Developing a Sustainable Business Plan at the Shopping Center of SouthPointe Mall in Lincoln, Nebraska

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Developing a Sustainable Business Plan
at the Shopping Center of
SouthPointe Mall in Lincoln, Nebraska

By

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AN UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of
The Environmental Studies Program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln
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For the Degree of Bachelor of Arts

Major: Environmental Studies
With the Emphasis of: Anthropology

Under the Supervision of
Dave Gosselin
and
Sara Cooper

Lincoln, NE

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Abstract:

This project consists of creating sustainable business plans for a group of diverse retail stores at the mall of SouthPointe Pavilions in Lincoln, Nebraska. A series of interviews took place with five managers at the businesses including: Scheels, Old Chicago, Bed Bath and Beyond, Von Maur, and Barnes and Noble. The questions were based around five different topics including: Technological, Environment, Socio-Cultural, Economic, and Public Policy. The Technological area includes processes with the product (or service) that occur before it arrives, during, and after it is sold. The Public Policy area includes if the business has an environmental policy, how it is communicated to staff, and how it is implemented. The Environment section is based on energy use, water use, and waste materials. The Socio-Cultural section focuses on the thoughts and attitudes regarding environmental change from customers, employees, and facilities workers. The last section of Economics includes incentives to environmental change, green promotions that the business may have implemented, and marketing or advertising strategies that include changes in sustainability. After the survey was completed, five separate business analyses were formulated to provide possible recommended improvements.

Along with each section, a relative score out of 10 was given to the section, which identified the areas that the business needed the most improvement and the areas that were doing seemingly well. A graph called the EcoSTEP Tool, which was developed by the Joslyn Institute based out of Omaha, was also made for a visual representation of recommended improvements for each business. The business analyses were presented to each manager along with an explanation of the EcoSTEP Tool.
Introduction:

The city of Lincoln has become an active leader with its emphasis on Earth Day and other green movements such as the Cleaner Greener Lincoln (Beutler 2010). However, not all places in the city are following suit. Within some of the stores, there have not been very many sustainable practices taking place. This study’s intent was to understand the changes that could be made to better a business’s sustainability and learn how to persuade their interest in the subject. The definition of the word sustainable would be described as creating an efficient business environment by limiting the amount of resources a business uses and creating a reusable lifestyle. Sustainability has become a crucial problem because although businesses have the option to recycle some items, other items cannot be recycled and businesses are not required to recycle. There are many recyclable items that could be used from each business such as cardboard from packaging, plastic from hangers, paper, etc. Some of these businesses may not have thought about other sustainable ways to run their business as well. This project provided a plan for five of the businesses at SouthPointe to become more sustainable. It also assessed the operations of the businesses, visually represented the current conditions using EcoSTEP, and developed a plan for improvement for these diverse businesses at SouthPointe Mall.

The Green Movement has begun to spark businesses’ interests in assuring their customers that their business is on the cutting edge of society. In the business world, the motivation for going green may not exactly be for the health of the environment, but for the reliability and profit they receive from their customers. Businesses or companies
establish changes to their processes and production to not only save energy and money at their end, but to provide their customers with a guaranteed commitment to the most recent fad, as they would see it. One large company that is participating in sustainability practices is Walmart (Beineck 2010). They have taken small steps to reduce their energy needs, transportation of products, and have now gone to larger steps such as cleaning up water pollution from chemical dye (Beineck 2010). They focus on many areas of sustainability such as food, jewelry, energy, waste, reuse, buildings, and especially packaging. This example of a large company business has given this project a model to follow and gave ideas to use towards the companies at SouthPointe Mall.

The SouthPointe Pavilion is full of a number of different businesses. It is home to a variety of departments such as apparel, jewelry, a movie theater, restaurants, books, home specialty stores, and a couple others. Larger companies or corporations who rent the space from SouthPointe run most of these businesses. This project planned to focus on the top five anchor businesses at SouthPointe Mall including: Scheels, Von Mar, Barnes and Noble, Bed Bath and Beyond, and Old Chicago. These anchor businesses were chosen because they are the top five staple of the SouthPointe Mall and are a diverse group of companies. Energy, water, and other products are utilized in everyday use by each of the businesses. Changes in a few businesses at a large shopping center in Lincoln could have the potential to influence other businesses at SouthPointe mall. The companies themselves could change to a more sustainable mode of operation. Although this is thinking on a larger scale, this project has hopefully persuaded these businesses to adopt new ways to run their stores in a more conservative manner.
In this project, interviews were done from the managers from the five different businesses at SouthPointe Mall to get information about how the stores operate as well as some of their thoughts on sustainable business. This helped to clarify whether the businesses at SouthPointe work together as an entity or separately. The interviews also addressed the businesses’ processes of their business such as the waste from their business, energy usage, recycling, etc. After finding more information about the area, a sustainable business plan was made for each business and then presented to them along with a visible graph called the EcoSTEP tool to show them long-term and short-term goals they could potentially accomplish.

**Purpose of this Study:**

The purpose of this study is to research what business’ current conditions are and find what improvements can be made based off of the interviews with the business managers. Then the study will compare the five different businesses and show what recommendations were similar and which ones were different.

**Definitions of Terms:**

**Sustainability** - Creating an efficient business environment by limiting the amount of resources a business uses and creating a reusable lifestyle.

**Green business** - A business that makes decisions to become more environmentally friendly by changing their processes and they way they run the business.

**EcoSTEP Tool** - A circular graph that was developed by the Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities, based in Omaha. It is a graphic representation to help
visualize different goals to accomplish on the way to a more sustainable business. This tool is used to plot the issues and conditions of a business within a one of three time frames: short-term, medium-term, and long-term. The time frames are represented along the concentric circles of the graph with the short-term ideas on the inner most circle. The issues and conditions of the business are analyzed and possible improvement choices are researched. These improvements are presented in one of the time spans of short-term to long-term. The EcoSTEP Tool then is used to plot out these different recommendations of improvements for the businesses to see as a visual of what goals the business can start on in the short-term and what goals they can work towards in the long-term.

Each improvement is also given a description of urgency, which is indicated by the color of the dot. The red dot represents immediate action, which means that the business should quickly improve this area of their business. The blue dot indicates improvement required, which means that the business has some areas within the section that need to be advanced, but are not very urgent. The green dot signifies to keep watch on the specified area. This means that the business has made some improvements in the area, but needs to maintain those improvements or that the business may need to modify those improvements as time goes by.

The tool also separates into different sections of the business including: Technological, Public Policy, Environment, Socio-Cultural, and Economic, which are depicted on spokes in a radial position on the graph. The Technological area includes processes with the product (or service) that occur before it arrives, during, and after it is sold. The Public Policy area includes if the business has an environmental policy, how it is communicated to staff, and how it is implemented. The Environment section is based
on energy use, water use, and waste materials. The Socio-Cultural section focuses on the thoughts and attitudes regarding environmental change from customers, employees, and facilities workers. The last section of Economics includes incentives to environmental change, green promotions that the business may have implemented, and marketing or advertising strategies that include changes in sustainability.

Literature Review:

The literature for this project helped in this study to provide more background information on sustainable businesses. The research consists of different journals, news articles, and websites for this information for the project.

Most of this research was used to provide a model of different types of businesses that use sustainable practices in their everyday procedures. Many businesses are becoming or are in the process of becoming greener in order to save on costs such as electricity or water. Some of these businesses are also using this as an advertisement to their customers that they are becoming green (Ehrenfeld 2008). There have been studies on what processes can be used to reduce a business’s effect on the environment such as reducing packaging, energy, water, and other resources (Simon 2010).

Although some businesses are voluntarily becoming more sustainable, others have to be persuaded to do so. There has been research done about how to promote sustainability in a more favorable manner to businesses so they are more likely to adopt the new practices (Capra 1995).

The Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities is a website that was used frequently. They have provided information of how the EcoSTEP tool functions and
what type of information will be provided with this graph. They also give other ideas for creating sustainability within different settings and in a community.

See Appendix 6 for the annotated bibliography that has been researched for the project.

Research Design:

The project’s research consisted of a process of interviewing five different businesses at SouthPointe Mall and using secondary research to help establish a report for each business and make a business analysis. The main areas focused on were the five different sections in the EcoSTEP tool: Technological, Public Policy, Environment, Socio-Cultural, and Economic. Then each area was broken down into three sub-categories that related specifically to businesses at a shopping center. An initial interview was scheduled to get baseline information about the businesses’ ways of processing and systems to run the stores through their companies. There was also the need for another interview to gain information about the specified area of the project. An interview was done with the general manager of SouthPointe Mall to learn about the practices of the Pavilion as a whole. After this the project plan is to research model retail operations and other business operations to determine areas for improvement. An EcoSTEP graph was created, which gave a visual to the businesses of what short-term, medium-term, and long-term goals can be achieved, as well as a written report of specificities. The EcoSTEP tool was used as a graphic representation to help visualize different goals to accomplish the way to a more sustainable business (Steward 2010).
A scoring system was also put into place to help give the businesses a relative score for each of the five sections of the EcoSTEP tool. This scoring system was based off of the responses to the questions asked during the interviews. This scoring system was admittedly subjective and was only a relative score to show the businesses which sections they needed to improve on. The same questions were asked for each business and the responses provided a relative or average number for that section.

In the survey, there was also ending questions that were specialized towards that specific business. These questions were added into the Environment section, unless they had already been answered in previous sections. A basic scoring system was used to give a relative score to businesses as an alternative way to see how the business did in each section rather than just to see the visual EcoSTEP Tool. A basic scoring system is shown below followed with examples of responses from the best, medium, and worst businesses based on this scoring system. These responses should explain how a business got a relative score for the particular section.
Each section was given a score through this scoring system:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>‘Do not know’ or has an unsure answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Short answer/does not know for sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Short, few word answer/response shows there is a definite need for improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Short, few word answer/response shows there is some need for improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Over 10 word answer/response shows there is some need for improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Over 10 word answer/response shows there is slight need for improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>15 word answer or multiple variable answer/response shows business has made a couple improvements in area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>15 word answer or multiple variable answer/response shows business has made some improvements in area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Over 15 word answer or multiple variable answer/response shows business has made significant changes in area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Over 15 word answer or multiple variable answer/response shows business has made many changes in area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>15-20 word answer or over or multiple variable answer/response shows that business has made all improvements possible and has had them in place for a significant amount of time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the Economic section of the Barnes and Noble interview, the score was a 6 out of 10. A question asked in the Incentives sub-group was: “What would help persuade your business to change to a more environmentally friendly business?” Their response was: “I don’t think anything. Our company takes every suggestion seriously and if it doesn’t cost insane amounts of money. Our company takes suggestions and tries to make them work and tries to make them company wide. If they are able to enroll it, they will. Booksellers have persuaded the company to do paper recycling. It took some time to implement, but they did it.” One of the questions asked in the Green Promotions sub-group was: “What promotions have been done to provide support for green activity?” Their response was: “We have Earth day where we bring recycled product into the store to sell. We bring in a company that makes recycled things and then sell them here. We always have eco-friendly journals and reusable totes to sell as well. Our company has also pushed for digital e-books, which are very eco-friendly.” A question asked in the Marketing/Advertising sub-group was: “Do you think becoming more “green” will give customers more incentives to buy your products?” Their response was: “Yes. It all depends on the person. People now days support a green company more than one that is not green.” These responses gave the business a relatively good score for this section because of their responses. The responses to the questions left very little improvement for the business and therefore gave them a good score. They also were very defined and long answers and they included multiple variables towards each question. Their improvements for this section were also more specific and not a general or basic improvement, which shows that they only need refinement in this section and gave them the score of 6 out of 10 in this section.
In the Environment section of the Von Maur interview, the score was a 3 out of 10. A question asked in the Energy sub-group was: “How much electricity is used for lighting?” Their response was: “I don’t know, the wattage of bulbs varies. I think the majority of bulbs in the store are 31 watt bulbs.” Another question asked in this section was: “What temperature is the building set at?” Their response to this question was: “It varies, but typically in the low 70s. We typically keep it at the same temperature during the winter or summer.” A question asked in the Waste sub-group was: “What is your highest volume of waste material?” Their response was: “Plastic and Styrofoam that is from packaging. We do try to reuse as much of them as possible for packaging.” A question in the Water sub-group was: “What kind of hand dryers do you have?” Their response was: “We have both hand dryers and paper towels.” Based on the responses to these questions, the Von Maur there were a good amount of improvements that needed to be put into place. The business also did not know some of the information, which lowered their score. The business gave some short responses and showed that they had many areas that they needed to improve on. This then gave them a score of 3 out of 10 because of their need for improvement and knowledge about their store.

In the Public Policy section of the Old Chicago interview, the score was a 0 out of 10. A question asked in the Policy Existence sub-group was: “Do you have a mission statement that includes an environmental policy or includes environmental sustainability elements?” Their response to this question was: “No, just to be part of the community.” Another question asked in this sub-group was: “Are you interested in your store becoming more environmentally friendly?” Their response to this question was: “Yes, but it is dictated by someone above you. I don’t know if we have any plans for this.”
The other two subgroups for the Public Policy section were not answered because they do not have an environmental policy. Because the business did not have any type of environmental policy or any sustainability acts in place, the business got a 0 out of 10 in this section.

The scoring system overall was put in place to show businesses which areas they need to improve on. This scoring was supplemental to the visual EcoSTEP Tool, which was also presented and explained to the businesses.

Secondary research was used to find model business practices and was used to identify an ideal sustainable business. This provided more background information on the procedures that businesses and large companies follow and how a sustainable business can be formed through this.

The data was assessed by determining which processes should be changed and how. A list of recommended improvements was given to the business as well as an explanation of why this improvement may help their business and save on how much that business impacts the environment. After the report was finished, it was given to the businesses at SouthPointe along with an explanation of the report and the EcoSTEP tool. This meeting helped to give some persuasion to the businesses to possibly aid in changing their practices.

**Presentation of Case Studies:**

The Scheels got an overall score of 17 out of 50, which indicates that there is some room for improvement in the business’ processes. The area that could be changed would be the Economic section. They can start advertising their green qualities to their
customers within the community as well as through corporate. They could also promote green activity through supporting Earth Day for example or by selling “green” brands within their store. In the other areas of the EcoSTEP tool, the business could focus on implementing a local Environmental Policy within their business. They could also work on discussing different ideas of shipping their products to the store fewer times a week and using high efficiency light bulbs in the store or reducing the light usage throughout the store in general. The last thing that the store could focus on would be to learn and communicate with their customers in order to understand how they feel about the environment and eco-friendly businesses. This business can make different changes locally by doing their own local recycling for example. The store rated at just an average score, but is on the edge of going below average. There can be many minor improvements made that would make a big difference to the environment and the community.
The Barnes and Noble got an overall score of 28 out of 50, which indicates that the store has made some great improvements, but there are other changes that could be made to progress. The main area that the business needs to improve on is the Technological section. The business could improve by making small changes such as using recycled paper in the office or recycling materials within the Starbucks café area. In other areas of the EcoSTEP tool, the business could communicate with their facilities workers in order to understand how they feel about the environment and creating eco-friendly businesses. They could also focus on creating a local Environmental Policy that is specific to their specific business location. The store rated at an average score, but seems to be working toward a higher score. There still can be many minor improvements made that would make a big difference to the environment and the community.
The Bed Bath and Beyond got an overall score of 17 out of 50, which indicates that there is room for improvement in this business’ processes. The section that needs to be improved the most is the Socio-Cultural section. Focusing on making communication about sustainability within the business could help the business progress as a community. This would include communication with the employees and the facilities workers in the store. The communication could also be improved with the customers of the store by learning about how they feel about the business becoming environmentally friendly. In other areas of the EcoSTEP tool, the business could also focus on monitoring the waste that is produced as well as materials that could be recycled. They could also create a local Environmental Policy in the business and advertise their green qualities to their customers. The final things Bed Bath and Beyond could focus on are using paper bags to give to purchasing customers as well as using BPA-free receipt paper in their registers.
The store rated at an average score, but is on the edge of going below average. There can be many minor improvements made that would make a big difference to the environment and the community.

The Von Maur got an overall score of 13 out of 50, which indicates that there needs to be some improvement for the business’ processes. The areas that need the most improvement are the Socio-Cultural and the Economic sections. For the Socio-Cultural section, the store could focus on making communication about sustainability within the business, which would help the business progress as a community. This would include communication with the employees and the facilities workers in the store. The communication could also be improved with the customers of the store by learning about how they feel about the business becoming environmentally friendly. In the Economic section, the store could start advertising their green qualities to their customers within the
community as well as through corporate. They could also promote green activity such as Earth Day and make their own local changes that are separate from corporate. In other areas of the EcoSTEP tool, the business could create their own local Environmental Policy for this store’s location. The Von Maur could also use high efficiency light bulbs and reduce the lighting in the store. Some other improvements would be to reuse display products in the store and use wooden hangers that are more durable. The store rated at a below average score, but is heading towards improvement. There are many small improvements that could be made that would decrease the amount of impact Von Maur has on the environment and the community around it.

![5 Key Areas of Sustainability (Von Maur)](chart)

The Old Chicago got an overall score of 7 out of 50, which indicates that many things need to be improved in this business’ processes. There are a few areas that could be improved on including the Economic, Public Policy, and Technological sections. The
restaurant can start advertising their green qualities to their customers within the community as well as through corporate. They can also promote green activity such as Earth Day and make their own local changes that are separate from corporate. For the Public Policy section, the business also needs to get an environmental policy for their local restaurant and implement it. In Technological section, the business could start recycling some of the packaging materials that they use such as cardboard boxes, glass, and plastic. The restaurant also needs to monitor the waste that they produce and reduce that waste. They could also buy biodegradable material instead of Styrofoam for their takeout packaging. In other sections of the EcoSTEP tool, the restaurant could reuse or recycle their display products and use high efficiency light bulbs or reduce lighting in the building. The store rated at a below average score and needs much improvement in order to decrease the amount of impact they have on the environment and the community around them.
5 Key Areas of Sustainability (Old Chicago)

Overall Sustainability Ranking

- Technological
- Environment
- Economic
- Socio-Cultural
- Public Policy

- Overall Sustainability Ranking
- Scheels
- Old Chicago
- Von Maur
- Bed Bath and Beyond
- Barnes and Noble
Discussion:

There are many different types of businesses in the business world comprised of retail, restaurants, book stores, hardware/appliances, home, department stores, sports gear stores, etc. All of these businesses run differently and consist of various forms of operations. For this project, a variety of businesses were chosen in order to include a wide variety of stores in the study as opposed to a focus on one type of business. This helped to gain knowledge of where improvement is needed in a specific type of business and in comparison to other types of businesses.

In this study, I decided to have a diverse population of businesses to work with. This helped to understand how different businesses are run and the contrasting improvements between them. Some businesses such as Barnes and Noble have more of a slow paced environment that gives them more of an advantage in changing their processes towards becoming more sustainable. They may have more time or space to recycle products. Whereas restaurants such as Old Chicago survive in a fast paced environment, making some processes harder to modify or change. There may not be enough room to keep the recycling in or it may take too long to sort recycling products for the fast paced environment.

Through this process I learned about the reactions of the different businesses to sustainability. Some were very willing and interested in becoming more sustainable and suggestions in order to do so. However, others were less than interested in any improvements that they could make. All of the businesses were willing to participate in
the project with an interview and follow-up meeting. However, only some of the businesses showed interest in making some of the changes that were suggested to them.

The final project did give the managers of the businesses more knowledge about their store after completing the follow-up meeting. However, the recommendations that were compiled for the businesses could not be very technical because the managers did not know some of the specifics of their store, such as the wattage of the light bulbs in the store or what the temperature of the building is set at. This made it difficult to create improvements that were more specific to the store. This lack of information from the managers should be improved in businesses to improve the changes that could be made within the business.

The graph that was modified for this project is called an EcoSTEP Tool, which was originally formed for a community. This graph was modified to fit to a business, but the main five areas were kept including: Technological, Environment, Socio-Cultural, Economic, and Public Policy. However, the sub-categories of each section were changed to fit towards the processes of a business. The EcoSTEP graphs were also simplified to aid in the understanding of the managers of each store. This made the graphs easier for the managers to understand and give them the ability to explain the graph to other managers, employees, or businesses in future meetings.

**Conclusion:**

The idea of sustainability is a very important topic to understand in our changing world. The different things that can be changed and the processes that can be manipulated to create a more reusable lifestyle should be introduced to different
businesses. Measuring sustainability in a business environment is really needed to improve our overall environmental footprints, programs, and visions. This is the first exposure these businesses have had to sustainability in a comprehensive manner. This is really needed to improve our community and it can be the first step to more businesses becoming sustainable in their processes.

Although my project has started to give businesses ideas to become more sustainable, there can be more work done to further the process. Some future work that could follow up this project would be to create more specific improvements. The five areas of the EcoSTEP Tool could be separated and worked on specifically. Each area has different improvements that need more specific information from the business in order to analyze and provide the store with the most efficient and reasonable improvements for the business. For the more technical side of the building’s processes, work with the facilities managers of each store would help to collect technical data for more specific improvements in the building.

Other work could be to analyze other stores and restaurants in the SouthPointe community and work on making the shopping center more sustainable as a whole. Cooperation between the SouthPointe Mall managers and store managers would create easier ways to make changes in the separate stores and the mall community.
Appendix 1: Thesis Survey

Businesses: Scheels: 402-420-9000  
Bed Bath & Beyond: 402-420-6767  
Von Mar: 402-420-9100  
Old Chicago: 402-421-3388  
Barnes and Noble: 402-421-7979

Intro:  
Hello my name is Jessica Hanson. I am a student from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and am currently working on a thesis. I was wondering if I could possibly set up a meeting with you to ask some questions and understand how your business is run.

Ask for permission to use computer for taking notes. If not have an extra copy of your survey in the interview.

Thank you for meeting with me today, I appreciate your time. I’m sure with your help I can get you something with your efforts at sustainability.

Ask for business card.

Intro Questionnaire:

What are your principle products?

Are there any specialized stuff?

Technological:

Before Product Arrives:
How is product transported to business?

What packaging is used?

What is done with used packaging?

Do you use pallets- wood or plastic?

What do you do with the cardboard-flatten it? Is it clean?

During Process:
What is done to prepare product for selling?

Are products reused? (hangers/display products)
After it is sold:
  Are receipts given without question? Have you ever thought of asking customer’s if they want a receipt?

  Do you use recycled paper?

  Are plastic bags/packaging given automatically?

Public Policy
Policy Existence:
Do you have a mission statement that includes an environmental policy or includes environmental sustainability elements? (corporate and local)

Are you interested in your store becoming more environmentally friendly? (corporate and local)
Do you need help?

How do you want/plan to become more environmentally friendly?

Communication:
How is the sustainability program communicated to staff, customers, and other branches of the business?

Is there a way for employees to make suggestions?

Implementation:
How is this policy implemented?

Are there strict rules and regulations that are followed?

Environment:
Energy:
Lighting-
  How much electricity is used for lighting? (Wattage of light bulbs/type of bulbs)

  Are high efficiency bulbs used? If so, what kind?

  Heating/Air Condition- (natural gas or electric?)
  What temperature is the building set at?

  Is this something you have control of?
Is it programmable?

Waste:
Waste products-
Highest volume material?

Do you have data or records of the amount of waste?  (get estimated data)

Recycling-
What do you recycle?

How often and how much?  (get estimated data)

Water:
Uses-

Bathrooms- How many bathrooms do you have?  Do you have automatic sinks?

What kind of hand dryers do you have? (Paper towels or air dryers?)

Laundry-

Kitchen-

Socio-cultural:
Customers:
Do you know if your customers care about how green your company is?  How do you know?

If so, what have you done to provide information of your company’s green qualities?

What ways do you advertise that you are green to your customers?

Employees:
How do employees view changes in creating sustainability?

Facilities:
How do the facility workers and managers view sustainability program?  How do you know?
**Economic:**

*Incentives:*

What would help persuade your business to change to a more environmentally friendly business? (saving money on energy? Other incentives?)

*Green Promotions:*

What promotions have been done to provide support for green activity? (corporate and local)

*Marketing and Advertising:*

How have you advertised your sustainable business changes to your customers and the public?

Do you think becoming more “green” will give customers more incentives to buy your products?

**Personalized Questions:**

*Scheels:*

How are all the sports and outdoor equipment transported?

What kind of hangers do you use? (plastic, wooden) Do you reuse the hangers?

*Bed Bath & Beyond:*

How are your larger products transported to your store?

Do you sell any products that are environmentally friendly? Would you be interested in doing so?

*Von Mar:*

What kind of hangers do you use? (plastic, wooden) Do you reuse the hangers?

*Old Chicago:*

How is your water supply managed?

What is done with leftover or oversupplied food?

What equipment is used for producing food?

Where does the food come from?
How much packaging is involved with the food?

What kinds of chemicals are used for sanitation?

Barnes and Noble:
What are done with books or products that are not sold?

Starbucks: What are the processes of the Starbucks area?

How is your water supply managed?

What is done with leftover or oversupplied food?

What equipment is used for producing food?

Where does the food come from?

How much packaging is involved with the food?

What kinds of chemicals are used for sanitation?

Closing:
Alright well that’s all the questions I have for you today. Thank you for taking time for meeting with me. If I have any questions after reviewing your interview I may want to contact you. Which is the best way to contact you and when?
Appendix 2:

Scheels Business Analysis

Score: 17/50

BACKGROUND

On Friday April 8, 2011, UNL Environmental Studies Student, Jessica Hanson, visited the Scheels at SouthPointe Pavilions Mall in Lincoln, NE to conduct an environmental assessment. The focus of the project was on the top five anchor businesses at SouthPointe Mall including: Scheels, Von Mar, Barnes and Noble, Bed Bath and Beyond, and Old Chicago. These anchor businesses were chosen because they are the top five staple businesses and are a diverse group of companies. The project will assess the operations, visually represent the current conditions using a graph called an EcoSTEP Tool, and develop a plan for improvement for these diverse businesses at SouthPointe Mall. The interview, with one of the store managers, took about thirty to forty-five minutes.

DESCRIPTION OF EcoSTEP TOOL

The EcoSTEP tool is a circular graph that was developed by the Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities, based in Omaha. It is a graphic representation to help visualize different goals to accomplish on the way to a more sustainable business. This tool is used to plot the issues and conditions of a business within a one of three time frames: short-term, medium-term, and long-term. The time frames are represented along the concentric circles of the graph with the short-term ideas on the inner most circle. The issues and conditions of the business are analyzed and possible improvement choices are researched. These improvements are presented in one of the time spans of short-term to long-term. The EcoSTEP Tool then is used to plot out these different recommendations of improvements for the businesses to see as a visual of what goals the business can start on in the short-term and what goals they can work towards in the long-term.

Each improvement is also given a description of urgency, which is indicated by the color of the dot. The red dot represents immediate action, which means that the business should quickly improve this area of their business. The blue dot indicates improvement required, which means that the business has some areas within the section that need to be advanced, but are not very urgent. The green dot signifies to keep watch on the specified area. This means that the business has made some improvements in the area, but needs to maintain those improvements or that the business may need to modify those improvements as time goes by.

The tool also separates into different sections of the business including: Technological, Public Policy, Environment, Socio-Cultural, and Economic, which are depicted on spokes in a radial position on the graph. The Technological area includes processes with the product (or service) that occur before it arrives, during, and after it is sold. The Public Policy area includes if the business has an environmental policy, how it is communicated to staff, and how it is implemented. The Environment section is based on energy use, water use, and waste materials. The Socio-Cultural section focuses on the thoughts and attitudes regarding environmental change from customers, employees, and facilities workers. The last section of Economics includes incentives to environmental
change, green promotions that the business may have implemented, and marketing or advertising strategies that include changes in sustainability.

In addition to the EcoSTEP tool, each section will also be assigned a relative numeric score. This score based on a maximum of ten points will allow basic comparisons between the individual scores involved in the project. The scores are based on what the current conditions of each store are, along with the different recommended improvements that can be made.

TECHNOLOGICAL: (Score: 5/10)

This area focuses on the processes that occur before the product arrives as well as how it arrives to the business. It also encompasses the processes that occur while the product is in the store and the processes of when the product is sold.

Current Conditions:

At Scheels, the products sold are transported by truck, specifically UPS ground shipping. Occasionally, products are transported by air if the product is needed overnight. The type of packaging used is mainly cardboard boxes on wood and plastic pallets for transportation. The cardboard is then crushed and a third party picks it up from the store. The cardboard is then sold by the third party for reuse. The pallets are either sold to a company that reuses them or they are kept for future use. They get about one shipment of UPS a day with about 200-300 boxes per day. Scheels get the clothes ready for selling; some clothes are steamed if wrinkled. The store uses mainly plastic hangers, but also uses some wood hangers. During checkout, the store does not give the hangers to customers, but reuses them in the store. If the hangers break, they are then thrown away in the regular trash. The sales receipts are given to customers without question, but if they don’t want it, the paper is recycled by being put in bins, which are located underneath each register. Recycled content paper is used in the offices and some of the receipt paper used is recycled. Plastic bags for purchased items are given to the customer after questioning. They do not sell reusable bags.

Recommended Improvements:

Based on the current conditions for the Technological category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Use plastic containers to replace cardboard boxes for transportation**
  This will help to reduce the amount of material that needs to be recycled because the containers will be reusable. It will reduce the amount of energy used to recycle cardboard.

- **Reduce shipping to fewer times a week**
  This will reduce the amount of greenhouse gases that are released into the air because the trucks will be traveling less to the store and therefore releasing less carbon emissions into the air.

- **Use only wooden hangers**
  Wooden hangers do not break as easily as plastic hangers and can be reused for longer periods of time.

- **Buy BPA free receipt paper**
Buying BPA free receipt paper allows for the paper to be recycled, unlike most receipt paper. BPA stands for bisphenol A, which is a chemical found in thermal paper or receipt paper. It can be absorbed by humans and leached into the ground at landfills or transferred to new material if recycled. It has been found as potentially harmful to humans. Buying BPA free receipt paper would help to reduce the amount of paper in the trash at the store and at the landfill, since it can be recycled. It also helps reduce the chemicals that can be released from BPA paper to humans and to the environment.

- **Sell reusable bags**
  Selling reusable bags gives the customer an option to buy a bag that is better for the environment.

- **Use paper bags instead of plastic for sold products**
  Using paper bags helps the environment because it is biodegradable and can be recycled easier than plastic bags.

**PUBLIC POLICY: (SCORE: 3/10)**

This section focuses on if the business has an environmental policy within their business. If the business does have a policy then this section also includes how it is communicated to the staff and how it is overall implemented in the business.

*Current Conditions:*

Skeels did not have a mission statement for environmental sustainability. The store is interested in becoming more environmentally friendly, but any initiative must be cost effective and feasible. The sustainability changes that are made are not communicated on a day-to-day basis to employees or customers, but are presented when first implemented, then grown through habit. Employees are able to make suggestions through the store improvement card, which is handed in every day. No strict environmental rules are followed, just suggested changes such as recycling.

*Recommended Improvements:*

Based on the current conditions for the Public Policy category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Create local environmental policy for store**
  This would give the store more freedom to make decisions locally. Having a specified local policy could help in the development of environmental improvements in the individual business. This could potentially improve the sustainability of this store in Lincoln.

- **Discuss environmental changes in meetings more often**
  Discussing environmental changes and soliciting the opinions of the staff at this store could give different perspectives and ideas to the store to help make changes locally or even at a corporate level.

**ENVIRONMENT: (SCORE: 4/10)**

The environment section addresses basic environmental concerns including energy use in lighting, heating and air conditioning. As well as waste in the products that
are thrown away and which products are recycled. It also focuses on water use in bathrooms, laundry, kitchen areas, and any other uses.

Current Conditions:
The lighting in the store is mainly fluorescent bulbs and some halogen lights. They are believed to all be high efficiency bulbs as well. The building is set at a temperature of about 72 degrees Fahrenheit all year round. The temperature is set on a sensor system, which keeps the building at 72 degrees all day and all night. This system is programmable. The highest volume of waste material was found to be from plastics and other paper products. The amount of waste that is thrown away in a day is about 12-15 bags that hold about 55 gallons. These bags are usually half full because they are at their weight capacity and may tear. A trash company picks the bags up every day. They recycle cardboard and paper about every two days equaling out to about one 55-gallon rolling bin. There are about 4 bathrooms with 4 automatic sinks with air dryers and paper towels. There are also drinking fountains and the gift lodge includes a coffee area where dishes and utensils are washed. The facilities also provide laundry with one washer and one dryer that is done about 2-3 times a week.

Recommended Improvements:
Based on the current conditions for the Environment category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Reduce lighting in store and use high efficiency light bulbs**
  Using less lighting in the store will help to reduce the amount of energy that the store uses. It will also reduce the costs for electricity use for the store and save on energy for other uses.

- **Reduce the temperature of building at night in the winter and increase the temperature in the summer**
  This will cut down on the amount of energy that is used to keep the building at a higher/cooler temperature when no customers are present. It would also reduce the costs on energy for the business.

- **Use hand dryers in bathrooms**
  If hand dryers were used in the bathroom exclusively, this would reduce the amount of paper towels that are thrown away and taken to the landfill. It would also move the business away from using paper towels that are not made from recycled material.

**Socio-Cultural:** (Score: 4/10)
This area focuses on what the thoughts are from customers, employees, and facilities on environmental changes in the business.

Current Conditions:
This Scheels store did not know if the customers cared about how green the company was, but assumed that some did and others did not. They have not advertised what their company has done to help the environment to their customers. The employees’ views on recycling were thought to differ with each individual. They liked the idea of recycling and of getting rid of paper towels in the bathrooms. The facilities
workers liked the idea that they did not have to clean up as much because of recycling and paper towels.

Recommended Improvements:
Based on the current conditions for the Socio-Cultural category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Learn how customers feel about environmentally friendly businesses**
  If the business understands how the customers feel about environmentally friendly businesses, the business could better tailor its programs to meet the customer’s needs.
- **Communicate with employees about sustainability changes and their thoughts**
  The business could get to know the thoughts of the employees and take their opinions into consideration to make changes in the business. This would give the business more ideas of what changes could be made and work together with their employees on this.

**ECONOMIC: **(**SCORE: **1/10)

This section addresses the possible incentives that may help to get the business to make some changes. It also concentrates on green promotions that the business has done to promote sustainability and different marketing and advertising strategies they may have implemented.

Current Conditions:
Scheels would become more sustainable if changes were cost effective and convenient. There have been no green promotions provided by this business. Changes that the business has made to become more sustainable have not been advertised to the customers. They also believe that they would not sell more products if customers knew about their sustainable changes.

Recommended Improvements:
Based on the current conditions for the Economic category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Make changes locally**
  Making changes at a local standpoint could have a large effect on the environment and the community. Even little changes that could be made at the local store make a big difference and could draw customers to the store as well as save money.
- **Promote green activity through business**
  Promoting green activity, such as advertising for Earth day or even selling reusable bags, could help advertise the business to its customers as well as help the environment through the promotions. Because Scheels is a sporting and outdoor equipment store, promoting environmental stewardship could have important economic benefits.
- **Advertise environmentally friendly changes that business has made**
  This may bring more business to the store and would let customers know about the changes the store has made to help the environment.
**INCENTIVES TO CHANGE:**

Making these changes within the business would help to make the business more sustainable and could save on unnecessary costs as well as make the business more efficient as a whole. The Scheels got an overall score of 17 out of 50, which indicates that there is some room for improvement in the business’ processes. The area that could be changed would be the Economic section. This business can make different changes locally by doing their own local recycling for example. They can start advertising their green qualities to their customers within the community as well as through corporate. The store rated at just an average score, but is on the edge of going below average. There can be many minor improvements made that would make a big difference to the environment and the community. The different categories are visually represented in the EcoSTEP tool that has been described earlier. The completed EcoSTEP tool has been attached in the appendix.
Appendix 3:

Barnes and Noble Business Analysis  

Score: 28/50

BACKGROUND
On Tuesday May 10, 2011 UNL Environmental Studies Student, Jessica Hanson, visited the Barnes and Noble at SouthPointe Pavilions Mall in Lincoln, NE to conduct an environmental assessment. The focus of the project was on the top five anchor businesses at SouthPointe Mall including: Scheels, Von Mar, Barnes and Noble, Bed Bath and Beyond, and Old Chicago. These anchor businesses were chosen because they are the top five staple businesses and are a diverse group of companies. The project will assess the operations, visually represent the current conditions using a graph called an EcoSTEP Tool, and develop a plan for improvement for these diverse businesses at SouthPointe Mall. The interview, with one of the store managers, took about thirty to forty-five minutes.

DESCRIPTION OF ECOSTEP TOOL
The EcoSTEP tool is a circular graph that was developed by the Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities, based in Omaha. It is a graphic representation to help visualize different goals to accomplish on the way to a more sustainable business. This tool is used to plot the issues and conditions of a business within a one of three time frames: short-term, medium-term, and long-term. The time frames are represented along the concentric circles of the graph with the short-term ideas on the inner most circle. The issues and conditions of the business are analyzed and possible improvement choices are researched. These improvements are presented in one of the time spans of short-term to long-term. The EcoSTEP Tool then is used to plot out these different recommendations of improvements for the businesses to see as a visual of what goals the business can start on in the short-term and what goals they can work towards in the long-term.

Each improvement is also given a description of urgency, which is indicated by the color of the dot. The red dot represents immediate action, which means that the business should quickly improve this area of their business. The blue dot indicates improvement required, which means that the business has some areas within the section that need to be advanced, but are not very urgent. The green dot signifies to keep watch on the specified area. This means that the business has made some improvements in the area, but needs to maintain those improvements or that the business may need to modify those improvements as time goes by.

The tool also separates into different sections of the business including: Technological, Public Policy, Environment, Socio-Cultural, and Economic, which are depicted on spokes in a radial position on the graph. The Technological area includes processes with the product (or service) that occur before it arrives, during, and after it is sold. The Public Policy area includes if the business has an environmental policy, how it is communicated to staff, and how it is implemented. The Environment section is based on energy use, water use, and waste materials. The Socio-Cultural section focuses on the thoughts and attitudes regarding environmental change from customers, employees, and facilities workers. The last section of Economics includes incentives to environmental
change, green promotions that the business may have implemented, and marketing or advertising strategies that include changes in sustainability.

In addition to the EcoSTEP tool, each section will also be assigned a relative numeric score. This score based on a maximum of ten points will allow basic comparisons between the individual scores involved in the project. The scores are based on what the current conditions of each store are, along with the different recommended improvements that can be made.

**TECHNOLOGICAL: (SCORE: 4/10)**

This area focuses on the processes that occur before the product arrives as well as how it arrives to the business. It also encompasses the processes that occur while the product is in the store and the processes of when the product is sold.

*Current Conditions:*

To transport its products, the business Barnes and Noble uses trucking through UPS. They use cardboard boxes that are either reused in shipping or recycled through a local paper company. They also use wood pallets for transportation purposes that are sent back and reused. The plastic that is used in the café is not recycled. A receipt is given to the customer without question because it is required by corporate policy. The paper used in the offices is not recycled content paper, but some of the receipt paper is recycled. The business asks if the customer wants a bag if they have a smaller item. The bags that are given to customers are made from recycled plastic material.

*Recommended Improvements:*

Based on the current conditions for the Technological category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Use plastic containers to replace cardboard boxes for transportation**
  This will help to reduce the amount of material that needs to be recycled because the containers will be reusable. It will reduce the amount of energy used to recycle cardboard.

- **Reduce shipping to fewer times a week**
  This will reduce the amount of greenhouse gases that are released into the air because the trucks will be traveling less to the store and therefore releasing less carbon emissions into the air.

- **Buy BPA free receipt paper**
  Buying BPA free receipt paper allows for the paper to be recycled, unlike most receipt paper. BPA stands for bisphenol A, which is a chemical found in thermal paper or receipt paper. It can be absorbed by humans and leached into the ground at landfills or transferred to new material if recycled. It has been found as potentially harmful to humans. Buying BPA free receipt paper would help to reduce the amount of paper in the trash at the store and at the landfill, since it can be recycled. It also helps reduce the chemicals that can be released from BPA paper to humans and to the environment.

- **Use recycled content paper in office**
This would help reduce the number of trees that are used to produce paper and would also help to reduce the amount of gas emissions it takes to create the paper from its original tree form.

- **Use paper bags instead of plastic**
  Using paper bags helps the environment because it is biodegradable and can be recycled easier than plastic bags.

- **Recycle materials in Starbucks café area**
  Recycling plastic products used by the Starbucks café area would help to reduce the amount of waste that is produced by the business.

**PUBLIC POLICY: (SCORE: 6/10)**

This section focuses on if the business has an environmental policy within their business. If the business does have a policy then this section also includes how it is communicated to the staff and how it is overall implemented in the business.

*Current Conditions:*

The store has a vague mission statement that includes being supportive of their community’s interests. This statement does not specifically reference environmentally friendly attitudes. The business is interested in becoming more environmentally friendly. The sustainability program is communicated to the staff through the Website that includes an environmental section where employees are able to make suggestions. The staff discusses changes that have been made to the store at staff meetings. They believe that some of the customers care because they ask if the bags used are recycled material. The other branches of the business have gone through changes to become more environmentally friendly as well because it was mandated through a corporate directive. There are some rules set by corporate that are followed, such as recycling old books.

*Recommended Improvements:*

Based on the current conditions for the Public Policy category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Create local environmental policy for store**
  This would give the store more freedom to make decisions locally. Having a specified local policy could help in the development of environmental improvements in the individual business. This could potentially improve the sustainability of this store in Lincoln.

- **Discuss environmental changes in meetings regularly**
  Discussing environmental changes and soliciting the opinions of the staff at this store could give different perspectives and ideas to the store to help make changes locally or even at a corporate level.

**ENVIRONMENT: (SCORE: 6/10)**

The environment section addresses basic environmental concerns including energy use in lighting, heating and air conditioning. As well as waste in the products that are thrown away and which products are recycled. It also focuses on water use in bathrooms, laundry, kitchen areas, and any other uses.
Current Conditions:
The store did not know how much electricity was used in the store. They were using high efficiency bulbs. The building is set at about 73 degrees during the summer and about 69 degrees during the winter. The temperature is turned off at night around 10:30 PM and is turned on in the morning at 8 AM, which is an hour before the store opens. The highest volume of waste comes from paper from the office as well as food products and the material customers throw away in the trash. The waste is picked up about one to two times a week in 6 trashcans that are about 44 gallons each. The store recycles cardboard about once a week and it fills about one larger bin, dumpster size. The paper is also boxed up and recycled once a week with about 15 boxes a week. There are seven sinks in the store and one drinking fountain for water usage. They use paper towels in the bathrooms and do not have any laundry. The kitchen would only include the Starbucks area, which includes two sinks, a refrigerator, an oven, and other coffee making machines. The leftover food is thrown away due to health code issues. The food is packaged and brought in from a distribution place in Minnesota. The packaging consists of cardboard boxes and plastic for the food. The sanitation chemicals used are the Eco-lab sanitation materials, which are used nationwide.

Recommended Improvements:
Based on the current conditions for the Environment category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Use hand dryers in bathrooms**
  If hand dryers were used in the bathroom exclusively, this would reduce the amount of paper towels that are thrown away and taken to the landfill. It would also move the business away from using paper towels that are not made from recycled material.

- **Reduce lighting in store**
  Using less lighting in the store will help to reduce the amount of energy that the store uses. It will also reduce the costs for electricity use for the store and save on energy for other uses.

- **Arrange for recycling of other materials (plastic and paper)**
  Recycling other materials would help decrease the amount of waste the store produces. It would eventually reduce the amount of waste that is brought to the local landfill and would reduce the carbon footprint of the store.

- **Research if leftover food can be donated**
  Some businesses are able to donate food to the local food bank. This would help support the local community as well as not allow leftover food to go to waste.

Socio-Cultural: (Score: 6/10)
This area focuses on what the thoughts are from customers, employees, and facilities on environmental changes in the business.

Current Conditions:
The store knows that customers care about how green their company is because they ask about things such as if their plastic bags are recycled. This has become so
apparent that the company has spent large amounts of money to make changes. The store has done national advertising in the coastal areas on their recycling program that was launched 3 or 4 years ago. The employees view the changes positively because many have come up with different ideas. Local facilities don’t seem to have much of a say on a sustainability program.

**Recommended Improvements:**

Based on the current conditions for the Socio-Cultural category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Start local advertising**
  Giving the local community advertisement of their green qualities can help the business to gain more interest from the community rather than just nationally.

- **Communicate with facilities about sustainability in the store**
  Having discussion with facility workers would help the store to realize the waste and recycling processes and let the facility workers give their feedback to the store.

**ECONOMIC: (SCORE: 6/10)**

This section addresses the possible incentives that may help to get the business to make some changes. It also concentrates on green promotions that the business has done to promote sustainability and different marketing and advertising strategies they may have done.

**Current Conditions:**

Low implementation cost of an idea would persuade the company to make environmental changes. However, the company takes all the suggestions seriously and tries to make them work company wide. There haven’t been very many green promotions except for Earth Day where the store sells recycled products. They always have eco-friendly journals and reusable totes as well. The company has advertised their sustainable business changes when they are implemented, such as the recycling program. The store thinks that making environmental changes could persuade customers to buy their products because currently people would support a green company more than one that was not green. The Barnes and Noble has also started advertising electronic green products such as the Nook which is used to read books electronically.

**Recommended Improvements:**

Based on the current conditions for the Economic category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Make changes locally**
  Making changes at a local standpoint could have a large effect on the environment and the community. The little changes that could be made at the local store make a big difference and could draw business to the store as well as save money.

- **Locally advertise environmentally friendly changes that business has made**
This may bring more business to the store and would let customers know about the changes the store has made to help the environment.

**INCENTIVES TO CHANGE:**

Making these changes within the business would help to make the business more sustainable and could save on unnecessary costs as well as make the business more efficient as a whole. The Barnes and Noble got an overall score of 28 out of 50, which indicates that the store has made some great improvements, but there are other changes that could be made to progress. The main area that the business needs to improve on is the Technological section. The business could improve by making small changes such as using recycled paper in the office or recycling materials within the Starbucks café area. The store rated at an average score, but seems to be working toward a higher score. There still can be many minor improvements made that would make a big difference to the environment and the community. The different categories are visually represented in the EcoSTEP tool that has been described earlier. The completed EcoSTEP tool has been attached in the appendix.
EcoSTEP
Measuring Sustainability
(Barnes and Noble)
Appendix 4:

Bed Bath and Beyond Business Analysis

Score: 17/50

BACKGROUND

On Monday April 4, 2011, UNL Environmental Studies Student, Jessica Hanson, visited the Bed Bath and Beyond at SouthPointe Pavilions Mall in Lincoln, NE to conduct an environmental assessment. The focus of the project was on the top five anchor businesses at SouthPointe Mall including: Scheels, Von Mar, Barnes and Noble, Bed Bath and Beyond, and Old Chicago. These anchor businesses were chosen because they are the top five staple businesses of the SouthPointe Mall and are a diverse group of companies. The project will assess the operations, visually represent the current conditions using a graph called an EcoSTEP Tool, and develop a plan for improvement for these diverse businesses at SouthPointe Mall. The interview, with one of the store managers, took about thirty to forty-five minutes.

DESCRIPTION OF EcoSTEP TOOL

The EcoSTEP tool is a circular graph that was developed by the Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities, based in Omaha. It is a graphic representation to help visualize different goals to accomplish on the way to a more sustainable business. This tool is used to plot the issues and conditions of a business within a one of three time frames: short-term, medium-term, and long-term. The time frames are represented along the concentric circles of the graph with the short-term ideas on the inner most circle. The issues and conditions of the business are analyzed and possible improvement choices are researched. These improvements are presented in one of the time spans of short-term to long-term. The EcoSTEP Tool then is used to plot out these different recommendations of improvements for the businesses to see as a visual of what goals the business can start on in the short-term and what goals they can work towards in the long-term.

Each improvement is also given a description of urgency, which is indicated by the color of the dot. The red dot represents immediate action, which means that the business should quickly improve this area of their business. The blue dot indicates improvement required, which means that the business has some areas within the section that need to be advanced, but are not very urgent. The green dot signifies to keep watch on the specified area. This means that the business has made some improvements in the area, but needs to maintain those improvements or that the business may need to modify those improvements as time goes by.

The tool also separates into different sections of the business including: Technological, Public Policy, Environment, Socio-Cultural, and Economic, which are depicted on spokes in a radial position on the graph. The Technological area includes processes with the product (or service) that occur before it arrives, during, and after it is sold. The Public Policy area includes if the business has an environmental policy, how it is communicated to staff, and how it is implemented. The Environment section is based on energy use, water use, and waste materials. The Socio-Cultural section focuses on the thoughts and attitudes regarding environmental change from customers, employees, and facilities workers. The last section of Economics includes incentives to environmental
change, green promotions that the business may have implemented, and marketing or advertising strategies that include changes in sustainability.

In addition to the EcoSTEP tool, each section will also be assigned a relative numeric score. This score based on a maximum of ten points will allow basic comparisons between the individual scores involved in the project. The scores are based on what the current conditions of each store are, along with the different recommended improvements that can be made.

**TECHNOLOGICAL: (SCORE: 6/10)**

This area focuses on the processes that occur before the product arrives as well as how it arrives to the business. It also encompasses the processes that occur while the product is in the store and the processes of when the product is sold.

*Current Conditions:*

The products in Bed Bath and Beyond are transported on mainly wood pallets by trucks companies from the West coast. The products are transported in cardboard boxes mainly, which are then separated from the trash and given to the Bed Bath & Beyond corporate who sells it. The displays are typically not reused, but are sent back to the vendor. Sales receipts are always given because they are needed if a customer wants to return an item. The paper used for receipts and office paper is not recycled content paper. The bags given out to customers after buying the product are plastic and given automatically. They do sell reusable bags.

*Recommended Improvements:*

Based on the current conditions for the Technological category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Use plastic containers to replace cardboard boxes for transportation**
  This will help to reduce the amount of material that needs to be recycled because the containers will be reusable. It will reduce the amount of energy used to recycle cardboard.

- **Reduce shipping to fewer times a week**
  This will reduce the amount of greenhouse gases that are released into the air because the trucks will be traveling less to the store and therefore releasing less carbon emissions into the air.

- **Buy BPA free receipt paper**
  Buying BPA free receipt paper allows for the paper to be recycled, unlike most receipt paper. BPA stands for bisphenol A, which is a chemical found in thermal paper or receipt paper. It can be absorbed by humans and leached into the ground at landfills or transferred to new material if recycled. It has been found as potentially harmful to humans. Buying BPA free receipt paper would help to reduce the amount of paper in the trash at the store and at the landfill, since it can be recycled. It also helps reduce the chemicals that can be released from BPA paper to humans and to the environment.

- **Use recycled content paper in office**
This would help reduce the number of trees that are used to produce paper and would also help to reduce the amount of gas emissions it takes to create the paper from its original tree form.

- **Use paper bags instead of plastic**
  Using paper bags helps the environment because it is biodegradable and can be recycled easier than plastic bags.

**PUBLIC POLICY: (SCORE: 3/10)**

This section focuses on if the business has an environmental policy within their business. If the business does have a policy then this section also includes how it is communicated to the staff and how it is overall implemented in the business.

**Current Conditions:**

The Bed, Bath and Beyond store does not have a local environmental policy and everything that they do is mandated from corporate level. The store believes that they could make some environmental improvements such as recycling of cans, but they also have already made some improvements on their own. Employees can make suggestions through a suggestion box. The policy is implemented through corporate and rules and regulations that are followed are directed through corporate.

**Recommended Improvements:**

- **Create local environmental policy for store**
  This would give the store more freedom to make decisions locally. Having a specified local policy could help in the development of environmental improvements in the individual business. This could potentially improve the sustainability of this store in Lincoln.

- **Discuss environmental changes in meetings**
  Discussing environmental changes and the opinions of the staff at this store could give different perspectives and ideas to the store to help make changes locally or even at a corporate level.

**ENVIRONMENT: (SCORE: 5/10)**

The environment section addresses basic environmental concerns including energy use in lighting, heating and air conditioning. As well as waste in the products that are thrown away and which products are recycled. It also focuses on water use in bathrooms, laundry, kitchen areas, and any other uses.

**Current Conditions:**

The store uses fluorescent and high efficiency light bulbs. They have also cut the amount of light bulbs used in the store. Lights come on 10 minutes before building opens and shuts down 30 minutes after store closes. Security lights are left on after store is closed. The temperature during the day is set at about 69 degrees Fahrenheit during the winter and 72 degrees Fahrenheit during the summer. At night the temperature goes
down to about 60 degrees in the winter and 78 degrees in the summer. The temperature is programmable and controlled by a sensor. Air curtains were put in place at the front door to serve as an airlock and keep the temperature swings from affecting building heating/cooling system. The highest volume of waste material at the store was unknown and the only thing recycled was cardboard and how often was unknown. There was only one source of bathrooms, which were the employee bathrooms that had one sink. There is another sink in the break room and a drinking fountain as well. Manual paper towel machines are used in the bathroom in a manual machine.

**Recommended Improvements:**

Based on the current conditions for the Environment category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Shut lights off earlier**
  Shutting off the lights earlier after the store closes would help use less energy and therefore help the store spend less money on electricity.

- **Keep track of waste material**
  If the material that is thrown away is noted, there could be more changes in what could be recycled and what should be thrown away.

- **Arrange for recycling of other materials**
  Once the volumes of other wastes are known, recycling other materials would help decrease the amount of waste the store produces. It would eventually reduce the amount of waste that is brought to the local landfill and would reduce the carbon footprint of the store.

- **Use hand dryers in bathrooms**
  If hand dryers were used in the bathroom, this would reduce the amount of paper towels that are thrown away and taken to the landfill. It would also keep the business away from using paper towels that are not from recycled material.

**Socio-Cultural:** *(Score: 0/10)*

This area focuses on what the thoughts are from customers, employees, and facilities on environmental changes in the business.

**Current Conditions:**

The store does not think that customers care that much about if their company is green because they put out more green products and did not have a bigger difference in sales. The only advertisement that has been done to show customers of the store’s green qualities is selling of environmentally friendly products. The thoughts of employees and other staff seem to be that there is not a major thought about creating sustainability.

**Recommended Improvements:**

Based on the current conditions for the Socio-Cultural category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Learn how customers feel about environmentally friendly businesses**
If the business understands how the customers feel about environmentally friendly businesses, the business could better tailor its programs to meet the customer’s needs.

- **Communicate with employees about sustainability changes and their thoughts**
  The business could get to know the thoughts of the employees and take their opinions into consideration to make changes in the business. This would give the business more ideas of what changes could be made and work together with their employees on this.

- **Communicate with facilities about sustainability in the store**
  Having discussion with facility workers would help the store to realize the waste and recycling processes and let the facility workers give their feedback to the store.

**ECONOMIC: (SCORE: 3/10)**

This section addresses the possible incentives that may help to get the business to make some changes. It also concentrates on green promotions that the business has done to promote sustainability and different marketing and advertising strategies they may have implemented.

*Current Conditions:*

The store would be most persuaded by regulations set through corporate and could maybe focus on recycling some things locally. For green promotions, the business has sold different environmentally friendly products in the store. There has not been any advertisement of the sustainable business changes to the customers. The store does not think that becoming greener will give customers more incentives to buy their products.

*Recommended Improvements:*

  Based on the current conditions for the Economic category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Make changes locally**
  Making changes at a local standpoint could have a large effect on the environment and the community. The little changes that could be made at the local store make a big difference and could draw business to the store as well as save money.

- **Promote green activity through business**
  Promoting green activity, such as advertising for Earth day or even selling reusable bags, could help advertise the business to its customers as well as help the environment through the promotions.

- **Advertise environmentally friendly changes that business has made**
  This may bring more business to the store and would let customers know about the changes the store has made to help the environment.

**INCENTIVES TO CHANGE:**

Making these changes within the business would help to make the business more sustainable and could save on unnecessary costs as well as make the business more efficient as a whole. The Bed Bath and Beyond got an overall score of 17 out of 50, which indicates that there is room for improvement in this business’ processes. The
section that needs to be improved the most is the Socio-Cultural section. Focusing on making communication about sustainability within the business could help the business progress as a community. This would include communication with the employees and the facilities workers in the store. The communication could also be improved with the customers of the store by learning about how they feel about the business becoming environmentally friendly. Bed Bath and Beyond could also focus on monitoring the waste that is produced as well as materials that could be recycled. The store rated at an average score, but is on the edge of going below average. There can be many minor improvements made that would make a big difference to the environment and the community. The different categories are visually represented in the EcoSTEP tool that has been described earlier. The completed EcoSTEP tool has been attached in the appendix.
EcoSTEP
Measuring Sustainability (Bed Bath & Beyond)

Immediate Action
Improvement Required
Keep Watch

L = Long-term
M = Mid-term
S = Short-Term
Appendix 5:

Von Maur Business Analysis

**BACKGROUND**

On Tuesday May 10, 2011, UNL Environmental Studies Student, Jessica Hanson, visited the Von Maur at SouthPointe Pavilions Mall in Lincoln, NE to conduct an environmental assessment. The focus of the project was on the top five anchor businesses at SouthPointe Mall including: Scheels, Von Mar, Barnes and Noble, Bed Bath and Beyond, and Old Chicago. These anchor businesses were chosen because they are the top five staple businesses and are a diverse group of companies. The project will assess the operations, visually represent the current conditions using a graph called an EcoSTEP Tool, and develop a plan for improvement for these diverse businesses at SouthPointe Mall. The interview, with one of the store managers, took about thirty to forty-five minutes.

**DESCRIPTION OF ECOSTEP TOOL**

The EcoSTEP tool is a circular graph that was developed by the Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities, based in Omaha. It is a graphic representation to help visualize different goals to accomplish on the way to a more sustainable business. This tool is used to plot the issues and conditions of a business within one of three time frames: short-term, medium-term, and long-term. The time frames are represented along the concentric circles of the graph with the short-term ideas on the inner most circle. The issues and conditions of the business are analyzed and possible improvement choices are researched. These improvements are presented in one of the time spans of short-term to long-term. The EcoSTEP Tool then is used to plot out these different recommendations of improvements for the businesses to see as a visual of what goals the business can start on in the short-term and what goals they can work towards in the long-term.

Each improvement is also given a description of urgency, which is indicated by the color of the dot. The red dot represents immediate action, which means that the business should quickly improve this area of their business. The blue dot indicates improvement required, which means that the business has some areas within the section that need to be advanced, but are not very urgent. The green dot signifies to keep watch on the specified area. This means that the business has made some improvements in the area, but needs to maintain those improvements or that the business may need to modify those improvements as time goes by.

The tool also separates into different sections of the business including: Technological, Public Policy, Environment, Socio-Cultural, and Economic, which are depicted on spokes in a radial position on the graph. The Technological area includes processes with the product (or service) that occur before it arrives, during, and after it is sold. The Public Policy area includes if the business has an environmental policy, how it is communicated to staff, and how it is implemented. The Environment section is based on energy use, water use, and waste materials. The Socio-Cultural section focuses on the thoughts and attitudes regarding environmental change from customers, employees, and facilities workers. The last section of Economics includes incentives to environmental...
change, green promotions that the business may have implemented, and marketing or advertising strategies that include changes in sustainability.

In addition to the EcoSTEP tool, each section will also be assigned a relative numeric score. This score based on a maximum of ten points will allow basic comparisons between the individual scores involved in the project. The scores are based on what the current conditions of each store are, along with the different recommended improvements that can be made.

**TECHNOLOGICAL: (SCORE: 5/10)**

This area focuses on the processes that occur before the product arrives as well as how it arrives to the business. It also encompasses the processes that occur while the product is in the store and the processes of when the product is sold.

*Current Conditions:*

In Von Maur, the product is transported by truck in cardboard boxes and in some hanging cloth bags. The cardboard is broken down, bailed, and sent back to the distribution center that will recycle it. The hangers are returned to the Von Maur company and redistributed throughout the stores. They also use wooden pallets for transportation, which are reused and given back to the trucking company. The product is prepared for selling by steaming some of the clothes that need it. The displays that are used in the store are sent by the vendor and are only reused if they are generic enough. Other displays that do not meet this requirement are thrown away. The receipts are given to the customers without question and they are unsure if it is recycled content paper. They use recycled content paper in the offices and in printing. Paper bags are given to the customers for their purchased items and they are given without question. They use plastic bags for shipping items that have been bought or for hanging items. The store also sells some of the reusable shopping bags.

*Recommended Improvements:*

Based on the current conditions for the Technological category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Use plastic containers to replace cardboard boxes for transportation**
  This will help to reduce the amount of material that needs to be recycled because the containers will be reusable. It will reduce the amount of energy used to recycle cardboard.

- **Buy BPA free receipt paper**
  Buying BPA free receipt paper allows for the paper to be recycled, unlike most receipt paper. BPA stands for bisphenol A, which is a chemical found in thermal paper or receipt paper. It can be absorbed by humans and leached into the ground at landfills or transferred to new material if recycled. It has been found as potentially harmful to humans. Buying BPA free receipt paper would help to reduce the amount of paper in the trash at the store and at the landfill, since it can be recycled. It also helps reduce the chemicals that can be released from BPA paper to humans and to the environment.

- **Use only wooden hangers**
Wooden hangers do not break as easily as plastic hangers and can be reused for longer periods of time.

- **Recycle display products**
  If displays cannot be reused in the store, it would be beneficial to recycle them to help the store to create less waste. If they are not able to be recycled, the store could also sell the displays or give them away to the local Goodwill.

- **Use only paper bags instead of plastic for sold products**
  Although most bags are paper, using paper bags exclusively helps the environment because it is biodegradable and can be recycled easier than plastic bags.

**PUBLIC POLICY: (SCORE: 3/10)**

This section focuses on if the business has an environmental policy within their business. If the business does have a policy then this section also includes how it is communicated to the staff and how it is overall implemented in the business.

*Current Conditions:*

The Von Maur does not have an environmental policy at this moment, but is working towards it by doing more recycling, becoming more cautious about things, and limiting tissue use that is used to wrap bought items. They are interested in becoming more environmentally friendly. The sustainability program is only discussed with staff, customers, and other branches if something changes. They discuss why it is being done and how to do it. They communicate their sustainability program to customers by asking if they can add a purchased item to a bag they already have. They do have a suggestion box for employees to make suggestions.

*Recommended Improvements:*

Based on the current conditions for the Public Policy category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Create local environmental policy for store**
  This would give the store more freedom to make decisions locally. Having a specified local policy could help in the development of environmental improvements in the individual business. This could potentially improve the sustainability of this store in Lincoln.

- **Discuss environmental changes in meetings**
  Discussing environmental changes and soliciting the opinions of the staff at this store could give different perspectives and ideas to the store to help make changes locally or even at a corporate level.

**ENVIRONMENT: (SCORE: 3/10)**

The environment section addresses basic environmental concerns including energy use in lighting, heating and air conditioning. As well as waste in the products that are thrown away and which products are recycled. It also focuses on water use in bathrooms, laundry, kitchen areas, and any other uses.

*Current Conditions:*
The electricity that is used varies throughout the store. Most of the bulbs in the light fixtures use 31-watt bulbs. They do not know if they use high efficiency light bulbs. The temperature of the building is set in the low 70s year round. The temperature does go down at night, but they did not know if it was set to a certain degree. The highest volume of waste from the store is plastic and Styrofoam. They do try to reuse the plastic and Styrofoam for packaging. The trash is picked up about once a month. It is the size of a semi-trailer. They recycle cardboard, paper, and plastic, which is picked up 3 times a week. The store contains 4 bathrooms and has 10 sinks total in the store. They have both hand dryers and paper towels and do not have any laundry facilities.

Recommended Improvements:
Based on the current conditions for the Environment category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Reduce lighting in store and use high efficiency light bulbs**
  Using less lighting in the store will help to reduce the amount of energy that the store uses. It will also reduce the costs for electricity use for the store and save on energy for other uses.

- **Reduce the temperature of building at night in the winter and increase the temperature in the summer**
  This will cut down on the amount of energy that is used to keep the building at a higher/cooler temperature when no customers are present. It would also reduce the costs on energy for the business.

- **Use alternative packaging material rather than Styrofoam**
  Styrofoam is a material that can be very bad for the environment because it usually cannot be recycled and is not biodegradable. Using a different packaging material would help the store to reduce the amount of waste that they create as well as reduce the amount of Styrofoam that is brought to the local landfill. The store could possibly use recycled paper for packaging.

- **Use hand dryers in bathrooms**
  If hand dryers were used in the bathroom exclusively, this would reduce the amount of paper towels that are thrown away and taken to the landfill. It would also move the business away from using paper towels that are not made from recycled material.

**Socio-Cultural: (Score: 0/10)**

This area focuses on what the thoughts are from customers, employees, and facilities on environmental changes in the business.

Current Conditions:
The store thinks that some customers are cautious about if their company is green or not. They have not done very much advertising of their companies’ green qualities. The employees and facilities seem to view the changes in sustainability well and it has made their job easier because they can reuse things.

Recommended Improvements:
Based on the current conditions for the Socio-Cultural category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Learn how customers feel about environmentally friendly businesses**
  If the business understands how the customers feel about environmentally friendly businesses, the business could better tailor its programs to meet the customer’s needs.

- **Communicate with employees more about sustainability changes and their thoughts**
  The business could get to know the thoughts of the employees and take their opinions into consideration to make changes in the business. This would give the business more ideas of what changes could be made and work together with their employees on this.

- **Communicate with facilities management more about sustainability in the store**
  Having discussion with facility workers would help the store to realize the waste and recycling processes and let the facility workers give their feedback to the store.

**ECONOMIC: (SCORE: 2/10)**

This section addresses the possible incentives that may help to get the business to make some changes. It also concentrates on green promotions that the business has done to promote sustainability and different marketing and advertising strategies they may have implemented.

*Current Conditions:*

The Von Maur believes that they do not need to be persuaded to make changes because they have already started implementing these things in their day-to-day process. They have not done any green promotions to support green activity. They have not done any advertising to show their business’ changes to their customers. The store thinks that customers would be more inclined to shop in a store that is more environmentally friendly.

*Recommended Improvements:*

Based on the current conditions for the Economic category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Make changes locally**
  Making changes at a local standpoint could have a large effect on the environment and the community. Even little changes that could be made at the local store make a big difference and could draw customers to the store as well as save money.

- **Promote green activity through business**
  Promoting green activity, such as advertising for Earth Day or even selling reusable bags, could help advertise the business to its customers as well as help the environment through the promotions.

- **Advertise environmentally friendly changes that business has made**
  This may bring more business to the store and would let customers know about the changes the store has made to help the environment.
INCENTIVES TO CHANGE:

Making these changes within the business would help to make the business more sustainable and could save on unnecessary costs as well as make the business more efficient as a whole. The Von Maur got an overall score of 13 out of 50, which indicates that there needs to be some improvement for the business’ processes. The areas that need the most improvement are the Socio-Cultural and the Economic sections. For the Socio-Cultural section, the store could focus on making communication about sustainability within the business, which would help the business progress as a community. This would include communication with the employees and the facilities workers in the store. The communication could also be improved with the customers of the store by learning about how they feel about the business becoming environmentally friendly. In the Economic section, the store could start advertising their green qualities to their customers within the community as well as through corporate. They could also promote green activity such as Earth Day and make their own local changes that are separate from corporate. The store rated at a below average score, but is heading towards improvement. There are many small improvements that could be made that would decrease the amount of impact Von Maur has on the environment and the community around it. The different categories are visually represented in the EcoSTEP tool that has been described earlier. The completed EcoSTEP tool has been attached in the appendix.
EcoSTEP
Measuring Sustainability
(Von Maur)

- Immediate Action
- Improvement Required
- Keep Watch

L = Long-term
M = Mid-term
S = Short-Term

Technological
Appendix 6:  
Old Chicago Business Analysis        Score: 7/50

BACKGROUND  
On Friday April 15, 2011, UNL Environmental Studies Student, Jessica Hanson, visited the Old Chicago at SouthPointe Pavilions Mall in Lincoln, NE to conduct an environmental assessment. The focus of the project was on the top five anchor businesses at SouthPointe Mall including: Scheels, Von Mar, Barnes and Noble, Bed Bath and Beyond, and Old Chicago. These anchor businesses were chosen because they are the top five staple businesses and are a diverse group of companies. The project will assess the operations, visually represent the current conditions using a graph called an EcoSTEP Tool, and develop a plan for improvement for these diverse businesses at SouthPointe Mall. The interview, with one of the store managers, took about thirty to forty-five minutes.

DESCRIPTION OF EcoSTEP TOOL  
The EcoSTEP tool is a circular graph that was developed by the Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities, based in Omaha. It is a graphic representation to help visualize different goals to accomplish on the way to a more sustainable business. This tool is used to plot the issues and conditions of a business within one of three time frames: short-term, medium-term, and long-term. The time frames are represented along the concentric circles of the graph with the short-term ideas on the inner most circle. The issues and conditions of the business are analyzed and possible improvement choices are researched. These improvements are presented in one of the time spans of short-term to long-term. The EcoSTEP Tool then is used to plot out these different recommendations of improvements for the businesses to see as a visual of what goals the business can start on in the short-term and what goals they can work towards in the long-term.

Each improvement is also given a description of urgency, which is indicated by the color of the dot. The red dot represents immediate action, which means that the business should quickly improve this area of their business. The blue dot indicates improvement required, which means that the business has some areas within the section that need to be advanced, but are not very urgent. The green dot signifies to keep watch on the specified area. This means that the business has made some improvements in the area, but needs to maintain those improvements or that the business may need to modify those improvements as time goes by.

The tool also separates into different sections of the business including: Technological, Public Policy, Environment, Socio-Cultural, and Economic, which are depicted on spokes in a radial position on the graph. The Technological area includes processes with the product (or service) that occur before it arrives, during, and after it is sold. The Public Policy area includes if the business has an environmental policy, how it is communicated to staff, and how it is implemented. The Environment section is based on energy use, water use, and waste materials. The Socio-Cultural section focuses on the thoughts and attitudes regarding environmental change from customers, employees, and facilities workers. The last section of Economics includes incentives to environmental
change, green promotions that the business may have implemented, and marketing or advertising strategies that include changes in sustainability.

In addition to the EcoSTEP tool, each section will also be assigned a relative numeric score. This score based on a maximum of ten points will allow basic comparisons between the individual scores involved in the project. The scores are based on what the current conditions of each store are, along with the different recommended improvements that can be made.

**TECHNOLOGICAL: (Score: 1/10)**

This area focuses on the processes that occur before the product arrives as well as how it arrives to the business. It also encompasses the processes that occur while the product is in the store and the processes of when the product is sold.

*Current Conditions:*

At Old Chicago, the products are transported by truck from only about two miles. Most of the packaging that is used is cardboard and some includes plastic packaging. The packaging is always thrown away. The product is cooked to prepare it for selling. The display products such as menus and other display items are thrown away after their use has expired. The receipts are given to the customers without question. They do use recycled content paper. If a customer is taking leftover food, they are given a Styrofoam box and a plastic bag.

*Recommended Improvements:*

Based on the current conditions for the Technological category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Use plastic containers to replace cardboard boxes for transportation**
  This will help to reduce the amount of material that needs to be recycled because the containers will be reusable. It will reduce the amount of energy used to recycle cardboard.

- **Recycle items that can be recycled (cardboard, glass, and plastic)**
  If the business is unable to use plastic containers instead of cardboard, then the business could use cardboard, but recycle it after its use. This would help the business to create less waste in the processes that the business goes through. They could also recycle plastic containers as well as paper throughout the store.

- **Buy BPA free receipt paper**
  Buying BPA free receipt paper allows for the paper to be recycled, unlike most receipt paper. BPA stands for bisphenol A, which is a chemical found in thermal paper or receipt paper. It can be absorbed by humans and leached into the ground at landfills or transferred to new material if recycled. It has been found as potentially harmful to humans. Buying BPA free receipt paper would help to reduce the amount of paper in the trash at the store and at the landfill, since it can be recycled. It also helps reduce the chemicals that can be released from BPA paper to humans and to the environment.

- **Use paper bags instead of plastic for sold products**
  Using paper bags helps the environment because it is biodegradable and can be recycled easier than plastic bags.
• Use biodegradable plastic or paper containers instead of Styrofoam to give to customers for leftover food
Styrofoam is a material that can be very bad for the environment because it usually cannot be recycled and is not biodegradable. Using a different material for the leftover food would help the store to reduce the amount of waste that they create as well as reduce the amount of Styrofoam that is brought to the local landfill. There are several vendors that sell biodegradable take out containers including: Green Wave biodegradable take out containers (http://www.greenwave.us.com/).

PUBLIC POLICY: (SCORE: 0/10)
This section focuses on if the business has an environmental policy within their business. If the business does have a policy then this section also includes how it is communicated to the staff and how it is overall implemented in the business.

Current Conditions:
The Old Chicago does not have a mission statement for an environmental policy in their business. They are interested in their store becoming more environmentally friendly, however, it is dictated by corporate. They did not know if they had any plans for creating an environmental policy.

Recommended Improvements:
Based on the current conditions for the Public Policy category, the following improvements could be made:

• Create local environmental policy for store
This would give the store more freedom to make decisions locally. Having a specified local policy could help in the development of environmental improvements in the individual business. This could potentially improve the sustainability of this store in Lincoln.

• Discuss environmental changes in meetings
Discussing environmental changes and the opinions of the staff at this store could give different perspectives and ideas to the store to help make changes locally or even at a corporate level.

ENVIRONMENT: (SCORE: 3/10)
The environment section addresses basic environmental concerns including energy use in lighting, heating and air conditioning. As well as waste in the products that are thrown away and which products are recycled. It also focuses on water use in bathrooms, laundry, kitchen areas, and any other uses.

Current Conditions:
The light bulbs within the store are all about 60-watt bulbs and only about 20% of them were high efficiency bulbs. The temperature of the building is set at 70-72 degrees Fahrenheit and it is automatic, but the store can override it. The temperature drops a little during the night and it comes back up when the store is opened. This is done
automatically at a certain time that was unknown. The highest volume of waste was from cardboard that came from packaging of food items. In one week they would throw away about 100 pounds of cardboard. They do not do any recycling. They have 2 bathrooms with 2 faucets in each bathroom. In the cooking area there are about 4 faucets. They have automatic paper towel hand dryers in the bathrooms and they do not have any laundry. The store managers review their water supply and leaks are monitored. The leftover food is donated to the food harvest program or the food bank. The restaurant uses an oven, stove, mixer, refrigerators, and freezers. The food comes from a vendor called Pegler-Sysco and everything is packaged by them. The chemicals used for sanitation are called Quaternary sanitizer chemical and Old Chicago was not sure if it was environmentally friendly or not.

**Recommended Improvements:**

Based on the current conditions for the Environment category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Arrange for recycling of materials (Cardboard, plastic, paper)**
  Recycling materials would help decrease the amount of waste the store produces. It would eventually reduce the amount of waste that is brought to the local landfill and would reduce the carbon footprint of the store.

- **Reduce lighting in store and use only high efficiency light bulbs**
  Using less lighting in the store will help to reduce the amount of energy that the store uses. It will also reduce the costs for electricity use for the store and save on energy for other uses.

- **Reduce the temperature of building at night in the winter and increase the temperature in the summer**
  This will cut down on the amount of energy that is used to keep the building at a higher/cooler temperature when no customers are present. It would also reduce the costs on energy for the business.

- **Use hand dryers in bathrooms**
  If hand dryers were used in the bathroom exclusively, this would reduce the amount of paper towels that are thrown away and taken to the landfill. It would also move the business away from using paper towels that are not made from recycled material.

- **Use environmentally friendly cleaning/sanitation products**
  Using chemicals that are environmentally friendly will help to reduce the amount of harsh chemicals used in the restaurant. It can help the business to make the restaurant a healthier and friendlier environment for customers and keep harsh chemicals out of the environment. A vendor that could be used for environmentally friendly cleaning would be Servicemaster.

**Socio-Cultural: (Score: 3/10)**

This area focuses on what the thoughts are from customers, employees, and facilities on environmental changes in the business.
The Old Chicago thinks that their customers care about how green their company is, but they have not done anything to show their customers their green qualities. The restaurant thinks that the employees consider changes to create sustainability are good. They also think that the facilities would like to recycle and sometimes employees even do their own recycling by taking boxes home and put it in their own recycling.

Recommended Improvements:
Based on the current conditions for the Socio-Cultural category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Learn how customers feel about environmentally friendly businesses**
  If the business understands how the customers feel about environmentally friendly businesses, the business could better tailor its programs to meet the customer’s needs.

- **Communicate with employees about sustainability changes and their thoughts**
  The business could get to know the thoughts of the employees and take their opinions into consideration to make changes in the business. This would give the business more ideas of what changes could be made and work together with their employees on this.

- **Communicate more with facilities about sustainability in the store**
  Having discussion with facility workers would help the store to realize the waste and recycling processes and let the facility workers give their feedback to the store.

**ECONOMIC: (SCORE: 0/10)**
This section addresses the possible incentives that may help to get the business to make some changes. It also concentrates on green promotions that the business has done to promote sustainability and different marketing and advertising strategies they may have done.

Current Conditions:
The business would be persuaded to change by saving money, but doesn’t think that spending more money to become more sustainable will be returned by more business from customers. They have done no promotions to support green activity and no advertising of the restaurant’s sustainable business changes to their customers. They also do not think that becoming “greener” will give their customers more incentives to buy their products.

Recommended Improvements:
Based on the current conditions for the Economic category, the following improvements could be made:

- **Make changes locally**
  Making changes at a local standpoint could have a large effect on the environment and the community. Even little changes that could be made at the local store make a big difference and could draw customers to the store as well as save money.

- **Promote green activity through business**
Promoting green activity, such as advertising for Earth Day, could help advertise the business to its customers as well as help the environment through the promotions.

- **Advertise environmentally friendly changes that business has made**

  This may bring more business to the store and would let customers know about the changes the store has made to help the environment.

**Incentives to Change:**

Making these changes within the business would help to make the business more sustainable and could save on unnecessary costs as well as make the business more efficient as a whole. The Old Chicago got an overall score of 7 out of 50, which indicates that many things need to be improved in this business’ processes. There are a few areas that could be improved on including the Economic, Public Policy, and Technological sections. The restaurant can start advertising their green qualities to their customers within the community as well as through corporate. They can also promote green activity such as Earth Day and make their own local changes that are separate from corporate. For the Public Policy section, the business also needs to get an environmental policy for their local restaurant and implement it. In Technological section, the business could start recycling some of the packaging materials that they use such as cardboard boxes, glass, and plastic. They could also buy biodegradable material instead of Styrofoam for their takeout packaging. The store rated at a below average score and needs much improvement in order to decrease the amount of impact they have on the environment and the community around them. The different categories are visually represented in the EcoSTEP tool that has been described earlier. The completed EcoSTEP tool has been attached in the appendix.
EcoSTEP
Measuring Sustainability
(Old Chicago)

- Immediate Action
- Improvement Required
- Keep Watch

L= Long-term
M= Mid-term
S= Short-Term
Appendix 7: References


Ehrenfeld, John R. “Sustainability needs to be attained, not managed.” Sustainability: Science, Practice, & Policy. 4:2. 2008.

