

Frequently Asked Questions

Answers to the FAQs from destination partners (e.g. hotels, museums) about participating in The Good Traveler program

Why was The Good Traveler program created?

San Diego Airport's Chairman, CEO and Director of Environmental Affairs all wanted to find a way of making the travel services that the airport provides more environmentally sustainable. They recognized that one airport can't make much of a difference on its own, so The Good Traveler brand was created and the program is being offered to other airports, and any organization that is involved in travel.

For travel that can't be avoided, the goal is to make it as efficient and non-impactful as possible and to offset the impact that can't otherwise be avoided. Carbon offsets are not an alternative to minimizing impact and increasing carbon efficiency.

What is a carbon offset?

A carbon offset is a way of funding an additional reduction in carbon that wouldn't otherwise have happened, to balance out your carbon footprint.



LEAVES NO TRACE

Please see a more complete explanation [here](#). See examples of the stickers we offer to acknowledge the purchase of a carbon offset [here](#).

What does it cost to join the program?

Not much. For airports there are no fees to join the program. We may request contributions to the cost of operating the program at some point in the future. For other destination organizations, such as hotels and restaurants, there are no program admission fees either.

Some point of sale merchandising materials (e.g. table tents) may be provided at no cost by our offset vendor partner.

You will need to purchase carbon offsets to cover those purchased by your visitors, but those costs will be covered by the funds you receive from the purchases. Currently we invoice you for those based on a report of the previous months sales.

If you decide to provide physical stickers to acknowledge your visitors' purchase of an offset, our offset vendor will provide at no extra cost of the carbon offset.

You may invest in PR and additional merchandising materials. We provide the artwork for such materials which you can purchase from your existing suppliers.

May we charge a profit margin?

No, but ...

We currently require for-profit destination partners, such as hotels, to refrain from marking-up the offset itself. A dollar to offset 500 miles of air travel is a

simple concept we want to preserve. We are open to input on this policy, but it seems to us that visitors will not like the idea of the venue providing offsets to make a profit. We want TGT to generate positive PR for your destination.

Offsets can be bundled with other products where there is a profit margin. For example, a hotel room stay that normally costs \$200, has an element of profit. So long as the cost of the offset is clearly called out, and the miles offset are clearly explained, the offset may be included in the product/service price, or offered as an option or add-on. Another example of this bundling might be a T-shirt which could have a TGT offset associated with it. This could be established by the artwork printed on the T-shirt or via a tag attached to it. The T-shirt may include TGT trademarked graphics if an offset is included in the price, so long as the graphics are approved in advance.

You may include a contribution for another non-profit program as part of a bundle. For example, a museum may sell TGT stickers for \$2 if they clearly state that \$1 pays for the offset and \$1 is going to the museum's environmental action fund. These bundles need to be approved in advance.

Do I have to provide a sticker when I sell a TGT Offset?

No. It's optional.

We understand that some people don't want a sticker, they just want to do their part to save the planet. If you don't offer a sticker you do need to:

- a) provide some acknowledgement of the purchase, a receipt (electronic is fine) and thanks to your visitor for their purchase
- b) establish a mechanism to track your sales that is agreed with us in advance. We need a way to making sure that every dollar you receive

for purchase in an offset is passed on to our offset provider and reported so that the offsets can be sourced and "retired" (taken out of circulation forever/not re-sold).

Why does TGT offer stickers?

Most people don't purchase carbon offsets. One of the reasons we heard for this was that purchasers of offsets felt unsatisfied. They felt their contribution was not being acknowledged. Most of us like to do good, and we like others to see that we are doing good. The stickers make people's virtue more conspicuous.

Stickers are the original "viral" technology. We want TGT to spread and make an impact. If people apply a sticker to their suitcase or laptop, word about carbon offsetting will spread.

We hope that people will make future, larger purchases on-line using our [web store](#), which is even more environmentally efficient.

Is purchasing a carbon offset a charitable donation?

No. It is virtuous, but it is not a donation. It's a purchase.

Money spent on carbon offsets funds programs that benefit everyone on the planet, but they are not a tax deductible charitable donation. A carbon offset is a measurable commodity. Part of what is being paid for is the auditing and measurement that ensures a given quantity of carbon is being offset. Offsets can be bought and sold on exchanges. Their price indicates the level of efficiency in mitigating carbon. Unlike a charity, where the question of

efficiency is a challenging one to answer, carbon offset prices offer inherent transparency.

The offsets that are sold as part of TGT cost approximately \$10 per metric ton of carbon equivalents that are offset. Offsets can range from \$1 to \$150 per metric ton, depending on the type of program and the efficiency of that program. Offsets from a small forestry project in the USA will be a lot more expensive than methane capture from cows in Poland. While the carbon offset is a commodity, the social value of the program is subjective. The description of the programs TGT supports, along with the auditor's reports can be seen [here](#).

The Good Traveler program which promotes and enables the sale of carbon offsets is a non-profit program, run by a non-profit agency (the San Diego International Airport). Most US airports are non-profits, but they are not 501(c)3 charities. Therefore, TGT offset purchases are not tax deductible. Some charities that are 501(c)3s do sell carbon offsets which are tax deductible. Even when purchasing from a charity, you should look first at the cost per metric ton of the offsets being sold and the kind of projects being funded, to evaluate the relative efficiency and impact of your dollar.