

Toyota has strongest reputation in Australia; new research *Car industry fares best in latest Corporate Reputation Rankings*

Sydney, April 22, 2013: Despite mounting speculation about the viability of the local car manufacturing industry, Australians view Toyota as the most reputable company in the nation according to the 2013 Corporate Reputation Index¹, released today.

It is the first time Toyota has taken top position in the survey², which is part of a global 27-country study conducted each year by leading research consultants AMR in conjunction with the Reputation Institute³. It examines our top 60 companies⁴ and ranks them accordingly. The car giant beat Australia Post, and JB HiFi respectively, to take the number one spot, which was held in 2012 by Apple Australia.

Toyota was not the only automotive company to fare well in this year's rankings; Mazda rose two places to rank 8th this year, Holden came 10th and Ford Australia leapt an impressive 12 places to rank 20th overall.

"While there may have been recalls, doubts cast over financial performance, staff layoffs and other issues facing the car industry in Australia, most people admire the fact that the companies are still here, and still operating in the local market. Their continued presence in the country, despite such strong difficulties, has obviously boosted the reputation of these organisations in the eyes of most Australians," explained AMR's Managing Director Oliver Freedman.

Other results showed that two of the nation's leading banks – Commonwealth and NAB – rose significantly in reputation; Commonwealth jumped 21 places to rank 27th overall, and NAB rose 16 places to come 38th this year. Bendigo and Adelaide Bank was ranked highest of the banks, coming 12th overall.

By comparison, two other financial organisations demonstrated a continued drop in public faith; Westpac dropped six places to 52nd, while ANZ fell nine places to rank 58th out of 60 companies measured in 2013.

"For many years, the Australian public have believed all four major banks are 'the same' but this year we have seen two - CBA and NAB - really separate themselves from other major players. Interesting to note that these banks have undertaken significant communication programs and there is the perception that they have implemented real improvements in their products and service."

After ranking first last year, Apple Australia's position also declined; the tech company came 5th in 2013. Freedman said this drop was mostly due to "a decline in how Australians view Apple's products, openness and transparency, and financial performance".

"While Apple may have initially differentiated itself in the local marketplace through true innovation, many of its more recent product launches have veered on the edge of novelty; simply updates on existing technology. As a result, Apple's position has fallen," he explained.

Other overall results showed:

¹ N=7989. Data was collected in February/March 2013 and respondents aged 18-64 were interviewed as part of the study. Results were weighted to the general population using several demographic and socio-economic variables

² Toyota did rank number 1 in the Corporate Reputation Index in 2005 and 2006; however the survey was undertaken using a different system including alternative methodology, sample size and smaller number of companies examined

³ 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.

⁴ The list of Top 60 Australian companies studied in the Reputation Index is compiled by AMR by using the BRW Top 100 list. Companies are excluded if they are not national, or only have a regional presence

- Despite a range of new initiatives designed to attract consumers back to the brand, Qantas still lags behind Virgin Australia (7th) and Air New Zealand (11th), ranking 13th in 2013. However this was a significant improvement from 2012 where it ranked 25th
- Australia Post has held its position as the second most reputable organisation in the nation, due to its community involvement and products
- Fairfax recorded an improvement in its reputation, this year ranking 49th overall. Other research by AMR has shown the format change by both the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age* may have helped perceptions of Innovation and Product
- Companies focused on selling electronics continue to be highly regarded with both JB Hi Fi and The Good Guys in ranking within the top 10 in 2013. Harvey Norman however continues to trail overall because the company is not viewed as particularly innovative

“This year’s results show again that a strong reputation leads to high levels of advocacy. This in turn attracts better employees, and ensures that companies are listened to, and suffer less reputational damage when faced with a crisis. This bodes well for companies like Toyota Australia and Australia Post who have maintained a strong reputation over time; they have had the opportunity to address issues as they arise with the knowledge that the public will trust the messages and information they receive,” Freedman said.

AMR is part of STW Communications Group, Australia’s leading marketing content and communications services group.

Ends.

About the Reputation Index:

Other major reputation or Corporate Responsibility studies conducted in Australia use a self-rating system; the companies being analysed voluntarily provide the data, which can then be audited. **However, the Reputation Index is different because it collates insight direct from consumers, and does not rely on any information provided by the companies being studied.**

In addition to collating overall reputation, the Reputation Index also measures how Australians feel about each of the 60 companies according to seven parameters; Products and Services, Innovation, Workplace, Citizenship, Governance, Leadership and Performance.

Adults aged 18-64 are surveyed as part of the Reputation Index in Australia, with results weighted to ensure they represent appropriate gender and age groups.

About AMR:

One of Australia’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 Australia and across the world. AMR is part of STW Communications Group, Australia’s leading marketing content and communications services group.

Editors please note: full list of rankings follows

Company	2013 Rank	Company	2013 Rank
Toyota Motor Corporation	1	Foxtel	31
Australia Post	2	Caltex Australia	32
JB HI-FI	3	7-Eleven	33
Nestle Australia	4	Allianz Australia	34
Apple Australia	5	AMP	35
The Good Guys	6	Visy Industries	36
Virgin Australia	7	AGL Energy	37
Mazda Australia	8	National Australia Bank	38
ALDI Australia	9	BHP Billiton	39
GM Holden	10	Tatts Group	40
Air New Zealand	11	Insurance Australia Group (IAG)	41
Bendigo and Adelaide Bank	12	Shell Australia	42
Qantas Airways	13	Macquarie Group	43
Flight Centre	14	QBE Insurance Group	44
Hewlett-Packard	15	Telstra	45
IBM Australia	16	Optus	46
Nissan Australia	17	BP Australasia	47
Woolworths	18	RioTinto	48
ING Direct	19	Fairfax Media	49
Ford Australia	20	Zurich Financial Services	50
Harvey Norman	21	Lion	51
BUPA	22	Westpac	52
Suncorp Group	23	Origin Energy	53
Myer	24	EnergyAustralia	54
Westfield Group	25	News Limited	55
Medibank Private	26	Australian Taxation Office	56
Commonwealth Bank	27	Citigroup	57
Coca-Cola Amatil	28	ANZ	58
Wesfarmers	29	Tabcorp	59
BlueScope Steel	30	Vodafone Hutchison Australia	60