

Campus Conservation Nationals 2015 Case Study

Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

1. SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS

Public, 4 year programs, 27,823 students

2. AUTHOR AFFILIATION

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3. COMPETITION TYPE & DATES

Carleton decided to focus on electricity only for the first year, with the competition held in March 2015. The timing of the competition was decided to ensure that there wasn't a clash with exams and so that residents were still active on campus.

4. OVERVIEW

The Project Rethink competition increased awareness in residence of how to live a more sustainable lifestyle as a student. Savings were achieved in electricity (as indicated below) and there was an increased campus engagement surrounding sustainability. All 9 residence buildings and the 3,617 who live in residence participated in Project Rethink. There were a total of 22 students directly involved with project rethink and two staff members. The highlights of Project Rethink were the three main events hosted during the three-week period. The first week of the competition we hosted a 'No Impact Week' where students were given fluorescent light bulbs and a variety of engaging events were held in the residence commons area. The second event was the Lights Out Coffee House that brought over 30 students together to listen to music, watch improv comedy and listen to sustainable talks, including one from Ecology Ottawa. The Third event was a glow in the dark dance in the student lounge, called Black Light Green Light, it brought students together to celebrate the end of the competition with a fun dance. These events increased residence engagement around sustainability.

5. GOALS

This was the first time Carleton participated in the CCN program and so the focus of our goals were to decrease electricity consumption and to increase general campus engagement around sustainability.



6. RESULTS

Overall % reduction: 7.2%	Average CCN % reduction (electricity): 2.9%
Electricity saved (kWh): 35,781	
Equivalent \$: \$3,896.15	
Equivalent lbs CO2: 17,353.94	

7. GROUP COMPETITION

Competition name: Project ReThink
Participating schools: Carleton University

8. PLANNING

Competition Organizing Team

Project Green, Carleton University Students for the Environment (CUSE) and the Sustainability Office were the groups involved in the organization of Project Rethink. Project Green is an environmental group for students in residence many coming from the sustainability floor. Project Green ran the No Impact Week and the Black Light, Green Night dance. CUSE ran the Lights Out Coffee House; the members of this group were not residence students.

Team Members:

Shannon Prendergast, Peter Stranberg, Lovely Juson (poster design), Sarah Francisca, Raymond Tang (engagement), Sung Hwang (helped with building dashboard) , Emtinan Salah, Ayaan Nadeem, Daniel Boswell-Patterson, Cameron Wales (part of planning and performed at the Lights out Coffee House) , Sharan Nayak, Justin Ramkarren, Jenny Andrews (Poster design), Beth White (Head organizer through residence).

Key Supporters

Vasundhara Saravade, Hannah Rolston, Veronica Araujo and Justine Jones helped organize the Lights out Coffee House as members of Carleton University Students for the Environment and Nora Duguid provided a video report about the Lights out Coffee House that has been posted on Youtube.

Timeline

Sustainability Office comes up with the idea passes it onto residence
Student Action Group formed in January
Bi-weekly meetings held up to competition period
Additional meetings / sub groups (i.e posters) held closer to the event

Funding

No finite budget was created.

Resources

All the planning resources were utilized, with the communications elements being most useful to students. In addition students went online to look up no-impact weeks from other schools.

9. OUTCOMES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS - OVERALL

The competition allowed for the successful engagement of residents students, both directly throughout the competition and especially with the no-impact week. Students created an increased level of awareness that the University is focused on sustainability improvements and the environment and that residence students should care as well. Overall electricity savings of 35,781 kWh, were achieved, which equates to \$3,896.15 in cost savings. The event also created a good platform to build on for future competitions as it was successful and allowed for an increased understanding of how to engage students about the conservation.

10. OUTCOMES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS – STUDENT LEADERSHIP

The student members of the Project ReThink organizing team gained great experience from being involved in the organization and delivery of a competition that reached the wider community. The student members also gained a larger understanding of what each individual can do to live more sustainability. In addition students also gained insight into both event management and engagement activities.

11. OUTCOMES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS - MARKETING, EDUCATION, & BEHAVIOR CHANGE

Implementation & Outcomes

No Impact Week

Some key messages/tag lines were – “Avoid phantom power, use a power bar to unplug it all at once”, “Turn down for what? Turning down the thermostat one or two degrees can make a huge difference in energy consumption”. These messages were written in the shape of a light bulb on posters on display.

Lights out Coffee House

The coffee house was mainly held in a dark room with only one light bulb hanging from the ceiling. The message was to use the smallest amount of light as possible.

Black Light Green Night

Same idea as the Lights out Coffee House with the reduction of the amount of lights used during the event.

Links to the buildings dashboard were advertised online via Facebook and twitter.

The building with the largest decrease in electricity usage during the competition won a pizza party. During the no impact week, fair trade coffee and hot chocolate was given out to people who brought their own mugs to the table. Florescent energy reducing light bulbs were given out during No Impact Week.

All of the events were equally successful for different reasons. The No Impact Week gave an opportunity to directly interact with the residence students with a table set up in residence commons. The Lights out Coffee House was successful with the inclusion of non-residence students getting involved as well as bringing in local community members involved with environmental action such as Ben Prowless with Ecology Ottawa. Black Light Green Night was successful as a fun away to celebrate the end of the competition as well as to bring people who wouldn't necessarily come to an environment based event to come and get involved.

The only way the local community was engaged was through connecting with Ecology Ottawa. There was no combination of the CCN with other events, programs or courses.

Effectiveness

All students who we had direct contact with the program did gain a stronger understanding of how to conserve electricity and water. It might be said that those students more on the perimeter of events may have not taken as much notice. The extent of adoption was shown through the decrease in electricity usage during the three week competition which was large in energy and cost savings. A future development and suggestion was to hold a sustainability survey prior and after the event to assess awareness changes.

12. CHALLENGES

The main challenges were keeping the organizing team members interested in the competition. The timing was a slight problem but that was because of a later start to organizing the competition. To increase interest we held more meetings and tried to be more flexible and engaging with the students.

13. WISDOM & GUIDANCE

The lessons that were learned from participating in the CCNs is that it is important not to underestimate the amount of planning and coordination to pull off a three-week event. The competition will not run as smoothly if there is not a lot of engagement from your team.

It is a great way to learn how small everyday decisions can really have a large impact on energy consumption. I feel the competition provided a way for campus groups to collaborate with residence and the sustainability office, building a stronger network between those groups. There was an electricity savings of 35,781 kWh during the competition showing how the events the group put on had an impact on people's decisions. Since there was a correlation between campus engagement and energy savings it makes it easier to create events like the CCNs in the future.

14. CONTACT

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**Open to being contacted by other schools for questions and further information*

15. SUSTAINABILITY AT CARLETON UNIVERSITY

Carleton launched a specific sustainability strategic plan in 2014 with a wide focus on all energy and sustainability topics, such as energy, waste, travel and procurement. The key has been in embedding sustainability within departmental and office action plans and ensuring support from all of the community. In addition a sustainability office was created, which includes a manager, sustainability programs, an energy manager and building operations manager. Initial focus on building performance and campus engagement, has seen all new and retrofit buildings achieving green globe status and an eco rep program and \$1 million green revolving fund being rolled out. Recently in addition to the strategic plan, sustainability has been advanced through the launch of an Energy Master Plan and ensuring that sustainability is integrated into the wider universities integrated plan. Finally campus sustainability efforts and have also been aligned to academics and research to ensure wider student engagement.



<http://carleton.ca/fmp/energy-and-sustainability/>

16. POSTERS, PHOTOS & VIDEOS

<https://www.facebook.com/CUProjectGreen?fref=ts> - facebook page of project green, which has a variety of posters used during the event displayed

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KyWkS4aM0oU> - Video Report by Nora Duguid on the Lights out Coffee House

