



IBM: Helping clients use SR more strategically

Overview

IBM is a globally integrated technology and services corporation headquartered in Armonk, NY. The objective of IBM's corporate social responsibility initiatives is to strategically focus the company's best and most valuable resources—its technologies, especially the innovative solutions that come from its world-class research laboratories—and its employee talent and expertise. IBM applies these assets against critical societal issues and problems such as education, health, energy and the environment, language/literacy, sustainable and vibrant cities, disaster relief, and culture to assist communities around the world.

Social Responsibility Issue

IBM has long history of corporate SR and has received numerous awards for its involvement. Its approach to addressing complex issues—including childhood cancer, literacy, and entrepreneurial support—goes beyond donating technology and money by taking its own expertise in SR and using it as a business offering.

"We're often seen as being IT-focused. When it comes to social responsibility, however, both in our own operations and for our clients, we aren't pigeon-holed into technology. We have a different kind of focus: helping companies develop their social responsibility strategy and practices," said Daniel Aronson, global offering lead for corporate social responsibility and sustainability for IBM's strategy consulting practice.

Solutions

IBM worked with Jantz Morgan, a Boston financial services firm, to develop more strategic and powerful SR initiatives.

Sean Morgan, Jantz Morgan's president, said the

engagement touched on multiple pillars of the company's responsibility efforts: "We asked IBM to help us make our corporate social responsibility more strategic, from examining our stakeholders to improving the linkage to our business strategy to helping us think about metrics to manage our firm's CSR initiatives."

IBM worked with Jantz Morgan to create a template for success that can help other companies and organizations integrate SR principles into business strategy:

- Determine SR principles
- Identify key stakeholders and how to engage them
- Evaluate values
- Engage employees
- Define the tools and insights required to develop a strategic set of SR initiatives
- Review industry best practices
- Develop a road map to reach strategic CSR objectives

"By developing an SR foundation for their business strategies, companies have an opportunity not only to protect themselves, but actually grow their businesses by retaining customers and attracting new ones through their integrity and their authentic contributions to society," said Aronson.

IBM used a research-based approach to rank and compare each SR priority, as well as the acquisition process they would have to follow to acquire and retain clients. Then they determined which types of SR initiatives would be best at attracting those kinds of individuals and organizations and matched with what had the most value to the community and the world.

"Working with Daniel and the IBM team, we were able to make our social responsibility initiatives more strategic and more valuable and to find innovative ways [to] involve others in making the world a better place," said Morgan.

Measurement

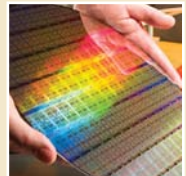
IBM used quantitative weighting and ranking to paint a picture of the kinds of organizations and individuals they wanted to be in touch—just as marketing researchers would do for advertising.

Other SR Involvement

IBM is involved in many other SR activities. For more information, visit <http://www.ibm.com/ibm/responsibility/index.shtml>.



IBM uses a research-based approach to rank and compare SR priorities and is helping other companies do the same.



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Company name: IBM
Location: Armonk, New York
Web site: www.ibm.com
Founded: 1896
Scope: Global
Employees: 398,000