The Travel Manager's Guide

to

Sustainability

Volume 1: Assess

The Huntico System™

Honesty and Transparency | Progress, Not Perfection

Dare to be Boring!

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About This Edition

This special preview edition offers a first look at **The Travel Manager's Guide to Sustainability** and **The Huntico System™**.

The complete system is designed to help travel managers understand where they are, decide what to do, and take the next steps when addressing business travel sustainability.

The Huntico System is delivered through a combination of guides, self-paced learning, coaching, and consulting support.

This edition contains selected excerpts from **Volume I: Assess**, the first guide in the series.

Included in this preview are

Introduction to The Huntico System	Introduction to Assess	Chapter 1: Drivers	Appendix 1: Driver Profile

Together, these sections demonstrate how the Assess phase helps travel managers understand the forces driving sustainability efforts, identify barriers to progress, and establish a foundation for future decisions.

The Huntico System™

The complete Huntico System consists of:

The Travel Manager's Guide to Sustainability

Volume 1: Assess
Understand the organization's drivers, stakeholders, suppliers, policies, risks, data, and current state.

Volume 2: Design & Execute
Build a practical plan, implement changes, and establish the routines needed to support long-term success.

Self-Paced Learning

Self-paced learning designed to help travel managers apply the concepts, tools, and worksheets at their own pace.

Coaching

Live guidance that helps travel managers apply the system within their own organizations.

Consulting

Direct support for organizations seeking assistance with strategy, implementation, analysis, and program development.

Follow our progress on LinkedIn and our website hunticoadvisors.com

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Introduction to The Huntico System

When organizations commit to reduce their environmental impact, many find it challenging to maintain meaningful long-term progress in the face of business reality. Action is tempered by cost concerns, unclear data, and increasing scrutiny from climate advocates and skeptics alike. It can feel like a lose-lose situation. For business travel, the goal of environmental stewardship must be harmonized with existing travel aims. Cost controls, duty of care, traveler needs, client demands, data administration, and stakeholder management still have to be managed at the same time as implementing a business travel sustainability regimen.

Travel management tools and resources are incorporating travel sustainability: booking platforms, supplier data, emissions dashboards, rail alternatives, hotel certifications, SAF mechanisms, and reporting tools. But resources do not turn into action without someone to sort through the growing number of considerations and options to design a coherent set of policies, procedures, and actions that the average travel manager can sustain over the long-term[1].

The Huntico System is a way to approach business travel sustainability confidently but without pretending it is easy. This system is anchored by three principles: Honesty and Transparency;

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[1] Sickel, J. (2026, June 10). *Travel AI and sustainability efforts can coexist, experts say*. **Business Travel News**. https://www.businesstravelnews.com/Management/Travel-AI-and-Sustainability-Efforts-Can-Coexist-Experts-Say
Web in Travel. (2026, July 1). *Trip.Biz introduces new app streamlining business travel booking*. **Web in Travel**. https://www.webintravel.com/trip-biz-introduces-new-app-streamlining-business-travel-booking/
Airoldi, D. M. (2022, March 25). *United launches sustainability dashboard for corp. customers*. **Business Travel News**. https://www.businesstravelnews.com/Transportation/Air/United-Launches-Sustainability-Dashboard-for-Corp-Customers

Progress, Not Perfection; and Dare to be Boring! The work is built around three connected phases: Assess, Design, and Execute. Volume 1 will guide you through Assess. Together, these principles and phases help you move from figuring out what to do, measure, and monitor, to active, evidence-backed support for your corporate goals.

When organizations start incorporating scope 3 category 6 business travel emissions into their environmental action plans travel managers can get asked for emissions data, supplier evidence, client responses, or a reduction plan before they are ready to provide them with confidence. The guides help you pace and organize the work so you document what is true, find what is missing, and build a plan you can explain and defend.

Why We Wrote The Guide

Business travel is integral to corporate climate action. Under the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, employee transportation for business purposes in third-party vehicles is classified as Scope 3, Category 6: Business Travel[2]. The category includes air travel, rail travel, ground transportation, and can also include hotel stays. Business travel is now part of many organizations' environmental reporting, customer disclosures, climate commitments, and public sustainability claims. For travel managers, emissions reporting and reductions are no longer a side conversation. It is becoming a routine part of the job. How did we get here?

Climate Change Requires Action

[2] Greenhouse Gas Protocol. Corporate Value Chain (Scope 3) Accounting and Reporting Standard: Category 6 – Business Travel. Accessed July 9, 2026. https://ghgprotocol.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/Chapter6.pdf

Climate change is one of the defining challenges of the twenty-first century. In 1856, Eunice Newton Foote published experiments demonstrating that carbon dioxide trapped heat, providing one of the earliest documented explanations of the warming effect of greenhouse gases[3 4]. More than 170 years later, rising temperatures, increasing ocean heat, shrinking ice sheets and glaciers, changing weather patterns, and accelerating sea-level rise have been measured and documented around the world[5 6 7]. Scientific institutions continue to track the environmental, economic, and social impacts of these changes.

The scientific consensus on the cause is equally clear. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded that human influence on the warming of the atmosphere, ocean, and land is unequivocal. Scientists know this because greenhouse gas concentrations have risen dramatically since industrialization and the pace, pattern, and magnitude of modern warming cannot be explained by natural climate cycles alone. The primary driver is the accumulation of greenhouse gases produced by human activity, particularly the combustion of fossil fuels, industrial processes, and land-use change.

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[3] Foote EN. Circumstances affecting the heat of the sun's rays. American Journal of Science and Arts. 1856;22(66):382-383.

[4] Ortiz JD, Jackson R. Understanding Eunice Foote's 1856 experiments: heat absorption by atmospheric gases. Notes Rec R Soc Lond. 2022;76(1):67-84. Published August 26, 2020. Accessed July 9, 2026. Royal Society Publishing. [royalsocie...ishing.org]

[5] Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis—Summary for Policymakers, Headline Statements. Accessed July 9, 2026. IPCC. [ipcc.ch]

[6] National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Ocean Warming – Earth Indicator. NASA Science. Accessed July 9, 2026. NASA Science. [science.nasa.gov]

[7] National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Climate Change: Global Sea Level. NOAA Climate.gov. Published August 22, 2023. Accessed July 9, 2026. NOAA Climate.gov. [climate.gov]

Greenhouse gases are a family of gases that trap heat and prevent some of the Earth's energy from escaping back into space[8]. Carbon dioxide is the most familiar and abundant of these gases, but methane, nitrous oxide, and several industrial gases also contribute to warming, each with different sources and characteristics. These gases come from many aspects of modern life and the global economy. Carbon dioxide is released when: generating electricity; manufacturing cement, steel, and plastics; constructing and operating buildings; heating homes and offices; and burning gasoline, diesel, natural gas, and jet fuel. Methane is released from sources including livestock, agriculture, landfills, and energy production. Nitrous oxide is associated with fertilizers and industrial processes, while additional gases are produced through manufacturing and refrigeration. Together, these emissions accumulate in the atmosphere and contribute to the long-term warming of the planet.

Businesses Face Demands to Act

Climate change is a business issue. Organizations are increasingly expected to understand, measure, manage, and report their environmental impacts. Those expectations come from investors, regulators, consumers, supply chain partners, employees, and the public. Regulatory requirements have become a stronger driver of corporate sustainability, customer-facing pressure has grown, and several traditional business drivers such as growth, innovation, operational benefits, and cost reduction have declined in relative influence since 2016[9]. Regardless of whether a company begins its

[8] US Environmental Protection Agency. Overview of Greenhouse Gases. Accessed July 9, 2026. US EPA. [epa.gov]

[9] Morris J. A decade of change in what drives corporate sustainability. *Trellis*. Published July 10, 2026. Accessed July 16, 2026. https://trellis.net/article/decade-of-change-corporate-sustainability-drivers/

efforts from conviction, compliance, or competitive necessity, pressure to act is becoming harder to ignore.

Investors more and more evaluate climate risk alongside other business risks and expect companies to demonstrate a credible path for managing environmental impacts. Public commitments and goals are no longer enough on their own. Investors progressively want evidence that corporate targets are connected to operational plans, measurable outcomes, and governance processes. Climate-transition planning is now part of investment evaluation and many institutional investors have their own frameworks for assessing corporate climate plans[10].

Regulators are turning climate information into formal reporting requirements. California's Climate Corporate Data Accountability Act, SB 253, requires large companies doing business in the state to disclose Scope 1, Scope 2, and Scope 3 greenhouse-gas emissions[11]. The European Union's Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive requires covered companies to report on environmental and social impacts, risks, and performance[12]. These frameworks require formal disclosure and governance from impacted businesses.

Climate risk is also becoming part of ordinary business planning. Companies face physical risks from heat, flooding, wildfire, severe weather, or changing travel conditions, as well as other risks driven by

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[10] Investors' take on transition planning. Natixis Corporate & Investment Banking. October 29, 2025. Accessed July 9, 2026. https://home.cib.natixis.com/articles/investors-take-on-transition-planning
[11] California Corporate Greenhouse Gas Reporting and Climate-Related Financial Risk Disclosure Programs. California Air Resources Board. Accessed July 9, 2026. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/california-corporate-greenhouse-gas-reporting-and-climate-related-financial-risk
[12] Corporate sustainability reporting. European Commission. July 3, 2026. Accessed July 9, 2026. https://finance.ec.europa.eu/financial-markets/company-reporting-and-auditing/company-reporting/corporate-sustainability-reporting_en

climate change: regulation, market expectations, and changing operating costs. Business travel can become part of the company's broader climate-risk story because it touches reporting, customer relationships, employee behavior, supplier choices, and public commitments.

Consumers probably never read a sustainability report, but they encounter advertising: carbon-neutral products, sustainable options, environmentally responsible brands, and public climate commitments. Consumers do reward companies that can demonstrate credible progress, but they can also challenge claims that appear vague, overstated, or disconnected from reality. For many organizations, public communication on this topic requires stronger supporting evidence[13].

B2B supply chains are another source of new business requirements. As buyers increasingly require suppliers and service providers to furnish emissions data and sustainability information in order to win contracts, those same buyers have suppliers asking for similar information. Those requirements appear as questionnaires, RFP modules, and emissions-reporting requests. Pressure moves in both directions through the value chain, making one company's climate commitment another's RFP requirement[14]. B2B pressure is the most important driver of corporate climate action outside of direct government reporting requirements. There is a knock-on effect: even if your business doesn't directly fall under a government reporting

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[13] United Nations Global Compact. Climate Policy Engagement. Accessed July 9, 2026. https://unglobalcompact.org/take-action/action/climate-policy

[14] New Supplier Engagement Guidance: Unlocking the Power of Supply Chains for Decarbonization. Science Based Targets initiative. June 19, 2023. Accessed July 9, 2026. https://sciencebasedtargets.org/blog/new-supplier-engagement-guidance-unlocking-the-power-of-supply-chains-for-decarbonization

regimen, your B2B clients may. Thus, their direct requirement becomes your indirect requirement.

The Unholy Trinity of Corporate Responses: Overpromising, Greenwashing, and Greenhushing

The pressure to act can lead organizations to take action with unintended and unwelcome consequences. A company can promise or claim more than it can deliver and prove. A firm can feel burned by past actions and pull back on commitments and retreat into silence. These responses are rational but they negatively impact your credibility, business relationships, employee trust, the bottom line, and the broader effort to tackle man-made climate change. This system is designed to steer you away from The Unholy Trinity of overpromising, greenwashing, and greenhushing.

Overpromising: The Road to Hell is Paved with Good Intentions

Overpromising on climate goals happens when well-meaning ambition gets ahead of available resources or business reality. A company sets a target, makes a pledge, or announces a transition path before the data, funding, market realities, technology, supplier support, governance, or daily operating routines match the ambition. Overpromising can force a firm to publicly scale back goals which can lead to reputational damage and possibly financial harm.

Honda, Starbucks, and 3 large tech behemoths are a few examples of companies who had to scale back laudable but overly ambitious sustainability goals. The goals were well intentioned and ambitious. Honda pursued an aggressive 100% shift toward electric and fuel-cell vehicles by 2040[15]. Starbucks set a 2030 goal to cut Scope 1, 2, and 3

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[15] Davis, R. A. (2026, May 14). *Honda posts first-ever annual loss after pullback from E.V.s*. The New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2026/05/14/business/honda-electric-vehicles-loss.html

emissions by 50% from a 2019 baseline[16]. Google and Meta both committed to reaching net-zero emissions across their operations and value chain by 2030 while Microsoft committed to becoming carbon negative by the same year[17].

The consequences of overpromising were embarrassing public pullbacks of once lauded goals. Starbucks began actively reassessing its 2030 value-chain emissions target after Scope 3 emissions rose, even as its direct emissions improved. Google has said its 2030 net-zero path is getting harder. Microsoft's emissions rose 25 percent in fiscal year 2025 amid AI- and cloud-driven data-center growth, even as it reaffirmed its 2030 carbon-negative goal and acknowledged it would need new approaches to stay on track[18]. Meta's disclosures

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[16] Segal, M. (2026, July 6). *Starbucks "actively reassessing" 2030 climate goal*. ESG Today. https://www.esgtoday.com/starbucks-actively-reassessing-value-chain-emissions-reduction-goal/

[17] Milman O. Big tech's lofty climate goals wrecked by energy-hungry AI. *The Guardian*. July 7, 2026. Accessed July 8, 2026. https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2026/jul/06/ai-climate-crisis
Bloomberg News. AI boom blows up Big Tech's climate promises. *Los Angeles Times*. July 2, 2026. Accessed July 8, 2026. https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2026-07-02/ai-boom-blows-up-big-techs-climate-promises
O'Brien M. AI's arrival complicates Big Tech climate goals, and data centers need lots of clean power. *AP News*. March 27, 2026. Accessed July 8, 2026. https://apnews.com/article/technology-artificial-intelligence-climate-change-data-centers-ef3a9c264bd6376d77e2c81ab266fb38
Tech giants including Alphabet, Amazon, Meta, and Microsoft acknowledge AI's strain on environment. *The Batch*. DeepLearning.AI. May 1, 2026. Accessed July 8, 2026. https://www.deeplearning.ai/the-batch/tech-giants-including-alphabet-amazon-meta-and-microsoft-acknowledge-ais-strain-on-environment
Segal M. Google cuts operational emissions but says moonshot climate goals getting harder. *ESG Today*. July 1, 2026. Accessed July 8, 2026. https://www.esgtoday.com/google-cuts-operational-emissions-but-says-moonshot-climate-goals-getting-harder/

[18] Clancy H. Microsoft adjusts climate agenda as emissions leap. Trellis. July 9, 2026. Accessed July 10, 2026. https://trellis.net/article/microsoft-adjusts-climate-agenda-as-emissions-leap/

show that its value-chain target depends heavily on supplier and infrastructure emissions outside direct operational control.

And Honda's case resulted in significant financial losses. Honda scrapped its major EV targets, had to absorb more than $9 billion in EV-related restructuring costs, and reported its first annual loss in nearly 70 years as a listed company.

Greenwashing: The Cardinal Sin

Greenwashing is a sustainability claim that sounds stronger, cleaner, or more certain than credible evidence can support. Accusations of greenwashing can lead to serious reputational damage and costly litigation. It is usually the result of poor planning and oversimplified promises. An organization could be trying to show real progress, explain a difficult transition, or point customers toward a lower-impact choice. Yet claims that a product or service is 'green' or 'carbon-neutral' can lead to accusations of misleading the public. In travel, this is an acute risk because terms like sustainable, carbon neutral, offset, SAF, lower-carbon, eco-friendly, and green sound good in the booking tool but are often used without being grounded in facts and proper context. Climate change is a complex problem that does not easily lend itself to corporate slogans or marketing campaigns. Greenwashing destroys the public trust that any effort to combat climate change must foster and maintain. It can also result in legal action and financial penalties.

KLM, Deutsche Bank and multiple cruise lines are a sampling of companies who marketed products as environmentally responsible only to face intense public scrutiny and repercussions. KLM's *Fly Responsibly* campaign made claims about sustainable flying, biofuel, tree planting, and offsets[19]. Cruise companies Cruise 1st, Cruise

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[19] Hoskins, A. (2024, March 20). *Dutch court rules KLM misled customers in greenwashing case*. Business Travel News.

Circle, SeaScanner, and Barrhead Travel, promoted ships with phrases like “the world’s cleanest marine fuel,” “new green technologies,” and “one of the most eco-friendly cruise ships afloat[20].” DWS, Deutsche Bank’s asset-management arm, marketed investment products as ESG-integrated, suggesting that sustainability criteria were built into how those funds were selected, managed, or evaluated[21].

Then activists challenged KLM and a Dutch court found KLM’s past ads misleading and illegal because some statements were too vague and others painted too rosy a picture of measures that only marginally reduced environmental impact. They were forced to cease such practices and to pay the litigation costs of the plaintiffs. The UK Advertising Standards Authority censured Cruise 1st, Cruise Circle, SeaScanner, and Barrhead Travel and banned the challenged ads from appearing again because their environmental claims were either too absolute, insufficiently supported, or likely to mislead consumers. DWS faced investigations, raids, reputational damage, and financial

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https://www.businesstravelnews.com/Transportation/Air/Dutch-Court-Rules-KLM-Misled-Customers-in-Greenwashing-Case

[20] Simmons & Simmons. (2025, September 4). *ASA censures travel companies’ ads as greenwashing*. https://www.simmons-simmons.com/en/publications/cmf6mjqli00auv9ts1fdbcojm/asa-censures-travel-companies-ads-as-greenwashing

[21] Sims T, Prentice C. Deutsche Bank-owned asset manager DWS fined $27 million in greenwashing case. Reuters. April 2, 2025. Accessed July 8, 2026. https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/german-asset-manager-dws-fined-25-mln-eur-greenwashing-case-2025-04-02/

Ethics and the Profession Committee report. *American Bar Association*. June 24, 2026. Accessed July 8, 2026. https://www.americanbar.org/groups/environment_energy_resources/resources/year-in-review/2025/ethics-profession/

Stoughton N. When greenwashing gets expensive. *Forbes*. March 23, 2026. Accessed July 8, 2026. https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbesfinancecouncil/2026/03/23/when-greenwashing-gets-expensive/

penalties after regulators found the firm had overstated how sustainability criteria were applied in its investment process. This resulted in $25 million in SEC penalties and a separate €25 million fine from Frankfurt prosecutors.

Greenhushing: The Betrayal

Greenhushing is a retreat from transparency, usually as a response to lawsuits, political pressure, activist scrutiny, regulatory change, or public criticism. Companies are being pulled in two directions: climate advocates are demanding clearer proof of action, while skeptics and opponents attack the language, cost, and legitimacy of the work. Recalibrating efforts and adopting better, narrower, more accurate language can be progress; however, backsliding and withholding information makes it harder for everyone trying to make serious change.

Again, these examples began with high visibility, potentially positive public commitments. Air New Zealand wanted to lead on airline decarbonization with a 2030 28.9% carbon-intensity reduction target validated by the Science Based Targets Initiative[22]. Coca-Cola pledged to reduce virgin plastic use and sell 25 percent of beverage volume in reusable packaging by 2030 after activist shareholders pushed the firm to respond to plastic pollution, packaging risk, and reuse expectations[23]. BlackRock, Vanguard, and other large asset managers had positioned climate and ESG engagement as part of investment

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[22] Reuters. (2024, July 30). *Air New Zealand drops 2030 carbon target, cites plane delivery delays*. https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/air-nz-dumps-2030-carbon-intensity-reduction-target-2024-07-29/

[23] Winters, J. (2024, December 13). *After 2 years, Coca-Cola's promise to scale up reusable packaging is dead*. **Grist**. https://grist.org/accountability/coca-cola-virgin-plastic-reuse-sustainability-targets-ellen-macarthur-foundation/

stewardship: a way to talk with companies about long-term risk, governance, resilience, and shareholder value[24] [25].

Then came the pushback. Air New Zealand said aircraft delivery delays, SAF availability and affordability, fleet renewal timing, and policy support made its 2030 target no longer achievable. As a result, Air New Zealand abandoned the target and withdrew from SBTi. Coca-Cola faced pressure over the veracity of its claims from shareholders and environmental advocates. Its reuse and virgin-plastic pledges disappeared from portions of its website, and its revised packaging strategy weakened or removed several earlier targets. BlackRock and other large asset managers faced tension from opposing sides of the climate action debate: climate advocates wanted visible stewardship and engagement, while political opponents and regulators challenged the legitimacy and legal exposure of ESG activity. BlackRock withdrew from a major climate coalition, and similar retreats have appeared across climate, biodiversity, DEI, and ESG commitments as companies try to reduce scrutiny even when internal work continues. Greenhushing is intended to reduce short-term exposure, but it does not build trust. It makes it harder to tell the difference between honest recalibration, quiet retreat, and abandonment.

These hazards overlap and often precede each other, with overpromising and weak claims resulting in bad press and government action that potentially drives corporate action underground or, worse, killing the entire effort outright.

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[24] Winston, A. (2023, February 7). *ESG is going to have a rocky 2023. Sustainability will be just fine*. **MIT Sloan Management Review**. https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/esg-is-going-to-have-a-rocky-2023-sustainability-will-be-just-fine/

[25] Future 500. (2025). *Greenhushing or ESG retreat?* https://www.future500.org/blog/https/wwwfuture500org/blog/greenhushing

Internal resistance.

Sustainability projects often start with a credibility problem inside the business. Finance will ask what the work costs, whether it produces measurable value, and whether the numbers can be trusted. Risk and Legal will worry about claims that create exposure. Leadership might support your efforts in principle while pulling back when the work touches budgets, service levels, sales activity, supplier relationships, or employee expectations. Operations teams often see the project as one more responsibility added to an already crowded job.

The travel manager needs more than interest to tackle the issues. The work takes time, money, data, authority, internal cooperation, supplier participation, and leadership support. Those resources are easier to obtain after the effort already looks disciplined, but the effort cannot look disciplined until someone has been given enough room to organize it. That is the catch-22. The way through is to enter the conversation with a method, not a slogan. You do not need to promise transformation on day one. You need to show that the work will be organized, measured, connected to business priorities, realistic about cost, and careful about claims[26].

How The Huntico System Helps You

Internal resistance is a barrier that can keep things from getting started in the first place while overpromising, greenwashing, and greenhushing are the repeating traps you must avoid when you are given the opportunity to act. The Huntico System is built to help with

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[26] Aronson D. Sustainability pays a credibility tax. Some of it is self-imposed. Trellis. Published July 23, 2026. Accessed July 28, 2026. Available at: https://trellis.net/article/sustainability-credibility-tax-self-imposed/?utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9M91YmcsbeElvqApe3ybP5tBMrzOl9A_jlsyzUVMDkrg62JmDHc09__ESAc1wZLiJO6ZNqKm4Jpq62TIMzrTTFrZh9Jw&_hsmi=33860362&utm_content=33860362&utm_source=hs_email.

both. It gives the travel manager a way to approach the work with enough structure to answer Finance on cost and value, Risk and Legal on claims and exposure, Leadership on business reality, and Operations on the routines needed to make the work hold up over time. We'll also provide examples of companies making well-calibrated moves, but The Huntico System is built first to help you avoid the traps and enter the conversation with a plan the business can understand, fund, and operate.

The answer is to be grounded in reality and built into your corporate operational routines. Our three design principles keep the work grounded: Honesty and Transparency keeps you tied to evidence, Progress, Not Perfection keeps ambition from becoming overpromises, and Dare to be Boring turns sustainability into records, owners, review habits, and ordinary operating discipline. The Huntico System embeds these principles as it moves through the Assess, Design, and Execute phases. Companies are responding to a dynamic new business requirement and there are seldom perfect solutions. Your best course of action is to act thoughtfully, consistently, and grounded in facts.

The Three Principles

Every travel program is different, but many sustainability efforts run into the same problems: more is expected than can be delivered, the plan is too large to execute, or your plan never moves into policy, tools, supplier management, records, and review routines. The three principles below keep The Huntico System grounded: be honest, improve in steps, and build boring routines that hold up over time.

Honesty and Transparency are non-negotiable. Be clear about what the organization wants, what it knows, what it still needs to learn, what the facts can support, what needs caveats, and how much change will be tolerated. Overstating progress, hiding limitations, or understating obstacles weakens trust and increases risk.

Public claims are watched by customers, investors, regulators, watchdogs, internal stakeholders, and sometimes the public. Good intentions do not protect a weak record. The Huntico System helps the travel manager know what they can explain, support, caveat, and defend.

Progress, Not Perfection means treating sustainable travel as a long-term effort: the goal is measurable progress, not an immediate claim that the organization has achieved its targets. Start with what is feasible, prioritize incremental change, and improve as data, capability, supplier offerings, and organizational support improve. Waiting for perfect conditions delays action and stalls progress.

Dare to be Boring! means building environmental stewardship into your routines: policy, approvals, booking tools, supplier management, records, support, and reporting. Lasting results come from dependable processes, repeated use, and steady follow-through. They do not come from one-off efforts.

Together, these principles keep The Huntico System practical, credible, and repeatable.

Built and Structured for Travel Management

The system has three phases:

- **Assess:** Determine the current picture using the best available data. (Volume I)
- **Design:** Turn what you learn into a plan for changes you can enforce. (Volume II)
- **Execute:** Put changes into practice and keep on track. (Volume II)

You will start with understanding all of your organization's goals, operational realities, and resources. Then you will design a plan before finally launching and making it part of your business routines. It is in the execution phase, or even well into that phase, after you have stress-tested the program, that you should consider a firm, achievable commitment, whether internal or public.

This work is dedicated to the unsung heroes fighting climate change. We purposefully titled it as a Guide for the Travel Manager as that is certainly one of our biggest primary audiences. But you should consider the term more broadly to mean anyone whose role overlaps with, interacts regularly with, or in any way touches upon the field of corporate travel management. We'll use the term travel manager and buyer interchangeably throughout the work because this guide is written for the people who have to quietly make business-travel sustainability work in practice: travel managers, operations teams, and others responsible for adding environmental expectations to a functioning travel program.

Use each guide in two passes: first to understand the phase, then as working guides while you assess in volume 1 and design and execute in volume 2. Volume 1 helps you establish your reality: why the organization is acting, who is involved, what the travel program looks like today, and what gaps need attention before Design. Some chapters will ask you to draft, start, inventory, document, or prepare; others will ask you to note gaps and return later. You do not need every answer on the first pass, just enough structure to know what is already clear, what needs to be checked now, and what should wait until a later phase. Each chapter includes what you are trying to do, the steps, the output you should produce, and the common sticking points.

The guides are designed to standalone or to work alongside Huntico's additional offerings: pre-made workbooks, self-paced content, and coaching. Those materials and live engagements are there to supplement the guides and accelerate your work, but the books give you the concepts and steps to build sustainability into your corporate travel program on your own.

Why would we give away the secret sauce if we want you to be our customer? Because this work is a calling, not just a business. If you need additional help, we trust that the quality of The Huntico System will make our advisory firm a logical place to turn. Our other offerings allow you to dig deeper and move faster through automated worksheets and analytical tools, then through guided online work sessions and live seminars. We also stand ready to help organizations with the most complex situations in an advisory capacity. But many companies will require relatively simple assessment, design, and monitoring, and we want this guide to reach them too. If all your budget allows is a few books and your own elbow grease, then we still want you in the work. The changes the industry requires will come from broad shifts in attitude, better common practices, and real action across the travel industry. If you're willing and able to do that from the books and The Huntico System alone, then we'd not only be proud of your accomplishment but would want to hear how it went as one colleague to another.

Tracy's Diary Entries

This guide includes short fictional diary entries from Tracy, a travel manager at OrbitHouse Global, or OHG. Tracy's entries illustrate The Huntico System unfolding inside an organization with real-world pressures: unclear authority, imperfect data, traveler needs, supplier limits, and sustainability expectations.

The guide is intended to be adaptable to the full spectrum of business needs. The diary entries help show the practical pressure behind The Huntico System and connect the chapters to just one realistic scenario. Translate Tracy's situation into your own organization, travel program, stakeholders, data, suppliers, constraints, and goals.

Workbooks

This guide describes workbooks that are spreadsheets and forms that hold the records you build as you move through The Huntico System so decisions, assumptions, facts, and numbers stay tracked and in one place. Use the workbooks to collect information and work through The Huntico System. Keep updating them as you learn more. Details on how to build the workbooks can be found in the appendix sections.

Online self-paced learning

The Huntico System features a series of online self-paced learning modules that expand on the concepts in this guide and provide additional examples, exercises, and practical application. The modules are designed to complement the workbook activities and help travel managers work through The Huntico System at their own pace. Complete the lessons alongside the relevant chapters or return to specific topics when additional guidance is needed. Use the guide, workbooks, diary entries, and online learning together as a single learning system.

About the Authors

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27 Global Reporting Initiative
28 Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures
29 Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive

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Tracy's Diary – Friday Week 3 @ OHG

I joined OrbitHouse Global three weeks ago. Going from an assistant travel manager on a big team at the last place, to being in charge of the team! It feels like The Big Time!

Even if it is a team of just me, myself and I. And no big deal – the last travel manager left just after launching OHG's annual hotel RFP. They extended the timeline but I came in right in the middle of reviewing the 1st round of bids, so forgive me for not keeping up with my journaling. It's a little crazy to say the least but I do get to see some of the old gang from Stonefield Hotels where this whole travel thing started.

It's been a whirlwind first few weeks of meeting new people and figuring this place out. It's still so much to take in.

This morning, out of the blue, I got a meeting invite from Emma, our Chief Sustainability Officer. Says she wants to talk about business travel sustainability. My old company didn't do anything about sustainability. I'm curious what she wants from me.

Introduction to Assess: Who, Why, What, How, Where

Tracy's Diary – Monday Week 4 @ OHG

```
Emma's meeting is later today, but I'm knee deep in the hotel
RFP. I need to square away these bid responses before I meet
her. I might have to cancel that call so I can focus on the
RFP.

I am trying to get ready, but mostly I'm learning how much I
still don't know. I'm still learning how OHG actually makes
decisions, who weighs in before something changes, and which
rules people actually follow.

The invite says business-travel sustainability. I don't really
know anything about sustainability. I was hired to be a travel
manager!

I am going in with questions. That may be the safest place to
start.
```

When an urgent request arrives without warning the urge to act quickly is common. Yet, an organized and measured approach to a topic as complex as business travel sustainability will set you up for success and help avoid counterproductive action. The travel manager has to understand what is true now, who must be involved, and what the organization can realistically support before making promises or acting.

An environmentally responsible travel program requires clarity of purpose, resources, and limitations. That means understanding what the organization is trying to achieve, what the travel program can realistically influence, which constraints shape decisions, and what is known, estimated, assumed, missing, or risky. You will always be working with imperfect data, competing priorities, limited resources, and resistance to change. You will have to make a number of assumptions to move the work forward; however, this system will minimize those assumptions and strengthen your ability to focus on what really matters for your organization.

Volume 1 covers the Assess phase. In chapter 1 you will build a first-pass Driver Profile, knowing that your first version will include assumptions. Chapters 2–7 help you identify the players, start the Stakeholder Map, and note what you may need to ask later. In these chapters you will start to fill in your Stakeholder Map. Chapters 8–13 help you understand the policies, technology, regulations, risk, costs, and funding issues you will need to assess before deciding what to change. In chapters 14 and 15 you will perform a quantitative analysis of your travel program and its carbon footprint and in chapter 16 we'll walk through conducting a formal gap analysis for your business travel sustainability program.

Informal conversations and introductions may happen along the way, but the formal engagement work (interviews, workshops, or surveys) should come after you absorb chapters 1-16 and make a preliminary program, footprint, and gap assessment. Once you hold those engagements, you will use the collected feedback to compare that feedback with your preliminary gap assessment and revise where needed. You'll then hold follow-up engagement sessions with key stakeholders and decision makers to share your final gap analysis before moving into the program design phase covered in Volume II.

The companies discussed in the Introduction struggled because commitments, claims, or expectations were not effectively grounded in reality. Before deciding what to change, you need to understand why the organization is acting, who to consult, when to engage them, how travel works today, what constraints exist, and what resources are at your disposal. Decisions made with that foundation are stronger and more likely to survive scrutiny, avoid unintended consequences, and result in commitments the organization can actually achieve.

Tracy's Diary – Friday Week 4 @ OHG

Well, that was unexpected.

Emma wants me to spearhead OHG's effort to create a public-facing travel sustainability program. Apparently, we need this by the end of the year. Nobody said anything about this during the interviews. Emma gave me some time to absorb the request, but she did ask me to help her make sense of what travel can do, what support I need, and what the company can commit to ASAP.

But Chuck the CEO and she are also concerned about publishing anything that might make OHG look bad. On top of that she said she didn't want to rock any boats. Apparently, there are some 'climate skeptics' in management. Whatever that means.

I picked up some pieces of what's behind this: client expectations, leadership interest, reporting requirements, and some investor questions.

It is enough to make my head spin. I'm glad I prioritized Emma's meeting instead of just plowing through more RFP bids. This is going to take some real thought. I will need to follow up with Emma in a couple weeks.

Chapter 1: Drivers

Tracy's Diary – Monday Week 5 @OHG

```
Over the weekend, I reread my notes from Emma's
meeting and it kept me up thinking.

OHG needs a business-travel sustainability strategy
by the end of the year and I have no clue what they
are driving at.

Emma sounded urgent. Clients are asking about our
commitments and requesting data, apparently there is
some investor pressure, too. She said Chuck is
worried about our credibility if we don't  act on
this soon, and mentioned government reporting
requirements in some of our markets.

I was hired to hold down cost while making the
travel program work. I was just about to get a break
while we wait for the 2nd round of hotel bids to come
back. Now it sounds like I'm going to need to learn
how to be a data analyst, an accountant, and an
activist!

I have to wrap my head around what to focus on. This
seems too much!
```

Individual drivers are the reasons firms enact an environmentally responsible business travel program and they clarify what you should prioritize. If you don't understand the real drivers behind your organization's travel sustainability push, you risk drifting into disconnected tactics, overpromising, or losing critical support when tradeoffs appear. Your job at this stage is to list potential forces in play for your organization. You will then score each driver for how intense they are and how high barriers to change are, now or in the future.

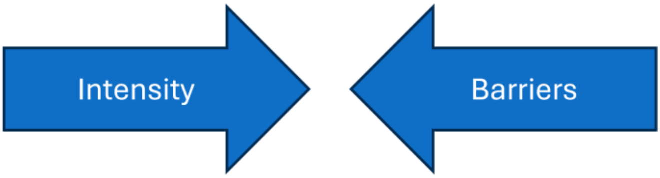
The types of evidence you should collect or may already have are all around you in your day-to-day work. Sources that show your firm's formal requirements are policies, regulations, reporting rules, and public commitments. The company may already internally discuss climate risks like additional costs, reputational harm, or business continuity. Other informal internal signals indicate the level of momentum on the issue but also reveal potentially high barriers to change. Budget pressure may slow action. Leadership decisions and announcements indicate their support or ambivalence. General traveler attitudes and behavior may help or block change. Client and supplier indicators are also clues you can often collect without a formal meeting. Check incoming RFP language to tell you what customers expect before they award, renew, or expand contracts. Likewise, existing supplier terms tell you what is already important to other operations buyers within your business.

Figure 1: Chapter 1 Drivers

Focus	Determines	Risks Mitigated	Action
Drivers	What year-1 success means	Not meeting the real need	Create list
Intensity	Where to focus	Doing low value work	Score 1-5 (low to high)
Barriers	How to approach risks	Slowed or derailed progress	Score 1-5 (low to high

Scoring the Drivers

Before we get into the drivers themselves we'll go over how to score them by thinking about the intensity of each driver and barriers you will need to manage. Think of intensity as the forward momentum that is pushing you to implement a sustainability program. Consider barriers to be the forces pushing against the forward momentum of intensity. Understood and measured together they help you plan strategically.



Estimating the strength of each reason to act will give you an initial sorting of obligations from optional actions. High-intensity drivers are non-negotiable: they create deadlines, minimum data standards, controls, and reporting requirements you must manage. Low-intensity drivers are optional: they may still be worth pursuing, but they do not set the minimum scope of the program. Are you getting multiple requests from stakeholders with lots of follow-up or is this something only mentioned in passing. Use a simple 1–5 scale: **1 = minimally important** and **5 = strongly important** to capture your initial impression**.** A low level of intensity does not mean that no action should be taken. You may find that there are many competing drivers so scoring them helps you to prioritize what to focus on and when.

Barriers are risks that shape how difficult it will be to implement an environmentally responsible and compliant travel program. Potential barriers arise from business reality, external authorities, and social norms. Use another simple 1–5 scale to estimate where you think you'll encounter speedbumps and roadblocks requiring a detour: **1 = low barrier** and **5 = high barrier**. Use this to score how likely the barrier is to interfere with acting on a driver. A high-intensity driver with a low barrier score gives you a clearer path forward. A high-intensity driver with a high barrier score tells you where you will need to spend additional time mitigating risks and finding a workable path forward.

Business reality includes management priorities, investor priorities, and competitive pressure. Cost concerns can block action when lower-emission choices, better reporting, or new controls require money the business has not set aside. A lean operating strategy can limit the availability of people and resources. Service expectations can block action when proposed changes make travel slower, less flexible, or harder for sales, client work, field work, or leadership travel. Competitive pressure could slow progress if competitors are not yet working on sustainability and your management believes action now is a competitive disadvantage.

External authority includes active government, regulatory, or political pressure against climate action. Public authorities may penalize companies that adopt ESG standards, join net-zero alliances, apply climate criteria to investment or procurement, or favor lower-emission suppliers. The pressure may come through blacklists, investigations, subpoenas, contract limits, incentive restrictions, or legal threats. These barriers can make leaders cautious about commitments, supplier choices, reporting language, climate frameworks, and visible action. Score them higher when external-authority pressure could punish, restrict, investigate, or discourage the company's climate-related decisions.

Social norms include customer preferences and employee attitudes. Customers may resist changes that raise costs, slow response, reduce in-person attention, or make service feel weaker. Employees may resist longer trips, fewer flight options, extra booking steps, or tighter approvals when the rule affects their own work. Managers may weaken adoption if they approve exceptions too freely, pressure travelers to ignore new rules, or treat sustainability as unserious. Climate skepticism or lack of basic understanding can also slow progress, especially when people see travel changes as symbolic, political, or disconnected from business needs. Score these barriers higher when customer, employee, or manager expectations could impede your progress.

Intensity and barrier scores can combine in four basic ways as shown in the 2X2 matrix below: high intensity with low barriers, high intensity with high barriers, low intensity with low barriers, and low intensity with high barriers. These scores are then plotted on a quadrant plot, also demonstrated below, to help you visualize a strategic set of priorities. A high-intensity driver with low barriers is an early-action candidate since the reason to act is strong and the pathway lacks major obstacles. A high-intensity driver with high barriers requires care and attention early on to mitigate current and potential issues, possibly requiring a longer planning and implementation timeline. A low-intensity driver with low barriers may be worth pursuing as time and resources allow, especially if it builds habits or data without distracting from stronger priorities. A low-intensity driver with high barriers should usually wait unless it aligns with or supports another priority. Figure 2 is the 2X2 matrix that shows how these scores work together. Figure 3 is an example of the quadrant plot you can build from this system to guide strategy planning.

	Low Barrier	**High Barrier**
High Intensity	Early-action candidate	High effort priorities
Low Intensity	When resources allow	If supports other priorities

Drivers and the 5 Key Domains

This system sorts drivers into five domains: Compliance, Climate Risk, Investor and Market Expectations, Leadership, and Culture. A driver is the base unit of the profile: one specific reason the company is being pushed to act. The domains help you organize those individual drivers so you can see which kinds of pressure are most important. The domains help us organize the discussion of drivers and will be used to create aggregate domain scoring based on the underlying individual drivers.

Figure 2: Common drivers of sustainability efforts

Domain	Example driver
Compliance	Scope 3 business travel reporting requirements
	Regulated procurement process requires emissions data
	Regulation requires proof of reduction efforts
Climate Risk	Exposure to climate change related costs
	Exposure to future carbon costs
	Unmanaged travel spend is weakening emissions control
Investor and Market Expectations	Client RFP asks for travel emissions and reduction plan
	Investors ask for evidence of method, coverage, limits, and progress
	Supply-chain partner demands a standard reporting format
Leadership Driven	Public climate commitment that includes business travel
	Competitor parity (peers publish travel metrics)
	Climate risk mitigation as a strategic goal
Culture	Employer brand (recruiting/retention expectations)
	Employee demand for more sustainable options
	Leadership expects travel choices to reflect company values

Compliance

Compliance drivers come from external rules and official requirements and are mandatory. This domain includes mandated disclosures, reporting obligations, audit expectations, regulated procurement requirements, and government rules that require the company to measure, explain, or provide travel-related sustainability information. Compliance sets the floor on what must be measured, what backup must be kept, when it is due, who signs off, and what must remain consistent each time the company reports or responds to a request.

Compliance requirements are a complex cacophony and can easily seem overwhelming. They do not apply evenly everywhere, and they are evolving. They can depend on where the company does business, apply to only certain business entities and not the entire firm, and involve revenue or other thresholds. Some requirements apply now. Others are coming into force, expanding in scope, or likely to affect the company later.

Jurisdictions like Europe, the UK, and California are three main jurisdictions with current and growing reporting and action plan requirements. There are also many varied country-specific reporting regimes and the list is growing each year. Relevant frameworks and regimes may include GRI, IFRS S2, EU CSRD and ESRS E1, California SB 253, and other national or regional disclosure systems[30].

Do not assume a framework applies because it exists; that will lead to needlessly focusing on work that isn't needed or can be postponed. Do not assume it is irrelevant because it is foreign. Even though US federal regulations are postponed indefinitely, this is an anomaly globally. In chapter 9 we'll cover what you will need to understand from your business and travel footprint to be able to anticipate what is currently required and what is coming within the next five to ten years.

If the company has told you which reporting regimes may apply, or you have requests for data to satisfy reporting requirements, then score this driver on the higher side. If you're not sure if this should be a higher or lower intensity score you can look through the compliance related drivers in Appendix 1 and the list of compliance regimes and company sector and earnings thresholds. This table will help you understand which regulatory regimes will likely apply to your company and require further follow-up. Don't worry about a thorough analysis at this point, but you should get a general sense of how central compliance is to your strategy.

Data, system, and supplier limits are the primary stumbling block you'll encounter. Compliance work depends on travel data that is complete, consistent, and detailed enough to support the reporting

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[30] Footnote on regulations needed

requirement. That becomes difficult if data is fragmented across agencies, airlines, booking tools, and expense systems. Your data may not capture the right fields or data sets do not match each other. Traveler and manager behavior can add to the problem when new booking fields, trip-purpose codes, approvals, or exception rules are skipped, misunderstood, or treated as extra work. Score these barriers higher when you are aware of existing data challenges and limitations. If the company cannot reliably collect, connect, verify, or explain the travel data needed for compliance, and if this is an important driver for you, then you'll need to address this quickly. We discuss data and analytics in more depth in chapter 13.

Climate Risk

Climate exposure, future costs, resilience, and business continuity fall under this domain. Climate change is part of the most if not all company's business reality: where it operates, what it owns, who it serves, what it insures, and what costs it expects to face over time. The driver is not that business travel creates climate risk. The driver is that climate risk matters to the company, and travel must fit into that broader response.

Climate risk for businesses is when the things you read and hear about in the news directly affect your firm's strategy and operations. Heat can limit outdoor work, raise cooling costs, affect employee safety, strain utilities, and make some locations harder or more expensive to operate. Flooding can close offices, damage warehouses, block access to customer locations, and disrupt roads, rail lines, ports, or airports. Wildfire can threaten facilities, reduce air quality, close transportation routes, disrupt employees and customers, and raise property-insurance costs. Severe weather can damage property, delay suppliers, interrupt customer service, close transportation hubs, and make some markets more expensive to serve. When those risks matter to the business, travel sustainability becomes part of the broader question of how the company manages climate exposure.

Climate risk is a strong driver when it is already shaping business decisions. It may show up in insurance reviews, facility planning, market analysis, customer communications, investor concern, required climate disclosures, supplier resilience work, or leadership discussion about future operating costs. Travel may not be the company's largest climate risk, but it can still become part of the evidence trail, public story, or risk response.

Look for evidence that climate risk is already treated as a business concern. Higher scores belong where climate exposure appears in risk reports, board materials, insurance discussions, customer requirements, leadership priorities, market planning, or public disclosures. Lower scores belong where climate change is acknowledged generally but is not yet affecting decisions, budgets, strategy, or messaging. The score should reflect how strongly climate risk is pushing the company to act, not whether travel caused the risk.

Acting on climate risk is difficult because long-term exposure has to compete with short-term business pressure. Add to this the potential for climate skepticism to color the objectivity of key players. Climate exposure may be real, but the return on prevention often appears as avoided loss rather than new revenue or immediate savings. Quarterly earnings pressure can make leaders reluctant to spend money now for risks that may not fully materialize for years. Uncertain climate models can make it harder to translate risk into a business case that Finance, Legal, or the board will accept. Capital limits can push resilience work behind projects with clearer payback.

Political backlash, skeptical investors, and customer disagreement can also make the company cautious about acting too visibly. Uncertain climate models can intensify that caution when people use uncertainty as a reason not to act, rather than as a planning factor that needs explanation. Score the barrier higher when these pressures are strong enough to slow action, even when the climate-risk driver itself is strong. We will subsequently walk through how to present the case for action in terms key players can evaluate, and how to answer climate-skeptic claims and not let them derail the work.

Investor and Market Expectations

Investor and market expectations are demands from investors, customers, clients, and supply-chain partners for measurable action and credible reporting. This domain can foster or block deals and strengthen or strain partnerships, so it makes sustainability a commercial requirement. In travel, it often becomes a demand for numbers, progress, and proof. The program must report in a way that survives basic questions about coverage, method, and what changed.

You may get or hear about investor requests for ESG updates, client RFP questions about business travel emissions, customer requests for engagement-specific travel data, and supply-chain partner demands for standard reporting formats. A company may also see this driver when buyers begin asking for methodology specifications, coverage limits, third-party assurance, emission reduction plans, or proof that commitments are on track.

External requests are a clear indicator that this driver is critical. A client may ask for business travel emissions in an RFP, a customer may ask for travel emissions tied to a specific engagement, a supply-chain partner may require a standard reporting format, or investors may ask for evidence of method, coverage, limits, and progress. One serious request can change the intensity quickly, especially if it affects revenue, contract access, investor confidence, or account relationships. As discussed in the Introduction, many organizations now face sustainability questions through RFPs, supplier questionnaires, and investor requests long before they face direct regulatory requirements.

The scores for these drivers should reflect how strongly external commercial pressure is pushing the company to act. Scores these drivers higher where investors, clients, customers, or supply-chain partners are asking for business travel emissions, emissions reduction plans, methodology specifications, coverage limits, progress updates, or assurance. Lower scores belong where the company has only general market noise and no actual requests tied to revenue, contracts, investor confidence, or account relationships.

Obstacles to meeting external requests include fragmented formats, unrealistic deadlines, resistance to cost, legal exposure, and pressure to answer before the company is ready. One requester may ask for emissions data, another for methodology notes, another for certifications, and another for proof that commitments are on track. RFPs and annual questionnaires can pile up quickly when each request uses different definitions, formats, or evidence standards. Some customers want stronger sustainability commitments while resisting the cost of producing or verifying them.

Investor pressure can push the company toward minimum action instead of deeper work. The company may focus on the score, disclosure, or response needed to satisfy the market without building the discipline behind it. Greenwashing and greenhushing fears add another barrier because weak, incomplete, or overstated answers can create litigation risk, public criticism, or reputational damage. Give that driver a higher barrier score when the company lacks the data, method, ownership, timing, cost tolerance, or legal comfort to answer requests effectively.

We will address these barriers throughout this Volume I by showing how to answer external requests without overcommitting or hiding the work. That means building responses around the data you have, the limits you know, The Huntico System you can explain, and the ownership needed to keep answers consistent. It also means knowing when to give a partial answer, when to caveat, and when a request exposes a gap that must be fixed before you can respond confidently.

Leadership Driven

Public commitments, brand and reputational concerns, and genuine leadership beliefs are all leadership-driven drivers. This domain covers the company’s chosen ambition: what it wants to be known for, what it has already said, and whether its travel program can support that position. Business travel matters when public commitments, leadership messages, or reputation claims depend on everyday operating choices that employees, customers, investors, and critics can see. If the company says sustainability is part of how it does business, unmanaged travel can become a liability.

Public climate commitments, CEO or board direction, sustainability goals in official business strategy, annual-report language, investor-deck language, brand positioning, or peer comparison all signal this is an important driver. The company may have promised emissions reductions, announced a broader climate plan, or signaled that sustainability is part of how it wants to compete. Travel becomes part of the strategic picture when the company's public posture depends on whether business travel can be measured, managed, explained, or reduced. These drivers stem from the company's own choices: what leaders believe, what they have committed to publicly, how they want the company to compete, and what they expect the travel program to support.

Score these drivers higher when sustainability is documented in company goals, leadership announcements, board materials, public commitments, annual reports, sustainability reports, investor decks, or known internal priorities. Score them lower when sustainability remains aspirational and has not been tied to travel decisions, funding, accountability, public claims, or leadership follow-through. If your company does not have a sustainability report this is clearly a lower priority at present. The score should reflect how strongly the company's own direction is pushing the travel program to act.

Barriers to leadership ambitions come in two flavors: competing priorities and overpromising. Competing priorities can push travel sustainability to the back of the queue, behind cost control, revenue growth, service expectations, sales activity, market expansion, or other leadership goals. Overpromising connects directly to the Unholy Trinity introduced earlier: leaders may want the company to say more than the travel program can support with current data, funding, supplier participation, policy, or operating capacity. Score these barriers higher when strategic ambition is likely to outrun the program's ability to deliver or when other business priorities could force sustainability work down the priorities list.

Culture

Travel is visible inside the organization. People notice who is allowed to fly, when meetings require travel, what options are encouraged, and whether everyday choices match what the company says about sustainability. Cultural drivers come from the values, expectations, and workplace norms that shape how employees and managers think the company should act. This domain covers internal employee expectations: whether travelers, arrangers, and even non-travelers expect business travel choices to reflect the company's stated values.

Cultural factors appear as employee requests for lower-impact travel options, recruiting or retention pressure from HR, internal sustainability campaigns, engagement-survey comments, leadership messages about values, manager expectations, or traveler complaints that the program does not match the company's commitments. A company may also see this driver when employees ask why rail is not easier to book, why virtual meetings are not used more often, or why high-emission travel still appears to be the default. These signals are stronger when they affect recruiting, retention, internal credibility, leadership trust, or whether employees believe the company's commitments are genuine.

Score these drivers higher when cultural expectations are visible in employee feedback, engagement surveys, recruiting conversations, internal communications, leadership messages, values statements, traveler comments, or recurring questions about travel choices that do not match company commitments. Score them lower when sustainability is broadly supported but has not been tied to employee expectations, management behavior, recruiting, retention, or travel decisions. The score should reflect how strongly internal expectations are pushing the travel program to act.

Barriers appear when stated values collide with daily habits. Employees may support sustainability in principle but resist longer trips, fewer flight options, added approvals, or rules they see as symbolic. Managers may weaken adoption through exceptions, mixed signals, or pressure to travel as usual. Climate skepticism, change fatigue, or distrust can also slow progress if people do not understand the business reason for the change. Score these barriers higher when cultural resistance could impede your progress.

We will walk through how to use your communications plan in Volume II and how to simultaneously poll your audience as well as to disseminate information out to them that will encourage better behavior. Culture can be an accelerant for change if properly coordinated or it can be an education challenge.

Take Action!

You will capture the work in a Driver Profile[31]. Start by making your best effort at documenting your organization's drivers. List 3–7 candidate drivers in the Driver Profile and assign each one to a domain. For each driver, record the evidence you have, the source of that evidence, the initial intensity and barrier scores, and a short explanation of the barrier(s).

Keep the entry concrete. Evidence explains why the driver is on the list. The intensity score shows how strongly that driver is pushing the company to act. The barrier score shows how difficult it may be to act on that driver. The short explanation should say what the company may need to measure, document, control, explain, or caveat.

Treat this as a first-pass Assess artifact, not a final answer. Use information you already have from records, requests, policies, reports, supplier material, known company context, and first- or second-hand knowledge. If something is missing, flag the gap. Some gaps can be checked later in Assess; others may belong in Design or implementation.

A clear Driver Profile shows why the company is acting, which drivers carry the most weight, which barriers could slow progress, and where later chapters must clarify facts, ownership, tradeoffs, and limits.

Figure 3: Driver Profile

Name	*Name the Driver in plain language*	Customer RFPs ask for business travel emissions
Intensity *Score 1-5*	*1 = **minimally** important and 5 = **strongly** important*	Score: 5 - strongly important

[31] Appendix 1

Barriers *Score 1-5*	*1 = **low** barrier and 5 = **high** barrier*	Score: 3 - Data Fractured
Evidence	*Policy, requirement, budget rule, commitment, or deal pressure*	Three recent RFPs requested travel emissions data and reduction plans.
What Changes	*What must be measured, controlled, or documented*	Need emissions baseline, method note, and owner for client responses.

Do:	**Don't:**
✓ Draft a first-pass driver list ✓ Score intensity from 1–5 and why ✓ Score barriers from 1-5 and describe ✓ Record evidence sources ✓ Flag gaps to check later	✘ Start with solutions ✘ Treat every driver as equal ✘ Use "we support it" as evidence

Done looks like

☐Driver Profile is drafted and lists 3–7 candidate drivers.
☐Each driver has evidence with sources.
☐Each driver has a preliminary intensity score from 1–5.
☐Each driver has a preliminary barrier score from 1-5.
☐Driver Profile is clear enough to act as a starting point to test against and guide the next Assess chapters and note what may need to be checked later.

Conclusion

The Driver Profile is the backbone of the entire Assess phase. Now that you have created a first-pass list of drivers with intensity scores and barrier scores, you have a working view of why your firm is acting on travel sustainability and where potential conflicts may appear. The remaining chapters build from that starting point. The next 5 chapters shift us from why you are doing this to who is involved: stakeholders, leadership, travelers and arrangers, suppliers, and other third parties. Chapter 2 starts with the stakeholder map and the people who can help explain, shape, approve, or complicate the work.

Tracy's Diary – Friday Week 5 @OHG

I did some thinking this week about why we're doing sustainability and I put it into a spreadsheet. It's rough, but it is already useful.

Emma knows that we're going to come under a patchwork of regulatory obligations next year with more expected in the coming years. We've already received RFP requirements from prospective clients asking about our travel footprint and corporate commitments. So those are high-priority reasons.

Chuck thinks it's a good idea to get ahead of the situation and have a public commitment, but he's leery of making waves with some clients while satisfying the demands of others.

I know this isn't perfect but at least I have somewhere to start.

I meet with my manager, Barry, on Monday. We'll talk about what I should do next.

Appendix 1: Driver Profile

1. Introduction to the Driver Profile

A Driver Profile identifies why an organization is pursuing environmentally responsible business travel. It captures the active drivers, their relative intensity, likely barriers to progress, and the confidence behind the assessment.

The profile is a working tool for organizing what is known now and what still needs to be checked.

The central question is: **Why is this organization doing this?**

The answer may include regulation, customer pressure, leadership direction, climate risk, employee expectations, or other business realities. Most organizations will have more than one driver.

1.1 What Is a Driver Profile?

A Driver Profile is a working record of the factors pushing an organization toward environmentally responsible business travel. It identifies the active drivers, groups them by domain, scores their intensity and barriers, and records confidence and open questions.

Use it as a map, not a measurement system. Its purpose is to reveal patterns, support discussion, and guide later Assess work.

At its core, the Driver Profile consists of four activities:

Identifying important drivers.	Evaluating their relative importance.	Identifying potential barriers.	Interpreting the results.

1.2 Why Build One?

A Driver Profile asks: **What is actually driving the organization?**

The answer shapes what comes next. A company responding to customer pressure may need different actions than one responding to reporting obligations. Use the profile to clarify the reason for action before moving into design decisions.

1.3 First-Pass Profiles and Mature Profiles

A first-pass profile represents the organization's current understanding rather than its final understanding. It should be based on

Existing knowledge	Professional judgment	Initial observations
Preliminary conversations	Available evidence	Reasonable assumptions

Many scores will later change. Regularly review, update, challenge, and refine your starting hypothesis.

The value comes from the process as much as the output.

1.4 What the Driver Profile Produces

A Driver Profile should produce outputs that help the reader see, explain, and revisit the organization's drivers.

Output	Purpose
Driver Inventory	Lists the drivers currently believed to matter
Intensity/Barrier Plot	Shows driver position by importance and difficulty
Domain Summaries	Shows where momentum is concentrated
Dominant Drivers	Identifies the strongest reasons for action
Primary Headwinds	Identifies the barriers most likely to slow progress
Open Questions	Captures what still needs to be checked
Driver Story	Explains what the profile means in plain language

The most important output is the Driver Story. The table, scores, plot, and summaries exist to help the reader explain why the organization is acting, what is shaping decisions, and what may affect progress.

2. Driver Reference Library

The Driver Reference Library helps readers find options, prompts, and definitions without crowding the chapter. Use it to consider what may apply.

2.1 The Five Driver Domains

The methodology organizes drivers into five domains:

Compliance	Climate Risk	Markets	Leadership	Culture

Compliance

Compliance drivers originate from formal obligations.

These are the drivers most organizations immediately recognize because they tend to be explicit.

What are we required to do?		
Examples	• Scope 3 reporting • Climate disclosure • Audit requests • Assurance • Regulatory deadlines	• Procurement documentation • Data retention • Internal compliance • Local obligations
Consider	• instructed to provide travel-related information? • Are reporting requirements creating urgency? • Has an internal dept. requested information? • Are emissions methodologies being reviewed? • Have new disclosure requirements emerged?	
Potential evidence	• Regulatory notices • Internal policy • Board requests • Audit findings	• Reporting calendars • Procurement policy • Legal guidance
Barriers	• Fragmented travel data • Poor data quality • Unclear ownership • Reporting resource constraints • Uncertainty regarding applicable requirements	

- Methodology disagreements

Climate Risk

Climate Risk drivers emerge when environmental conditions, operational resilience, business continuity, future costs, or organizational exposure become meaningful concerns.

What could happen if conditions change?

How might environmental factors affect future operations?

How should travel decisions fit into organizational risk management?

Examples Include	• Climate risk assessments • Severe weather disruptions • Business continuity planning • Insurance concerns	• Resilience initiatives • Travel-related exposure concerns • Long-term operating cost concerns • Strategic risk management efforts
Potential evidence may include:	• Risk registers • Resilience plans • Insurance discussions	• Climate assessments • Business continuity reviews • Executive planning documents
Common barriers include:	• Difficulty quantifying impacts • Limited organizational awareness • Competing priorities • Uncertain future conditions • Weak internal ownership	

Markets

Markets drivers originate outside the organization but within its commercial environment. Customers, investors, suppliers, procurement teams, competitors, and strategic partners can all create pressure.

What do investors, clients, and suppliers expect from us?		
Examples Include	• Customer emissions requests • RFP requirements • Client questionnaires • Investor requests	• Competitive positioning • Industry benchmarking • Partner requirements
Potential evidence may include:	• Customer questionnaires • RFP language • Investor inquiries	• Supplier requests • Market research • Benchmarking reports
Common barriers:	• Limited customer demand visibility • Inconsistent requirements • Resource constraints • Difficult data collection processes • Conflicting stakeholder expectations	

Leadership

These drivers emerge when executives, business leaders, program sponsors, or strategy owners decide that environmentally responsible travel should become part of organizational priorities.

What direction is leadership setting?		
Examples	• Executive mandates • Strategic objectives • Corporate commitments • Reputation initiatives	• Brand positioning efforts • Public goals • Board interests • Long-term transformation initiatives
Consider	• Has leadership publicly discussed the topic? • Has executive sponsorship emerged? • Is sustainability mentioned in strategic plans? • Have new goals been announced? • Is organizational reputation part of the discussion?	

Potential evidence	• Exec communications • Strategic plans • Leadership presentations	• Public commitments • Board discussions • Internal town halls
Common barriers	• Leadership turnover • Conflicting priorities • Resource limitations	• Weak sponsorship • Inconsistent messaging

Culture

These drivers involve expectations, beliefs, values, workplace norms, and organizational identity.

What do people inside the organization increasingly expect?		
Examples Include	• Staff expectations • Recruiting & Retention • Internal advocacy • Workplace values	• Team norms • Employee engagement • Organizational identity
Consider	• Do employees discuss environmental issues? • Are recruiting conversations affected? • Have employee groups raised concerns? • Are managers encouraging change? • Is organizational identity evolving?	
Potential evidence may include:	• Surveys • Town halls • Employee forums	• Recruiting feedback • Retention discussions • Internal messaging
Common barriers:	• Change fatigue • Inconsistent engagement	• Competing concerns

2.3 Common Barriers

Barriers explain why action becomes difficult.
Common barrier categories include:

Technical
Missing data
Poor system integration
Methodology issues
Technology limitations

Organizational
Resource limitations
Competing priorities
Unclear ownership
Governance challenges

Stakeholder
Resistance to change
Conflicting expectations
Limited engagement
Communication challenges

Financial
Budget constraints
Uncertain business value
Funding limitations

External
Supplier limitations
Market conditions
Regulatory uncertainty

2.3 Evidence and Indicators

Evidence may include:

- Conversations
- Emails
- Meeting notes
- Policies
- Survey results
- Regulatory communications
- Customer requests
- Strategic plans Reports
- Procurement documents

2.4 Intensity Scale

Intensity measures how strongly a driver appears to influence behavior.

1	2	3	4	5
Minimal The driver exists but appears to have little influence.	**Limited** The driver is present but not a major factor.	**Moderate** The driver contributes to decisions.	**Strong** The driver is clearly influencing action.	**Dominant** The driver is a primary reasons action is occurring.

2.5 Barrier Scale

Barrier scores measure expected implementation difficulty.

1	2	3	4	5
Minimal Limited effort required.	**Manageable** Some effort required but manageable.	**Moderate** Meaningful effort will be required.	**Significant** Substantial effort or engagement.	**Major** A serious obstacle

2.6 Confidence Scale

Confidence captures how certain the assessment appears to be.

Low Little supporting information exists.	**Medium** Some supporting information exists.	**High** Strong supporting information exists.	**Confirmed** The assessment has been repeatedly validated.

2.7 Quadrant Definitions

The Driver Profile combines intensity and barriers to create four planning quadrants.

Early-Action Candidate High intensity and relatively low barriers. These drivers may represent opportunities for early progress.	**High-Effort Priority** High intensity and high barriers. These drivers deserve attention because they matter, but they may require significant investment.
When Resources Allow Lower intensity and lower barriers. These items may be addressed as capacity permits.	**If It Supports Other Priorities** Lower intensity and higher barriers. These items typically rank lower unless they contribute to more important objectives.

3. A Note On Driver Profile Design

Design the Driver Profile around the outputs it must support: driver records, scores, summaries, the intensity/barrier plot, and the Driver Story.
The structure should let the user identify active drivers, group them by domain, score intensity and barriers, record confidence, capture notes and unknowns, and return later to revise the profile.
Field names and tools may vary. The design should preserve these core functions:

Score intensity	Explain why it matters	Assign the domain	Identify the driver
Score barriers	Capture evidence	Record confidence	Support analysis

This is enough design structure to begin building the profile.

4. Building the Driver Profile

Build the first-pass profile quickly, then revise it as Assess progresses.

Step	Action	Result
1	**Explore potential drivers**	Consider each domain before selecting drivers
2	**Select active drivers**	Choose the drivers that appear relevant now
3	**Record driver information**	Capture the name, domain, and reason it matters
4	**Score intensity and barriers**	Compare influence and difficulty
5	**Record confidence**	Mark how certain the assessment is
6	**Capture notes**	Preserve assumptions, questions, and gaps
7	**Review the first-pass profile**	Confirm it is usable enough to interpret

A first-pass profile should usually include at least three active drivers. It does not need to be complete, final, or fully validated. It needs to be useful enough to support discussion, interpretation, and later updates.

5. Understanding Driver Profile Outputs

Use the outputs to interpret the profile, not just display the data. Together, they should show what matters, where resistance may appear, and what needs further review.

Driver Intensity and Barrier Plot

Plot each active driver by **barrier** on the horizontal axis and **intensity** on the vertical axis. The chart should make patterns visible quickly, especially where drivers cluster by quadrant or domain.

Quadrant Interpretation

Use the Appendix 1 section 2.7 to interpret the chart.

Driver Cards

Driver cards explain the dots on the plot. Each card should identify the driver name, domain, intensity score, barrier score, confidence, and basic meaning.

Domain Summaries

Domain summaries show whether momentum is concentrated in Compliance, Climate Risk, Markets, Leadership, or Culture. Use them to identify which kinds of pressure matter most.

Dominant Drivers

Dominant drivers are the strongest reasons for action. They should shape later conversations, planning priorities, and stakeholder questions.

Primary Headwinds

Primary headwinds are the barriers most likely to slow progress. They should guide later planning around resources, ownership, communication, data, and timing.

Open Questions

Open questions capture what still needs to be checked. Use them to guide stakeholder conversations, document reviews, and later Assess work.

6. Developing the Driver Story

The Driver Story turns the profile into a short explanation of what the results mean. Use the plot, domain summaries, dominant drivers, headwinds, and open questions as inputs to explain the organization's situation in plain language. The Driver Story should be accurate, practical, and specific to the organization. It does not need to sound inspirational.

It should clarify:

Why	Friction	Momentum	Uncertainty
Main reason the organization is acting	Primary headwinds and barriers	Strongest domains and drivers	Questions or assumptions to validate

What's Next

What to check or discuss later

7. How to Build Your Own Driver Profile in Microsoft® Excel

Use a spreadsheet as the easiest build path. The goal is to create a working Driver Profile that captures inputs, applies simple logic, and produces usable outputs. These instructions assume you're using Excel but you can use these specifications to build your Driver Profile in a number of data analytics tools.

7.1 Suggested Worksheet Structure

Sheet	Job
Instructions	Explain the workflow and scoring
Driver Library	Store domains, drivers, barriers, and lists
Driver Entry	Capture selected drivers and scores
Logic	Calculate summaries, rankings, and classifications
Profile Output	Show the plot, cards, summaries, and Driver Story
Lookups	Use for dropdown source lists to keep your analysis clean

7.2 Recommended Fields

Field	Purpose	Field	Purpose
Driver ID	Primary Key	**Confidence**	Shows certainty
Domain	Driver category	**Evidence**	Supporting notes
Driver Name	Short label	**Primary Barrier**	Main obstacle
Why this?	Capture reasoning	**Notes**	Extra context
Intensity	Scores momentum	**Open Questions**	Flags for later
Barrier	Scores difficulty	**Review Date**	Supports updates

7.3 Reference Lists and Drop-Downs

Use reference lists for repeated values:

List	Values
Domains	Compliance, Climate Risk, Markets, Leadership, Culture
Scores	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Confidence	Low, Medium, High, Confirmed
Profile Stage	First pass, Under review, Partially validated, Mature
Quadrants	Early-action, High-effort, Resources allow, Supports priorities

Drop-downs improve consistency. Allow custom driver names where the provided list does not fit.

7.4 Scoring and Classification Logic

Use simple logic that supports interpretation:

Calculations

Average intensity by domain	**Top intensity drivers**	**Quadrant classification**
Shows strongest momentum	Identifies dominant drivers	Places each driver on the plot
Average barrier by domain	**Top barrier drivers**	**Confidence summary**
Shows where friction is strongest	Identifies primary headwinds	Shows reliability of the profile

Suggested quadrant rule

Early-action candidate		**High-effort priority**	
Intensity =3 –5	Barrier = 1–2	Intensity = 3–5	Barrier = 3–5
When resources allow		**If it supports other priorities**	
Intensity = 1–2	Barrier = 1–2	Intensity = 1–2	Barrier = 3–5

7.5 Building the Scatter Plot

Create a scatter plot: The plot should quickly show what matters, what is difficult, and where drivers cluster.

Chart Settings

X-axis	Barrier	Scale	1–5 on both axes
Y-axis	Intensity	Points	Active drivers
Labels	Short name or ID	Dividing lines	At 3 on both axes

7.6 Building the Dashboard

Build one output page that a reviewer can understand quickly. Place the Driver Story and scatter plot near the top. Put detail below.

Include			
Driver Story Explains the result	**Scatter Plot** Shows priority and effort	**Driver Cards** Explains plotted points	**Domain Summary** Shows where momentum sits
Dominant Drivers Identifies strongest reasons	**Primary Headwinds** Identifies main barriers	**Open Questions** Shows what to validate next	

Thank You

Thank you for exploring this preview edition of **The Travel Manager's Guide to Sustainability** and **The Huntico System™**.

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