

## GOOGLE LEADS GLOBAL RANKING OF BEST CSR REPUTATION

***The 2016 Global CSR RepTrak® 100 report confirms that perceptions related to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) build more than 40% of any company's reputation***

**BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS (September 15, 2016)** The global consultancy firm Reputation Institute has released the main findings of its **2016 Global CSR RepTrak® 100** report, including the list of the companies considered as the most responsible worldwide. Over 80,000 people in 15 countries (United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, Germany, France, Russia, Brazil, Mexico, USA, Canada, Japan, China, India, Australia and South Korea) were interviewed to create this report.

For the third year in a row, Google tops the ranking of companies perceived as the most responsible, even though their advantage versus other firms is no longer as significant as last year's. The top ten list of the most reputable global companies in CSR are listed below:

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|----------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Google                  | 6. Daimler     |
| 2. Microsoft               | 7. Apple       |
| 3. The Walt Disney Company | 8. Rolls-Royce |
| 4. BMW                     | 9. Rolex       |
| 5. Lego                    | 10. Intel      |

The **2016 Global CSR RepTrak® 100** reflects public perceptions of corporate performance across three of seven corporate reputation dimensions, as stated by Reputation Institute RepTrak® model: *citizenship*, *workplace* and *governance*. The results describe which companies are best regarded by consumers for having a positive societal influence, being environmentally friendly, operating with openness and transparency, behaving ethically, rewarding employees fairly and promoting employee well-being, among other factors.

"For a company, it is essential to be perceived as responsible in order to be able to build and defend its reputation", explains Fernando Prado, managing partner of Reputation Institute Iberia and Latam. "However, despite the growing importance of CSR policies in corporate strategy, companies still do not know how to monetize their social commitment in financial terms", Prado says.

According to the 2016 study, almost 18% of consumers are unable to assess companies' social commitment since they are not aware of the actual performance in the three dimensions previously mentioned (*citizenship*, *workplace* and *governance*). Conversely, only 9% of consumers said they are not aware of how companies are performing on the other four dimensions of RepTrak® model dimensions (products/services, innovation, leadership and performance); in fact, when looking only at the products and service dimension, this figure is even lower, only 2.4%.

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According to Prado, "this gap reduces companies' competitiveness in a crucial area of its corporate performance. To overcome such an obstacle is an urgent need, especially if we consider that more than 40% of companies' reputation depends on being perceived as responsible. However, companies have a powerful tool to achieve this goal: corporate communications".

The report also goes into detail about best practices in corporate communications that can be implemented to improve public perception of CSR initiatives. Three have a significant impact on the core dimensions of CSR: companies must openly communicate about their activities with all their stakeholders, they must provide sufficient and accurate information about their performance in all areas, and finally, they must be genuine and sincere in what they say and defend.

Moreover, the 2016 *Global CSR RepTrak*<sup>®</sup> 100 data show that direct communication channels from companies with good reputations can more effectively inform about their own CSR actions and policies. By contrast, communication channels of companies with weaker corporate reputations are less reliable, so they must rely on third-party endorsements (media, NGOs, etc.), to gain credibility.

"We live in the Reputation Economy, where stakeholders' perceptions have a direct impact on business results. So, if a company is perceived as a responsible business, its reputation will improve, as well as the positive behaviors towards it. In conclusion, good corporate reputation contributes to the sustainability of CSR investment within a company", concludes Prado.

## Top Trends

- Stability is the dominant trend in the 2016 CSR top ten: in the last three years, the same companies have reached the top ten, no new companies have been added to this ranking.
  - The Information & Media and Technology Industries achieve the best public perceptions; the worst perceived companies are the Healthcare and Energy sectors.
  - The importance of CSR as a driver of reputation differs across different industries. For example, the dimensions of CSR are more important in the Healthcare and Energy sectors than the Retail and Consumer Products industries.
  - Compared to 2015, LG, SAS and Novartis have improved their reputation the most, while Estée Lauder, Philips and Volkswagen have fallen the most.
  - Up to 20.9% of people surveyed do not have enough knowledge or background information to distinguish and to assess programs and actions carried out by companies in the *workplace* dimension. Also, 18.4% said the same about *citizenship*, and 14.3% said so when surveyed about *governance*.
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■ Perception and not reality is the key to a solid reputation. Companies with identical certification for its CSR policies can have up to 8 points of difference in their final qualifications.

The RepTrak® model is the gold standard for reputation measurement, providing a one-of-a-kind measurement of how the public views the world's best-known companies, examining 15 stakeholder groups in more than 25 industries and more than 50 countries for more than 7,000 companies.

The full top 100 list can be found online at <https://www.reputationinstitute.com/thought-leadership/csr-reptrak-100>

Reputation Institute is hosting a webinar to discuss the **2016 Global CSR RepTrak® 100 report** today, the September 15, 2016, at 10 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) or 16:00 Central European Time (CET). View the recording of the webinar on our website at <https://www.reputationinstitute.com/research/Events>.

#### **About Reputation Institute**

Reputation Institute (RI) is the world's leading consulting and advisory firm for reputation. RI enables many of the world's leading companies to make more confident business decisions that build and protect reputation capital, analyse risk and sustainability topics, and drive competitive advantage. RI's most prominent management tool is the RepTrak® model for analysing the reputations of companies and institutions — best known via the Global RepTrak® 100, the world's largest and most comprehensive study of corporate reputations, as well as Country RepTrak® and City RepTrak® studies that look at reputation across organizations within a given geography.

Learn more at: <http://www.reputationinstitute.com>

#### **Further information**

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