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## Starting in Seattle with Boats, Fruits, and Phones

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Last week, first year students from the BII (the combination of the Entrepreneurship and Sustainability Centers) traveled to Seattle for several days of business visits, and a bit of networking as well. Here, **Mike**

**Hatchadorian** (CSBP, Class of 2014) provides a quick rundown of the first day of the trip...

Day one in Seattle provided a pretty packed schedule with a diverse group of companies and experiences. We began the day by meeting with Jensen Motorboats. Jensen is a family owned and operated full-service boatyard that was established in 1927 by Tony Jensen. With over 85 years of experience, the company is the oldest boat builder in the Seattle area, and a great deal of their success can be attributed to the emphasis placed on customer relationships. Throughout our time on the dock, our hosts continually mentioned the importance of working with customers and understanding their needs in order to achieve long term success.

Next on the agenda was Harold J Barrett Company, a frozen fruit broker. The folks at HJB highlighted the concept of trends, and explained that running a business, regardless of industry, will always require managers to identify these themes, and adapt to capitalize on them in order to keep up with, or outpace competitors.

The last meeting of our first day afforded us the opportunity to meet with the corporate sustainability team at T-Mobile. The team spoke to us about making the business case for sustainability in a large multi-national corporation, and how important it is to justify changes in terms of operational efficiency and cost-savings. This concept is something that we heard throughout the week, and have discussed at length in Mike Russo's Sustainable Business class as well.

Ultimately, everything in business comes down to dollars and cents, even when organizations have the best of intentions. Fortunately, instead of hearing how often things "just don't fit" into a corporate model, we were presented with examples of how great sustainability can be for improving firm performance and morale. Overall, we had a great day with a wide array of perspectives presented!

Written by [Andrew White](#)



Andrew is an MBA Candidate in the Center for Sustainable Business Practices. A native of Massachusetts, he came to UO to refine his business skills and build his expertise in the sustainability arena. His primary interest is in helping organizations implement environmentally and socially sustainable strategies for long-term success, and he is a regular participant on many of the MBA intramural sports teams.

### One comment



*Matthew Jensen*

We appreciated your visit and feel free to visit anytime. – The Owners, Managers, and Employees of Jensen Motor Boat

April 3, 2013 /

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