

American Express Conference Goes Green

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The Bonneville Environmental Foundation sells Green Tags to help fund renewable sources of solar and wind power. Azumano Travel, an Amex Rep based in Portland, OR is a partner with the foundation.

The 2007 American Express Consumer Travel Network's US Representative National Conference was completely green through the purchase of Green Tags from the Bonneville Environmental Foundation, which uses the funds from Green Tag purchases to replace traditional polluting sources of electricity with solar and wind power throughout North America.

Azumano Travel, an American Express Travel Services Representative based in Portland, OR, is partnering with the Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF) on a number of initiatives that will provide renewable energy offsets, including the purchase of Green Tags provided by BEF.

At last year's Amex Rep conference in Tucson, Patrick Nye, director of sales for BEF, told the American Express reps that the travel industry is just starting to pay attention to offsets and that travel agencies can offer the Green Tag program as a value add to their customers.

He added that by offering the option to clients, agencies won't risk losing their travel business to other, greener outlets.

Nye told the Amex reps gathered at the Tucson conference that the Bonneville Environmental Foundation program is different from carbon offset programs because its Green Tag program seeks to shift the energy production system to one that is totally based on renewable resources of solar and wind power.

"Planting trees doesn't get to the root of the problem of fossil fuel emissions," he said.

American Express said that its purchase of the Green Tags for last year's conference attendees will support enough renewable energy to offset more than 60,000 pounds of greenhouse gases.