The Societal ROI Index: A Measure for The Times We Find Ourselves In

Embargoed until November 9, 2018, 8am EST
The Societal ROI Index, developed by the Harris Poll with Finn Partners, is a newly formalized index designed to measure the perceptions of a company’s social value. Harris developed an index using attributes historically used to measure a company’s reputation to better understand the social role and image of highly visible companies.

Using six attributes related to the company’s impact on society, a model was developed to show the causal relationship between how a company performs in these areas and how they may influence business outcomes. There are three broad themes:

• Ethical stewards
• Civic minds
• Visible values

Performance on the attributes, and the pairs of attributes that make up the three dimensions, are transformed to be the Societal ROI Index. This allows a read of which aspects of performance might be most holding back or most helping performance on key business outcomes.
The Societal ROI survey was conducted online in English and took place among the general public, adults 18+. Respondents were randomly assigned to rate two of the companies with which they are “very” or “somewhat” familiar. After the first company rating was completed, the respondent was then asked to rate the second company. Each interview lasted approximately 20 minutes.

This year’s rating interviews took place online between December 11th and January 12th, 2018 among 25,800 U.S. adults to obtain an average of approximately 300 ratings per company.

Index score ranges in value from a low of 0 to a high of 100.

Data informing the 2018 scores were collected as part of Harris Poll’s 2018 Reputation Quotient. The SROI model was then developed to show the causal relationship between how a company performs on selected attributes and common business outcomes.
A company’s Societal ROI score encapsulates perceptions across three dimensions reflective of today’s reputational landscape and changing public expectations about how companies demonstrate social good.

Each dimension is composed of two attributes.

It provides a summary of how companies are perceived in modern culture, a new measure for the times in which we find ourselves.
Why Does Societal ROI Matter?

A company’s SROI score shows how a company is performing in areas the model shows cause the kinds of business behaviors needed in the marketplace. Companies with high Societal ROI scores have a more supportive business landscape.

Visible Values
- Is accountable for its actions
- Speaks out on societal issues that are important to me
- Behaves responsibly towards the people in the communities where it operates

Ethical Stewards
- Has excellent leadership
- Looks like a company that maintains high ethical standards
- Looks like a company that rewards its employees fairly

Civic Minds
- Is accountable for its actions
- Speaks out on societal issues that are important to me
- Behaves responsibly towards the people in the communities where it operates

Scales are based on 1-4, with 4 being ‘definitely’ and 1 being ‘not at all’
# The 2018 Societal ROI Top 20 Companies by Score

Highest SROI scorers among America’s most visible companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Ranked 1-10</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Ranked 11-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Wegmans</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>HEB Grocery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>Patagonia</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Publix Super Markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>UPS</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>L.L.Bean</td>
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<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>ALDI</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>LG Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>Microsoft</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>Whole Foods Market</td>
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<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Lowe’s</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>Amazon.com</td>
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<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Tesla Motors</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>IBM</td>
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<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Kellogg Company</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>The Kraft Heinz Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Chick-fil-A</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Berkshire Hathaway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>The Boeing Company</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>The Kroger Company</td>
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</table>
The 2018 Societal ROI Industry Scores by Dimensions

- Companies in Grocery and Tech tend to earn the highest score on Societal ROI dimensions
- Most industries lag in Visible Values
### 2018 SOCIETAL ROI

**Societal ROI Uncovers Strategic Opportunities for Companies**

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- I see your values, but am not quite sure about what’s behind it all.

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- Proactive stewards of your values, but I’m not sure if it’s in the real world.

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- You’ve got it, but I’m not seeing it deployed against today’s issues.

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- High Ranking Relative to This Dimension
- Moderate Ranking Relative to This Dimension

- Community? Sure. But potentially more hat than cowgirl.
The survey of the importance and impact of social issues was conducted online by The Harris Poll from July 10 - 12, 2018 among 2,012 U.S. adults ages 18 and older and is nationally representative of the U.S. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population.

Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents’ propensity to be online. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

The social issues data provides a snapshot of the current issues Americans want companies to address and the perceived impact companies are making. The data informed the creation of the Societal ROI as a new metric and diagnostic tool to understand a company’s reputation relative to social good.
2018 SOCIETAL ROI

Issues Americans Believe Companies Should Address

- Privacy of data: 65%
- Access to healthcare: 61%
- Supporting veterans: 59%
- Education: 56%
- Job creation: 56%
- Hunger: 55%
- Sexual harassment: 55%
- Racial equality: 54%
- Domestic violence: 51%
- Poverty: 50%
- Gun violence: 49%
- Gender equality: 46%
- Climate change: 44%
- Immigration: 42%
- Drug addiction: 41%
- LGBTQ rights: 30%

How important is it to you, personally, that companies work to truly make a positive difference on the following societal issues?

% Very Important
Issues Americans Believe Companies Are Making An Impact On

- Job creation: 24%
- Supporting veterans: 22%
- Education: 18%
- Access to healthcare: 18%
- Hunger: 16%
- Privacy of data: 16%
- Racial equality: 16%
- Gender equality: 16%
- Sexual harassment: 15%
- Domestic violence: 13%
- Poverty: 13%
- LGBTQ rights: 13%
- Drug addiction: 13%
- Gun violence: 13%
- Climate change: 12%
- Immigration: 12%

How much of an impact on society do you think companies have made on each of the following issues?

% Very Positive Impact
The Gaps Between Perceived Impact and Importance

Americans said it was very important that companies work to truly make a positive difference on the following issues:

- Privacy of data
- Access to healthcare
- Supporting veterans
- Education
- Job creation
- Hunger
- Sexual harassment
- Racial equality
- Domestic violence
- Poverty
- Gun violence
- Gender equality
- Climate change
- Immigration
- Drug addiction
- LGBTQ rights

Americans said companies were making a very positive impact on these issues:

- Job creation
- Supporting veterans
- Education
- Access to healthcare
- Hunger
- Privacy of data
- Racial equality
- Gender equality
- Sexual harassment
- Domestic violence
- Poverty
- LGBTQ rights
- Drug addiction
- Gun violence
- Climate change
- Immigration
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