

The Sustainable Hotel Handbook

*With practical insights, tools and resources
for you and your team*



Profit

Your handbook for creating a more profitable hotel for all.

MAp

THE SUSTAINABLE HOTEL

#05

March 2026

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Profit
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*For everyone on the journey
to making this Planet a more purposeful
and hospitable place.*



FOREWORD

Pursuing the path to sustainability – together

Welcome to The Sustainable Hotel – and thank you for joining us on the journey to a better future!

We carefully and passionately crafted *The Sustainable Hotel Handbook: Profit in order to MAp* out the way for hoteliers to develop more sustainable hotels. Sustainable hotels that make a positive impact on People and Planet, while delivering sustainable success for you. Whether you've long been on the path to sustainability or are just starting out, this handbook is intended to empower you and get you going in the right direction.

Before we begin, we'd like to introduce ourselves. We are MAp, a creative-led hotel branding and marketing consultancy. We turn Purpose into performance, creating sustainable hotels and standout brands that do good, look good and sell well. As a Certified B Corporation based in Zurich, we work internationally, MApping out a better future for hotels, People and Planet.

Through our experience, we know that hoteliers such as yourself have the power to create real impact in this world and leave it better off for future generations. But, we also know that sustainability can be daunting – especially when it comes to hospitality. With so much information out there, where do you start? With such a complex topic, what's the correct route for

your hotel? With so much marketing noise, how do you avoid the trap of greenwashing?

In this handbook, we present how to earn a Profit in a sustainable way, and share in that Profit too. To help with this, we've filled it with practical guidance, tools and resources. If you haven't done so already, we recommend reading the separate Introduction handbook in order to get better acquainted with the handbook structure and important elements that will guide you to action.

As we embark on this journey together, it's important to always remember that, when it comes to sustainability, you should strive for progress not perfection. Achieving 100% sustainability, while an admirable goal, is simply not realistic and as the needs of our world change, the way we tackle those needs changes, too. What's most important is that you simply start the journey, and continue to learn, grow and improve along the way.

"Progress not perfection" was our guiding mantra when creating this handbook, knowing that it will never be perfect or finished. We knew it was needed for the hospitality industry, and we approached it with the goal to serve and empower hoteliers as well as do our part for People and Planet. We too will continue to provide updated guid-

ance and tackle new challenges and critical topics for the betterment of the industry and the world. That's our commitment.

It is our hope that you too will approach this journey with a deep commitment to learning, serving and making a real difference now and in the future.

Once again, thank you for joining us on the journey to impact! Let's build a more hospitable and purposeful Planet – together.

**#onwards
Your MAp team**



VISIT THE SUSTAINABLE HOTEL NOW

P.S.: We'd love to hear from you along the way! Please feel free to share your feedback, insights and comments with us at onwards@MAp-consultancy.com.

5.

PROFIT



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“Just as people cannot live without eating, so a business cannot live without profits. But most people don’t live to eat, and neither must businesses live just to make profits.”

JOHN MACKEY

(as cited in Business of Purpose, 2022).
CEO of Whole Foods



5.1.

INTRODUCTION *to Profit*



**BECAUSE WHAT IS
IT TO PROFIT IF THE
WORLD AROUND
YOU DOESN'T PROFIT
TOO?**

The final P in MAp's 4 Ps of sustainability framework is Profit, or economic sustainability.

While it comes after Purpose, People and Planet, it's a key element, as it dictates how your hotel, and those who believe in and support it, reap the rewards of your sustainability efforts.

Of course, there's nothing more rewarding than those warm and fuzzy feelings knowing you're living your Purpose, doing right by your People and creating good for the Planet. But in this Profit handbook, we look at how you financially benefit from sustainability, while spreading the wealth with others.

Because what is it to Profit if the world around you doesn't Profit too? What is it to move forward when others are held back?

Economic sustainability refers to practices that support your long-term economic growth, while also protecting and promoting the social and environmental aspects of your hotel operations.

Harkening back to our definition of sustainability: **It's about how you can work profitably in the NOW, without endangering future generations' ability to work profitably in the future.**

Therefore, economic sustainability takes an internal view toward economic growth – earning a Profit for your hotel business – and an external view of economic growth looking out toward the world around your hotel.

With that said, let's embark on our final P!



“Profit is like oxygen, food, water, and blood for the body; they are not the point of life, but without them, there is no life.”

JIM C. COLLINS & JERRY PORAS (1997).

Authors of the book “Built to last: Successful habits of visionary companies.”

DEFINITION

Profit Mapped out

Operating in a profitable way is important for every business. Without Profit, you file for bankruptcy. You can no longer operate. And for hotels, that’s no exception.

We won’t argue: Profit is important. But what is also important is that the Profit earned is:

- Achieved in a sustainable way = not at the cost of People and Planet
- Distributed in a sustainable way = used to secure your hotel’s operability in the future while also making this world a better place

Money is the lifeblood of your business, but it is not your reason for being. It is not what makes your hotel great. It is not what inspires your People. Instead, your Purpose does. That’s why it’s so important to have one (learn more in [The Sustainable Hotel Handbook: Purpose](#)). Purpose is what enables your hotel to make a sustainable impact and achieve long-term sustainable growth.

But how can you pursue your Purpose if you are not profitable and financially strong? That’s the paradox: organisations that only exist to earn a Profit don’t last long. But organisations that don’t prioritise Profit can’t survive long enough to fulfil their Purpose. In other words, in the context of sustainability: it’s hard to be green when you’re in the red!

Therefore, let’s take a closer look at some important concepts that will help us move #onwards in achieving economic sustainability.

PURPOSEFUL PROFIT

As the terminology makes clear, Purposeful Profit is Profit achieved by achieving your Purpose (say that 3 times fast!). This concept puts forward that, first comes your Purpose, and then follows the Profits, which are simply your reward for achieving that Purpose.

This might run counter to the common opinion that smart business practices lead to Profit, and there’s no denying the importance of that, but more and more studies reveal that there is a business case for Purpose. That Purpose and Profit are intrinsically linked, and that in future, bringing your Purpose to life will be the difference between running a successful business or the failure of it.

The term itself was coined by Joanne Sonenshine in her book “Purposeful Profits: Inside Successful Businesses Making a Positive Global Impact” (2019). And since its publishing, we’ve seen many successful entrepreneurs, scientists and economists arguing that businesses that only target Profit won’t survive long.

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE

While Bottom Line is an accounting term we all know too well, in the context of economic sustainability, we look at Triple Bottom Line (or TBL).

TBL supports your sustainability goals by:

- Bringing together the three Ps – People, Planet and Profit – into one framework
- Ensuring all management and operational decisions are made in harmony with the environment, society and profitability
- Measuring both your business and sustainability success

In other words, TBL ensures that Profit does not come at the expense of People or Planet, but instead fulfils a higher and nobler Purpose for its existence.

TBL was coined by business advisor John Elkington in the 1990s in order to measure sustainability. It’s an expanded baseline for measuring performance, looking beyond the traditional measures of Profits, return on investment and shareholder value, to include social and environmental dimensions.

The rationale: if you look at Profits only, ignoring these other important dimensions, you cannot account for the full cost of doing business (Slaper & Hall, 2011).