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Los Angeles Center Studios - Where Green Meets the Media Machine -Greening Hollywood Series Part 1

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LA's Greenest Six Sound Stage Studio
Photo: Courtesy of LACS

After years of watching the film industry waste more than a small nation, studio heads have finally caught the Green bug and Hollywood is making changes. It's exciting to see Sustainability Officers being placed in strategic positions in most of the big studios, as well as eco-conscious producers looking for ways to green their shows. And while these sustainable media industry initiatives are taking smaller steps than many other industries, there are some leading the movement with a passion for a better future and fast pace to match it.

First up on my list of top eco-minded Hollywood Studios - **Los Angeles Center Studios**. Tucked away right in the heart of downtown LA on Bixel Street, this home to eco-savvy television shows like [Mad Men](#) and [The Closer](#), and feature films such as [Mr. and Mrs. Smith](#), is a showcase model for what a sustainable studio should be. Not only does the studio draw large productions, but it is also home to a number of media companies like Current TV and eco-centric events such as [Opportunity Green](#) and organizations such as [c3](#), a nonprofit with ties to the [Millennium Project](#). I recently had the opportunity of chatting with Chris Ursiti, Managing Partner of Los Angeles Center Studios (LACS) and eco-entrepreneur, to find out more about what really makes this exciting media epicenter stand out as a leader in sustainable media production.

Created with extraordinary vision and strong environmental initiatives from its inception, [Los Angeles Center Studios](#) took what was the national headquarters of an oil company and turned it into a thriving studio facility.

Focused on designing an environmentally low-impact creative community and media industry game-changing six sound stage property, LACS has been retrofitted with health and environment in mind - from the buildings, to the food to the landscaping and services offered to production companies. The transformation of the more than 50 year-old office tower into the environmentally and economically efficient building it is today, included installing [VFD-Tower Fans](#) (variable-frequency drive) boiler retrofit, lighting controls in wing buildings and tower, and recycled carpet tiles. In addition, low flow water faucets and toilets were installed, as well as waterless urinals. An extensive recycling program was also implemented including paper, plastic bottles, cans, glass and e-waste, which also includes additional

production recycling programs that even reuse left-over paint to repaint the sound stage floors. As Chris likes to joke, “That’s why it’s always a grey floor, but the shade varies a little. When you mix all of the leftover paint together it always somehow comes out grey”. Low water landscaping and composting have also been added, as well as office lower-impact measures such as using and promoting e-faxing and e-documents, newsletters, quarterly reports, and all billing statements. Also a source of pride is Flix Café, the studio’s on-site commissary, which features organic produce, is certified green, uses compostable and recycled materials in food production and even recycles fryer oil into fuel. More recently, LACS also teamed up with tenants and producers on the lot to initiate several new programs to increase efficiency and cut waste. Some of these initiatives include composting catering waste, recoiling fryer oil liquids, incentivizing public transportation, switching to electronic means of communication, and utilizing more recycled and reusable materials. Also in the works, all new paints used to be low or no VOC, recycling keys and hotel style locks to eliminate key waste, using recycled ceiling tiles, window tinting for better energy efficiency, recycle water irrigation system, low energy lighting and motion control systems, solar power exterior lighting and encouraging shut down of computers and equipment in off hours. These extraordinary measures have resulted in a reduction of 68% in gas, 32% in electricity and 26% in water utilities just between 2005 and 2008, and a predicted additional 35% more savings was seen in 2009. The recycling efforts made by LACS led to additional savings in natural resources including the equivalent of 2,640 trees, 159 tons of paper and plastic, and over 1,000,000 gallons of water in just one year. These reductions not only saved the studio an estimated \$450,000 annually, but also serve to lower the overall impact of the film industry on the local environment.

The eco-leadership begun by LACS’ visionary founders continues to ripple through the thriving environmentally focused campus community. LACS continues to attract a growing number of sustainability conscious tenants, encourages participation and creation of new programs, reaches out to the wider community to enhance green initiatives and supports a number of sustainability oriented campaigns. Los Angeles Center Studios is a breath of fresh air in every aspect helping to preserve the environment on a data-to-day basis.

To learn more about the “Super Heroes for the Environment” at Los Angeles Center Studios, check out: <http://www.lacenterstudios.com>

Slideshow: Los Angeles Center Studios

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