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E-BOOK

# Real Estate Leader's Guide to GRESB: Data and Performance



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# Challenges to Accessing Data

Despite the potential for environmental, social, and governance (ESG) initiatives to create positive business outcomes, inconsistent standards have made reporting a significant challenge for many organizations.

This challenge is further complicated by triple net leases in which tenants pay utilities directly, precluding access to utility. This presents a challenge to building owners who are responsible for sustainability and emissions disclosures. Collecting accurate utility consumption for each building across a distributed real estate portfolio is resource-intensive and requires significant coordination with tenants. However, this data is foundational for standardized ESG reporting.

The Global Real Estate Sustainability Benchmark (GRESB) was founded in 2009 to standardize ESG reporting in real estate, provide unbiased assessment, and allow investors to accurately compare funds. GRESB encompasses a range of qualitative and quantitative metrics to create a unified global standard. GRESB evaluates an entire portfolio, similar to how ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager evaluates individual buildings.

Although participation in GRESB is optional, it is shown to have significant financial benefits. [Recent studies](#) show that the GRESB Real Estate Assessment correlates with higher returns for participating funds.

With the right solution, real estate leaders can streamline data acquisition, simplify reporting, and maximize their portfolio's GRESB score by deploying a smart meter solution.

Smart meters enable real estate leaders and their investors to understand true sustainability performance, identify areas of opportunity, and manage areas of risk.

# Understanding the GRESB Real Estate Assessment

The [GRESB Real Estate Assessment](#) has three components:



## Management

Measures an entity's strategy, leadership, policies, processes, risk management, and stakeholder engagement.



## Performance

Measures an entity's performance using asset-level and portfolio-level performance indicators.



## Development

Measures efforts to incorporate ESG into new building construction and renovation projects.

The score for each component is broken down across aspects of ESG with distinct individual indicators. The table below shows how each component is broken down by each aspect of Environment, Social, and Governance. Each aspect is scored using indicators - here is a list of the 2024 indicators.

	Environmental	Social	Governance
Management	0%	35%	65%
Performance	89%	11%	0%
Development	73%	21%	6%



# GRESB uses two benchmarks to evaluate real estate:

The GRESB Real Estate Benchmark evaluates the ESG performance of existing buildings, whereas the GRESB Development Benchmark evaluates adherence to ESG principles during building design and construction.

GRESB Real Estate Benchmark	Management	Performance
	30%	70%
GRESB Development Benchmark	Management	Development
	30%	70%

In this e-book, we will focus on how to maximize the Performance component of the GRESB Real Estate Benchmark.



# Improving Your GRESB Score with Data Coverage

The GRESB assessment relies on the disclosure of ESG performance data to create a transparent picture of how sustainable policies and practices have been put into action. This is why performance makes up more than two-thirds of the total score. The more data you can share to demonstrate your portfolio's progress toward sustainability initiatives, the more you can improve your score.

## Robust Data Coverage

The GRESB Real Estate Benchmark places heavy weight on consumption data coverage across a portfolio and awards additional points for data granularity. GRESB awards 17 points (12% of the overall score) based on the data coverage of an entity's portfolio. Furthermore, using smart building technology to measure electricity, water, and natural gas use is rewarded with additional points. Here are points associated with data coverage in the GRESB assessment:

GRESB Performance Points and Criteria	
17 points	Portfolio-wide electricity, water, and natural gas consumption (prorated by squarefoot measured)
3.25 points	Thid-party data verification
0.5 points	Automated meter reading for electricity, water, and natural gas consumption
0.25 points	Using smart building technology, including smart meters
0.25 points	Submetering individual water subsystems
7 points	Measuring Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions

# Net Zero Targets and Efficiency Measures

Sustainability initiatives—such as Net Zero targets—can be difficult to develop without reliable, high-quality data. As Peter Drucker famously said, “You can’t manage what you can’t measure.”

With robust data, real estate leaders can improve resource management, implement efficiency measures, and identify opportunities to make building upgrades such as installing LED lighting, replacing HVAC systems, or setting up solar panels. [A Department of Energy study](#) estimated that metering programs can generate up to 20% in energy savings.

Advanced metering solutions provide consumption analysis, enable the data-driven planning necessary for decarbonization, and create a clear roadmap to achieve Net Zero targets.

Smart Meters are essential tools for developing long-term performance improvement targets and Net Zero targets because they measure electricity, water, and natural gas consumption baselines. By using accurate baseline data, real estate investment firms can create actionable, science-based targets and earn two points on the GRESB Real Estate Benchmark.

GRESB Performance Points and Criteria	
1 point	Declared, science-based, long-term building performance targets
1 point	Declared, science-based, Net Zero targets



With robust data, real estate leaders can improve resource management, implement efficiency measures, and identify opportunities to make building upgrades.

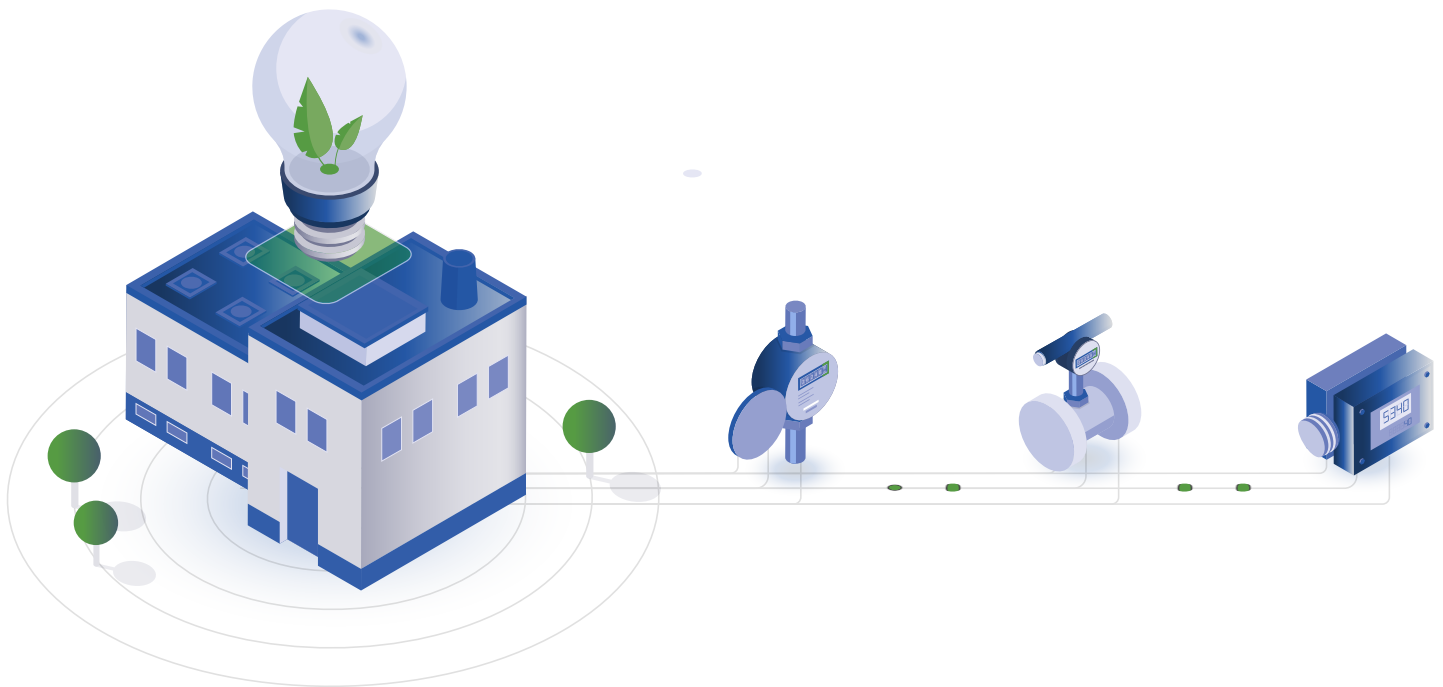
Installing building system upgrades such as LED lighting, improved HVAC systems, or solar panels improve sustainability and makes buildings more competitive.

# Validated Building Certifications

Many frameworks, including GRESB, account for building certifications as part of their scoring model. This is to demonstrate compliance with regulations and sustainable building practices that apply to your real estate portfolio. It also validates standing investments with improved energy ratings and operational certifications.

By importing data directly into Energy Star Portfolio Manager, Redaptive ONE streamlines industry benchmarking and generates the inputs required for building certifications (including building-level energy and water consumption).

GRESB Performance Points and Criteria	
8.5 points	Buildings with Green Building Certifications
2 points	Buildings with Valid Energy Rating





# Engagement with Tenants and Community

Another component of the GRESB assessment is tenant engagement. There are multiple ways to support tenant engagement, but using energy and water use data to drive meaningful conversations is one great example.

GRESB awards points for providing information about energy and water use to tenants. Additionally, granular, real-time data from smart metering solutions provides extra details that can be used to engage with tenants.

For example, smart meter data can reveal abnormal energy or water usage. This may lead tenants to discover water leaks or malfunctioning equipment, leading to cost savings or improvements in the power system. This type of engagement builds rapport with tenants and encourages renewals.

GRESB Performance Points and Criteria	
1 point	<p>Does the entity have a tenant engagement program that includes ESG issues?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide tenants with feedback on energy/water consumption and waste</li><li>• Offer tenant engagement meetings</li><li>• Offer tenants an ESG guide</li><li>• Build communication</li></ul>



Granular usage data from smart meters reveals abnormal energy or water usage, enabling the discovery water leaks or malfunctioning equipment.

Identifying abnormal usage ultimately leads to cost savings or improvements in the power system. This type of engagement builds rapport with tenants and encourages renewals.

## Capturing Performance Data

Accurate, reliable data is imperative to assess ESG performance. In fact, GRESB specifically awards points for verifying third-party data, metering water subsystems, and using smart meters to capture electricity consumption. Ultimately, to perform well against the GRESB Real Estate benchmark, real estate investment firms need to invest in smart meter data solutions for their portfolios.

It's no small task to implement a data acquisition solution across a distributed real estate portfolio. However, with support from a partner like Redaptive, it is achievable.

Through metering and data platform programs, we've helped customers use data to decrease energy and water usage, improve operations by extending the life of their customer's current assets, and even [identify operational risks and issues](#).



# Understanding Data Acquisition Providers

There are many meter providers. However, most providers offer a partial solution for electricity, water, and natural gas consumption required for the Performance component. There's [a lot to consider](#) when evaluating meters. [Redaptive ONE](#), Redaptive's data acquisition solution, is the only data solution that supports building system improvement projects and offers turnkey installation, end-to-end program management, and electric, water, and gas in one platform.

	Redaptive ONE Hardware + Software	Other Providers Hardware + Software	Hardware Only
Turnkey Installation	✓	⊖	⊖
Program Management	✓	⊖	⊖
Energy Meter	✓	⊖	⊖
Water Meter	✓	⊖	⊖
Gas Meter	✓	⊖	⊖
Energy Star Data Integration	✓	✓	⊖
Web Reporting	✓	✓	⊖
GRESB Partner	✓	✓	⊖
Opportunity Identification	✓	⊖	⊖
Funds Building System Improvement Projects	✓	⊖	⊖
Executes Building System Improvement Projects	✓	⊖	⊖



Offers service



Offers partial service



Does not offers service



“With Redaptive’s metering solution and the Redaptive ONE platform, our team can easily track and monitor consumption data, by building, across our entire portfolio for water, gas, and electricity. Prior to Redaptive ONE, gathering data was a slow, manual, and time-intensive process.

As an added benefit, we are using this data to engage with our tenants to promote investments in capital projects that decarbonize our buildings and assist our tenants in reaching their sustainability goals.”



**Spencer Gerberding**  
Partner | WPT Capital Advisors

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# Redaptive Provides Performance Data for Your Entire Portfolio

Redaptive is your partner for performance measurement. As a trusted GRESB Real Estate solution partner, you can rest assured that Redaptive’s data acquisition solution provides you with the data you need to maximize your GRESB score.

Redaptive can also identify building system improvement projects that enhance your assets and benefit your tenants. In addition to finding efficiency opportunities, Redaptive also offers unique financing and project management capabilities to fund and install asset upgrades without the need for your or your tenants’ capital. We’ve helped customers [achieve millions of dollars in energy savings](#) by implementing these upgrades quickly and at scale across their portfolios.

Redaptive enables businesses accelerate their sustainability goals by providing data, capital, and project resources to enable reporting, facilitate Net Zero Planning, and execute building system improvement projects. Connect with our experts to learn more.



# REDAPTIVE®

Sustainability Data Acquisition. Simplified.



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