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*Emerging Economies.
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October 10 - 12, 2008

IIM BANGALORE

presents

SPARSH





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Sparsh - The NGO Event

Corporate social responsibility

CSR - is a hot topic for the world's largest organisations. The link between social and environmental activities and overall company performance has been demonstrated and is increasing as consumers become ever more aware of their wider impact.

The understanding here is that CSR goes much beyond corporate philanthropy.

According to British Telecom, the CSR journey involves 3 steps:

The first is ensuring the company meets all legal, regulatory and compliance requirements. Issues such as health and safety, corruption, privacy, ethical procurement, pollution and discrimination all need to be dealt with effectively and consistently. Companies then move to a second step - this is the 'builder' phase - where they move beyond merely what is required by law and begin to build a genuine ethical reputation. They do this by addressing issues like workforce and supplier diversity, flexible working, community investment, charity support, the efficient use of natural resources and care for the environment.

The ultimate step is to become an innovator. This is the top of the CSR evolutionary scale to date. Here, CSR becomes a creative stimulus and an aid to developing new business, strengthening strategic relationships and building marketplace diversity.

How do you evaluate CSR?

Unfortunately, there are, as yet, no standardized indicators upon which companies can be evaluated for their CSR activities. However, a number of organizations and publications produce rankings. Methods of evaluation vary, as do the depth of research and degree of diligence.

What is the measure of "good" CSR? Is it the resources channelized by the company into it? Or does it depend on the diversity of its CSR activities as well? Would you call a company that places salary/wage increments of its employees ahead of making charitable contributions socially responsible? And above all, is CSR sector dependent? Because many businesses by their very nature cannot be "ethical". Pharmaceuticals for example, involves animal-testing.

The energy industry's entire value-chain from mining, to internal combustion engines and power plants, is destructive and dirty. So would you call these companies socially irresponsible?



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What is required of you?

Your task is simple (well, not so very though!)

1) Come up with a set of criteria & a procedure you will use to rank companies on their CSR initiatives

The criteria should be clear-cut and presented in bullet point format. They should not be more than 10 in number. Explain the criteria you considered, and why you thought these 10 were the most important among them. Using these criteria, how would you generate an overall score for a company on CSR that will eventually facilitate their ranking?

2) Make a questionnaire which when filled will help you score companies on the criteria that you have mentioned.

For eg, if your criterion is environmental sustainability, you can ask questions like Does the company have an environmental policy? What is its carbon footprint? Does it do/encourage recycling? etc.

In case you are using multiple questions to arrive at the score for a single criterion, you should explain how that is done. Also mention which criteria can be scored based on publicly available data, and which require internal information from the company. You can assume that we are ranking only listed companies.

(1) & (2) should make an integrated whole.

Criteria for evaluation

- Exhaustiveness of the solution proposed
- Brevity in questions
- Minimum redundancy/overlap between criteria/questions
- Approach followed for calculating the final score

Preference will be given to those solutions which arrive at the score using more publicly available company information.

Timelines

- The last date for receipt of entries is October 3rd, 2008.



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Submission formats

- Teams are expected to write a 4 pager approach to the problem.
- The soft copies should be typed in Microsoft Word, with single line spacing and font Times New Roman, size 12
- The file should be sent in PDF form in the format -
<TeamName>_<Institute>_Sparsh.pdf. For exchange students it is to be of the format -
<TeamName>_<InstituteA>_<InstituteB>_Sparsh.pdf if in case they choose to work with students of different Institutes.
- Each entry should have a cover page mentioning names of the participants, the institute they belong to, e-mail ids and telephone numbers of the participants. This cover page shall be detached before the one page write up is given for evaluation. The names of the participants or the institute they belong to should not appear anywhere on the one page write up.
- The participants are required to send only a soft copy of their entry to the following mail id: sparsh@iimb.ernet.in
- Acknowledgement of the receipt of the soft copies of entries would be sent within 24 hours of the receipt of the papers.

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