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M&S TOPS REPUTATION INSTITUTE'S RANKINGS FOR BEST CORPORATE REPUTATION

Public place increasing importance on companies behaving transparently and ethically

High Street retailers prominent in the ranking, Banks the big losers

LONDON, UK – June 4, 2009 — Marks and Spencer has ranked at number one as **the most reputable company** in the eyes of British consumers in the UK rankings of the Global Reputation Pulse Study 2009 published by the Reputation Institute (RI). The retail and food outlet, currently celebrating its 125th anniversary, topped the annual survey of 140 of the largest companies in the UK, in which over 5000 British consumers were surveyed. The study also identified Smith & Nephew and Cadbury's Plc as taking the 2nd and 3rd slots respectively, with William Morrison and the Rolls Royce Group following closely in 4th and 5th positions. The results, dominated by consumer industries, show that faith in consumer products has not been dented by the current economic crisis. Banks make a poor showing in corporate reputation performance, with Nationwide Building Society being the only financial operation to feature in the top 50 index.

The Global Reputation Pulse measures the corporate reputations of the world's 600 largest companies in 32 countries – based on consumers' trust, esteem, admiration, and good feeling about a company across seven dimensions of reputation.

“The results in the UK reflect the overall current mood among consumers globally, said Seamus Gillen, UK MD of the Reputation Institute. The most telling finding is that, next to delivering strong products and services, consumers want companies to act transparently and ethically, and to prove that they care about society. We are clearly seeing the reaction to the way in which banks in particular have let people down, and destroyed public trust.

“As the leading companies in the survey show, a good reputation is key for businesses to help them sustain support and come out on top with the consumer.”

Building a top-class reputation – category winners:

Products and Services: Rolls-Royce

Workplace Marks & Spencer

Governance Marks & Spencer

Citizenship: William Morrison Supermarkets

Leadership: William Morrison Supermarkets

Performance: Tesco

Innovation: Inmarsat

Category definitions

Products and Services – offers excellent products and reliable services;

Workplace – an appealing place to work and treats employees well;
 Governance – a responsibly-run company, behaves ethically and is open and transparent in its business dealings;
 Citizenship – a good corporate citizen, supports good causes and protects the environment;
 Leadership – has strong and visible leaders and is managed effectively;
 Performance – delivers good financial results;
 Innovation – makes or sells innovative products or innovates in the way it does business.

Companies with the best overall reputations – the UK top 10 (Global Mean Score 62.4)

Rank	Company	Global Pulse Score
1	Marks & Spencer	78.23
2	Smith & Nephew	77.58
3	Cadbury PLC	77.58
4	William Morrison Supermarkets	77.16
5	Rolls-Royce	77.09
6	Tate & Lyle	76.84
7	Sainsbury	76.43
8	Intercontinental Hotels	76.16
9	Thomas Cook	75.99
10	Inmarsat	75.31

Recommendations Lead to Lucrative Bottom Line Results

According to the Global Reputation Pulse findings, a company’s reputation score has a positive and direct link to consumer attitudes and behaviours. There is a significant correlation between the strength of a company’s reputation and the willingness of consumers to recommend it to others. For example, by improving its reputation score five points, research shows a company can increase recommendations within the general public by 6.75 percent. In a competitive situation, increasing recommendations by 2 to 5 percent can have a significant impact on business performance and the bottom line.

The Global Reputation Pulse also shows that 57 percent of consumers would give the most reputable companies across the globe the benefit of the doubt in a time of crisis. This is significant, since enjoying the benefit of the doubt can deliver a competitive advantage when launching a new product, raising prices on services, or dealing with a negative public situation. On the contrary, four out of 10 people would refuse to support the 20 least reputable global companies in a crisis, a public reaction that will put their business results at risk.

About the Global Reputation Pulse 2009 Study

The Global Reputation Pulse 2009 was conducted online in late January and February 2009. A Pulse score is a measure of corporate reputation calculated by averaging perceptions of four indicators — trust, esteem, admiration, and good feeling — obtained from a representative sample of at least 100 local respondents who were familiar with the company. Respondents are also asked to rate the factors which drive a company's reputation: Products and Services; Workplace; Governance; Citizenship; Leadership; Performance and; Innovation.

The mean for all companies included in the study was 62.4. The top-scoring company in the survey was Italian company Ferrero with a score of 85.17, and the top-scoring company in the UK was Marks and Spencer with a score of 78.23. Reports on the 2009 Global Reputation Pulse findings, and the separate UK survey, can be downloaded at www.ReputationInstitute.com.

About Reputation Institute

Reputation Institute is the world's leading reputation consulting firm. As a pioneer in the field of brand and reputation management, Reputation Institute helps companies unlock the power of reputation. With a presence in more than 25 countries, Reputation Institute is dedicated to advancing knowledge about reputation and shares best practice and current research through client engagement, membership, seminars, conferences, and publications such as Corporate Reputation Review. Reputation Institute's 2009 Global Reputation Pulse is the largest study of corporate reputations in the world, identifying what drives reputation and covering more than 600 companies from 32 countries annually. Reputation Institute provides specific reputation insight from more than 15 different stakeholder groups and 24 industries, allowing clients to create tangible value from intangible stakeholder feelings.

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The UK top 50

Rank	Company	Global Pulse Score	Rank	Company	Global Pulse Score
1	Marks & Spencer	78.23	26	Wood Group	71.14
2	Smith & Nephew	77.58	27	GKN	71.04
3	Cadbury PLC	77.58	28	Weir Group	71.02
4	William Morrison Supermarkets	77.16	29	Wolseley	70.72
5	Rolls-Royce	77.09	30	Babcock International Group	70.67
6	Tate & Lyle	76.84	31	Rentokil Initial	70.38
7	Sainsbury	76.43	32	Debenhams	70.31
8	Intercontinental Hotels	76.16	33	Elsevier	70.09
9	Thomas Cook	75.99	34	Home Retail Group	70.04
10	Inmarsat	75.31	35	Go-Ahead Group	70.03
11	PZ Cussons	74.66	36	Reckitt Benckiser	69.95
12	SAB Miller	74.25	37	Xstrata	69.61
13	Next	73.77	38	Johnson Matthey	69.49
14	Travis Perkins	73.75	39	Sage	69.47
15	BHP Billiton	73.69	40	Jardine Lloyd Thompson	69.45
16	Unilever	73.60	41	Vodafone	69.45
17	Dairy Crest	73.57	42	Taylor Nelson Sofres	69.38
18	GlaxoSmithKline	73.16	43	Nationwide Building Society	69.35
19	Associated British Foods	72.81	44	Yell Group	69.20
20	The Game Group	72.69	45	British Airways	68.98
21	WHSmith	72.43	46	Inchcape	68.78
22	Tesco	72.29	47	BAE Systems	68.66
23	AstraZeneca	71.39	48	Pearson	68.55
24	Diageo	71.33	49	Tomkins	68.46
25	WPP Group	71.29	50	Avis Europe	68.41