



Press Release

EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01 ON 16 FEBRUARY 2010

Major new study reveals corporate social responsibility “iceberg”

The true value of unseen and unaccounted for corporate social responsibility (CSR) could run into billions, according to a major new study released today.

Published by the British Brands Group, the study comprises a new collection of essays which estimates that billions of pounds of value is currently hidden as branded companies do not measure fully the impact of their CSR activity.

The essays show that easily recognisable aspects of corporate giving is just the tip of the CSR “iceberg” for branded companies and that social responsibility is now a well established, integrated activity that lies at the core of their business. As a result, brands have become valuable partners for Government as they support the delivery of public policy goals and make a significant economic, social and environmental contribution, potentially saving billions for the Exchequer.

Some of the key positive outcomes from branded companies’ partnerships with Government are:

- 6,000 premature deaths prevented each year as a result of voluntary salt reduction, saving £1.5 billion to the economy;
- 48% reduction in plastic bag use saving 130,000 tonnes of CO² ;
- ‘Gum counts’ reduced by 62% in some areas as a result of the Chewing Gum Action Group.

Furthermore, new primary research undertaken for the study reveals how branded companies and Government are working in partnership to deliver public policy goals. It also highlights lessons to be learned from these initiatives in order to create the next generation of public policy partnerships, including Change4Life and the Campaign for Smarter Drinking.

Commenting on the study, John Noble, Director of the British Brands Group, said:

“This report clearly shows the link between branding and responsible business. It also reveals the significant time and resources being invested by branded companies in their CSR programmes as they seek new ways to drive positive change for society, the environment and the communities in which they work. Importantly, they are integrating this activity into the heart of their businesses.

“However, the impact of such programmes is currently largely unaccounted for, indicating that there is a CSR iceberg hiding the true value and contribution of this work. These programmes are not only delivering significant value, they are also generating considerable savings for UK taxpayers.”

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. Public Policy Partnerships – lessons for Government and Brands:

The report makes the following recommendations for Government and Business to consider when engaging in future 'public policy partnerships'.

Lessons for Government:

- Government needs to show understanding of industry and engender an atmosphere of trust;
- Government needs to ensure clear goals are set at the beginning of a project;
- Government must keep bureaucracy to a minimum;
- Partnership is dialogue.

Lessons for brands

- Brands must fully engage with a partnership's goals;
- Acting together is better than acting alone;
- Partnership working should be a natural progression for brands as they expand their corporate responsibility activities."

2. Further information on the examples provided above can be found at the following links:

- Voluntary salt reduction targets – figures obtained from "*Government in Markets: Why competition matters – a guide for policy makers*", Office of Fair Trading:
http://www.offt.gov.uk/shared_offt/business_leaflets/general/OFT1113.pdf
- Plastic bag reduction targets – figures obtained from *Local Environmental Quality: Carrier Bags*, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs:
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/quality/local/litter/bags/index.htm#government>
- Chewing Gum Action Group – figures obtained from the Action Group's website:
<http://www.chewinggumactiongroup.org.uk/successstories/2008campaign.ashx>

3. About the British Brands Group:

The British Brands Group was founded in 1994 as a non-profit-making organisation. Its objective is to ensure that the positive contribution of Brands to consumers, the economy and society is better understood by policy makers and others. Members include leading brand manufacturers of all sizes.

The British Brands Group is part of a global network of similar brand associations, and is the UK representative of AIM, the European Brands Association, based in Brussels.

For more information and further background please visit the British Brands Group website:
www.britishbrandsgroup.org.uk

For more information, please contact:

Ian Tennant
ian.tennant@fleishmaneuropa.com

020 7395 7080

or

Andy Johnson
andy.johnson@fleishmaneuropa.com

020 7395 7194

Sue Pakenham-Walsh
spw@britishbrandsgroup.org.uk

07880 710555