



Millennials Will Be Key Drivers of Sustainability in Small and Medium Businesses

Top insights from second annual national Cox Conserves Sustainability Survey

November 3, 2015 (Atlanta) – Today, Cox Enterprises released the results of the second annual Cox Conserves Sustainability Survey, which showcased that Millennials will lead the way for small and medium businesses in future conversations and efforts around conservation, energy efficiency and environmental stewardship. The survey, commissioned by Cox Enterprises, is a national study that examines sustainability opportunities and challenges for small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs).

The top finding from the 2015 survey is that Millennials have a huge appetite for sustainability and will drive adoption of these practices. Millennials showed greater knowledge about sustainability than other age cohorts and a strong interest in implementing sustainable business practices, but noted that in their current roles, they lacked the influence needed to effect change.

“Millennials are on the leading edge of today’s thinking and dialogue about sustainability and will greatly influence the scope and effectiveness of tomorrow’s efforts,” said Cox Enterprises Executive Vice President Alex Taylor. “The Cox Conserves Sustainability survey found that this demographic group is more informed, more energetic and more passionate about implementing sustainable business practices.

Millennials Driving Sustainability

- **Millennials are more knowledgeable about sustainability.** Millennials have the most knowledge of sustainability than other generations, with 80 percent of those surveyed indicating that they have at least a fair amount of knowledge.
- **Millennials are more committed to increasing sustainability.** Nearly 60 percent of Millennials are committed to increasing sustainable activities in their businesses, which is significantly higher than the 49 percent of Boomers, who are more likely to be the top decision makers.
- **Millennials believe they lack enough influence to effect change now.** Only 27 percent of Millennials in management roles believe that they have a great deal of influence on their organization’s sustainability practices, and more than half (53 percent) of Millennials say that their leadership is impeding their company’s sustainability initiatives. The top decision makers in SMBs, such as owners and partners, are more likely to be Boomers.

As for year-over-year findings, the 2015 survey showed that there has been little change in the number of SMBs that have implemented sustainable business practices. Only 62 percent have implemented some type of company or employee-based program to reduce energy, encourage recycling, etc. That number is nearly identical to the findings in the 2014 survey.

“There are measureable benefits of sustainability, and one of the best things we can do as owners and leaders of businesses is to listen to younger generations and give them an opportunity to make a positive difference to our bottom lines and to the world around us,” said Taylor. “Our survey showed that some SMBs often find it difficult to make or justify the investment in sustainability programs or prioritize them over other demands and initiatives. From our own experience with the Cox Conserves program, I can confirm that sustainability is as good for our business as it is for the environment.”

Today Versus Tomorrow

SMB leaders identified the sustainable business activities they believe are most critical to implement now, as well as those that should take place in the next five years in terms of operations, investments and employees.

- **Operations:** Using supplies more efficiently (67 percent) is critical today, and utilizing solar technology is the top item to take place in the next five years (49 percent).
- **Investments:** SMBs believe that buying or leasing refurbished goods is the most critical activity today (47 percent), and they identified buying alternative energy as the top item to look at over the next five years (47 percent).
- **Employees:** Encouraging employees to power down equipment is critical today (55 percent), while offering employees incentives to purchase eco-friendly vehicles (31 percent) is noted as the top activity to look at in the next five years.

Cox Conserves is Cox Enterprises’ national sustainability program, which focuses on reducing waste and energy consumption, conserving water and encouraging employees to engage in eco-friendly practices. The company's sustainability goals are to send zero waste to landfill by 2024 and become carbon and water neutral by 2044. More details and survey findings can be found at www.CoxConserves.com/Survey. #CoxConservesSMB

About the 2015 Cox Conserves Sustainability Survey

The 2015 Cox Conserves Sustainability Survey was conducted in June and July among a national sample of 2,019 decision-makers of businesses with less than 1,000 employees. The margin of error for the survey is plus or minus 2.18 percent and gauges SMB perceptions and challenges regarding sustainability. The survey is a part of the company’s larger commitment to conservation and ongoing desire to further sustainable business practices.

About Cox Enterprises

Cox Enterprises is a leading communications, media and automotive services company. With revenues of more than \$17 billion and approximately 55,000 employees, the company's major operating subsidiaries include Cox Communications (cable television distribution, high-speed Internet access, telephone, home security and automation, commercial telecommunications and advertising solutions); Cox Automotive (automotive-related auctions, financial services, media and software solutions); and Cox Media Group (television and radio stations, digital media, newspapers and advertising sales rep firms). The company's major national brands include Autotrader, Kelley Blue Book, Manheim, Savings.com and

Valpak. To learn more about Cox's commitment to people, sustainability and our communities, please visit CoxCSRReport.com.

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