

A thick dark gray vertical bar runs down the left side of the page. In the lower-left quadrant, several thin, curved lines in dark gray and light gray sweep upwards and to the right, creating an abstract, organic shape.

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# Yakima Chief-Hopunion

Global Reporting Initiative Success Story

**Soraya Shattuck**

SUSTAINABLE ADVANCEMENT, LLC

[SORAYA@SUSTAINABLEADVANCEMENT.COM](mailto:SORAYA@SUSTAINABLEADVANCEMENT.COM)

## QUOTE FROM CEO OF YAKIMA CHIEF – HOPUNION, LLC

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“Sustainability is important to our multi-generational grower owners and also our brewery customers. We are passionate about being a good corporate citizen in the communities in which we live and work and want to leave our planet in a better place than we found it. **Utilizing the Global Reporting Initiative format helped us to take a discerning look at our sustainability initiatives and publicly declare our success and intentions in achieving our goals. Just as importantly, the project allowed us to tell our story, and the feedback has been very positive. I would highly recommend utilizing the format to any company who is serious about embedding sustainability in their corporate culture.**”

~Steve Carpenter, Chief Executive Officer, Yakima Chief-Hopunion, LLC.

## ABOUT YAKIMA CHIEF – HOPUNION, LLC

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Yakima Chief-Hopunion is a global hop supplier producing whole leaf hops, hop pellets, and hop extract products. Based in eastern Washington, Yakima Chief Hopunion is a 100% grower-owned company, focused on providing premium quality hops and uncompromising service.

## THE CHALLENGE

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Yakima Chief-Hopunion embarked upon the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) journey because, not only is sustainability a part of the Yakima Chief-Hopunion corporate culture, but the organization also found that their customer base was becoming increasingly interested in working with suppliers who demonstrated responsible business practices. Given that sustainability is a growing culture in the brewing industry, the GRI was an opportunity for Yakima Chief-Hopunion to demonstrate their strengths, as well as their commitment to continually improving their triple bottom line business practices to all their stakeholders.

## MEP’S ROLE

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The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) serves as the *preferred* sustainability reporting framework, and is used by over 7,500 of the biggest national and international companies today. As a first time reporter, navigating the requirements of the GRI can be challenging and complex. Although Yakima Chief-Hopunion had previously composed an independent sustainability report, the GRI format provided an opportunity to present the organization’s values and efforts in a way that linked strategy to their commitment to sustainability and responsible business practices. The technical framework of the GRI provided clear metrics and methods to report sustainability-related impacts and performance.

Impact Washington consultant, Soraya Shattuck, led the development of a GRI report for Yakima Chief-Hopunion. In addition to managing the project, she educated the Yakima Chief-Hopunion team and select employees about the GRI process. Soraya Shattuck, together with the Yakima Chief-Hopunion Sustainability Coordinator, systematically led the organization through:

- Onboarding leadership and key team members about the GRI process and requirements
- Exercises on stakeholder identification, engagement and allocating materiality aspects are most significant
- Identification of material aspects (what matters) and boundaries (where it matters) within the organization

- Collecting, analyzing and compiling data and information needed to build the sustainability report according to the G4 standard disclosures

Yakima Chief-Hopunion used the GRI report as a platform to showcase the organizations current sustainability initiatives, and to set future objectives/goals. The GRI not only allowed the organization to benchmark sustainability performance against other organizations, but elevated Yakima Chief-Hopunion to an elite group of companies committed to improving their sustainability impacts.

Given the nature of the GRI project, funding support was provided by the Washington State Department of Ecology. The Department of Ecology supports and encourages organizations to participate in sustainability assessments and reporting, such as the GRI method. These tools provide companies the opportunity to evaluate and improve potential weak areas in operations and share information with selected stakeholders.

For more information on the Global Reporting Initiative, click [here](#).

## RESULTS

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The GRI report has:

- Provided a long-term road map for the organization to set ambitious sustainability goals, and hold them accountable to achieving progress towards these goals
- Provided an increased understanding of risks and opportunities for the organization
- Increased supplier and customer understanding of the organization's value and long-term strategy
- Highlighted opportunities to streamline operations, increase efficiency and reduce costs
- Provided the addition of a new fulltime position in the organization as a dedicated Sustainability Coordinator

To read the full Yakima Chief-Hopunion GRI report, click [here](#).