

Green Entrepreneurship

Successful business cases of Green Entrepreneurs in the Mediterranean



Regional Activity Centre
for Cleaner Production



Vigilius Mountain Resort: A wooden hotel in Alto Adige with a strong ecological spirit

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Name:	Vigilius Mountain Resort
City, country:	Lana, Italy
Name of entrepreneur/ founder:	Ulrich Ladurner

Description The Vigilius Mountain Resort is a wooden hotel that reflects from its very beginning a strong ecological spirit. It is felt in every part, from the respect for the environment and nature in which the resort is inserted, to the type of building, as close to nature as possible, making the best use of resources present in the area.

Investment Not available.

Stakeholders Entrepreneur Ulrich Ladurner, Architect Matteo Thun, Surveyor Peter Nösslinger.

Employment generation The company currently has 50 employees.

Timeline “Eco” and not “ego”: this is the philosophy that inspired the architect Matteo Thun. The special, unique place in which the Vigilius Mountain Resort was inserted could not be in any way damaged by an architecture disrespectful to the surrounding environment. At the Vigilius Mountain Resort the boundary between nature and architecture is barely perceptible. The landscape is the true starting point, it does not act as a mere background or frame. The building made of wood and glass looks like a tree trunk lying on the back of the mountain. The choice of materials from renewable sources reflects the Resort’s philosophy and ethics.

Feasibility study The optimization and control of combustion, combined with the filtration of exhaust gases, allow to minimise the production of harmful emissions. Between 1,200 and 1,400 cubic meters of wood chips are burned annually, which amount, depending on the quality of the chips, to a quantity of fuel equal to 120,000 – 140,000 litres: translated into currency, this means saving around EUR 65,000 every year.

Geo-social-economic setting Not available.

Key features One thing was made clear from the outset: the Resort would not use fuels such as oil or gas to produce heat, but biomass. Wood chips are supplied directly from farmers who, while gaining access to a further source of income, also take care of the forest.

Overall rational and motivation Not available.

Strenghts	<p>To create a greater sense of well being inside the building, radiant heating technology was chosen. With this type of system the heat is spread in the rooms through the walls, while in the bathrooms the heat radiates from the floor. A controlled ventilation system in all spaces ensures excellent air quality.</p> <p>The building's central system lets you adjust and control all functions through a BUS cable system. In this way alarms, faults or incorrect values can be detected and corrected at any time through a graphical system managed by a central computer.</p> <p>A project aiming at low energy consumption, characterized by its location, construction and materials, should be widely adopted in the field of hotel and housing construction. It should also be considered a prime example of twenty-first century avant-garde architecture, where the energy demand and consumption aspects of a building during the planning and design stages are not improvised, but rather taken very seriously.</p>
Challenges and constraints	<p>There are no roads that can reach the hotel, thus no noise or exhaust gas: the guest is met by the embrace of silence and nature.</p>
Direct activities and Impacts	<p>From the cable car, it is difficult to tell the building apart from the nature that surrounds it. The wood and glass facade of the hotel blends harmoniously into the landscape made up of woods, mountains and small valleys. The visible part of Vigilius is in larch wood. The clay plaster, which was adopted for indoor and outdoor use, as well as the unfinished clay walls, give the building a very personal artistic aspect and create a unique atmosphere in which natural elements come to the fore.</p>
Use of innovative Technologies	<p>Due to the high thermal quality, both within and outside the building, heat-loss is very low and heat demand is highly reduced, despite the fact that the hotel is in an exposed area, with large windows and needing higher temperatures in the pool and spa areas. In summer there is no risk of overheating because the building was designed to ensure adequate sun protection, thanks to its wooden strips frame and to various heat storage and ventilation units. The completely airtight construction prevents the formation of any drafts.</p>
Evidence of a holistic approach/world view	<p>Not available.</p>
Scale of benefits	<p>Not available.</p>
Policies, incentives and regulations needed	<p>Not available.</p>

Lessons and recommendations

The Vigilius Mountain Resort has received several awards as a prime example of sustainable tourism particularly sensitive to environmental issues.

In 2005 the jury of the WWF Italy “Golden Panda” prize gave the Vigilius Mountain Resort, a 5-stars design hotel, the special recognition “Friend of the climate”. In the same year, the hotel was granted the first –and so far the only– “Class A - House climate” certification, due to its high energy standards that allow consumption of less than 30 kWh (kilowatt-hours) per square meter per year and to the adoption of highly innovative technological systems.

In 2006 Vigilius received from the main Italian environmental association “Legambiente” the prestigious “Award for environmentally-friendly innovation” .

In 2009, “Eco Hotels of the World” awarded Vigilius the maximum score: 5 green stars.

In the summer of 2010 The Vigilius Mountain Resort obtained the environmental certification ISO 14001. The certificate attests that the resort embraces the highest standards in terms of environmental protection and has played a pioneering role in the hospitality industry.

Always in 2010, the Vigilius Mountain Resort received the certificate “KlimaHotel”, a brand born in 2009 and developing precise quality criteria in terms not only of mere energy consumption, but of every aspect of the hotel’s business. This is a guarantee of the hotel’s determination in becoming a beacon in terms of environmental management. Since its opening, the Vigilius Mountain Resort has considered this not just a simple promise, but a real commitment.

References

Cristina Boggio – Marketing Director
www.vigilius.it