

Google Ranks Highest On Corporate Reputation...

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..in 12th Annual Harris Interactive U.S. Reputation Quotient® (RQ®) Survey U.S. General Public Gives Corporate America's Most Visible Companies Higher Ratings Overall; Largest Number of Individual Companies Rank 'Excellent' in 12-year History of RQ Study

After falling to unforeseen lows amidst scandals, recalls and self-inflicted demonization economic crises, the American public's positive perception of the reputation of corporate America is on the rise. Overall corporate reputation is experiencing rehabilitation as the American public gives high marks overall to corporate America, specific industries, and the largest number of individual companies in a dozen years.

This, according to the findings of the 2011 Harris Interactive RQ Study, which measures the reputations of the 60 Most Visible Companies in the U.S. This is the 12 th year for the study, established in 1999.

Of the 20 notable changes in reputation among the 54 companies measured in both 2010 and 2011, 18 had significant positive increases, compared to only two declines. An astounding 16 companies received an RQ score over 80, which is considered to be an "Excellent" reputation, a sharp increase from the six companies so recognized in the 2010 survey.

Google ranked highest, supplanting Berkshire Hathaway, which falls to the 4th position. Johnson & Johnson ranked second again, followed by 3M Company at 3rd. Apple continues a steady rise begun in 2002, ranking 5th, as its corporate reputation catches up with its elite brand status.

Robert Fronk, Senior Vice President, Global Practice Lead, Reputation Management at Harris Interactive, stated "The record 16 companies that received RQ scores reflective of an excellent reputation should all be lauded for their focus and commitment to reputation management. These companies recognize that it is this behavioral commitment that earns them reputation equity, not tactics designed to help them score well on lists like these."

Google Vice President of Consumer Marketing Gary Briggs reacted to the news. "We have always believed that if we focus on making the best products for our users all else will follow. We're honored to be recognized in this ranking and we will continue to put our users first."

Tech Looms Large

The technology sector continues to be perceived most positively, with 75% giving the sector a positive rating, versus the number two sector, retail, which fares at 57% positive. Technology/Internet and Consumer Goods companies dominate the top rankings, with top 10 finishers 3M, Apple, and amazon.com benefitting from being associated with both industries.

"These top scoring companies are seen as supporting the infrastructure of the lives of the American public", says Robert Fronk, "and they get credit for simplifying, delighting, or enriching people's lives."

Facebook is a newcomer to the RQ Most Visible List, debuting in the middle of the pack (ranked 31st) with a RQ score of 74.12.

Auto Industry Shines

The auto industry had a significant increase in positive perceptions, jumping 15 points from 2010, the largest year over year gain by any industry in the study's 12-year history.

All three domestic auto companies demonstrate positive momentum compared to 2010 and were among the ten most improved companies in the study. Building on its progress from last year, Ford improved its RQ score to 74.61, from 69.77.

Ford is the second highest ranked car company, following Honda, which maintained its consistently high rating. Toyota ranks third among automakers but suffered a RQ decline of 9.96 points. GM and Chrysler achieved the 3 rd and 4th highest gains in 2011.

Stabilizing but Still Struggling

Financial services firms and oil companies continue to populate the bottom of the rankings. AIG came in last position, with newcomer BP just edging above in the 59th position. Goldman Sachs and Citigroup filled the remaining 2 slots in the bottom four.

These four lowest rated companies were also rated lowest on the reputation characteristics of "being trusted to do the right thing" and "having high ethical standards".

Following are some additional findings of interest:

* The top 10 companies on this year's list in order of ranking include: 1) Google; 2) Johnson & Johnson; 3) 3M Company; 4) Berkshire Hathaway; 5) Apple; 6) Intel Corporation; 7) Kraft Foods; 8) amazon.com; 9) General Mills; 10) The Walt Disney Company. For a full list of the top 60 companies and other findings visit: www.harrisinteractive.com.

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* In addition to the top 10, 6 other companies received scores indicating they have an excellent reputation level. Those additional companies are: Procter and Gamble Co., SC Johnson, UPS, Sony, The Coca-Cola Company, and Microsoft.

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* The bottom 10 companies on this year's list in order of ranking include: 51.) Delta Airlines; 52) JP Morgan Chase; 53) Exxon Mobil; 54) General Motors; 55) Bank of America; 56) Chrysler; 57) Citigroup; 58) Goldman Sachs; 59) BP; 60) AIG.

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* There are six reputational dimensions that the RQ survey focuses on that influence reputation and consumer behavior. Below are the six dimensions along with the five corporations that ranked highest within each:

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* Social Responsibility - 1) Whole Foods Market; 2) Johnson & Johnson; 3) Google; 4) The Walt Disney Company; 5) Procter & Gamble Co.

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* Emotional Appeal - 1) Johnson & Johnson; 2) amazon.com; 3) UPS; 4) General Mills; 5) Kraft Foods

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* Financial Performance - 1) Google; 2) Berkshire Hathaway; 3) Apple; 4) Intel; 5) The Walt Disney Company

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* Products & Services - 1) Intel Corporation; 2) 3M Company; 3) Johnson & Johnson; 4) Google; 5) Procter & Gamble Co.

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* Vision & Leadership - 1) Berkshire Hathaway; 2) Google; 3) Apple; 4) Intel Corporation; 5) The Walt Disney Company

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* Workplace Environment - 1) Google; 2) Johnson & Johnson; 3) Apple; 4) Berkshire Hathaway; 5) 3M Company

Additional Information

To review selected research from the 2011 Harris Interactive RQ survey, please visit www.harrisinteractive.com.

Reputation Quotient Methodology

In its 12th consecutive year, The Annual RQ surveys more than 30,000 members of the American general public, utilizing its proprietary Harris Poll online panel. Respondents are first asked to identify the 60 most visible companies and then surveyed to rate these companies based on their reputation on 20 different attributes that comprise the RQ instrument.

The attributes are then grouped into six different reputation dimensions: Emotional Appeal, Products & Services, Social Responsibility, Vision & Leadership, Workplace Environment, and Financial Performance.

In addition to the 20 attributes, the study includes a number of reputation-related questions that help provide a comprehensive understanding of public perceptions. The 2011 RQ survey was conducted from December 30, 2010 to February 22, 2011.

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About Harris Interactive

For more information, please visit www.harrisinteractive.com.

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