Green Building’s Top Ten Trends for 2011

Green building consultant Jerry Yudelson offers his insights on the green building industry with a list of top trends for 2011; worldwide green building growth is the fastest-growing trend.

Tucson, Ariz. (Vocus/PRWEB) December 29, 2010 -- Green building and sustainability consultant Jerry Yudelson says that the green building industry will rebound in 2011 in spite of the continuing economic difficulties in most developed countries, citing 10 major trends.

Speaking about his annual “Top Ten” list of green building trends, the green building expert and author said, “What we’re seeing is that more people are going green each year, and there is nothing on the horizon that will stop this trend.” Yudelson, who is the principal of Tucson-based green building consulting company, Yudelson Associates continued, “However, in 2010, the slowdown in commercial real estate put a crimp in the start up rate for new green building projects.” He added, “In putting together my Top Ten trends for 2011, I’m taking advantage of conversations I’ve had with green building industry leaders in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Australia as I have given green building keynotes and presentations all over the world during the past year.”

Jerry Yudelson’s Top Ten Green Building Trends for 2011 include:

1. The worldwide green building movement will continue to accelerate, as more countries begin to create their own green building incentives and developing their own Green Building Councils. More than 70 countries, on all continents, will show considerable green building growth in 2010.
2. Green building will rebound in 2011, as measured by the new LEED project registrations as a proxy for this growth. “The reduction in commercial real estate building in many countries,” he said, “was not offset by other sectors such as government, and so the growth rate of new green building projects fell dramatically in 2010.”
3. The focus of the green building industry will continue to switch from new buildings to greening existing buildings. “The fastest growing LEED rating system in 2010 was the LEED for Existing Buildings program, and I expect this trend to continue in 2011,” said Yudelson. “My 2009 book, Greening Existing Buildings, documents the strategic components of this trend.”
4. Blue will become the New Green. Awareness of the coming global crisis in fresh water supply will continue to grow, leading building designers and managers to take further steps to reduce water consumption to increase sustainability. This will be done in buildings through the use of more conservation-oriented fixtures, rainwater recovery systems and innovative new water technologies. “My latest book, Dry Run: Preventing the Next Urban Water Crisis, shows how to do this in green buildings all over the world.”
5. Green building in the U.S. will continue to benefit from the Obama presidency with a continued focus on greening the executive branch. New announcements of a commitment to a minimum of LEED Gold for all new federal projects and major renovations confirm and highlight this macro-trend.
6. Zero-net-energy designs for new buildings become increasingly commonplace, in both residential and commercial sectors, as LEED and ENERGY STAR ratings become too common to confer competitive advantage.
7. Performance Disclosure will be the fastest emerging trend, highlighted by new requirements in California and other states. Commercial building owners will have to disclose actual building performance to all new tenants and buyers.
8. Certified Green Schools will grow rapidly as part the LEED System. This trend will accelerate as understanding of the health and educational benefits of green schools grows. Already by mid-year 2010, green
schools represented nearly 40% of all new LEED projects in the U.S.

9. Local and state governments will step up their mandates for green buildings for both themselves and the private sector. We’ll see at least 20 major new cities with commercial sector green building mandates. The desire to reduce carbon emissions by going green will lead more government agencies to require green buildings.

10. Solar power use in buildings will continue to grow. This trend will be enhanced by the increasing focus of municipal utilities as they need to comply with state-level renewable power standards (RPS) for 2015 and 2020. As before, third-party financing partnerships will continue to grow and provide capital for large rooftop systems such as on warehouses. However, we may very well see a slowing of large solar and wind systems, as federal grant support, in lieu of tax credits, is phased out.

Yudelson added two “bonus picks” to his list: “First, there will be a continually growing use of software and the Internet “cloud” in green building design, construction and operations; Second, the revolution in sustainable building materials is gaining momentum each year, one that gives higher performance at ever lower costs.”

About Yudelson Associates
Yudelson Associates is a leading international firm in sustainability planning and green building consulting. The founder, Jerry Yudelson, is widely acknowledged as one of the nation’s leading green building and sustainability consultants and keynote speakers. He is the author of 12 green building books and served for two years as Research Scholar for Real Estate Sustainability for the International Council of Shopping Centers, a 70,000-member international trade organization. He is a frequent green building speaker at industry and professional conferences and chaired the country’s largest annual show, Greenbuild, for six years from 2004 through 2009.

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