



## VERBIO'S TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

**WE BELIEVE THAT BUSINESS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD AND  
HELP MAKE IT A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE.**

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Verbio strongly believes that profitability, social justice, economic reform, and environmental sustainability are not mutually exclusive. It is for this reason that we have implemented a proactive approach to the social, economic, and environmental factors that exist in our world today. We constantly look for ways to implement processes in our day-to-day operations that contribute to a healthy planet, happy people and honest profitability.

Green America and the Green Business Network certified our efforts in January of 2011 by granting us the Green America Seal of Approval. Verbio elected to join Green America due to prior experience we had working with that organization via an affiliate company. This was followed by the City of Portland awarding us their Sustainability at Work Gold Certification in 2013. These certifications and the corresponding annual audits of our green behaviors help reinforce our efforts and spur us on to greater achievements.

In 2014, Verbio sought designation as an Oregon Benefit Company to make our commitment to the principles of social and environmental responsibility visible to the community. We firmly believe that aligning our values with our profitability is a fiscally responsible action that benefits our employees, the local community and by extension the world.

### CURRENT SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES

#### ENERGY USAGE

We do not like to waste energy; it is common to find us using natural daylight from the windows rather than overhead fluorescent lighting. Our computer monitors automatically go to sleep every 10 minutes. We also turn off lights, computers, and printers overnight. Additionally, the building where we are located employs an HVAC system that siphons hot air away from the data rooms to heat human-inhabited office spaces. Heating and cooling system is even turned off on the weekends, when humans are not commonly occupying the offices, so as to further reduce the unneeded use of energy.

Verbio's websites are hosted by AISO.net, which owns and operates a purely solar-powered data center.

*"The sun is dependable and nobody is waging wars over it so that was a conflict-free source of power that could power some of the service... I made a 100% solar hosting solution in 2002 and then continually added more and more improvements and efficient technologies to improve performance, energy efficiency, security, and reliability." – AISO.net.*

We voluntarily purchase Renewable Energy Certificates and Carbon Offsets from Bonneville Environmental Fund to cover 100% of our electric use and employees' commuter miles.



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*"Many BEF partners aim to go beyond energy conservation to directly support a clean energy future. Through the purchase of Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs), you can directly support the development of renewable energy projects and ensure the electricity used in your business operations, manufacturing, events and headquarters comes only from clean energy sources.*

*"Our Green-e Energy Certified RECs represent renewable energy sources such as wind, solar or biogas projects where clean energy has been delivered to the North American power grid to reduce carbon emissions from fossil fuel-based electricity. One REC represents the non-power environmental attributes of 1,000 kilowatt-hours (1 megawatt hour) of renewable energy."*  
– **Bonneville Environmental Fund**

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## A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY

**REDUCE:** Verbio primarily delivers its work products and invoices via electronic means. We have also taken major strides to minimize printing within our office. These initiatives include double-sided printing, only printing necessary documents - typically only documents required by government. These steps reduce our consumption of paper and toner, and extend the longevity of our printers. We apply a mentality of printing marketing materials only in the smaller quantities that we actually need and will readily use, so that we don't have to discard excess documents when we update our message or design.

Data and file backups are stored on electronic media, drastically minimizing storage space requirements (climate controlled space, file cabinets, etc.).

**REUSE:** We purchase used dictionaries and reference materials from the local and independent Powell's City of Books. To the extent possible, consumable office supplies contain 80% or more post-consumer recycled content. This includes paper, printer cartridges, notepads, the paper used for our marketing materials, and more.

**RECYCLE:** Paper, newspaper, cardboard, glass and metals are recycled. Furthermore, we have a special container to collect and recycle ALL plastics, including plastic film and bags plus broken plastic parts. Styrofoam and packing peanuts are contributed to a local postal facility, where they are re-used.

**E-CYCLE:** When electronics components and printer cartridges reach the end of their usable life, we take them to Green Century Electronics Recycling. This facility refurbishes and resells components like power cables and toner cartridges, then properly disposes of the limited non-reusable components. We extend the option to employees and vendors to bring their e-cyclables to our office in an annual recycling drive.

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## GREEN OFFICE SETTING

**FURNISHINGS:** When outfitting our office, we used recycled paint from MetroPaint. Most of our office furniture was gently-used and re-purposed to create a welcoming and functional setting. Our in-house recording studio employs re-purposed equipment and sound-isolating foam. When we do occasionally decommission furnishings, we post them on the Portland Freecycle list.

**OFFICE SPACE:** Although Verbio simply leases space in an office building and has limited control over that building's furnishings and fixtures, we can choose to locate in a building that applies environmentally conscious practices. The Pittock Block, where we are located, employs low-flow faucets, toilets, and plumbing fixtures in all of the restrooms and kitchen areas. Only a small tank-less water heater serves in our kitchenette. Additionally, the building's HVAC system siphons hot air away from the building's plethora of computer data rooms to heat human-inhabited office spaces. The heating and cooling system is even turned off on the weekends, thereby further reducing energy consumption.

**KITCHEN & CLEANING:** We use durable dishware, glasses and cutlery in our office kitchen. We choose to drink tap water filtered through a Shaklee pitcher, instead of bottled water. We use Shaklee and Legacy of Clean cleaning products that are environmentally certified.

**TRANSPORTATION & TELECOMMUTING:** Staff and visitors are encouraged to arrive at our office using alternative transportation. Our website suggests several alternative forms of transportation with directions to our offices from the Portland Streetcar, bus and MAX. Employees are offered subsidies for carpooling and/or using public transportation.

Staff walk to meetings and to make deliveries within Portland's downtown core and inner Eastside. Magpie Messengers is a bike-based service that we use for area deliveries. Indoor bike racks are available in our building and a patch kit for tires is available in our office.

Verbio enables and encourages our employees to telecommute by providing a distributed telephone system and secure VPN access to our project and file management systems.

## TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE: PEOPLE > PLANET > PROFITS

Verbio sees community participation and partnering with like-minded businesses as an asset that allows us to do business and keep our corporate values. We are committed to employee growth: cultural, educational and professional. We select our vendors after careful consideration. We offer our services at reduced rates or pro bono to organizations who reflect the values we work to exemplify. We give back to our peers through training and serving our professional affiliations. Our company owner is presently in the middle of her second term volunteering as the Administrator of the ATA's Translation Company Division.

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## PAY IT FORWARD

We belong to Green America and the Green Business Network to support other companies employing sustainable business practices. When selecting vendors and partners, we consider the whole package of benefits each offers. Verbio looks beyond the costs and weighs a vendor's values and commitment to social responsibility or sustainability when selecting a partner or supplier.

We select vendors that uphold the Triple Bottom Line. For example, AISO.net provides Web hosting that is powered exclusively by the sun. We use Minuteman Press for our larger volume printing needs and task them with sourcing soy-based inks and recycled papers for our orders. Magpie Messengers is a bike-based service that we use for area



deliveries. Verbio selected a new telephonic interpreting partner in 2015: Certified Languages International is a certified WBENC, a local Portland company, and predominantly hires female interpreters.

Not only do we provide critical services to green companies and social benefit organizations, we offer them discounted rates, trade in-kind, and/or collaborative partnerships that extend the value of their dollar. Social benefit organizations and green companies we love to work with include: United Way, Public Health International, Mercy Corps, Regional Arts & Culture Council, Oregon Food Bank, Growing Gardens, Deep Green Films, Zenger Farms, and Clean Water Services.

We work with many non-profit professional associations where we apply our values of supporting the immigrant and woman-owned small business communities, such as:

OAME – Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs

Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

Femprofessionals

ATA – American Translators Association - Translators are usually solopreneurs; 68% woman-owned

## SUSTAINABILITY GOALS AND FUTURE PLANS

### 2014 GOALS ACHIEVED

- ✓ Registered as a Benefit Company in the State of Oregon.
- ✓ Updated our website with information on our Benefit Company goals, status and annual report in addition to our current sustainability page.
- ✓ Held an e-waste recycling drive and a cloth-recycling drive.
- ✓ Resumed plastics recycling for all plastics (hard & soft). B-Lab collects full bags for proper disposal with Metro.
- ✓ Renewed Oregon MWESB certification and self-certify for Federal EDWOSB status
- ✓ Partnered with like-minded businesses and non-profits focusing on sustainable/social action and business opportunity: Mercy Corps, Klean Kanteen, OAME, BESThq, Portland Area Business Association.
- ✓ Volunteered services: Administrator of the American Translators Association's Translation Company Division, give student outreach presentation at Portland State University, Board Member of the Portland Area Business Association (LGBTQ community)
- ✓ Promoted “Benefit Company” values within the translation industry locally, regionally and nationally. Gave a presentation to educate different business groups about Oregon Benefit Company status.

### 2015 GOALS ACHIEVED

Verbio maintained all of the prior year's initiatives. We had set new goals to expand community awareness. However, due to operational and financial setbacks early in the year, Verbio did not achieve all of the goals it had set for 2015. This is what we did accomplish:

- ✓ Cooperated with like-minded businesses and non-profits focusing on sustainable/social action and business opportunity: Mercy Corps, OAME, BESThq, Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce.
- ✓ Formalized partnerships with Certified Languages International, Access Services NW, Barbier, and Braille Plus -- which are all woman-owned businesses in the local community.
- ✓ Volunteered services: Administrator of the American Translators Association's Translation Company Division, gave student outreach presentation at International School of Beaverton, Board Member on the Portland Area Business Association (LGBTQ community).
- ✓ Certified by the State of Oregon as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) according to USDOT rules.
- ✓ Promoted “Benefit Company” values within the national language services industry and the regional business community. Participated in the B-Lab Summit and the Business Diversity Institute's summit.

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## 2016 GOALS

- ✓ Renew our certification with City of Portland's Sustainability at Work program.
- ✓ Hold another e-waste recycling drive and cloth recycling drive.
- ✓ Define quantifiable parameters for our social and environmental programs measured against profitability. For example: measure the volume of e-waste or plastic waste that we recycle. Define a format to encourage feedback from the general public, clients and vendors as to our current sustainability and our future sustainability plans.
- ✓ Donate a percentage of profits or in-kind services to Translators Without Borders or Mercy Corps.
- ✓ Re-establish free networking or low-cost training opportunities for local translators and interpreters. The majority of this demographic falls into several of these marginalized social categories: 1) recent immigrant to the USA, 2) female, 3) single-mother, 4) business start-up, and 5) low-income household. We offered such training & networking consistently from 2002-2006 (inclusive). Our goal is to work with competitors in our local industry to establish and promote a more professional talent base and enhance the quality of life and pay for immigrant translators and interpreters in the Pacific NW.
- ✓ Promote "Benefit Company" values within the national language services industry and the regional business community. Co-host with Oregon Office of Minority and Women-owned Small Businesses (OMWESB) a community meeting for the language industry during which Verbio explains how to become certified as "Benefit Companies" and minority-owned or woman-owned businesses. Cooperate with BestHQ to give another presentation about "Benefit Companies."
- ✓ Hold quarterly team meetings to bring attention to current green actions that can be taken/enhanced within our office, green actions that employees can take at home, or hot topic issues related to sustainability and social awareness.
- ✓ Establish an annual "Green Team" event for employees and their families. This could be something like a SOLV beach clean-up or similar volunteer initiative.