

Air New Zealand returns to being NZ's most reputable company, longest running study reveals

EMABRGOED: April 1, 2016: Air New Zealand and Toyota have proven they have the strongest, most consistent reputations in the country, with the latest NZ Corporate Reputation Index results ranking them 1st and 2nd respectively – the third year running the organisations have been in the top 2.

Released this week, the NZ Corporate Reputation Index is the country's longest running corporate survey and has been produced for the past six years by research consultancy AMR in conjunction with the Reputation Institute¹. It measures how New Zealanders view the nation's top 25 companies across seven reputation drivers, and then ranks them according² to people's overall emotional reaction using more than 6,000 ratings. It is part of a global study conducted each year and uses a method validated by a database of more than three million ratings.

The latest Index shows Air New Zealand has reclaimed its top placing after falling to 2nd in 2015. It previously ranked third in 2013 and first in 2011 and 2012. New Zealanders were particularly impressed with the national flagship carrier's cheaper flights, new planes, better financial results, positive service experiences and famous safety videos.

Coming in 2nd in the 2016 rankings, Toyota placed first in 2013, second in 2014 and first in 2015, and only narrowly missed out on line honours this year.

“The long term reputational success of these two organisations can be attributed to the high quality and innovative products and services for which they are both renowned. This perception is not new; it has been built over many years through consistent delivery. In the case of Toyota, it has consistently provided mechanically reliable vehicles, and for Air New Zealand, the constantly high level of customer service has been a key reputational driver,” explained AMR's Managing Director, Oliver Freedman.

“But overall both organisations are excellent examples of how a consistently strong customer experience, teamed with leadership, transparency and good corporate citizenship, can result in long-term reputational benefits. Reputation is not something that is built overnight – it is years of effort and hard work. Both companies should be congratulated.”

¹ The Reputation Institute is the leading international organisation dedicated to advancing knowledge about corporate reputations. Founded in 1997, the Reputation Institute has been a pioneer and global leader in the development of measurement tools and counsel to leading corporations around the world.

² n= 2,911. Survey was undertaken in February 2016. The sample was weighted to age and gender quotas representative of the New Zealand general population aged 18-64

Retail giant The Warehouse also fared well in this year's results, moving up one place to rank 3rd overall, driven by strong improvements in its products and services, workplace and the perception of being a responsibly run company.

"The Warehouse is known for its cheap prices but those surveyed pointed to its improved product quality, its upgraded, modernised stores and good treatment of staff as reasons for the rise in reputation," Freedman explained.

Vodafone's reputation significantly improved in this year's rankings, moving from 20th last year to 9th overall in 2016. It scored better on all key dimensions, in particular Products and Services, Innovation and Governance. Its reputation took a hit between 2014 and 2015, driven by a decline in perception among customers particularly in the area of customer service experience.

Fonterra's reputation declined from 2015; its overall ranking fell from 17th to 23rd this year. Consumers said ongoing issues with farmgate milk prices were a key driver for its fall in reputation.

Several other NZ organisations kept reputations stable; ASB again ranked 6th overall, BNZ again ranked 10th, and Fulton Hogan again ranked 11th overall. TrustPower ranked 18th in the first year it has been included in the survey, while another newcomer, IAG New Zealand, ranked 22nd in its debut. Goodman Fielder and SkyCity were not included in this year's NZ Corporate Reputation Index as they are no longer in Deloitte's top 25 companies based on revenue.

The Corporate Reputation Index has been produced in New Zealand for the past six years, with a similar study also conducted in Australia each year.

AMR is part of the STW Group, Australasia's leading marketing content and communications group.

Ends.

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Please note - a full list of New Zealand rankings for 2016 follows

Notes to editors:

About the Reputation Index:

The Reputation Index measures how New Zealanders feel about each of the 25 companies according to seven parameters; Products, Innovation, Workplace, Citizenship, Governance, Leadership and Performance. Adults aged 18-64 are surveyed as part of the Reputation Index in New Zealand, with results weighted to ensure they represent appropriate gender and age groups. The study includes the top 25 companies based on revenue sourced from the 2015 Deloitte Top 200 list. Other major reputation or Corporate Responsibility studies conducted in New Zealand and Australia use a self-rating system; the companies being analysed voluntarily provide the data, which can then be audited. **The Reputation Index**

differs because it collates insight direct from consumers, and does not rely on any information provided by the companies being studied.

About AMR:

One of Australasia's leading research consultancies, AMR regularly conducts reputation studies on corporations, countries and cities. AMR gathers in-depth data and provides insight into reputation, and how it is measured and valued both in New Zealand and across the world. AMR is part of STW, Australasia's leading marketing content and communications group.

2016 Corporate Reputation Index - rankings and changes

