



## The Competitive Advantage of a Sustainable Business

Southern Colorado Sustainable Communities Conference, November 20, 2008

**Can't afford to?**

**You can't afford NOT to!**

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**It's NOT the business you do: it's HOW you do business!**



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# Competitive advantage comes from:

1. **Initiatives that reduce operating costs, thereby providing superior pricing power in the marketplace**
2. **Products and Services that deliver superior value in the perception of customers/consumers**

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### **Sustainability delivers competitive advantage in 3 ways**

- 1. Cost savings, risk mitigation & improved operating efficiency**
- 2. Superior products, enhanced brand image & market reputation & incremental revenue generation**
- 3. Creative, innovative, productive people environment**

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**Cost savings, risk mitigation, improved operating efficiency – looking inside for cost performance improvement**

- **Eliminate waste**
- **Improve resource productivity**
- **Lower upstream and downstream costs**
- **Reduce environmental business risk**

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# Examples

**Waste elimination – Boulder Community Hospital**

**Improved Resource Productivity – Fluid Coffee**

**Value Chain Improvements - IKEA**

**Risk mitigation - Newmont Mining (license to operate), Serck Services**

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# **Better products, enhanced brand image & revenue generation – the outward facing side of sustainability**

- 1. New or redesigned products to address environmental needs**
- 2. Improved market reputation, brand image & customer loyalty**
- 3. Completely new, breakthrough products or services**

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# Examples

**New products - Sun Microsystems**

**Market reputation/brand image – GRX**

**Breakthrough products/services – Humana, JP Morgan, Reconnx**

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# **Creative, innovative, productive people environment – the human side of sustainability**

- 1. Creating a sustainability-based culture**
- 2. Employer of choice**
- 3. Spill-over to community sustainability**

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# **Examples**

**Sustainability-based culture – Denver Machine Shop, Boulder  
Outlook**

**Employer of choice – Merrick Engineering**

**Spill-over to community - New Belgium Brewing**

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# A Final Message

**ANY company can achieve competitive advantage through a sustainable business strategy**

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