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Campbell's and Nike Rise to the Top, Amazon Falls in Reputation Institute's 2018 US RepTrak® 100 — The Largest Study of Corporate Reputation in the US

Six new companies in the Top 10 and 36 companies debut in the Top 100 as prevailing disruption and erosion of trust cause major shake-up in company reputations

BOSTON — April 17, 2018 — Reputation Institute (RI), the world's leading provider of stakeholder measurement, membership and management services, today announced the company's annual US RepTrak® 100 rankings. Based on more than 52,000 individual ratings of companies during the first quarter of 2018, the survey quantifies the emotional bond stakeholders have with more than 880 leading companies, and how these connections drive supportive behavior like the willingness to purchase a company's products, recommend the brand, invest or even work for the company.

The top 10 companies in RI's 2018 US RepTrak 100 are:

1. Campbell's [NYSE: CPB]
2. Nike [NYSE: NKE]
3. Bose
4. Barnes & Noble [NYSE: BKS]
5. Kellogg's [NYSE: K]
6. Hershey's [NYSE: HSY]
7. Hallmark
8. J.M. Smucker [NYSE: SJM]
9. Canon [NYSE: CAJ]
10. Amazon [NASDAQ: AMZN]

Observations of Reputation Disruption in 2018

Six new companies entered the Top 10 this year, including Campbell's, Nike, Bose, Kellogg's, J.M. Smucker and Canon, and overall 36 new companies have entered the Top 100 in this past year.

Trends among successful companies demonstrate that brand strength, increasingly founded on the delivery of a brand promise, yields higher reputation and greater support

among stakeholders. The Top 10 companies – nine of which are US-based – all embody traditional American values and the underlying characteristics of success, stability and growth. A more vocal CEO also benefits a company's reputation – including key dimensions of Citizenship and Governance.

Among the rapid risers, USAA is a company that aligns with strong traditional values and is ranked 36th overall.

“USAA has built its reputation on doing the right thing for members and serving the military community,” said Stuart Parker, CEO of USAA. “We value the trust and loyalty of our members. Every employee at USAA is passionate about delivering on our mission to help members achieve financial security.”

Cisco Systems entered the Top 100 for first time.

“At Cisco we believe we are responsible for serving people, society and the planet,” said Vitor De Souza, Cisco's Vice President Communications. “We work every day towards our goal of securely connecting everything, innovating everywhere and benefiting everyone. Being named a most reputable company is an honor and a signal that we are doing our job.”

2018 Results Reveal a New Era in Corporate Reputation: Disruption

The survey findings indicate that many companies are experiencing significant challenges. Macrotrends impacting corporate reputations in the US have resulted in significant disruptions this year, with companies' rankings changing by an average of 27 spots, revealing a significant erosion of trust and confidence in corporations and making earning stakeholder support more difficult.

Stephen Hahn-Griffiths, Chief Reputation Office at Reputation Institute said, “The underlying reputation disruption we are seeing in the US is driven by a crisis of trust. In an era of tweet ranting, fake news, data privacy breaches and questioning of company ethics, the trust in big companies has eroded in the past year. Companies that are most trusted garner a stronger reputation.”

While Governance and Citizenship – especially on the merits of fairness, ethics, positive influence on society, and importance of products/services – have increased as reputation drivers in 2018 (collectively contributing to 51.9% of reputation), the relative importance of overall company performance have declined, with fewer companies perceived as embodying a sense of sincerity and genuinely caring, the absence of authenticity is fueling doubt among stakeholders. In a politically polarized environment increasingly centered around the credibility of information and authentic communication, we are seeing that corporate reputation and politics do mix, and can significantly impact corporate reputation.

Fast fallers in the US RepTrak rankings include Amazon, Apple and Facebook. Amazon is on the decline at #10 from being #1 in 2016 and #2 in 2017. Amazon's largest declines are in the three CSR dimensions: workplace, citizenship and governance. Apple fell entirely from the Top 100 list in 2018 with an 11-point drop in RepTrak pulse score – last year Apple was #72. Facebook is also in reputational free-fall and experienced reputational declines across all dimensions, especially on the merits of governance.

Among industries, only three have strong reputation scores – including Consumer, Food and Beverage, and Automotive. The majority of industries are in the average range. The Telecom industry joins Energy in the weak range, and the Airlines industry has the largest pulse decline. Healthcare is the only industry to have a positive reputation movement since 2017 – and is a faster riser in ranking.

Learn More and Get Your Company's Pulse Score

On an annual basis, RI measures the reputation of thousands of companies using our RepTrak framework, including measures of the most highly regarded and familiar multinational companies in 15 countries including Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, South Korea, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

To access the full list of the most reputable companies in the US please visit:

<https://www.reputationinstitute.com/webinar/2018-us-reptrak>.

To get your company's 2018 score and learn how you can improve your ranking and grow your stakeholder support, just ask us at:

<https://www.reputationinstitute.com/about/Contact-Us>.

About Reputation Institute

Reputation Institute powers the world's most reputable companies. By tracking and analyzing stakeholder perceptions, we unleash the power of reputation to enable leaders to build better companies. Our RepTrak® model analyzes the reputations of companies and is best known as the Forbes-published RepTrak 100. Underlying the model is the RepTrak methodology, the global gold standard for measuring reputation. Learn more at:

<http://www.reputationinstitute.com>.

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