

SUSTAINABLE EVENT MANAGEMENT REPORT

AAPEX

2023

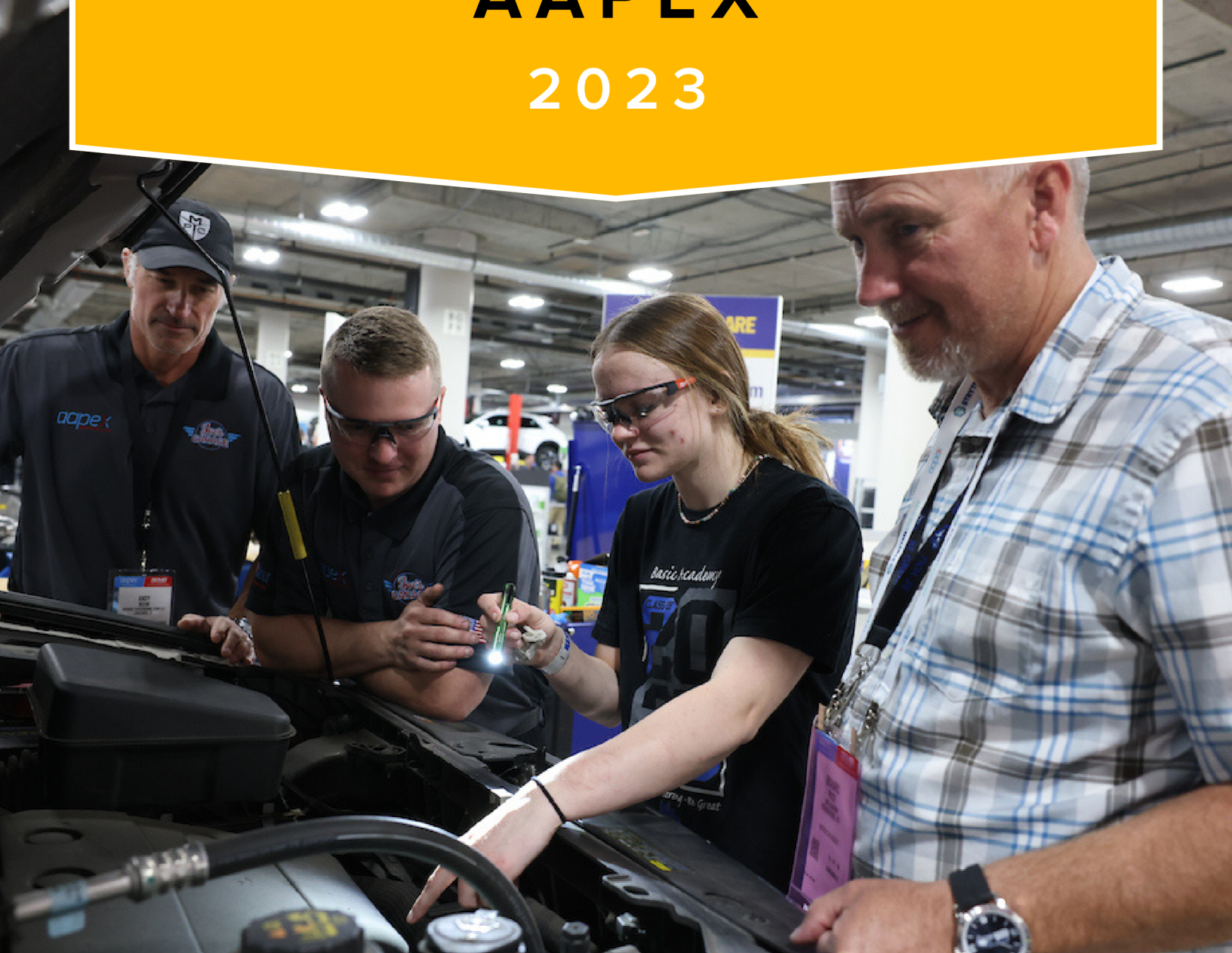


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SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

In partnership with the [Auto Care Association](#) and [MEMA](#), Honeycomb Strategies (HCS) worked with the AAPEX production team as well as key vendor partners to baseline conference metrics at The Venetian Expo. This data creates the foundation for a comprehensive sustainable event management strategy that includes strategic goals, implementation, and ongoing sustainability management to produce AAPEX. It is understood not all impacts are under the direct control of the HCS or production partners, but rather under their influence. The detail and effectiveness of Honeycomb Strategies' reporting is reliant on vendors and partners supplying data.

As our industry becomes more aware of its growing impact on the environment, more and more industry stakeholders are proactively addressing the need for sustainability through means including recycling, remanufacturing, eco-friendly packaging, helping vehicles safely remain on the road longer and perform more efficiently, by offering sustainable products and services, and by using energy-efficient equipment and processes.

Danielle Thomas-Pollard
PMP, IT Director and Liaison for the newly formed Auto Care
Association Sustainability Committee

INTRODUCTION

The following key performance indicators (KPIs) are the measurements by which MEMA, the Auto Care Association and AAPEX can understand the starting point of a sustainability program and guide actions to meaningful and measurable changes.



Achievements



Opportunities

ABOUT AAPEX


AAPEX is the premier event for the more than \$1.8 trillion global automotive aftermarket industry. It's where innovative products and technologies from 2,500+ exhibiting companies are brought to life. Where networking with top industry leaders and trainers is made possible. And where staying up to date on the trends and market intelligence transforming auto care has never been easier.

COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

MEMA Aftermarket Suppliers and the Auto Care Association are committed to a more sustainable future, and as the co-owners of AAPEX, initiatives are being introduced to reduce the environmental and increase the social impacts of the show. The Center for Sustainability was formed to meet the needs of MEMA members given the rise in the importance of sustainability and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG).

ABOUT AAPEX 2023

SHOW DATES:	Oct 31 - Nov 2, 2023
LOCATION:	The Venetian Expo, Las Vegas, NV
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS:	93,191
NO. OF EXHIBITING COMPANIES:	2,605
EXHIBIT SPACE:	574,276
TOTAL OCCUPIED ROOM NIGHTS:	106,282


141
COUNTRIES
REPRESENTED

AAPEX 2023 BY THE NUMBERS

65%

EVENT WASTE
DIVERSION RATE

100%

ENERGY FROM RECS
AT THE VENETIAN EXPO

616,710 GALLONS OF
WATER CONSUMED

94,317.49

SQUARE FEET OF
SIGNAGE PRINTED WITH
FREEMAN

235.7 METRIC TONS OF
TOTAL WASTE

17% RECYCLABLE
SIGNAGE

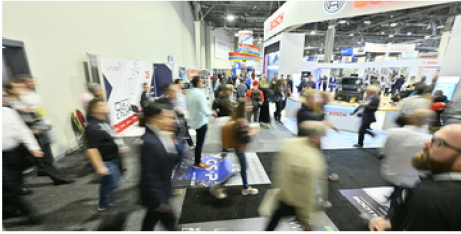
1st year

- EXHIBITOR SUSTAINABILITY SURVEY
- SUSTAINABI-TEA & COFFEE
- SUSTAINABLE BOOTH AWARD
- KEYS TO PROGRESS

41

PARTICIPATION OF
THE EXHIBITOR
SUSTAINABILITY PLEDGE

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



COMMUNICATIONS

AAPEX did well at communicating sustainability this year, using blogs, videos, and newsletters to get the word out.

[Read more here.](#)

INAUGURAL SUSTAINABILITY-TEA INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

Sustainability leaders from across the automotive aftermarket came together to learn about industry association sustainability groups.

[Read more here.](#)



AAPEX EXHIBITOR SUSTAINABILITY PLEDGE

Offered for the first time, the pledge brings invited exhibitors into the conversation of sustainability at AAPEX. Feedback from exhibitors indicated that the pledge created behavior change in 2023.

[Read more here.](#)

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

AAPEX debuted a new award in the sustainability category, and the New Product Showcase highlighted sustainable products and booth design.

[Read more here.](#)



TOP OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT



SIGNAGE

Evaluate each substrate for minimal environmental impact and build end of life plans for the substrates. Add multiple language signage to support the number of international attendees.

[Read more here.](#)

WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Focus on reducing the overall amount of waste and increase the waste diversion rate by sending more waste for recycling and re-use.

[Read more here](#)



SOCIAL IMPACT

Build programs that attract and support new people who may have difficulty attending the show due to hardships, and ensure all cultures feel welcomed at the show.

[Read more here.](#)

ACCESSIBLE WATER

Provide water stations on the show floor to ensure easy access and increase the wellness of participants.

[Read more here.](#)





CARBON FOOTPRINT

TOTAL CARBON FOOTPRINT

2023
142,761.18
MTCO₂e

Equivalent to: 365,121,359
miles driven by an average gasoline-
powered passenger vehicle

PER PARTICIPANT CARBON FOOTPRINT

2023
1.53
MTCO₂e

Equivalent to: 3,913
miles driven by an average gasoline-
powered passenger vehicle

The majority of GHG emissions (98%) for AAPEX came from travel. Because this number is both high and unavoidable, separating out on-site emissions to zero in on other impacts shows where AAPEX does have opportunities for reduction.

ONSITE CARBON EMISSIONS BY SOURCE

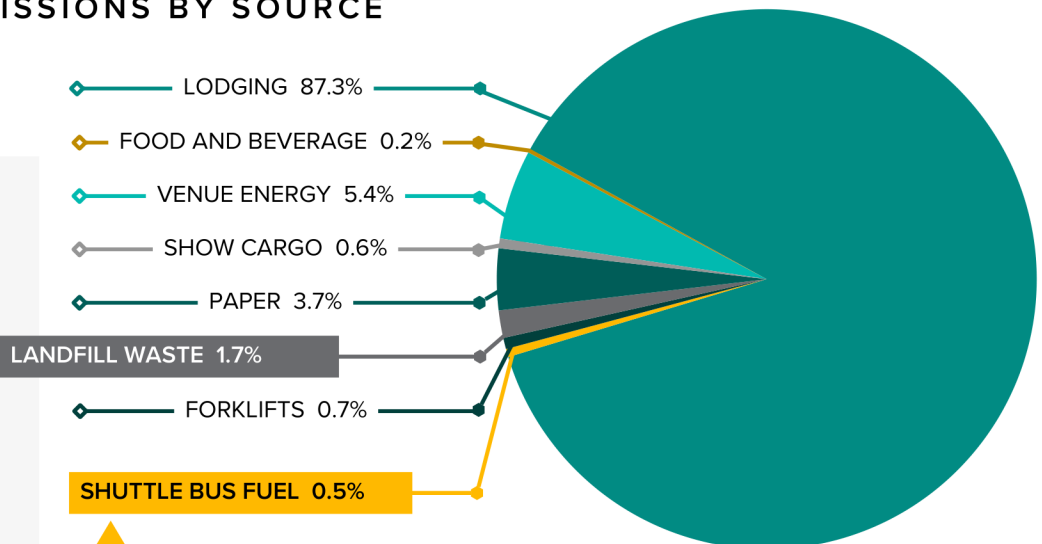
*Excludes travel



83.4

metric tons
landfill

Aim to reduce waste overall. Even with a good percentage of materials being diverted from landfills, the net weight of land-filled trash has a significant impact on the environment and emissions.
([More about waste management](#)).

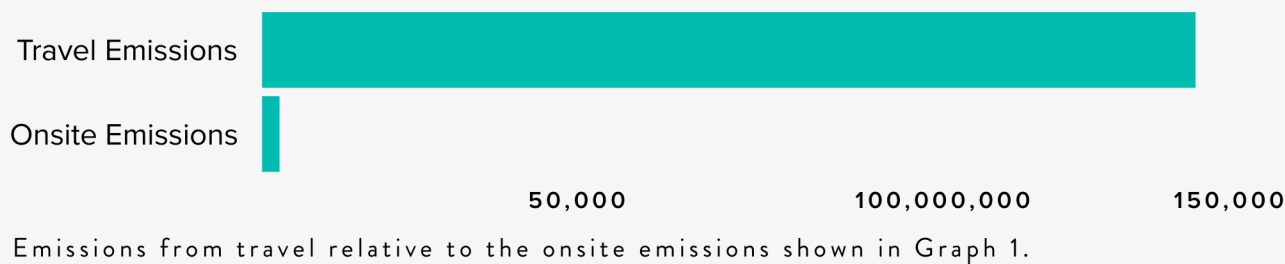


100% OF SHUTTLE EMISSIONS OFFSET

Shuttles run 12 hours a day between AAPEX and SEMA to reduce travel impacts between shows.



CARBON EMISSIONS FROM TRAVEL



141 COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

AAPEX collocates international trade and business in one event, which consolidates environmental impact into one show, rather than multiplying it across multiple, regional events.



AAPEX can offset emissions from travel to help balance the emissions travel creates. Offer carbon offsets at registration for ease and to increase visibility of the program. There are options to select local offset or carbon mitigation projects that directly support the host community.

Offsets are a sponsorship opportunity!

Image credit: AAPEX





EXHIBITOR ENGAGEMENT

EXHIBITOR SUSTAINABILITY SURVEY

For the first time, AAPEX asked exhibitors about travel plans, on site transportation, booth energy use, waste management, and food & beverage routines.



47 companies
responded



Translate the survey into several languages to increase participation from foreign exhibitors.

Honeycomb Strategies followed up on site with each company that filled out the survey. Exhibitors Honeycomb Strategies talked to were encouraged that these conversations were happening, and were often inspired to take action based on the questions asked.

What was learned?

Of the exhibitors who participated...

21% Offset GHG emissions resulting from travel through reputable and verified platforms.

21% Design and store graphics for reuse by avoiding dates.

60% Use QR codes for marketing material.

30% Print on 75% post-consumer recycled content.



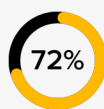
AAPEX can also use recycled content in printed signage. ([read here](#))



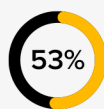
74% Used LED or compact fluorescent light bulbs in their booth.

81% Powered down all displays, monitors and booth lighting nightly after show hours.

This survey question inspired some exhibitors to shut down electronics displays overnight who hadn't realized this easy behavior change could make a big difference.



72% Avoid polystyrene in shipments.



53% Use recycled or biodegradable packaging.



HCS recommends prohibiting polystyrene from the show entirely to reduce carbon and waste impacts upstream and downstream of the event.

43% Order food and beverage with little or no packaging or fully recyclable/compostable options to avoid plastic.

One booth manager changed from single-use plastic water bottles to a bubbler and refillable bottles for the show based on this survey.

ON THE SHOW FLOOR

To augment engagement on sustainability once exhibitors arrive, AAPEX can provide guidance on best practices in attention-grabbing ways, like signage on the show floor, dedicated emails, webinars, onsite tours and meetings.



The first ever Sustainability-TEA and Coffee meet-up educated members on best practices and served as a networking opportunity. The gathering highlighted the Auto Care Association’s Sustainability Committee’s four focus areas:

- Industry education;
- Evaluation and influence of legislative policies;
- Advantages and opportunities of recycling;
- Fostering best-practice sharing and enhancement of industry standards to become more environmentally friendly.



Exhibitors told us they were concerned that cardboard was not being recycled because they didn’t see a designated area during set-up and break down. While Honeycomb Strategies assured them it was sorted for recycling, increasing education can show engaged exhibitors what programs are already in the works behind-the-scenes, increasing the perceived value of AAPEX as a sustainability leader.



Green aisle carpet in the remanufactured section was a step in the right direction. While AAPEX can reduce aisle carpet ([read here](#)), the sentiment to draw attention to reuse is commendable.

Remanufacturers ‘Walk the Talk’ on sustainability by showing the importance of giving auto parts a second (and ongoing) life.



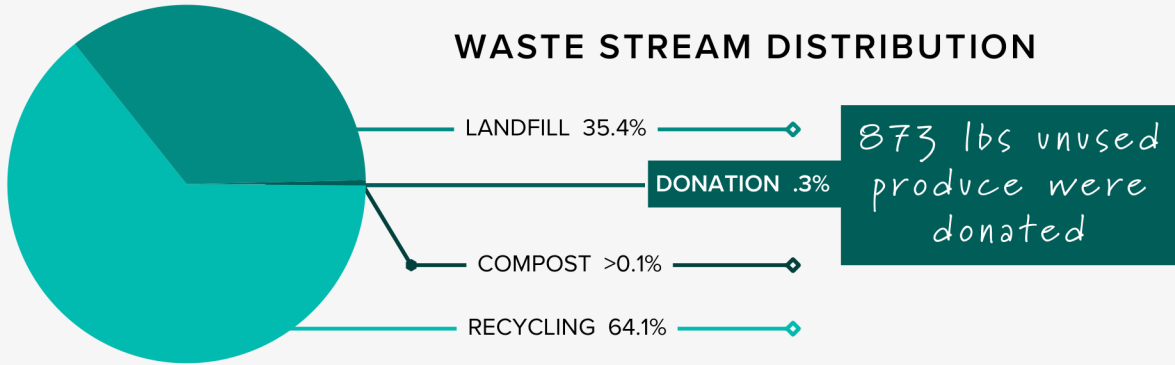
Honeycomb Strategies didn’t see very many booths providing gifts to attendees on the show floor, which reduces inevitable waste and the upstream impacts of manufacturing.



WASTE

By analyzing the waste stream, AAPLEX can identify where reductions are possible through future planning and education.

WASTE STREAM DISTRIBUTION



65%

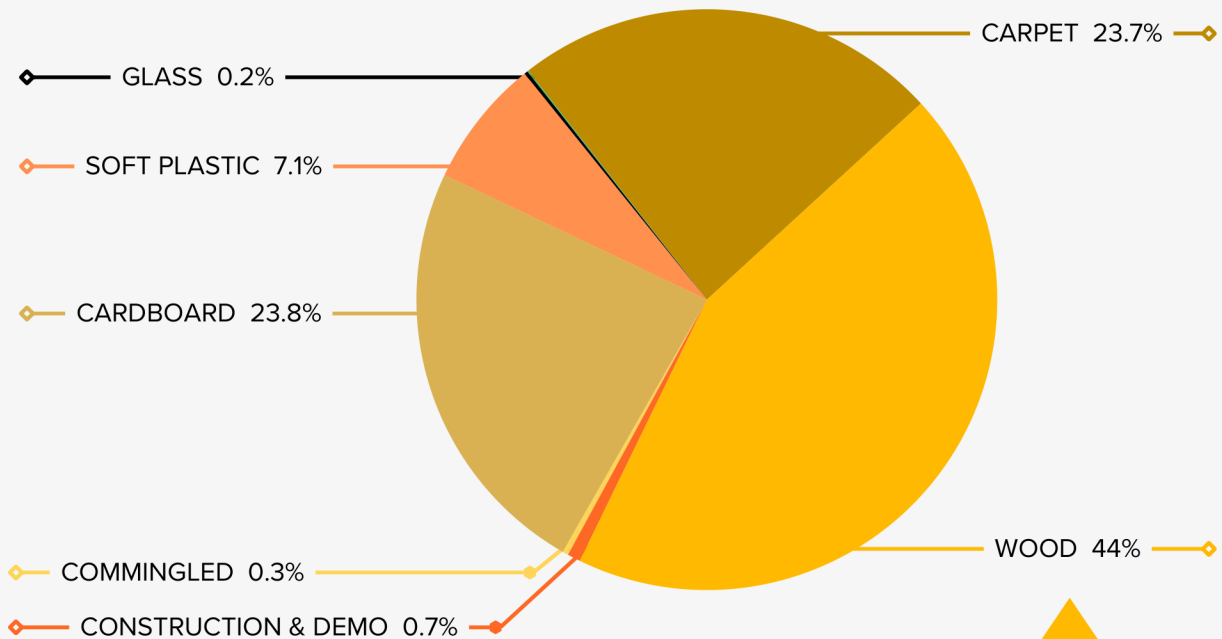
WASTE DIVERSION RATE



This percentage is slightly lower than the average annual diversion rate of The Venetian Expo.

Diversion rate is defined by the amount of materials that are diverted away from landfill or incineration by means of recycling, donation or composting.

RECYCLING BREAKDOWN



To reduce waste from Series A and J booths, Honeycomb Strategies proposed implementing an exhibitor donation program for reuse and utilizing a metal recycling initiative provided by the venue.

ON THE SHOW FLOOR

14,400 pages of paper avoided

The welcome letter was not printed (or mailed) for the first time this year, which saved .59 MTCO₂e saved.



This is equivalent to .704 acres of forest sequestering carbon for one year!*



Many exhibitors on the main level packed in re-usable crates rather than on pallets wrapped in plastic. AAPEX can reinforce this best practice with pre-show education, such as the Exhibitor Sustainability Pledge, to send less waste to landfill.



AAPEX can develop an audit program to reduce the likelihood of ‘Build & Burn’ booths to directly engage with exhibitors about their end of use plans. Honeycomb Strategies observed waste being moved from the booth to common areas. Formal programs can assist Freeman and AAPEX in holding exhibitors responsible for their impacts.

A booth left after the Expo with tags to trash all remaining items. Credit: Honeycomb Strategies



AAPEX can lead by example and print the Show Directory on recycled-content paper. Ask at registration if people want a printed show guide to gauge quantities to print. Tally how many directories are left at show close so printing numbers can be revised each year.

10,000 show guides were printed at 262 pages each with 0% recycled content. By opting for recycled content paper or by moving to a digital show guide or app, AAPEX could save the amount of carbon that is sequestered in 12.7 acres of forest in one year!*

*source: [EPA](#)



SIGNAGE & DECOR

FLOORING

61,776.49

SQ YDS OF FLOORING

Ordered through Freeman (exhibitors and show management). This does not count flooring not ordered through Freeman.



Install of aisle carpet, including one-time use plastic covering. Credit: Honeycomb Strategies

15% TOTAL WASTE FROM CARPET

Standard aisle carpet and classic cut carpet by Freeman have recycled content and are washed for reuse on multiple events. Custom cut carpeting, and certain colors, especially white, are one-time-use and are sent to landfill. AAPEX should make responsible choices for its own use and educate exhibitors about the most sustainable choices available.

82% AISLE CARPET

While aisle carpet can be used multiple times before recycling, removing it altogether reduces the waste impact of the show without compromising the feel of the show as a business industrial hub.



83%

SINGLE-USE GRAPHIC SUBSTRATES

One-time use graphics refer to dated and/or branded materials that cannot be reused and materials that aren't physically durable enough for more than one use.

SIGNAGE

94,317.49

SQ FT OF SIGNAGE

The properties of signage substrates affect disposal numbers, costs and environmental impact.



AAPEX donated some Honeycomb board signage to local educators through The Venetian Expo.

Substrate	Sustainable Properties	Total Sq Ft Used	Percent of Total Signage
Fabric	One time use - Landfill or reusable	23,035.82	<div><div></div></div> 24.4%
Vinyl Banner	One time use - Landfill or reusable	22,923.59	<div><div></div></div> 24.3%
PVC	One time use - Landfill	21,354.15	<div><div></div></div> 22.6%
Cardstock & Honeycomb	Recyclable	12,016.67	<div><div></div></div> 12.7%
Decals	One time use - Landfill	4,038.15	<div><div></div></div> 4.3%
Foamcore/Polyfoam	One time use - Landfill or reusable	2,205.92	<div><div></div></div> 2.3%



24% STANDARD FABRIC SIGNAGE

Sponsored large fabric banners hung on many surfaces in the lobby and between the two floors. Most detailed AAPEX booth numbers and featured new innovations from the company, making them one time use. Designing for reuse is the best option but if that is not possible, bring in a hard to recycle hauler which can take fabric is the next best responsible option.



23% PVC GRAPHICS

Honeycomb Strategies observed that many exhibitors print their signage on a form of PVC which is harmful to manufacture and single-use, especially J Series booths that are predominantly international exhibitors from Asia. AAPEX has the opportunity to educate their participants on substrate choices, and provide that information in multiple languages for accessibility.



Vinyl banners Credit: AAPEX



17% RECYCLABLE SUBSTRATES

Recyclable graphics refer to items, branded or not, made from materials that are easily recyclable in municipal streams like cardboard, or which can be recycled through specialty disposal. It is assumed that all recyclable items were recycled as opposed to reused or trashed.



WATER & ENERGY



616,710 gallons of water

AAPEX is not a water heavy show. The water metric is a measure of consumption and resource impact. Efficient water use is largely a venue opportunity rather than a metric where AAPEX can make measurable change.



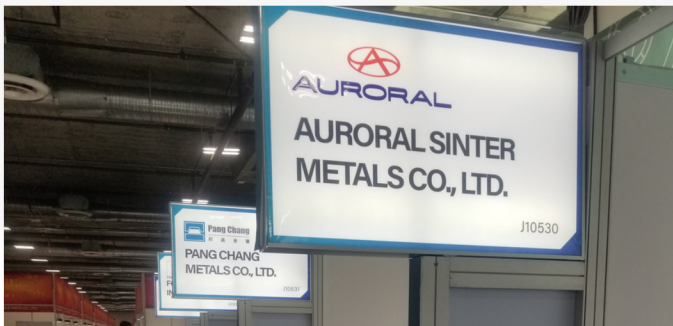
100% Electricity from RECs

The Venetian Expo uses electricity as well as natural gas for energy. The 280,287 kWh of energy used at the venue come from renewable resources which have a lower emissions than traditional energy.

The ballroom of the Venetian Expo.
Credit: AAPEX



Booth lighting and electronics contribute to the show's energy use. Encourage the use of LED lighting and introduce a power-down policy.



Lightboxes at some booths had inefficient lighting.
Credit: Honeycomb Strategies

Honeycomb Strategies heard concerns that screens would not turn on each morning after being powered down. Work with the AV team to ensure there is support for this tech concern.



SOCIAL IMPACTS

Truly sustainable events prioritize mental wellbeing, the pursuit of equity, and the inclusion of all persons.



For the first time in AAPEX history, distributors, manufacturers, tool and equipment providers and service professionals from around the country gathered in Joe's Garage to service and repair a vehicle on the show floor. At the close of AAPEX, a newly repaired 2013 Ford Edge was donated to a veteran through the Progressive Keys to Progress Veteran Vehicle Giveaway Program.



YANG UNDER 40

The Young Autocare Network Group provides mentorship for those who are passionate about their growth and development and well as a scholarship each year. AAPEX supported a fundraiser benefiting the Automotive Aftermarket Charitable Foundation (AACF).



WOMEN IN AUTOCARE

This organization celebrates female leaders, in a male dominated industry during a mainstage event.



AAPEX can go even further to introduce programming that attracts emerging talent, new registrants and lift industry representation.

Male 86%

Female 11.5%

Prefer not to answer 2.5%

AAPEX/SEMA breakdown



Create programs which showcase the job opportunities in the industry, like a job fair. Bring in local trade school students, veterans and formally incarnated people who may not know about the career opportunities within the industry.



11% of participants came from East and Southeast Asia

With such a large demographic coming from this region of the world, it can be good for morale, networking, and retention to help create a sense of belonging at AAPEX. Make sure culturally diverse foods are available from vendors, and translate signage into multiple languages.



Honeycomb Strategies heard from many exhibitors the frustrations from lack of water on the show floor. Just like there are sponsored phone charging stations, offer a sustainability sponsorship of water stations on the show floor to keep people hydrated.



PARTNERSHIPS

Sustainable efforts of any show are a continual work in progress and art of collaboration. MEMA Aftermarket Suppliers and the Auto Care Association have aligned with partners who will help AAPEX reduce the environmental impact of the show and increase the social impact on the community.



**HONEYCOMB
STRATEGIES**

YEAR 1 OF CARBON MEASUREMENT

AAPEX has partnered with Honeycomb Strategies to quantify AAPEX 2023 environment and social impact of the show. This report provides an understanding of the show's impacts and acts as a benchmark for improvement.



LEED VENUE SELECTION

Venue selection is the framework from which an event's impacts come. The Venetian Expo is centrally located, allowing many partner hotels to be less than 1 mile walking distance from the convention. The property is deeply invested in eco-friendly operations, focusing on waste reduction, resource conservation and the use of sustainable materials. The Venetian Expo boasts one of the highest recycling rates in Nevada and stands as an early achiever of APEX/ASTM advanced (Level 2) Green Venue certification.



FREEMAN NET 0 CARBON BY 2050

AAPEX partners with Freeman for expo and booth materials as well as logistics. Freeman has a commitment by 2030 to reduce GHG emissions by 50%. With both an ISO 14001 and ISO 20121 certification, Freeman guided BACE exhibitors through sustainable offerings while at the show.

BOUNDARIES & QUANTIFICATIONS

ENERGY USE

- The energy boundary consists of energy consumed during AAPEX and corresponding move-in/move-out periods.
 - The Venetian Expo: Total energy consumption includes purchased electricity (including RECs) and was reported through a proportion of the bill and a direct meter read of natural gas consumption.
 - Energy use from fuel burning from participant travel to/from the destination, and mobile fuels from other vehicles operated by the venues or third parties were not included in the energy footprint (but are included in the GHG emissions calculations).

CARBON EMISSIONS

Included in the total carbon footprint number reported.

- Travel to the destination by 93,191 registered participants (exhibitors, media, buyers, staff, vendors)
 - Participants were assigned a round trip distance based on the characteristics and layout of departure city. Mode of travel includes car and plane (domestic, mid-range, international, international with second leg of flight).
- Ground shuttles for travel between AAPEX and SEMA
- Estimated mobile fuel combustion of freight:
 - General contractor/show management deliveries
 - Exhibitor freight sent from advanced warehouse to The Venetian Expo
 - Marshaling yard trucks and trailers used to support AAPEX
 - Propane used by forklifts during AAPEX
- GHG emissions per occupied room for hotels within the contracted room block
- GHG emissions for waste streams from data provided by The Venetian Expo
- The number of vegetarian and non-vegetarian meals catered by AAPEX

The following are not included in the total carbon footprint number reported.

- Ground transportation by participants from airport(s) to The Venetian Expo

QUANTIFICATION

- Energy emissions at venues from US EPA "Emission Factors for GHG Inventories" (March 2020 update)
- Emission factors for electricity consumption at venues obtained from EPA eGRID Year 2021 summary tables
- Emissions from electricity generated by renewable sources is assumed to have zero emissions.
- Emission factors for stationary fuel burning obtained from the World Resources Institute stationary combustion tool 4.0
- Air Travel UK Govt. GHG Conversion Factors for Company Reporting (2023 version) - no radiative forcing applied
- Other participant carbon offsets were calculated separately from the total GHG emissions value
- Hotel Carbon Measurement Initiative, using occupied hotel room night data provided, metrics per the Cornell Hotel Sustainability Benchmarking research report published 2023
- Emission factors obtained from the US EPA Waste Reduction Model (WARM) Version 15
- Water, energy, and waste impact average comparisons are based on Honeycomb Strategies client portfolio event data from trade shows of similar size in both attendance and exhibit hall square footage across the United States

THANK YOU

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