



Joe's Wine Cellar

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Why did your business decide to adopt action items from the 10 Simple Things Checklist? Was the motivation financial, or perhaps related to an environmental issue of personal or business concern?



The motivation was both financial and environmental. Also, I think it's the right thing to do.

During our build-out, we wanted to get down to the bare brick walls. So staying with an industrial look that uses woods and metals aesthetically made sense. Everything we used turned out to be reused or recycled, and so we kind of went with that idea and built everything around it.

People appreciate the aesthetics of the place – I think you can be environmentally aware and still end up with a place that people think is cool, nice, and functional.

What are some of the action items that you chose?



We put in all LED lighting from the get-go. Educating employees regarding recycling and energy efficiency was another thing we did right away.

As far as water, our toilets are low flush, because they are new. We also have automatic shutoffs in the bathrooms for hand washing. Those were two easy ones that we did.



Please provide an example of how one of the action items you implemented makes financial sense for your business.



Our highly energy-efficient equipment probably resulted in the greatest return on investment.

My guess is when we look at our electrical bill, we probably save about 20% compared with a similar business type with a similar space.



Are there any WPB businesses that helped you implement your action items? If so, which businesses and how were they helpful?



Members of the WPBCC Green Committee, including Wayne Janik and Joe Bettencourt, were very helpful from an informational standpoint when they came to certify the business with Green Status.

We focus on getting wine, cheeses, beers, and spirits from local Chicago and Illinois businesses, and make it a priority to buy U.S.-made, when we have the chance.



What is one piece of advice you would like to give other businesses that may be considering the opportunities and challenges of action items on the 10 Simple Things Checklist?



The big thing is that environmental awareness is only going to increase over time. My guess is businesses that aren't green will start to become the minority - instead of the other way around. Something to keep in mind, if you want to be ahead of the curve.

My advice to others would be that there are clear financial benefits associated with higher efficiency. So when equipment needs to be changed, that's when you need to take increased efficiency into consideration when making the decision on whether to replace it with a more efficient model. It makes good business sense in the long run.

