Resources Guide for brands

2023
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 working in production at a brand, 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
The sphere of influence

Each person will only be able to do so much on individual projects - as this is a collaborative effort. The average production manager can only remove 15-20% of the carbon from a project's carbon footprint*.

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

Unavoidable emissions that they will need to offset

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

*According to data from BAFTA's albert
Who does what?

The different users in the carbon calculator

**Principal Production Partners (PPPs)** are a type of contributor. They are the principal supplier of production services to the advertiser. Usually the PPP is a creative agency but it could also be a production company, if working direct to client.

**Third Party Production Partners (TPPPs)** are another type of contributor. They are not the principal supplier of production services to the advertiser. Usually the TPPP is a production company or production service company.

**Reviewers** are those not involved in organising any activities for the project. Reviewers are assigned to campaigns by the PPP.
Calculate and compare

There are three ways agencies and production companies can use the carbon calculator, and as a brand you can ask them to share the data to make decisions collaboratively.

**CHECK**
the impact of one activity option against another
- e.g. non-renewable vs renewable powered post-production house

**DRAFT**
a production footprint using information from a budget to establish a rough picture
- e.g. number of days budgeted for post-production time

**COMPLETE**
a project with finalised details from the production
- e.g. actual number of days spent in post-production and the fuel used to power the space
London to Edinburgh (return travel)

CO2e generated per passenger per km travelled

Here is an example of the carbon calculator being used to compare different activities and their resulting CO2e emissions. Both flying and travelling on your own in a car will generate significant CO2e emissions (not to mention other gases) so it is far better to travel by train or minibus. The carbon calculator allows you to work with the figures, rather than assumptions, and be able to start meaningful conversations based in fact.

Taking this journey by train, rather than driving alone in a car, would reduce travel emissions by 85.5%.

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**Carbon emissions per passenger per km travelled**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>CO2e emissions per passenger per km</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flight</td>
<td>0.311 tCO2e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train*</td>
<td>0.291 tCO2e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>0.077 tCO2e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minibus</td>
<td>0.035 tCO2e</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Train travel here references the UK rail network. Other countries will have a different percentage of trains powered by electricity which would result in lower or higher emissions.

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The AdGreen Carbon Calculator only measures the direct effects (CO2e emissions) of flights, it does not include indirect effects, as per albert’s methodology.

Indirect effects from high altitude include oxides of nitrogen, soot particles, oxidised sulphur species, and water vapour, and will increase overall emissions of a flight.

“The climate effect of non-CO2 emissions from aviation is much greater than the equivalent from other modes of transport, as these non-CO2 greenhouse gases formed at higher altitudes persist for longer than at the surface and also have a stronger warming potential,” Eloise Marais, from the Atmospheric Composition Group, at the University of Leicester.

Throughout our events, resources and training we talk about carbon emissions from four specific activity types. As you can see from the graph below, they are listed in the order in which they will usually impact a production, starting with travel.

**TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT**
Trains, planes and automobiles... even helicopters and boats! And not just for people - for product too

**SPACES**
Power for all non-filming, filming, accommodation and post production spaces budgeted for an advertising project, and the energy needed to run and charge equipment in them

**MATERIALS**
Set construction right down to paper, and all the water, drives, catering, batteries and costume in between

**DISPOSAL**
Recycling, composting and energy recovery

The mean (average) emissions split by activity areas across 515 completed projects in 2022

- Travel and transport: 62.34%
- Accommodation: 13.69%
- Post-production: 12.39%
- Filming spaces: 5.09%
- Non-filming spaces: 2.70%
- Materials: 3.20%
- Disposal: 0.60%

All spaces: 24.6%
Creative, production, post-production
Pre-production

The script - behind the scenes

Here are some script tweaks to consider asking your production partners to consider.

While these suggestions 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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Avoid baking air travel emissions into the script with specific locations and casting.</th>
<th>Avoid baking an excessive use of materials (and waste!) into the script with specific set ups.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop scripts which can be shot locally, or remotely, as air travel will significantly increase a production's footprint.</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow for seasonal weather advantages to keep shoots in your own hemisphere/country and avoid air travel.</td>
<td>Consider delivering certain elements in CG/VFX instead to avoid materials associated with shooting them in camera.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider delivering certain elements in CG/VFX or using virtual production instead to avoid travel associated with shooting them in camera</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pre-production

The script - on screen

As well as adjusting scripts to reduce negative impacts, positive ones can be added too! Are these considerations included in the brief?

Script choices, such as locations, character actions and props, can be used to promote and encourage sustainable behaviours, so discuss this with your production partners 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 shot.
- 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 with real cutlery, on real plates.

Pre-production

Production choices

Once the script is in place, there are a number of choices which can be made by those working at brand level to reduce the emissions on a production even further.

These choices could be developed into company policy, to help everyone understand what is expected on every project. Remember, you can ask your PPP to check the impact of one activity option against another at any point by using using the carbon calculator to see which has the lower impact, e.g., non-renewable vs renewable powered hotel.

- If the shoot is based overseas, join the production remotely rather than flying.
- If in person attendance is essential, reduce the number of brand members joining a shoot.
- If flying, travel economy instead of business class.
- Travel to the shoot by public transport where possible.
- If cars are required, choose electric vehicles.
- If your or your team are attending and staying overnight, stay in economy or midrange hotels rather than luxury ones, or ones powered by renewable energy.
- If driving, don’t idle vehicles whilst stationary.
- Ask your PPP to select production partners (production companies, post houses etc.) running on 100% renewable energy.
- Work with your PPP to consider VFX before live product shots to avoid the impact of shipping hero items.
- If meals are being provided (including evening meals if staying overnight) choose veggie or vegan options.
- Go paperless instead of printing.
- If product is being supplied by the client, make sure it is reused, rehomed or recycled/composted afterwards.
Pre-production

Using your influence

There are a number of questions you can ask your production partners, to influence the shoot. You could add these questions to a meeting agenda to bring sustainability into the conversation.

- Can the post team work remotely or work with local teams to avoid/reduce travel emissions?
- Are the studios, offices, or home-working set ups powered by 100% renewable energy?
- Are cloud storage and remote servers for short term storage powered by 100% renewable energy?
- Are energy efficient computers, render farms etc, in use to reduce energy needs where possible?
- Can VFX be used instead of live product shots and set builds?
- If sets are involved, what set disposal options are there, and what costs are involved for the more sustainable options?
- Can veggie/vegan options be offered as the norm?
- Can hard drives from previous productions be reused?

- 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?
- Does the studio offer recycling and/or food waste composting?
- Can reusable cups/glasses for cold drinks/water and reusable mugs for hot drinks be supplied? If not, compostable is preferred
- Can access to drinking water/a water cooler be organised, for cast and crew to refill water bottles?
- If anything is purchased for the production, ask what will happen to it once it's over. Is it really needed?
- Can any materials be rehomed or reused before being recycled and/or sent to landfill?
Using the carbon calculator: get set up

If you already have an account, follow the next steps. If not, please register here. You company may have already been set up in the calculator by an agency or production company when they created a campaign. You can claim your account by searching for your company name on the registration page.

Once you log in you will see your dashboard. If you are connected to multiple accounts (a brand and brand parent account for example) you will see these all listed.
Production partners: at draft stage

You can encourage your PPP and TPPP to create a draft footprint as soon as possible. These are the activity areas they can focus on for a draft calculation, as they will give everyone the information they need to make reduction decisions before the shoot. A company will only input activities in their portion of the budget, and each project is different so the items below are just an example.

**AGENCY ENTERS:**
- Agency and brand travel
- Agency and brand hotels
- Meals for agency and brand outside of the shoot catering
- Post production

**PRODUCTION COMPANY ENTERS:**
- Travel for cast and crew
- Transport for materials
- Energy used to power and heat filming and non-filming spaces (benchmarks)
- Catering for the shoot
- Large material items, e.g. set build, wardrobe
- Disposal

**FOR ANIMATION OR CGI CONTENT, ENTER:**
- Spaces as included in budget including post production
- Transport
- Catering
Once you have logged in, you will see your campaign overview page. Once you’ve selected your campaign from this list you’ll be taken through to that campaign page, where you can see the projects listed, and the total footprint separated by activity areas.
Using the carbon calculator: see your data

On the project page you will see more details about that shoot, including budget, delivery date, photographer/director and content type. Scrolling down the footprint will be visible, split by production partners and activity areas again, with a total footprint and potential offsetting cost. Below this you will see the activity areas.
Using the carbon calculator: see your data

You can also view all activities in one go, and sort them by CO2e, date added, last edited and alphabetically. This makes it really easy to see where your high carbon items are, and can help to focus attention.
In the menu bar you will see the options to view footprints in campaign or project view. By selecting project view you will see all projects across your campaigns listed. Highlighted below you will see the ‘export to CSV’ button. This allows you to download all project data so it can be further analysed.

![Image of the carbon calculator interface with project view highlighted]
Further support, resources and templates

Want to know more about AdGreen? Watch the AdGreen Overview video for an introduction.

If you’d prefer to read rather than watch, download the 2-pager which provides a brief summary.

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.
At APR, we support marketers to transform and optimise their content production ecosystems. Alongside the more traditional areas we are asked to support on, we have seen an increased interest in environmental sustainability reporting, and an ambition to embed more sustainable production practices.

While there may be an organisational desire to implement sustainable practices, in reality most brand teams are at the beginning of their sustainability journey. Often lacking the capabilities or knowledge around how to get started, brands are turning to partners who can help them navigate this new area of corporate responsibility.

A large part of a consultant’s role is to help our clients move past theory and put learning into action. Most importantly we must also be able to measure the results and provide a clear assessment of where progress is being made, and the further work required. For many brand teams, taking on the challenge of creating a carbon reduction strategy on top of an existing workload is impractical. We step in to join the dots between corporate sustainability targets set at an organisational level, and what the marketing and production arms of the organisation can do to practically support them.

Data is a key component of any reduction strategy, and this is where the AdGreen carbon calculator plays a pivotal role. The ability to measure the various activity areas of a production, and analyse the impact, is what will enable us to drive fundamental change.

We advocate for the use of the calculator across our client base to provide us with the data we need to create a roadmap, but to also drive that crucial behaviour change amongst brand teams and their creative partners.
For organisations to meet their Net Zero targets, scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions need to be measured, reported, and validated. As production consultants we see it as our role to ensure clients are aware of their responsibility for their scope 3 emissions, which includes marketing and production, and to help them take a considered approach to tackling them.

We believe the key is to start gathering data as early as possible, both in the context of individual productions but also as an organisation; those who have embraced the use of the calculator at this early stage will be able to access the data they need to report on their carbon footprint, and more importantly will be able to demonstrate reductions as a result.

As consultants we can also bridge the gap between our clients and AdGreen supporting the implementation of calculator usage across brands, markets, and creative agency partners. Through a combination of anecdotal feedback from partners and personal involvement in measuring campaigns, we can support the team as they make improvements and adjustments to optimise the user experience across their production eco-system.

Increasing the number of projects which are measured (and completed) in the calculator will provide a more representative and robust dataset for the production community, which is what will allow us to make informed change. It is our collective responsibility to provide the individual campaign and project data which will come together to show the bigger picture. Our hope is that data capture for production will ultimately become second nature to agencies and production companies, but we are cognisant of the fundamental changes required of us all which will have a significant impact on traditional working practices. We are here to support this industry-wide transition to a low carbon future.

“Creating a more sustainable world is one of Diageo’s key ambitions as part of our ESG action plan, Society 2030: Spirit of Progress. To be in a position where we can drive this agenda, we need to understand what our existing impact actually is. AdGreen’s carbon calculator is a critical tool that we’ve begun to embed across our business to help us understand what our Scope 3 carbon impact is across our creative productions. With APR as our partners, we’ve started to baseline our existing emissions and to use that to begin to apply reduction targets. Whilst we have much more to do on addressing our emissions, the carbon calculator has firmly supported our drive to delivering more sustainable creative productions.”

David Akeredolu,
Global Lead – Creative Production, Diageo
Further support, resources and templates

Creating an environmental policy

Here are some headings to think about when writing an environmental policy:

- Transport preferences: When is flying acceptable? How many people will travel? Who are your preferred suppliers?
- Energy and water: Can you switch to renewables and discuss how to save water with your supplier?
- Materials: Can you limit purchases of new items, procure from sustainable suppliers, go paperless, or plan how to rehome items?
- Waste: Can you organise for recycling and composting to be available?

Measuring your operational emissions (as opposed to those associated with a particular project) will give you a benchmark to start from - see the Ad Net Zero website for more. Once ready, display your policy, add to employment contracts, send to freelancers and appoint a champion to review it periodically and ensure everything is implemented.
Supplier listings

Based in the UK? Our partners at BAFTA’s albert have compiled a list of sustainable suppliers serving those in advertising, TV and film production. The list can be filtered, making it even easier to find what you’re looking for.

Look out for those powered by 100% renewable energy.

Take a look through the supplier listings.

FAQs

Got a question? Check out the FAQs here - it might have been asked already.

Think an answer is missing? Get in touch.

I’ve requested access to the carbon calculator as a new company and not heard back yet.

What’s the value of all of this for my brand?

Does it cost more to produce advertising work in a more sustainable way?

What is the carbon footprint of an average shoot?
Glossary

REVIEWER COMPANIES
These are defined as brand parents, brands, production consultancies and advertising agency parents and holding companies. Reviewer companies do not have access to create campaigns and projects or add or amend data on activity forms. Companies whose users and admins will only view (not input) carbon activity data about campaigns to which the company has been assigned (and the campaign's associated projects).

CONTRIBUTOR COMPANIES
These are defined as advertising agencies, production companies and service production companies. Each contributor company can act as either the principal production partner (PPP) or the third-party production partner (TPPP) on any given campaign. Companies whose users and admins will input and view carbon activity data about motion, stills and audio projects to which the company has been assigned. Privileges afforded to the contributor company depend on which role they are fulfilling on a particular campaign.

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTION PARTNER (PPP)
A role taken on by a contributor company on a particular campaign. The Principal Production Partner is the principal supplier of production services to the advertiser, who will be billing them for said services. In most cases this will be an advertising agency. In some cases, the PPP will be an in-house agency at the advertiser, or could also be a production company, service production company, audio post-production company or visual post-production company working directly with the advertiser.
PPP users and admins set up campaigns and assign reviewer companies. PPP users and admins also set up projects within campaigns and assign TPPPs so that their users and admins can contribute activity forms in order to generate a footprint for the project (and subsequently, the campaign).

THIRD-PARTY PRODUCTION PARTNER (TPPP)
A role taken on by a contributor company on a particular campaign (meaning they only see specific projects within the campaign, to which they have been assigned by the PPP). A further production partner that the principal production partner has engaged to provide specific production services which they themselves do not specialise in. In most cases the 3rd party production partner will be a production company contracted by an advertising agency. In some cases, the TPPP will be a service production company, audio post-production company or visual post-production company. TPPPs users and admins contribute activity forms in order to generate a footprint for the project (and subsequently, the campaign).

USER
A user can only view projects they have personally created or been assigned to (and the associated campaign details). A user can invite other users to the project or campaign as relevant.
If they are part of a contributor company, a user can also add activity forms to the project. If the company they belong to is acting as the PPP on a particular campaign, they can also edit the campaign details and assign reviewers, and edit the details of any project held with the campaign, and assign contributors. They can also submit projects for review.

ADMIN
An admin can view every project the company has created or been assigned to (and the associated campaign details). An admin can invite other users to the project or campaign as relevant.
The admin is responsible for managing the company’s users incl. adding, removing and creating other admin. They can also perform the functions of a user.

CAMPAIGN
An entity to which projects belong. A campaign must be created before a project. Each campaign has its own overview page, where varying detail of data is visible depending on the company the user / admin belongs to.

PROJECT
Each project belongs to a campaign. A project can be defined as audio, stills or motion. Each project has its own overview page, where varying detail of data is visible depending on the company the user / admin belongs to.

ACTIVITY FORM
Each activity undertaken as part of a project is logged on its own activity form, by the relevant contributor company’s user or admin. Each activity falls under one of the activity areas: Non-filming spaces, Filming spaces, Travel and Transport, Accommodation, Materials, Disposal, Post-Production.