

# Main Street Goes Green

Learn. **Green.** Go.

## GREEN BUSINESS

### IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE FOR RESTAURANTS

Inspired by Café Lovi's Sustainability Success



## INTRODUCTION

Sustainability isn't just a trend—it's a smart investment in your business, community, and the planet. Café Lovi, a Santa Monica coffee shop led by owner Manuel Boutin, shows that small businesses can go green without sacrificing customer experience or profits. By diverting 95% of waste from landfills and cutting energy use, the café boosted sustainability and maintained strong performance. This guide offers practical steps to help you do the same—whether you run a café, retail shop, or service-based business.



### STEP 1

#### ASSESS AND SET CLEAR GOALS

Before making changes, review your current operations. Ask:

- How much waste do we generate, and where is it going?
- Are we using disposable plastics or materials?
- What's our energy usage like—are we maximizing natural light?
- How do we manage food scraps or organic waste?

#### Set SMART Goals

(Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound)

*Example: Reduce landfill waste by 80% in 12 months through composting and recycling.*



### STEP 2

#### REDUCE WASTE AND ELIMINATE SINGLE-USE

Café Lovi eliminated single-use plastics and added composting and recycling systems.

#### Action Steps:

- Replace plastic utensils, straws, and to-go containers with compostable or reusable options.
- Partner with local or municipal composting programs.
- Create designated bins for compost, recycling, and landfill.
- Encourage dine-in customers to use reusable dishware.



## Pro Tip: Start Small

Eliminate one disposable item (e.g. plastic straws) and expand.



### STEP 3

## START A COMPOSTING PROGRAM

Café Lovi diverted food scraps and coffee grounds from landfills by composting.

### How to Get Started:

- Contact your city or a composting service provider.
- Educate staff on what can be composted.
- Use signage to guide customers and minimize contamination.
- Track composting volumes to monitor progress.

### Industry Example:

Restaurants and cafes benefit from composting prep waste, expired inventory, and plate scrapings.

## Pro Tip: Track Usage

Consider tracking usage over time to identify patterns and opportunities for savings.



### STEP 4

## OPTIMIZE ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Without spending a dime, Café Lovi reduced energy use by relying on natural light.

### Simple Energy Solutions:

- Maximize daylight—open blinds, rearrange seating to reduce the need for electric lighting.
- Switch to LED lighting where necessary.
- Install motion sensors in restrooms and storage areas.
- Power down non-essential equipment at night.



### STEP 5

## MAKE IT REUSABLE

Reusable dining options improve customer experience and reduce waste:

### What You Can Do:

- Use ceramic plates and metal utensils for dine-in service.
- Offer reusable containers for loyal customers (e.g. branded mugs).
- Charge extra for disposable items to encourage eco-conscious choices.

### Customer Experience Win:

Reusable dishware created a cozier, café-like atmosphere that guests appreciated.





## STEP 6

### EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY

Café Lovi partnered with waste-reduction apps and platforms.

#### Try This:

- Use digital inventory apps to reduce overstock and spoilage.
- Join platforms like, “Too Good To Go” to sell surplus food affordably and reduce waste.
- Leverage social media to promote your green practices and connect with eco-conscious customers.



## STEP 7

### COMMUNICATE AND EDUCATE

Transparency earns trust. Café Lovi found that customer resistance diminished once they understood the “why.”

#### How to Build Buy-In:

- Share your goals and progress on social media, your website, and at your business.
- Train staff on new practices and why they matter.
- Ask for customer feedback and adjust accordingly.



## STEP 8

### TRACK, ADJUST, AND CELEBRATE

Café Lovi’s journey didn’t happen overnight. They adjusted over time, sought customer input, and celebrated progress.

#### Ways to Measure and Celebrate:

- Track waste diversion, compost volume, and energy savings.
- Share milestones online and in-store.
- Recognize team members who lead green efforts.
- Consider pursuing local or national green certifications.

#### Summary: Implementation Checklist

Action	Completed
Conduct a sustainability audit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Set SMART goals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Replace single-use plastics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Launch composting and recycling systems	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximize natural lighting	<input type="checkbox"/>
Switch to reusable dining materials	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leverage tech tools to reduce waste	<input type="checkbox"/>
Train staff and educate customers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitor progress and celebrate wins	<input type="checkbox"/>

## FINAL WORDS: START SMALL, THINK BIG

Café Lovi’s transformation proves that with patience, persistence, and clear goals, small businesses can make a big environmental impact. As Manuel Boutin said: “It’s okay to do it slowly... what matters is doing what you can, and improving over time.” Start with what’s doable, stay consistent, and you’ll soon be known not just for your products—but for your purpose.

