

Sustainability Report APRIL 2023

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Introduction

How the IT Sector Impacts the Environment

On a global scale, the IT sector is widely acknowledged as a major contributor to global carbon emissions with its rapid growth and ever-increasing demand for electronic devices and data centers. Hence, it's crucial for businesses in the sector to assess their environmental impact and implement strategies on the way to sustainable management and carbon offsetting. As part of that global industry, we at Site-Ground have always been conscious of the impact we have on the environment and have always worked to mitigate our carbon footprint by taking responsible actions towards sustainable operations and hosting services. As one of the leaders in the hosting field, we are accountable for the infrastructure that powers over 2,800,000+ websites worldwide. Being environmentally responsible is not just for our community and our business, but for millions of businesses all around the globe.

About This Report

At SiteGround, we strive to build and scale sustainable website hosting environments for our clients, a sustainable work environment for our employees and a responsible social environment for our community.

In this report, we will cover various aspects of our sustainability strategy towards reducing our environmental impact and hosting a better tomorrow from providing green hosting services to genuinely caring about the well-being of our employees, our communities, our cities, our society, and our Planet.



Growing Sustainability-Focused



Infrastructure 100% Renewable Energy Match

Our Data Center Infrastructure is entirely based on Google Cloud Platform. Google is recognized as a carbon-neutral platform, matching 100% of its energy consumption with renewable sources like wind and solar.



Clients

Joined Forces for a Brighter Future

We are committed to constantly innovating our services to provide sustainable business solutions to all our clients, and help reduce their carbon footprint online. As part of our efforts to ensure a sustainable future, we also engage our customers in our eco-friendly initiatives.



Employees Fostering a Healthy Environment

At SiteGround, we believe that people and nature are interconnected, and that investing in one means investing in both. Our philosophy is centered around creating a workplace that nurtures the well-being of our employees while also being mindful of our impact on the environment.



Environment Earth-Driven Ideology

Our core values are caring for each other and the environment. We lead by example, fostering a culture of responsibility and care for people and nature to create a brighter future.





Environmentally Responsible Service From the Ground Up

As a leading global web hosting provider, we at SiteGround, have always prioritized operating in an environmentally responsible manner. Through the years we have implemented numerous service and product innovations towards reducing our and our clients' impact on the Planet.

Our major step to operational improvements is **moving to Google Cloud platform** in 2020. Back in the day, we were looking for both a data center provider that applies innovative technologies, and a like-minded partner in terms of commitment to sustainability. A major factor in our final selection was that Google Cloud platform matches 100% of the energy consumed by their global operations with renewable energy and maintains a commitment to carbon neutrality.



More Efficient Data Centers

Our partnership with **Google** is part of our dedication to investing in sustainable infrastructure. Google has taken significant measures toward sustainability, one of which is enhancing the efficiency of its data centers. The efficiency of a data center is determined by a metric known as Power Usage Effectiveness (PUE), which evaluates the amount of energy used by the computer equipment. A typical data center has a lot of equipment, including chillers, cooling towers, water pumps, and control systems, all of which consume a significant amount of energy. To address this issue, Google employs smart cooling techniques, such as evaporative cooling or outside air, instead of mechanical chillers. Additionally, they reduce energy usage by implementing smart temperature and lighting controls in their facilities. Their servers are also custom-designed to minimize energy consumption. By implementing various energy-saving measures, Google has managed to reduce its PUE, indicating an improvement in data center efficiency.

By partnering with Google and relying on their ongoing data center energy minimization initiatives, we get reduced server energy right away, providing a sustainable and planet-focused service.



Source: Google

100% Energy Match & Net Zero Strategy

Google has been carbon neutral since 2007 and achieved a significant milestone in 2017 by becoming the first company to match 100% of its annual electricity consumption. In 2021, Google took a step further towards sustainability by aiming to use only clean energy for its data centers. The company has set an ambitious goal of achieving net-zero emissions and 24/7 carbon-free energy by the year 2030.

We are proud to partner with a company whose goal is to completely decarbonize its electricity supply and make 24/7 clean energy a reality for us and our clients.



Optimizing Resources Through Innovative Technologies

More efficient hosting services are another pillar of our green hosting. Every operation of a website is executed by a hosting server, which requires CPU, RAM and storage resources. The more resources required, the longer the server is in use, and the more energy consumed.

To reduce the environmental impact of our clients' websites, we constantly optimize our server software and develop powerful tools to maximize efficiency and minimize resource usage. Some of them are our custom PHP implementation that cuts the TTFB (time to first byte) and improves page load by up to 30%, our SuperCacher, which enables full-page caching and has been shown to speed up websites by up to 500%, and our in-house built CDN that caches and replicates website content across multiple servers on four continents.

We also optimize our internal operations for maximum efficiency by performing regular backups during periods of low server resource usage to avoid adding extra load on the server processors, thus balancing energy consumption.

By providing access to environmentally responsible website technologies, we help our clients achieve top website performance while fostering sustainable web practices. Our commitment to providing top-notch technologies for website efficiency not only helps our clients succeed online, but also reduces the environmental footprint of their websites.





Sustainable Service Out-of-the-Box

Being accountable to our Planet is a core value of our company. Our commitment goes beyond offering web hosting services - we are dedicated to delivering a sustainable solution that powers millions of online businesses worldwide.

Throughout our company's growth, we have remained conscious of our business's impact on the Planet, as well as the impact of every website hosted on our servers. We firmly believe that eco-friendly online businesses rely on sustainable web hosting services.

Our sustainable-first approach not only benefits the environment but also provides our clients with an eco-friendly foundation for their online business. By choosing our services, our clients are joining our green mission for a better future. By prioritizing our love for people and nature, we aim to inspire not only our clients, but everyone around us to live a more conscious and responsible life.



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Website Carbon Footprint Calculator

Our efforts to power sustainable websites do not imply that our clients' websites do not produce CO2. In fact, every website has an impact on the environment, but unoptimized websites produce a significantly higher amount of carbon.

To spread awareness about what environmental consequences websites have, in 2022, we launched our carbon footprint calculator. It enables website owners to assess their site's CO2 emissions and provides them with valuable insights about website carbon footprint. In order to lower their website's CO2 footprint, we provide personalized website optimization tips.



Reducing Carbon Footprint Webinar



To continue our efforts to educate our audience about digital carbon footprint, we are launching multiple initiatives to raise awareness and suggest more environmental-friendly solutions. We collaborated with environmental advocate Michelle Li, a SiteGround client and an inspiring activist for a carbon literate society. Together, we hosted a captivating webinar on "Reducing Your Carbon Footprint."



During the webinar, we shared practical tips and actionable strategies for reducing personal and website footprint. From energy-saving techniques to carbon offsetting solutions, we explored every avenue to help people make clever carbon decisions for themselves and the Planet.

Carbon-Offset Reforestation

Providing our clients with a sustainable service and making sure they receive the latest website optimization tips in order to reduce their carbon footprint is part of our operations as a whole, but at the end of 2022, we decided to go bigger.

At the end of every year, we conduct our traditional client satisfaction survey to gather first-hand feedback from our clients. In 2022 we decided to take this a step further by not only using our clients' feedback to improve our services, but also as an opportunity to contribute to our Planet. For every client who completed our survey, we pledged to plant a tree on their behalf. This led us to the creation of our **SiteGround forest** - a thriving forest consisting of over 11,000 trees planted in various locations around the world, including USA, Spain, Portugal, France, Indonesia, and Madagascar.

We believe that this initiative not only helps to reduce our carbon footprint, but also allows our clients to actively participate in making a positive impact on the environment.







Green Offices

We envision the world as a place where we must be responsible to both people and nature. The driving force behind our team is rooted in our shared values of compassion for one another and the world around us. SiteGround's principles are based on the belief that we have the power to shape the world we live in, and we aim to inspire each member of our team to embrace greater responsibility towards the environment. We believe that change begins with us, and we strive to lead by example.

At the core of our values has always been investing in the comfort and well-being of our team, and building a workplace that upholds our responsibility to people and the environment.

To cultivate a greener workplace, we've incorporated innovative systems for energy efficiency and a zero-waste-oriented culture.



Office Plovdiv, Bulgaria

















Green Building Certification



In 2019 we opened our Headquarters building in Sofia, Bulgaria. Our aim was to not just build our own office, but a second home for our team members with a focus on people and the environment. We've incorporated nature into our indoor environment in order to create a place that increases our well-being and productivity. Our second goal was to build an office that is environmentally friendly at its base, in accordance with LEED requirements, which set the standard for eco-friendly building practices around the world. Today, we can proudly say that both our goals are achieved, as our Headquarters building is a place where together we continue to grow and innovate, and the building itself is LEED Gold certified.







Reduced Energy Consumption & Renewable Energy

Our HQ building makes use of renewable energy systems, like solar thermal collectors and heat recovery systems, to convert wasted energy into hot water. These systems capture the energy that is usually lost by HVAC systems or during industrial processing and transform it into heat that is used for hot water. This significantly lowers the amount of energy needed to produce hot water, while also reducing the overall energy consumption of our building. We have also implemented an innovative building management system that automates energy-saving measures and monitors building energy efficiency in realtime. With it, we easily identify any issues or areas of energy waste and reduce energy consumption.

Zero-Waste Culture

The effort we put into constructing an environmentally-sustainable workplace would be in vain if we failed to maintain ongoing responsible practices. At SiteGround, we are committed to a zero-waste-oriented mindset that fosters a sense of community and responsibility towards our Planet.

To reduce plastic waste, we have eliminated the use of plastic water bottles, containers, and coolers in our offices. Instead, we have installed water filter dispensers to provide drinking water, reducing our reliance on single-use plastics.

Our annual team building events also reflect our commitment to minimum waste: on our latest outdoor team festivals, we banned the use of single-use plastics, implemented on-site waste separation and recycling, and tried to integrate the zero-waste philosophy into all of our team workshops and activities throughout the event.



Waste Management

We have implemented a waste management system at all our offices, which includes waste separation and recycling. On each of our 8 floors in our HQ, we have five designated containers for segregation and we ensure that the waste is directed to specialized containers and recycling facilities after leaving our offices.





Healthier, More Sustainable Workplaces

Our commitment to sustainability is embedded in every aspect of our operations. We believe that a healthy and happy work environment is crucial for our employees' well-being and productivity.

To achieve this, we've incorporated natural elements into our office design. All our offices provide access to outdoor views and abundant natural light, proven to increase productivity and happiness. Additionally, we've introduced wooden materials and green walls with Scandinavian moss to bring a touch of nature indoors. Our LEED Gold Headquarters, located on the outskirts of Sofia, was strategically positioned to maximize the stunning mountain views.











Purified Air

In 2020 and 2021, during the breakout of the COVID-19 pandemic, we've taken all necessary measures to ensure the safety and health of our employees. In the time of fully remote work, we used the opportunity to renovate our offices and implement innovative systems to enhance comfort and safety. The most significant one was the unique JONIX plasma technology we incorporated into the air-filtration system of our office building. This powerful technology continuously sanitizes and decontaminates the air throughout the entire building. Typically found only in medical facilities, our office is one of the first commercial buildings in Europe to leverage this technology on such a large scale in a public environment. It means the air in our 10 000 sq.m workspace is constantly purified and sanitized, similar to the environment in medical facilities, so even if any virus particles end up in the air, they are quickly neutralized by our state-of-the-art JONIX plasma filters.



Encouraging an Active Lifestyle

At SiteGround, we view physical activity as the cornerstone of a healthy and fulfilling life. We hold the firm belief that encouraging an active lifestyle is a key component of fostering both the physical and mental well-being of our employees.

In order to achieve this goal, we are glad to offer a variety of initiatives that encourage sports activities within our company. We provide free full-coverage sports cards to our team members, enabling them to access a diverse range of sports activities and facilities in each city in which we have an office.

Furthermore, we are happy to support several sports events that allow our employees to engage in friendly competitions and demonstrate their athletic abilities: two times a year we hold an internal GetFit challenge for employees, encouraging them to form teams and get more active by competing in different activities, such as running, cycling, and working out. Hundreds of team members take part in each challenge every year, and report that this alone has inspired them to instill more time to be active in their daily lives even after the challenges are over. To motivate even more team members to get involved each year, besides the prizes for best team results and top performers, we add a cause we support financially for every person who signs up to participate in the challenge.

















In 2021, we went even further in our commitment to promoting an active lifestyle, as we opened our very own fitness center at our HQ building. This part of our office has a variety of amenities, including fitness equipment, yoga and Pilates studios, and even table tennis and PRAMA training areas. By providing these diverse options, we ensure that our team members have access to different exercise choices, enabling them to tailor their fitness routine to their individual preferences and needs.

Through these efforts, we remain steadfast in our dedication to fostering a culture of physical activity and wellness within our company. We firmly believe that investing in the health and happiness of our employees is not only the right thing to do but also a vital component of building a sustainable future.





Green Commuting

As part of our ongoing efforts to promote sustainability, we know that being kind to the environment isn't limited to the workplace. Our eco-conscious travel approach includes e-shuttle buses from the nearest public transport station to our HQ to encourage our employees to use public transit to get to the office. To complement this, we encourage switching to electric means of transportation, by providing free charging stations, accessible to all employees 24/7. Following this benefit, we inspired many of our employees to consider electric cars for their own personal use, thereby reducing their carbon footprint and promoting a more sustainable future.

Eco-Conscious Values from Day One

At SiteGround, we encourage environmentally-friendly practices from the very start of our employees' journey with us. Each new team member is greeted with a special welcome package that embodies our eco-friendly values. We partner with **Noissue's Eco-Packaging Alliance** to create custom-designed, eco-friendly packaging for all SiteGround-branded gifts and packages. With every order placed, Noissue plants a new tree, helping to promote global reforestation and carbon neutrality. Not only do we prioritize sustainable packaging, but we also strive to include thoughtful, reusable gifts in our welcome, anniversary, and holiday packages. New SiteGround employees' gifts included a reusable water bottle as part of their welcome package to encourage them to stay hydrated and reduce plastic waste, we give away reusable cups as gifts during our team-building events, and more.





We believe that sharing is caring, and charity and volunteering have always been a big part of our company culture and values. Over the years we have participated in numerous initiatives including financial support, providing free hosting services, and volunteering. At SiteGround, we are committed to making a difference in the world by regularly supporting a variety of charitable causes.

Change Starts With Each One of Us

The path towards a sustainable future begins with the adoption of sustainable practices. At SiteGround, we strongly believe that we have the power to shape the world we live in. This belief is reflected in one of our core values -"Do everything with care" - which guides us to prioritize responsible and sustainable actions in all aspects of our business.

As a company, we recognize the importance of sharing knowledge and information to drive positive change. That's why we actively encourage our employees to share socially-responsible causes that they care about and are in need of support. In addition, we have established an internal initiative known as "Host a Cause". The program aims to inspire our team members to assist NGOs that they are passionate about by enhancing their online presence. Each member of SiteGround has the opportunity to select a non-profit organization, project, or foundation to support by providing them with a lifetime free website hosting account. We believe that sharing is caring, and that by identifying and implementing sustainable solutions together, we can have a tremendous influence on saving our world.

Our commitment lies in fostering an environment where every individual is empowered to make a positive impact towards creating a sustainable future.



Planting the Seeds of a Greener Future

We try to involve the SiteGround team hands-on as much as we can. In 2022, we participated in multiple forestation initiatives throughout the month of April, to coincide with international Earth Day and Earth Hour. Our teams from Sofia, Plovdiv, Stara Zagora, and Madrid joined forces to plant over 1300 trees, bringing new life to our Planet. In May, we continued our mission to grow a greener future by planting more than 170 saplings. Through our Earth Day and ongoing afforestation projects, we strive to inspire others to join us in creating a more sustainable future. At SiteGround, we are committed to doing our part to protect our Planet and ensure a better tomorrow for generations to come.



Cleaning Up Our Act

Taking care of the Earth starts with taking care of the environment around us. This is hy, every year, the SiteGround team participates in World Cleanup Day, and 2022 wasn't an exception. We joined forces with volunteers from Sofia, Plovdiv and Stara Zagora to clean up the Batak Dam in our home country of Bulgaria, a beloved destination for our teambuilding and off-site events.

The Batak Dam is a stunning natural area that provides a habitat for a variety of wildlife, and we recognize the importance of preserving its beauty and ecological health. That's why we were eager to roll up our sleeves and do our part to ensure that this special place remains a source of enjoyment for generations to come.

On World Cleanup Day, we worked alongside our fellow volunteers to collect and properly dispose of litter and debris that had accumulated around the Batak Dam. Despite the hard work, we felt a great sense of satisfaction and pride in knowing that we were doing something positive for the Earth.







Protecting Our Feathered Friends

What started as an employee-driven initiative and part of our Host-a-Cause program extended to a long-term partnership and **support to the Green Balkans** organization, a prominent force dedicated to conserving rare species in Bulgaria. For more than three years, we have been providing Green Balkans with free website hosting services, but we also contribute to their mission at a company level.

Green Balkans has been working tirelessly for almost three decades to reintroduce the bird species of Cinereous Vulture back to Bulgaria. This bird of prey is not only the largest in Europe but also extinct in Bulgaria, making it a crucial part of the country's biodiversity. Thanks to our support through the "Bright Future for Black Vulture" program, two Black Vulture couples were settled in Bulgaria for the first time in 30 years. However, for the complete recovery of this extinct species, Green Balkans needed more support. To aid their efforts, we launched an internal donation campaign, allowing every SiteGrounder to contribute an amount of their choice, which SiteGround then doubled. As adopters, we had the privilege of naming one of the special birds and receiving signals of its location through Green Balkans' tracking system once it lives freely and safely in our regions.

A few weeks later, we received the exciting news that our adopted bird had a baby, and we had the honor of naming it. We named the bird Avalon after one of our internal systems.



Support for the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds

Protecting rare species is essential to preserving our Planet's biodiversity. Therefore, as part of our commitment to environmental conservation, we also partnered with the **Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds** to support the conservation of vultures.

Vultures are a protected species, and their survival is essential for maintaining a balanced ecosystem. Unfortunately, due to habitat loss and hunting, vultures have become increasingly rare in Bulgaria. That's why we have decided to sponsor a year-long camera that broadcasts live from a vulture's nest, allowing people to observe how these magnificent creatures come together and create a new generation.



Protecting Our Bees and Pollinator Population

Our efforts to preserve the delicate balance of ecosystems continued with our support for the "True Honey" platform. "True Honey" is committed to promoting sustainable beekeeping practices among Bulgarian beekeepers, utilizing advanced sensor technology to monitor the health and productivity of the bees. Their aim is to provide consumers with 100% pure honey of guaranteed quality and origin.

We've taken on the role of proud adopters of several beehives. The **SiteGround beehives** currently house over 60,000 pollinators that play a critical role in maintaining our Planet's ecosystems. In 2022, we celebrated World Bee Day by visiting our SiteGround beehives and actively participating in the honey harvesting process. Through our support for local Bulgarian beekeepers, we aim to promote the increase of bee populations while also focusing on the preservation of honey bees.







Supporting Foster Animals for National Pet Day

At SiteGround, we firmly believe that every animal deserves a loving home and proper care. Our pet friends bring us joy, love, and companionship, and have a significant influence on our mental health and happiness, and we want to ensure that they receive the care and attention they deserve. We decided to show our gratitude to the ones that brighten our homes on National Pet Day. We opted to give our employees' pets customized Site-Ground swag with a cause.

For that purpose, we partnered with two animal foundations that are close to our hearts - Ador Barador & Dare2CareAnimals. Ador Barador is a non-profit organization dedicated to rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming stray and abandoned dogs in Bulgaria. Dare2CareAnimals is another foundation committed to helping animals in need, providing rescue, veterinary care, and adoption services for stray animals in Malta. They also focus on promoting responsible pet ownership and preventing animal cruelty through education and awareness campaigns. By supporting their mission, we hope to make a meaningful impact on the lives of animals and inspire others to do the same.





Keeping the Mountain Spirit Safe

The preservation of the environment is at the heart of our continuing efforts to create a better future, but we also recognize the significance of fostering a lasting connection between humans and the natural world. Amidst our fast-paced daily lives, we often forget to reconnect with nature. In line with our commitment to sustainability, we support various initiatives that promote a safe reconnection with nature while preserving the natural beauty of the Bulgarian Mountains.

One of our recent initiatives involved supporting the Bulgarian Organization of Chalets with Observation by equipping the Balkaniti, Septemvri, and Malyovitsa huts with internet and webcams. This equipment enables the organization to monitor the conditions in these remote mountain areas and enhance the safety of hikers and climbers.

Furthermore, we supported the Mountain Rescue Service at the Bulgarian Red Cross by funding the purchase of the first and only three RECCO detectors in Bulgaria. These detectors are vital in detecting people trapped by avalanches and will enable rescue teams to locate individuals more quickly and save more lives.

We also contributed to the renovation of the Kazana shelter in Pirin, a critical rescue operation hub in the mountains. The shelter provides a safe haven for hikers and climbers in case of emergency, and the renovation ensures its continued operation for years to come.

Additionally, during our end-of-year donations, we supported the **Eho hut**, known for its breathtaking mountain views. The Hut needed a replacement of traction batteries and additional photovoltaic panels, so we joined forces to raise the remaining funds needed to purchase the necessary tools to provide electricity during winter.

Through these initiatives, we aim to bring back the mountain spirit and preserve the natural beauty of Bulgaria's mountains.







Pursuing New Causes for a Sustainable Future

We have a long-standing tradition of hosting a charity campaign every Christmas and in order to ensure that we support causes and projects with a lasting impact, we are partnering with the biggest online donation platform in Bulgaria - Platformata. Our annual charity campaign allows our employees to donate as much as they desire, to any of the causes we have selected from the platform, and then SiteGround doubles the amount and donates it to the selected causes.









Record-Breaking Ocean Rowing Mission to Protect the Southern Ocean

- First human-powered expedition on the Southern Ocean South to North
- First human-powered expedition on the Scotia Sea
- Southernmost start of a rowing expedition
- Fastest row on the Southern Ocean
- Fastest Polar row



Most of the projects we support have as their end-goal to make a lasting impact on the Planet, our environment and biodiversity, and our local communities. But one of them stands out, since it went on to win 6 Guinness world records on its way to raise awareness about protecting the Southern Ocean's pristine marine environment and preventing its overexploitation. The Shekleton Mission from 2023 represented the first-ever human-powered rowing expedition from Antarctica. The mission was led by a team of 6 explorers and adventurers from 5 different countries. On January 11, 2023, they departed from the Antarctic King George Island to South Georgia Island aboard their boat, Mrs Chippy, covering 850 nautical miles in six days, passing through one of



the world's most dreaded bits of ocean. By doing this, the crew won 6 Guinness World Records, including the first human-powered expedition from Antarctica, the fastest row on the Southern Ocean, and the Southernmost start of a rowing expedition. SiteGround was a proud main sponsor of the adventure, hoping to help achieve their noble cause and protect the Southern Ocean.

Despite its seemingly small size, The Shackleton mission represents a colossal stride for the Planet. Its success not only proves that, with the right team and support, anything is possible, but also that united you can strive for a greater goal – to prevent the overexploitation of the pristine marine environment of Antarctica through a petition to designate new marine protected areas of at least 4,000,000 km2 in the Southern Ocean, the largest marine protection in history. Signing the petition can help prevent the extinction of over 90% of large marine species in the oceans.







Conclusion

Our vision of the future as a leading web hosting provider aligns with our commitment to sustainability. A key aspect of our sustainability efforts has always been providing businesses with environmentally responsible services and growth methods online. We believe that by offering our clients sustainable solutions, we can help them achieve their goals while minimizing their impact on the environment. As we keep on growing as a company, we remain committed to our vision of sustainability. We will continue to develop and discover innovative methods to lessen our environmental impact while providing our customers with the highest quality services.

Our mission is straightforward: to create a better future for people, the web, and the Earth.

