotels are doing to further their sustainability impact.

A company's current progress along its own sustainability journey will impact what level of detail they request from hotel suppliers with regards to that area. The most common questions from buyers range from carbon footprint impact to how a hotel reduces its food waste to corporate social responsibility practices, including diversity, modern slavery, and anti-human trafficking efforts.

The Preferred Hotel Group team has taken the opportunity to gather key industry data, and we are pleased to share insights, trends, and statistics on the importance of sustainability in the corporate travel space with all of our member hotels across all of our brands globally.

Current Look at Corporate Travel Sustainability Trends

Following a survey of 30,000 people in 30 countries, Booking.com's [Sustainable Travel Report 2021](#) reported that 46% of respondents said the pandemic has made them want to travel more sustainably in the future. Top concerns about travel include excess waste such as single-use plastics (43%), threats to local wildlife and natural habitats (38%), overcrowding popular destinations (34%), and carbon dioxide emissions (22%).

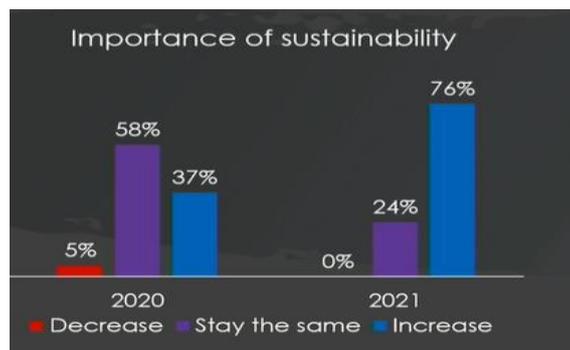
Based on a survey of more than 400 global travel buyers that Preferred Hotels & Resorts conducted in March 2021, sustainability and corporate social responsibility was mentioned as one of the top three goals for clients' 2021 /2022 hotel programs. Further, when asked how important sustainability was for their company moving forward, nearly 80% of respondents indicated that it was important or very important. The following comments were submitted by travel managers in regards to the types of sustainability initiatives they are looking for from hotels and how sustainability helps drive buying decisions:

- *"Green" hotels are marked especially in our booking tools.*
- *There is a major push for staff to stay in "green hotels." We are looking for hotels to meet at least one of the well-known sustainability certifications, and a list of certifications will be provided on the RFP.*
- *For all hotels, I would like to see a continued recycling program and elimination of any unnecessary use such as straws, plastic, etc, as well as a guest option for linen/towel change and clear, in-room placards to showcase the hotel's overall sustainability efforts.*
- *We are looking for hotels that show creativity in obtaining sustainability goals either through actual reduction of carbon output or cancelling efforts.*
- *As part of our procurement strategy, we want to see that a minimum of 75% of vendors have science-based targets. Therefore, from a lodging perspective, we will be focusing on bringing greener hotels to our program, working with chains on measures to reduce our*

carbon footprint, reduce on-property services such as linen changes, removal of plastic bottles, and focusing on water waste and food waste.

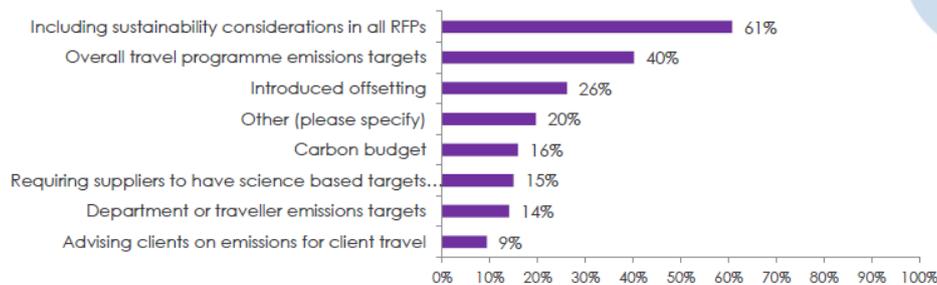
- We are looking for standard metrics (e.g., Hotel Carbon Measurement Initiative (HCMI), which can be calculated at no cost).
- Looking for hotels to provide incentivized opportunities to our travelers that will reduce our carbon footprint.

The Institute of Travel Managers in the United Kingdom marked that the importance of sustainability within corporate travel had increased to 75% in 2021 compared to 2020.



Further to this statistic, travel buyers shared with ITM their key sustainability initiatives that they had implemented over the last year.

Which of these initiatives have you/your team implemented?
(Respondent was able to tick more than one option)



Source: ITM Insights and Priorities for 2021 and beyond/2021 Buyer Member Survey Results

The survey reported three key additional findings:

- Thirty-six percent of companies had set a science-based target against emissions, and 64% said that suppliers will be at some advantage in securing their business if they also have science-based targets in place. Science-based targets are greenhouse gas reduction targets to reduce an organization's emissions aligned with climate science and the Paris Agreement goal to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.
- Forty-eight percent of respondents stated that they ask specific questions that address diversity and inclusion requirements in their RFP, and 52% consider suppliers based upon their diversity and inclusion policies and practices.
- Forty-four percent of surveyed travel buyers reported having science-based sustainability targets committing to reduce carbon emissions in the following decades.

Travel Management Company (TMC) Insights

Many TMC partners have focused on creating their own sustainability policies internally and are now focused on what they can offer clients, while ensuring hotel suppliers are also engaged in sustainability. Preferred Hotel Group looked at its key global TMC partners and their internal and client-facing sustainability initiatives. Here are a few key findings:

Amex GBT

In 2020, GBT articulated its environmental strategy with three key targets on sustainability:

- Establish GBT as the leading marketplace for green business travel providing the practices, tools, and supplier relationships for clients to put sustainability at the heart of their travel programs.
- Lead by example, reducing operational emissions by 100% with renewable energy and achieving carbon neutrality by 2025.
- Work with clients and partners across the travel ecosystem to drive aviation towards net zero carbon by 2050.

GBT is looking at continually covering topics including sustainability in upcoming Partnership Exchange meetings, Supplier Insights newsletters, Preferred Supplier Insights calls, and future business reviews. For its 2022 consortia program, GBT will ask all hotels for mandatory responses to the standardized GBTA corporate socially responsible RFP module fields in Cvent.

CWT

CWT is deeply committed to sustainability and corporate social responsibility, which they call [Responsible Business](#). Thanks to its continuous improvement, CWT was rated Platinum by EcoVadis, placing CWT in the top 1% of all companies surveyed.

Flight Centre

Flight Centre will launch a new carbon offsetting program in partnership with sustainability consultancy South Pole and plans to offset all global staff travel retroactive to 2019. According to the company, the program will enable Flight Centre to mitigate its carbon emissions generated by their corporate travel and meet some sustainability targets.

BCD Travel

BCD Travel recently published its [2021 Sustainability Report](#), which summarizes the company's activities, achievements, and progress internally for the past two years, aligns with the 10 principles of the United Nations Global Compact and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and has been prepared in accordance with the Global Standards for Sustainability Reporting (GRI). Further, BCD Travel reported that 43% of its travel buyers use sustainability related questions in RFPs, with another 45% looking to implement them. Yet, the number of supplier partners with sustainable certifications is still very low at 18%. Thirty-five percent of BCD Travel's clients currently partake in a carbon emissions offset, with 47% looking to implement this in the future. Forty-four percent of travel buyers report having science-based sustainability targets committing to reduce carbon emissions in the following decades.

Top Requirements from Corporate Clients

Earlier this year, the Preferred Hotel Group corporate sales team researched the top volume corporate accounts for Preferred Hotels & Resorts, which included looking at questions and requirements regarding sustainability via their annual RFPs. Findings showed that 56% of accounts asked detailed questions through custom or user-defined questions, 16% of them had mandated that hotels complete the Environmental Impact module, and 28% of them did not ask any questions related to sustainability. Here are the most common RFP questions related to sustainability asked by these corporate accounts:

- Is the hotel complying with the environmental laws and regulations?
- Is there a plan / policy / system for sustainability efforts in Place?
- Who is the contact for sustainability efforts within your organization?
- Does the hotel offer employee training on the hotel's sustainability program?
- Does the hotel engage with suppliers to apprise the sustainability of those goods and services?
- Is the hotel certified by a globally recognized sustainable certification program? If yes, please name all sustainable certification programs in which you participate.
- Does your sustainable certification include a third-party audit?
- Does your hotel collect sustainability data?
- Is your program attached to measurable KPIs?
- Key focus areas: resource efficiency, waste minimization, and pollution/emissions reduction
- Do you incentivize travelers to reduce carbon footprint or donate to a charity to offset a property/chain's carbon footprint?

A few esteemed clients had also requested additional information and asked for questionnaire completion outside of the Cvent RFP process, with examples as follows:

EY

In January 2021, EY announced an ambition to be carbon negative in 2021 by setting targets to significantly reduce its absolute emissions and removing and offsetting more carbon than it emits. EY set out the seven key components of its plans to not only become carbon negative but also reduce total emissions by 40% - consistent with a science-based target - and achieve net zero in 2025. EY is now interested to know if its suppliers are also currently observing science-based targets (SBTs) or if they are looking to adopt this standard in the future. EY's custom questions for hotels were 1) Have you already adopted SBTs?, and 2) If not, when does your organization plan on adopting SBTs?

Deloitte

Deloitte has been asking suppliers to take reasonable steps to minimize emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) and encouraging them to both track GHG emissions and set science-based GHG reduction goals, aligned with the Paris Agreement. In September 2020, Deloitte set its own GHG reduction goals aligned with science and validated by the *science-based targets* initiative.

"A very important part of our goals focuses on you, our supplier. We committed to having two thirds of our suppliers set science-based emission reduction targets by 2025. We are starting our engagement process with the ask for you to report your emissions and actions to address climate change to CDP, an independent, third-party who provides a platform for the disclosure process." ~ Brian Nichols, Deputy Chief Procurement Officer, Deloitte Global



Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

The foundation has been gathering information from suppliers on diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) and sustainability, and questions it asks hotels include, but are not limited to, the availability of the initiatives, data capturing and reporting, and sourcing with DEI and sustainability in mind.

Morgan Stanley

As part of Morgan Stanley's sustainability initiative, its Sustainable Sourcing Team has started a new process of evaluating the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices of its core suppliers, as well as all participating suppliers in the competitive bidding process. Morgan Stanley is requiring partner hotels to complete and answer the ESG RFI questionnaire, comprised of nearly 50 questions, prior to the Global Hotel RFP Cycle.

Boston Consulting Group (BCG)

As part of BCG's commitment to sustainability, hotels accepted into its preferred program must answer questions related to their CSR commitments. Questions include:

- Is the hotel certified by a globally recognized sustainable certification program?
- Does your sustainable certification include a third-party audit?
- Does the hotel measure carbon per room night?
- Does the hotel measure water per room night?
- Does the hotel measure energy intensity?
- Does the hotel measure waste diversion rate?
- Does the hotel have its own environmental or corporate social responsibility program?

Salesforce

Salesforce is publicly committed to ensuring that its priority suppliers set science-based greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets by 2024, encouraging them to align those targets with the principles established by the [Science Based Targets Initiative](#), but has not made validation of these initiatives a requirement, yet. Salesforce expects its suppliers to complete a corporate social responsibility assessment annually through the EcoVadis platform and to show continuous improvement over time, aiming for a silver medal or better and overall score of 54 or higher. If a contract is awarded, the supplier's EcoVadis scorecard and progress update may be considered during business reviews.

Salesforce's work toward a greener hotel program is part of larger, companywide ambitions to achieve net-zero growth. Salesforce recently told all suppliers – including hotels – that climate change topics would appear in all future procurement contracts. There are terms in this legal document called 'climate breach' and 'climate mediation fee,' requiring suppliers to set science-based targets, disclose greenhouse gas emissions, and deliver all products on a carbon-neutral basis – or pay. It is a first-of-its-kind contractual move to make climate action a front-and-center focus.



Resources and Tips for Hotels

As Preferred Hotel Group's research has shown, sustainability has a prominent place in the corporate travel world's buying decision process and will continue to be an important part of many corporate RFPs now and in the future.

None of our corporate accounts currently exclude properties for not having sustainability efforts in place or getting top scores on their data reporting; rather corporate travel managers are highlighting those that do via online booking tools. Companies are looking to recategorize their preferences in the tool, so that they can truly say that the most preferred hotels are preferred for other reasons (beyond rate and location), and also because they meet the company's sustainability standards. This may also evolve over time, where hotels will be held accountable, and one of the RFP acceptance criteria may be based on sustainability data reporting.

For your hotel to be best prepared and educated, we have pulled together the following resources specifically pertaining to sustainability in corporate travel, as well as overall sustainability resources.

Cvent Property Profile Updates - Environmental Impact

Cvent Transient (formerly Lanyon) is the primary shop window of your hotel for travel managers, who will use the tool to export most of the details they need on your hotel. Therefore, it is very important that the Property Profile in Cvent is regularly updated, with all fields completed.

In 2021, Cvent introduced 47 standardized questions concerning sustainability and diversity practices and protocols. These questions are based on extensive feedback from travel management companies, following dialogues with their corporate clients and hotel suppliers. Hotels can easily answer these questions in Cvent, and those responses will be made available to buyer organizations when they access their reporting modules to evaluate the sustainability and diversity practices and protocols of various properties during the RFP process.

Important note: these questions will not be included in the RFP, and the GBTA format will remain the same. Instead, these questions will be included as a supplement to the RFP process and will be accessible by corporations in their reporting tool.

You will be able to find the new Supplemental Sustainability and Diversity Questions module in your profile under "Custom Categories."

Preferred HOTELS & RESORTS | Welcome Lenora - Lenora Minasian | Go to Supply Portal | User Options | Logout | cvent

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT | ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT | REPORTS | PRODUCT INFORMATION | SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION

Property Profile

Return to Property Management Home | Preview Channel: Select a QDS | RFP fields only | Customize View: RFP fields only

Property: (PH) Test 3 - TEST PROPERTY WEST, Newport Beach, CA, US | Select Another Property

The icon next to the category name indicates the category is incomplete (status is In Progress). Please update the category(s) and set the status to Approved.

General Profile	Airports	Blackouts/Fair Dates	Block Rooms	Communications	Competitor/Nearby Properties	Contacts	Descriptions
Dining Options	Distribution Systems	Environmental Impact	Facilities	Location	Meeting Rooms	MultiMedia	Policies
Rate General Information	Recreation	Rooms	Safety & Accessibility	Services & Amenities	Taxes, Fees & Payments	Custom Categories	

Custom Categories

Refresh Status

Custom 1	Rate/Fairline	Sustainability and Diversity
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Sustainability and Diversity

Seq	Prompt	Accepted	
1	2	Does your hotel and/or parent company have Sustainability and/or Social Impact goals/strategy?	<input type="text"/>
2	2	Please provides comments or a link to any publicly communicated sustainability or social impact goals/strategy.	<input type="text" value="(255)"/>
3	2	Does the hotel store all of its chemical's Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) in one place?	<input type="text"/>
4	2	Do you have initiative in place to reduce daily guest room cleaning and bedsheets/towel change?	<input type="text"/>
5	2	Has your hotel taken steps to reduce single-use plastics, such as removing plastic straws (except upon request for guests with disabilities), stirrers and cotton buds?	<input type="text"/>
6	2	If yes, please provide detail as to the steps you have taken to reduce single use plastics?	<input type="text" value="(255)"/>
7	?	Does your hotel offer large-format bath amenities?	<input type="text"/>

Additionally, please ensure that your Cvent *Environmental Impact* module, located on your hotel profile set up, is also kept up to date:

General Profile	Airports	Blackouts/Fair Dates	Block Rooms	Communications	Competitor/Nearby Properties	Contacts
Dining Options	Distribution Systems	Environmental Impact	Facilities	Location	Meeting Rooms	MultiMedia
Rate General Information	Recreation	Rooms	Safety & Accessibility	Services & Amenities	Taxes, Fees & Payments	Custom Categories

Environmental Impact

Last updated by admphr1

Hotel Carbon Index	Carbon Index Item	Amount	Unit of Measure	Time Period (in months)
Room Night Carbon Factor		<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/> lbs <input type="radio"/> kgs	<input type="text"/>
Meeting & Event Carbon Factor		<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/> lbs <input type="radio"/> kgs	<input type="text"/>
Room Night Water Usage		<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/> gal <input type="radio"/> liters	<input type="text"/>
Waste Diversion Rate		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>

Environmental Programs

Is your hotel certified by a globally recognized "sustainable" certification program? Y N

Please provide your top five (5) environmental programs (e.g. carbon offset) that are visible and actively communicated to the guests, shareholders, vendors and the public.

Does your sustainable certification include a third party audit? Y N

Would you be willing to provide a copy of your certification upon request? Y N

Does your property have an active water conservation program in place such as a linen reuse option to multiple night guests and/or water conservation fixtures? Y N

Does your property have an active recycling program in place? Y N

Does your property have its own environmental or Corporate Social Responsibility program? Y N

If yes, please explain (100 characters max)

Please name all sustainable certification programs you participate in. Examples: Global Sustainable Tourism Council-recognized programs or LEED programs.

Is your property utilizing environmentally responsible cleaners throughout the property? (MSDS Health Hazard Rating 1 or less) Y N

Does your property have an environmental procurement policy for its suppliers? Y N

Does your property measure the impact of its non carbon emitting environmental measures, for example sheet and towel change programs? If yes, provide additional details (150 characters max): Y N

If yes, please explain (150 characters max)

Power Sources and Usage

Energy Intensity	Amount	Unit of Measure	Time Period (in months)
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/> BTU/sq ft <input type="radio"/> MJ/sq meter	<input type="text"/>

For more information, please contact ConsortiaSales@PreferredHotels.com.

Hotel Carbon Measurement Initiative (HCMI)

HCMI is a ground-breaking initiative to unite hotel industry efforts to calculate and communicate carbon impacts by agreeing on a standardized methodology and metrics. A joint Carbon Measurement Working Group, consisting of representatives from the Alliance and WTTC's hotel members, was established in May 2011. In partnership with advisor KPMG, the Working Group developed this methodology to measure greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from individual hotels on a meeting room and guest room basis. HCMI data has been requested by quite a few corporate travel buyers from hotel suppliers as part of their hotel evaluation. Please find further resources including the Methodology v1.2, a sample template of the HCMI tool, and the HCMI tool in Excel format here:

- [HCMI Methodology](#)
- [HCMI Tool](#)
- [HCMI Tool - Example](#)

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals or Global Goals are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all." The SDGs were set up in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and are intended to be achieved by the year 2030. Hotels can use these goals as a great guidance tool to work towards making their business more sustainable. [View all of the goals online here.](#)

Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)

The GSTC manages global standards for sustainable travel and tourism, and acts as the international accreditation body for sustainable tourism certification. The GSTC offers industry criteria and suggested indicators for hotels, which are available in the public domain free of charge for non-commercial use. They were created to help the industry come to a common understanding of sustainable tourism and are the minimum that a hotel business should aspire to reach.

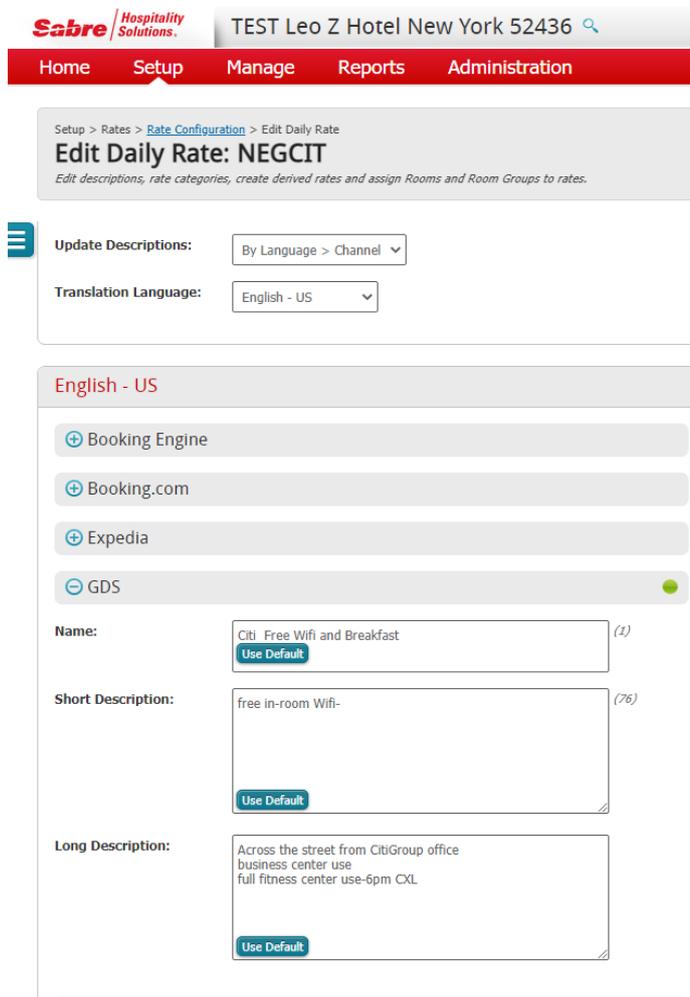
Additionally, the GSTC also offers information, resources, and various courses such as the GSTC Sustainable Tourism Training Program, which teaches the breadth of sustainable travel and tourism components and offers practical insights and effective steps to help hotels improve their sustainability practices. For more, please visit www.GSTCouncil.org.

SynXis

If your property has a robust sustainability program in place and/or a LEED certified (or any other certifications), you may promote that in the GDS and OBT by leveraging existing fields in SynXis.

Rate Name and Descriptions

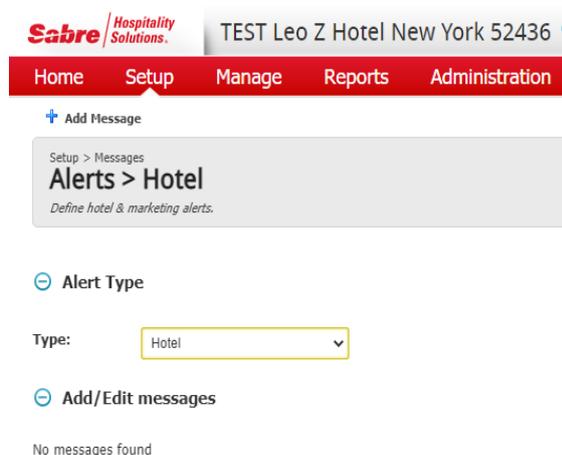
A great way to “market” your focus on sustainability focus to corporate clients is to optimize the corporate rate names and descriptions in SynXis based on each account’s requirements. This would be rate specific and the most powerful space, especially if LEED/GREEN is important to a company and is a line item in the RFP. One example, keeping in mind the 30-character limit, would be along the lines of: “Citi Free Wi-Fi & Brfst LEED.” Further, more details can be added to the short and long descriptions.



The screenshot shows the Sabre Hospitality Solutions interface for 'TEST Leo Z Hotel New York 52436'. The navigation menu includes Home, Setup, Manage, Reports, and Administration. The current page is 'Setup > Rates > Rate Configuration > Edit Daily Rate'. The title is 'Edit Daily Rate: NEGCIT' with a subtitle 'Edit descriptions, rate categories, create derived rates and assign Rooms and Room Groups to rates.' The 'Update Descriptions' section shows 'By Language > Channel' and 'Translation Language: English - US'. Under 'English - US', there are expandable sections for Booking Engine, Booking.com, Expedia, and GDS. The 'Name' field contains 'Citi Free Wifi and Breakfast' with a 'Use Default' button. The 'Short Description' field contains 'free in-room Wifi-' with a 'Use Default' button. The 'Long Description' field contains 'Across the street from CitiGroup office business center use full fitness center use-6pm CXL' with a 'Use Default' button.

Alerts Messages

A short message can also be added under Hotel Alerts. In the dropdown, there is also an option for MARKETING alerts. Please note that these messages do not display everywhere, and there is no control of display. Hotel Alert is visible in Voice, Booking Engine, and CRS. Marketing Alerts can be set to be rate specific as well.



The screenshot shows the Sabre Hospitality Solutions interface for 'TEST Leo Z Hotel New York 52436'. The navigation menu includes Home, Setup, Manage, Reports, and Administration. The current page is 'Setup > Messages' with the title 'Alerts > Hotel' and subtitle 'Define hotel & marketing alerts.' There is an 'Add Message' button. The 'Alert Type' section shows 'Type: Hotel' with a dropdown arrow. Below it is an 'Add/Edit messages' section with the text 'No messages found'.



Preferred's Commitment to Help Hotels Go Beyond Green

If you are interested in having Beyond Green Travel provide individualized consultancy services to support future sustainability aspirations, please reach out to Costas or your Regional Director.

Future Outlook

While sustainability has always been an important topic over the years, it has now become even more prevalent and has taken on a renewed and timely significance. Its importance has been partly fueled by developments related to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the recently declared climate emergency, leading to an increased urgency for tangible action by companies and governments.

Companies are not just thinking of essential travel, but also “purposeful travel.” Now is the time for the travel industry to move forward together for a greener, better future.

We hope that you find the information in this document useful, both in better understanding and meeting Corporate Travel Buyers' requirements, and in gaining additional resources to help meet your individual property's sustainable efforts and goals.