

# Online guide to greener developments

BETTER known as the play thing of Generation Y, online social networking technology has been put to use by the commercial property sector, with the launch of a \$1.5 million online encyclopedia and networking tool to help create environmentally friendly and profitable commercial buildings.

Designed to function as a wiki – a collaborative web tool – “Your Building” was unveiled at Stockland’s sustainable new headquarters in Sydney’s CBD.

It is a joint initiative of the Australian Greenhouse Office (AGO), the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Construction Innovation and the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council. Your Building uses internet links to pool thousands of individual sources of information on current sustainability practices, regulation, technological innovations and case studies in a single location.

How-to guides on developing business cases for green developments and refurbishments also feature on the site.

According to the AGO, the building sector has a significant impact on the environment, accounting for 10 per cent of Australia’s greenhouse emissions, 12 per cent of water consumption and up to 40 per cent of total energy. Activities around buildings produce 40 per cent of landfill waste and 40 per cent of air emissions in Australia.

CRC’s chief executive, Dr Keith Hampson, said Your Building “would encourage the commercial property sector to share its ideas and experiences, fuel debate on important sustainability issues and ultimately highlight how business could profit from sustainability”.

Dr Tony Stapledon, project leader of Your Building, said the site would help tackle barriers to successful business cases by demonstrating how to lower development and capital costs, reduce liability and risk, increase tenant productivity and give buildings a green premium.

“Creating green buildings which reduce environmental impact can have enormous benefits for the owners, the occupiers, the employees, the business, as well as benefiting the city and the natural environment. Importantly, they do not necessarily cost more than normal buildings,” Dr Stapledon said.

“The job of Your Building is to make it easy, and profitable for the industry to go green.”

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