



AdGreen Guide for Creative Agencies

2025



How to Use This Guide

AdGreen unites the advertising industry to eliminate the negative environmental impacts of production, and enable the community to measure and understand carbon and waste impacts.

This guide is for those in the creative, production and account management departments at agency level, and lists the actions where they can have an impact.

To get the most out of the guide, individuals should:

- Take time to read it all through, following the web-links where necessary
- Start working with the resources guide as early as possible on each project
- Be mindful of changes that could be made beyond current projects - like switching to renewables for office spaces, opening an account with a more sustainable supplier, or creating a company policy to encourage permanent behaviour change Encourage others to read the relevant resources guides

Sphere of Influence

Each person will only be able to do so much on individual projects - as this is a collaborative effort. AdGreen empowers organisations and individuals to follow the sphere of influence:

Things individuals and organisations can do themselves, with the help of AdGreen's resources, tools and training

Things they can influence by asking more of their team and suppliers

Unavoidable emissions that they will need to offset



Carbon Calculator


The AdGreen carbon calculator can be used at different stages of the production:


- To draft a production footprint using information from your budget to establish a rough overall picture, e.g., number of catering heads budgeted across the shoot
- To check the impact of one activity option against another to see which has the lower impact, e.g., beef vs vegetarian catering
- To complete a project with finalised details from your production to build your company’s dataset, e.g., actual number of catering heads per food option


Throughout the guide you will see suggestions of low carbon activities you can consider for your production.


Production Format


All production activities will fall into one of these activity areas. Throughout this guide action points will be shared which will reduce the impact in one or more of these areas.


**People Transport**


**Equipment Transport**


**Shooting Spaces**


**Catering**


**Wardrobe**


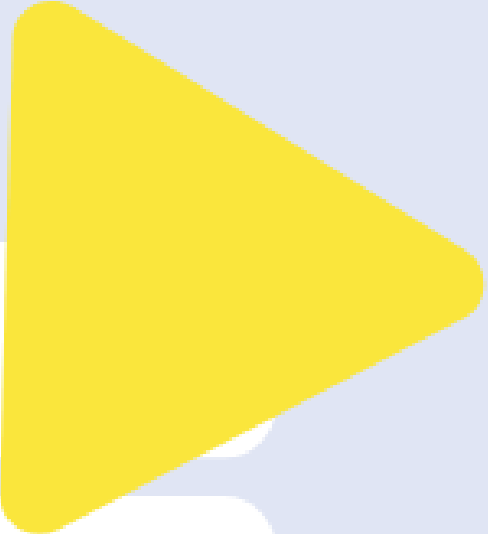
**Work Spaces**

**Accommodation**

**Data Storage**

**Non-Shooting Spaces**

**Art Dept & SFX**



Script Development

Here are some script tweaks to consider. While they may not seem obviously conducive to creating great work, we've seen in our industry that it is possible for creativity to flourish when working within constraints. Why not make low carbon production part of the brief?

Avoid baking air travel emissions into the script with specific locations and casting:

- Develop scripts which can be shot locally, or remotely, as air travel will significantly increase a production's footprint
- Allow for seasonal weather advantages to keep shoots in your own hemisphere/country and avoid air travel
- Consider delivering certain elements in CG/VFX or using virtual production instead to avoid travel associated with shooting them in camera

Avoid baking an excessive use of materials (and waste!) into the script with specific set ups:

- Try to minimise repeats of specific material heavy elements, and consider removing wet downs/weather elements from the script, to avoid excessive use of materials
- Consider a smaller build, and try to use sustainably sourced materials (and reuse old items if possible); items like poly carving create a lot of waste and are best avoided
- Consider delivering certain elements in CG/VFX instead to avoid materials associated with shooting them in camera

On Screen

As well as adjusting scripts to reduce negative impacts, positive ones can be added too!

Script or production choices, such as locations, character actions and props, can be used to promote and encourage sustainable behaviours, so discuss this with the director/photographer and producer at the earliest stage possible. These requirements can be passed onto the location manager and production designer as needed:

- Show characters using public transport
- Use electric and hybrid cars as prop cars
- Show solar panels on homes/businesses in exterior shots
- Show wind turbines in landscape shots/GVs
- Show characters turning off lights as they leave rooms, turning off taps, and putting appropriate waste in recycling and
- compost bins
- Show characters using reusable coffee cups, water bottles and canvas bags
- Show characters eating vegetarian/vegan food options with real cutlery, on real plates

Production Decisions

Once the script is in place, there are a number of choices which can be made to reduce the emissions on a production even further. These could be developed into company policy, to help everyone understand what is expected on every project.

Remember, you can check the impact of one activity option against another at any point by using the carbon calculator to see which has the lower impact, e.g., non-renewable vs renewable powered post-production house.

- If the shoot is based overseas, join the production remotely rather than flying
 - If in person attendance is essential, reduce the number of agency members
 - If flying, travel economy instead of business class
 - Travel to the shoot by public transport
 - If cars are required, choose electric vehicles
 - If driving, don't idle vehicles whilst stationary
 - Consider VFX before live product shots to avoid the impact of shipping hero items
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- If a team are attending and staying overnight, stay in economy or midrange hotels rather than luxury ones
 - Select production partners (production companies, post houses etc.) running on 100% renewable energy
 - If managing the post-production in-house, find out if the building is running on 100% renewable energy

- If meals are being provided, choose veggie or vegan options
 - Go paperless instead of printing
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- If product is being supplied by the client, make sure it is reused, rehomed or recycled/composted afterwards



Use Your Influence

HERE ARE QUESTIONS THAT CAN BE ASKED ON EACH SHOOT

- If anything is purchased for the production, ask what will happen to it once it's over. Is it really needed?
 - Can hard drives from previous productions be reused?
 - Can access to drinking water/a water cooler be organised, for cast and crew to refill water bottles?
 - Can reusable cups/glasses for cold drinks/water and reusable mugs for hot drinks be supplied? If not, compostable is preferred
 - Can reusable location protection be used rather than disposable items?
 - Can veggie/vegan options be offered as the norm?
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- If sets are involved, what set disposal options are there, and what costs are involved for the more sustainable options?
 - Does the studio offer recycling and/or food waste composting?
 - Can any materials be rehomed or reused before being recycled and/or sent to landfill?

QUESTIONS FOR THE BRAND TEAM

- Can any clients join the production remotely rather than flying?
 - If in person attendance is essential, can the number of clients be reduced?
 - If flying, can the clients travel economy instead of business?
 - Can the clients travel to the shoot by public transport, and if cars are required, can electric vehicles be chosen?
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- If clients are attending and staying overnight, can they stay in hotels powered by renewable energy, or economy or midrange hotels rather than luxury ones?
 - If meals are being provided, can the clients choose veggie or vegan options?
 - Can the clients go paperless instead of printing?

Post-production

QUESTIONS FOR THE POST PRODUCTION SUPPLIER

- Can the post team work remotely or work with local teams to avoid/reduce travel emissions?
- Is the studio, office, or home-working set up powered by 100% renewable energy?
- Are energy efficient computers, render farms etc, in use to reduce energy needs where possible?
- Are cloud storage and remote servers for short term storage powered by 100% renewable energy?
- Can long term, infrequently accessed data be stored on LTO tape (two copies in two separate locations) to avoid carbon emissions from cloud servers and consumption of hard drives?
- Can VFX be used instead of live product shots?
- Can VFX be used instead of set builds?

Further resources

Do you want to know more about AdGreen? Watch the AdGreen Overview video below for an introduction into how AdGreen began, how we support the advertising industry, why measurement and reduction are Important, and how we keep everything free at the point of use.

ADGREEN OVERVIEW



SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION TRAINING



Training

The flagship Sustainable Production module provides an insight into the climate crisis with science-based carbon literacy education, an introduction to the impact of the advertising industry, and information on practical solutions for those wanting to act. It also includes a step-by-step walkthrough of the carbon calculator.

Free to access for all, our training supports each individual working in production to become carbon-literate. Trainees can assess their comprehension of the material along the way with relevant quizzes and further reading. In addition, electronic badges enable trainees to demonstrate their carbon literacy and tool know-how to colleagues and future employers.