

# Top 5 companies in terms of social responsibility

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November 13, 2012 Top 5 Companies in Terms of Social Responsibility We live in a society that holds companies accountable for their actions in relation to the environment, the welfare of the less fortunate, and the investors that fund them. A company's actions in terms of social responsibility are placed into three categories: profit responsibility, stakeholder responsibility, and societal responsibility. Profit responsibility refers to a company's responsibility to maximize profits without using deceptive or unfair practices.

Stakeholder responsibility is a company's responsibility to consider the consequences of its actions on those that can be negatively affected by them. Societal responsibility refers to the duty a company has to preserve the environment and to the public in general. Using these guidelines, CR magazine compiled a list of the most socially responsible companies. The top five on this list are: 1. Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. 2. International Business Machines Corp 3. Intel Corp. 4. Microsoft Corporation 5. Johnson Controls Inc

As a global "BioPharma" company, Bristol-Myers Squibb uses its resources to formulate medicines that help millions of people affected by various illnesses. They have devised a strategy that combines their resources in order to maximize profit while providing a value to consumers. "We focus on our customers' needs, giving maximum priority to accelerating pipeline development, delivering sales growth and continuing to manage costs" (BMS). While making a profit, Bristol-Myers Squibb has continued to pursue its mission to provide access to healthcare through their patient assistance programs.

These programs provide free or low cost medicines and services to those that have met financial hardship. In addition, they provide a diverse

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workforce that respects cultural and familial differences among its employees. As for the environment, Bristol-Myers Squibb integrates “comprehensive energy management, pollution controls, and other practices to reduce environmental impacts” at their worldwide facilities. “Bristol-Myers Squibb delivers on its commitments: to our patients and customers, to our employees, to our global communities, to our shareholders and to our environment” (BMS).

According to the New York Times, Bristol-Myers Squibb declared a self-imposed ban on drug ads in 2005. The reasoning behind this ban was to give physicians time to understand new products before patients began asking for them (Saul). “We want to make sure that before we start mass media - television, radio and print branded advertising - that physicians have a level of comfort about the treatment and which patients are appropriate for it,” Brian Henry, a spokesman for Bristol-Myers, said (qtd. in Saul).

International Business Machines Corp, also known as IBM, is a global technology company that prides itself on thinking outside of the box to “solve some of the world's most complex problems” (IBM). In terms of corporate citizenship, IBM uses a comprehensive approach to focus on societal issues that include literacy, education, and community economic development. They utilize a global environmental management system to ensure they are protecting the environment at all of their worldwide facilities.

Approximately 8% of their purchases are from diverse suppliers and they also have a commitment to maintaining employee diversity. “IBM believes that a company culture based on core values not only helps our business, but

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also defines the role that we can and should play in society” (IBM). CBS News published an article detailing IBM’s 2008 study on corporate social responsibility. This study showed that only 17 percent of companies ask customers for their social responsibility concerns. “ IBM believes that by asking customers about their CSR concerns, companies can actually uncover new sales opportunities” (Holstein). One clear implication of the study for top management is this: it no longer suffices to have one office dedicated to CSR, handing out a few community grants. CSR needs to be built into the business units and into the business strategy” (Holstein). Intel prides itself at maintaining the highest standards through leadership, company governance, contributions to health and environment issues, and within its commitment to being socially responsible. The company has created a code of conduct that focuses on improved worker conditions, economic development, and a cleaner environment for communities.

Beyond their code of conduct, Intel has an innovative education program that provides girls worldwide with educational opportunities through technology access and community learning programs. They have also created their Teach Program to assist teachers in becoming effective educators. All of this is in line with their vision: “ This decade we will create and extend computing technology to connect and enrich the lives of every person on earth” (Intel). According to Huffing Post writer, Ryan Scott, “ Intel has decidedly immodest goals for its corporate community involvement” (Scott). In 2011 alone, Intel funded nine different projects to the tune of \$125, 000 in total to nine different projects. One of the recent programs is Intel's work studying colony collapse disorder” (Scott). Microsoft Corporation

claims global corporate citizenship through the company's commitment to fulfill its public responsibilities by serving the needs of people in communities worldwide. " As our company has grown, this commitment has extended far beyond our own products and services and has been amplified many times over through our network of partners, including governments, nonprofits and other organizations" (Microsoft).

One of the ways in which Microsoft serves the community is through YouthSpark. YouthSpark is a hub that provides access to tools, programs, and resources to help children and teens imagine and reach their full potential. In addition, they strive to work responsibly through a diverse workforce that provides competitive compensation and extensive employee training in addition to benefits to domestic partners of employees. They also provide humanitarian response worldwide and aid in empowering nonprofit organizations to do the same. We provide powerful technologies and human support that make it possible to keep families and communities connected, and speed the arrival of much needed aid" (Microsoft). Beyond an initial response, Microsoft stays to help rebuild. " We extend our commitment beyond the immediate need, supporting rebuilding efforts for months and years afterward" (Microsoft). Microsoft's statement seemed to ring true in a brief article published by the Seattle Times. " Microsoft said it will donate \$1.25 million, a combination of cash and in-kind donations, to Haiti earthquake relief" (Chan).

With this effort, they also encouraged employee participation by " matching annual donations up to \$12, 000 per worker and reaching out to local government and non-government agencies to offer help" (Chan). Johnson

Controls provides an environment in which their employees understand and value each other's similarities and differences. " We cultivate a culture where our people recognize it is the strength of personal relationships across businesses and functions that help us continually succeed" (Johnson Controls).

The company also practices diversity in its selection of suppliers, increasing diverse suppliers from 300 to 420 in 2009. Johnson Controls also shares a spirit of giving through global community relations that support arts, education, health and social services, the environment, and leadership development. " In 2011, Johnson Controls donated more than \$15.4 million worldwide to nonprofit and community organizations in support of these causes" (Johnson Controls). According to WTMJ out of Milwaukee, Johnson Controls made a " historically large" donation to Milwaukee Public Schools in September 2012. The plan involves an investment in Pulaski High School's automotive program" (WTMJ). While details of the dollar amount were not available, the donation itself is a testament to Johnson Controls support of education. To conclude, a company's actions in terms of social responsibility are placed into three categories: profit responsibility, stakeholder responsibility, and societal responsibility. The top five are known as, Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. , International Business Machines Corp. , Intel Corp. , Microsoft Corporation and Johnson Controls Inc.

From resources to formulate medicines that help millions of people affected by various illnesses, to inventing the new Microsoft Windows 8 system, each have become a huge part in society and in our lives and most likely continue to be part of our future. Works Cited BMS. " Bristol-Myers Squibb - A Global

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