

BUSINESS TOOLS

INSIGHTS

How have your plans changed given the state of the economy?

"Instead of planning a 15 percent increase in gross income, we are planning a 15 percent decrease in gross sales. Some aspects of the marketing budget are being trimmed back. We are trying to hold the same payroll budget. And we are attempting to increase our in-store efficiencies by adding a new point-of-sale system."



Jeff Mulert,
owner, Feathers

"As a restaurant that opened to do carry-out business, we're having to look at what our customers' needs are. That means learning to turn big catering orders around in 24 hours. People used to plan. Planning seems to have gone by the wayside. Now they're doing things at the last minute, and they want the best value you can give them. It's forced us to do things really strategically and use every resource we have."



Nikki Heckman,
owner, Elsto-
to-Go

Regency aims to go green without turning green

BY ANYA LITVAK

In June, Tom Miller, president of Regency Global Transportation Group Ltd., was asked to give a speech about green transportation. What he knew at that point was that the kind of cars in his 35-vehicle fleet don't come in hybrid form.

His is an industry of vans and limousines, after all, which have yet to ripen to the green craze.

"Buying a Prius and putting it on our lot doesn't solve our problem," he said.

Still, Miller committed to speak before the Pittsburgh Business Travel Association, so he began to research how a transportation company can go green without greenwashing (think whitewashing then change the color).

"The conclusion that I came to at that time was (that) the concept of going green is, basically, the same for any business," he said.

The first step was measuring how much greenhouse gas Regency was emitting. The firm hired Green Ride Global, a Toronto-based energy consultancy for the transportation industry, to measure everything from the amount of paper and other waste generated by Miller's operation to the



JOE WILKINSON

Thomas Miller, president of Regency Global Transportation Group Ltd., is aiming to reduce his company's carbon footprint by 2 percent each year over the next decade.

number of miles his employees travel to get to work each day.

The results are still being tallied, but in the meantime the company has made some permanent changes. The thermostat dropped from 72 to 69 degrees in the offices of Regency's 20,000-square-foot building. Miller disconnected every other light fixture in the garage, and dropped its temperature to a constant 50 degrees.

The company has gone paperless in its reservations — no small change at 20,000 trips per year — and is working to blend GPS technology with its

dispatch software, so that drivers can optimize their trips without idling.

The goal for Regency is to reduce its carbon footprint by 2 percent each year over the next decade.

By then, Miller said, the green issue will be more important than today, "and quite frankly, corporate clients are asking today 'what is your environmental commitment?'"

The question is now a line in some requests for proposals, Miller said, and it appears to be coming from all kinds of sources around the world.

Rosanne Russo, global travel manager for Reed

Smith, was spurred to think green by European clients, who would be asking to see the firm's carbon footprint and its corporate social responsibility policies.

Russo keeps track of the air miles Reed Smith employees travel and calculates a yearly carbon cost — \$16,000 in 2008 — which the firm then donates to environmentally focused organizations.

"Sometimes it's a requirement for the client" that traveling Reed Smith attorneys stay in green-minded hotels while on business trips, she said.

It was Russo who invited

Regency Global Transportation Ltd.

Chauffeured car service company

BASED: North Shore

PRESIDENT: Tom Miller

EMPLOYEES: 50

REVENUE: About \$4 million

WEB SITE: www.regencytransportation.com

■ **CHALLENGE:** How to green a transportation company without greenwashing its fleet

■ **SOLUTION:** Measure the company's carbon footprint and reduce by 20 percent in 10 years

Miller to give the green transportation speech last summer, partly inspiring his company's initiative.

Since then, Regency's other clients, such as PNC Financial Services Group Inc., have asked how the company minds the environment.

Miller said the whole movement has given his firm a measurable way to differentiate from the competition.

"We want to get in on the beginning of that curve and get ahead of it," Miller said.

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