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Belgian EU Ecolabel campaign: plant a flower and pick a prize

From 1 September until 6 October, as part of the EU Ecolabel Month 2011, a massive communication campaign will draw Belgian consumers' attention towards the EU Ecolabel. The campaign is organised by the Belgian Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment. It aims to improve awareness about the EU Ecolabel, as well as raise sales of EU Ecolabel products. The original concept of the campaign, along with the 10,000 EU Ecolabel products that can be won, will certainly give the EU Ecolabel's image a huge boost in Belgium.

According to the April 2009 [Eurobarometer study](#), the EU Ecolabel is still unknown to most Belgians; only 36% of the Belgian population is aware of its existence. A mere 16,1% of all Belgians buy ecolabelled products on a regular basis. This is one good reason for the Belgian authorities to effectively introduce the EU Ecolabel to its population.

The campaign revolves predominantly around an online contest. People can answer a few simple questions about the EU Ecolabel after which a flower will be awarded to them. Contestants will then be able to track their flower through the campaign website or their own Facebook account. Once the flower blossoms, contestants will know what they have won based on the colour of the flower. Even though the contest itself is held online, the flowers are grown in a real greenhouse. The greenhouse itself is not to be visited by contestants, but the website



The visuals for the EU Ecolabel Communication campaign

www.ecolabel.be provides an insider's glimpse at the evolution of the vast field of flowers as well as a view on the growth of the contestants' individual flower.

And the prizes are impressive! Exactly 10,000 EU Ecolabel products can be won, such as television sets, home makeovers with free paint and a colour consultant, detergents, towels, shampoos etc. Not only will these prizes attract a lot of attention, but they will also demonstrate the variety of existing EU Ecolabel products. Moreover, Belgian retailers guarantee to support the campaign, by offering free products and promoting the campaign through their own promotional materials and websites.

The contest will be supported by a media campaign. A few print advertisements are planned. However, the main focus is on new and social media. The EU Ecolabel in Belgium will get its own Facebook and Twitter accounts, bringing it to a whole new group of consumers. So if you are living in Belgium, look out for this ambitious EU Ecolabel campaign!

For further details, please visit the website www.ecolabel.be.

Hotel la Perouse shares its experience about being green

Hotel La Perouse is an independent tourist accommodation located in the city centre of Nantes, western France, and stands out for its commitment to the environment and sustainable development. It was one of the first hotels in the region to be awarded the EU Ecolabel in 2007 and its licence was recently renewed. After four years of working with the EU Ecolabel, the hotel Director, Gilles Cibert, can clearly see the improvements it has brought to his business and shares his experience:

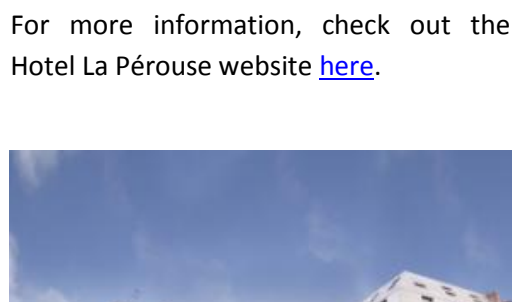
"When we decided to implement an ambitious environmental policy in 2007, we were mainly thinking about water consumption and energy savings." To get the EU Ecolabel, however, the hotel had to fulfill 37 mandatory criteria and 47 optional criteria covering various domains, in order to obtain the minimum number of points. For instance, one of the most demanding measures for the hotel was simply to stop the use of all individually-packaged products that are so common in tourist accommodations: soaps, shampoos, shower gels, and so on. It seemed obvious to the hotel team that the EU Ecolabel was right in that the hotel should stop using disposable bathroom products. After a customer's stay, an average of 21 grammes remain on a 25 gramme bar of soap. Over the course of one year, this creates almost one ton of waste! However, the hotel team did not know if customers were ready for a change like this. The hotel decided to conduct an online survey, which concluded that 75% of customers would be willing to be provided liquid soap dispensers as opposed to individually-sized portions. After Hotel La Pérouse received the EU Ecolabel in 2007, waste generation was reduced by 50%, decreasing from 9.2 tons per year to 4.5. Now that the hotel's Ecolabel license has been renewed, waste generation has

been reduced by an additional 500 kilograms per year.

Many other unexpected benefits came with the hotel's eco-friendly modifications; using cleaning products which are less harmful to the environment is also good for the employees' health; refilling the dispensers from bulk containers of '3-in-1' all-purpose soap instead of small samples helped to significantly save space. The hotel now uses bed sheets made of finer cotton that weighs less and requires less water and energy to be washed. Overall, the hotel's changes have had a positive influence on the staff morale!"

The EU Ecolabel is used on a great variety of products, and in that sense, it effectively validates businesses' environmental approach. According to Mr. Cibert, this label is renowned for its quality by the general European audience, so receiving certification is considered very rewarding, but also very demanding. Indeed, it requires the recipient to seriously reconsider the operation of the hotel. Hotel La Pérouse is a good example of how the EU Ecolabel can be a powerful tool for businesses to constantly improve their performance on all sustainable development aspects, while continuing to satisfy the needs of their clients and employees.

For more information, check out the Hotel La Pérouse website [here](#).



Hotel La Pérouse

Agenda and other issues

Until **30 September**, licence holders can submit their application for the **EU Ecolabel Communication Award 2011**. The award aims at recognising holders with outstanding achievement in increasing public awareness and knowledge of the EU Ecolabel through their promotional campaigns. Further information is available [here](#).

Between **mid-September and mid-October** the EU Ecolabel Month 2011 will take place. A wide range of activities are organised in the different participating Member States to promote the EU Ecolabel. Please check with your local [Competent Body](#) for events planned in your country.

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