

BT: sustainability

A sustainable Olympic legacy for London

Telecoms multinational BT was tasked with building on its record of responsible sourcing to help deliver the most energy-efficient, environmentally-sensitive infrastructure projects the Games have ever seen

Promoting itself as the world's first sustainable Olympics, the London Games organisers have had to think hard about their corporate partners, especially since 2012 will inevitably include some of the Games' most demanding infrastructure projects yet.

As one of a handful of firms chosen to be members of the Organising Committee's sustainability 'club', BT has been at the centre of planning and managing communications from the scheme's outset. The company's overall aim is to increase connectivity without adding to the environmental footprint of what is already a huge infrastructure undertaking.

BT is applying its experience of integrating sustainability into its own large-scale operations to the Games, covering anything from improving energy efficiency, managing carbon emissions and running local social inclusion programmes.

Employing a converged network dramatically reduces energy consumption and waste, and maximises potential re-use after the Games

The telecoms multinational is also building on its record of responsible sourcing and waste management at the Games, to build a sustainable legacy for London that lives well beyond the closing ceremony. In terms of core communications, BT has designed a single network that will, for the first time in a summer Games, combine fixed and mobile telephony, Games applications, community area television and wireless internet access across the Olympic sites.

The infrastructure, which will also be managed and operated by the company, will support 80,000 connections across an estimated 94 competition and non-competition venues. BT's business director for London 2012 Tim Boden explains: "Employing a converged network dramatically reduces energy consumption and waste, and maximises potential for re-use after the Games. The design reduces the diversity of equipment needed. For example, the BT Hosted Voice platform eliminates the need for separate telephony gateways and switchboards at each venue."

To cut down on waste, the company will use an artificial intelligence tool to ensure the optimum use of kit and cabling, which it expects to reduce equipment requirements by 5%. Colin Norfolk, from the firm's "venue design team", says: "This technology produces designs with much greater accuracy than the estimating techniques used previously. It is easily reconfigurable to explore what-if scenarios and proposed changes, ensuring the most efficient use of resources and minimising our impact on the environment."

Digging will also be kept to a minimum by BT's blown-fibre technology, a method of installing cables with compressed air.

Importantly for London post-2012, all BT services installed for the Games will become part of the national BT infrastructure, providing what the company calls "a valuable economic legacy for the benefit of local businesses and communities" in east London and beyond.

At the Olympic Park, for example, the 19,000 copper pairs and 3,000 fibres installed will service the 6,000 homes and other commercial developments due to be built on the site after the Games. BT has also developed London 2012's unique and much-vaunted carbon measuring, and claims that many other organisations have increasingly been asking it to help support their efforts in carbon

The company

BT is one of the world's leading communications services companies, serving the needs of customers in the UK and in more than 170 countries worldwide. In 2011, it reported profits of £1.72bn (\$2.69bn) on revenues of £20.08bn.

Its main activities include the provision of fixed-line, broadband, mobile and TV products, as well as networked IT services. In the UK, it is a leading communications provider, but also sells wholesale products and services to providers in Britain and around the world. Its CSR targets include:

- Building stronger communities, improving digital inclusion and behaving responsibly and ethically.
- Reducing carbon emissions and its impact on the environment: BT has set itself a target of achieving an 80% reduction in its worldwide emissions intensity by 2020, compared with 1997.
- Quantifying the most significant social, environmental and ethical risks to BT in its corporate responsibility risk register, updated twice a year and reviewed annually.



footprint assessment using the adapted methodology. The company says it is building on its existing efforts in the area, having cut its own carbon footprint by half a per cent since 1997.

To minimise emissions, BT is piloting the use of electric vehicles for its engineers, promoting video conferencing services for organisers in order to reduce travel, and ensuring its own operations are energy efficient.

And the company's Sourcing With Human Dignity initiative already mirrors stringent Olympic requirements on responsible sourcing for suppliers. These sourcing and sustainability standards – based on the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Labour Organization Conventions – are included as obligations in BT's contracts with suppliers.

BT is also registered with the Supplier Ethical Data Exchange, a membership organisation for businesses committed to continuous improvement in supply chain management.

BT is also taking an active role in Get Set, the official London 2012 education programme, and has created three core initiatives aimed at improving local young people's communication skills and their parents' and carers' key coaching abilities and principles.

These programmes are focused on promoting diversity and social inclusion through collaboration – using the appeal and excitement of the Games to

encourage better communication among children and teenagers. Though its efforts will help minimise its sector's impact on climate change and ensure a sustainable legacy for its work, the company said it is simply "doing what it does best – bringing people together using communications".

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A computer-generated image of how the completed Olympic and Paralympic Village, located in the Olympic Park in east London, is expected to look

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BT has been leveraging its core capabilities to support the planning and management of communications at the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Through the transfer of knowledge from the company's experience of integrating sustainability into large-scale operations, they are helping London 2012 to achieve its aim of being the first sustainable games.

BT is also using the opportunity to pilot new technological advances which aim to minimise carbon emissions such as the single network (combining fixed and mobile technology) and the use of electric vehicles for its engineers.

Points to note:

- BT's commitment to continuous supply chain improvement through the Supplier Ethical Data Exchange and Sourcing With Human Dignity initiative.
- The company's active role in 'Get Set', the official London 2012 education programme.
- BT's new infrastructure which will create a tangible 'economic legacy' to benefit the local community in the Lee Valley.

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