

Finding Green in Sustainability: Temple Nightclub



Between cocktails, pick-up lines and booty shaking, a nightclub might be low on the list when thinking about sustainability. But what if with every two-step you took you were helping to power the dance floor? That was the goal for Temple Nightclub's founder Paul Hemming. The San Francisco-based club opened its doors in 2007 with 40 employees and the vision of becoming the greenest night club in the world. Last June it unleashed its sustainable dance floor.



From inception this was about understanding sustainability. The nightclub is our way to use culture as a means to affect behavior change. We have always thought to make this an eco-conscious/edutainment corporation. Temple is one component of the Zen Compound and the main revenue generator. We also have a sushi restaurant and an urban, roof-top garden where they take food waste and compost it. We are experimenting with urban agriculture.



How does that dance floor work?

It works with compression. As the floor moves up and down it has a gear box that turns a generator. That generator supplies electricity to the dance floor and to an energy meter to complete the feedback route. Right now the dance floor only powers itself, not the lights in the whole club. We tried to make our own, but cost was a major consideration. It can cost just under \$100 per square foot. We are in partnership with a sustainable dance club in Rotterdam, Netherlands. One of the biggest pros of this initiative is that it can be seen: 71% of our building's waste is recycled or composted, but that can't be seen. Having something that is front and center and that is interactive and fun is great.



What other options did you consider that you did not implement?

We thought about using a giant hamster wheel, using bicycle power. We even investigated using piezoelectric crystals – crystals that have an electric conductor. We wanted to put a glass pyramid like the Louvre on the building.

How did your employees react to your initiative and policies?

A lot of people chose to work here, as opposed to other clubs, because of our values. We have collateral that is included in an employee package where we outline our employee initiatives. It is important for our bartenders to know why our cups are compostable and made out of corn. We educate them about our initiatives with waste, water and energy efficiency and how all three initiatives save us money.

What other examples of sustainability exist within your business?

All of our kitchen grease is donated to a bio-diesel fuel preparation program. We don't use any petroleum-based products. We are implementing LED lights and will be receiving a rebate for that. We plan to continue to include our rooftop garden more into the menu of the food we are serving. We are also taking some

of the things we learn here to the developing world. We are trying to build a community in order to sets us apart from being a bar that just recycles. For us, community creates this notion that we can share our resource conservation best practices with other nightclubs in an effort to educate the rest of the industry.