

It pays to plan your next move

INFLUENCE - Track the movement of stakeholders' issues and your competitive positioning to stay one step ahead

IMAGE - Gauge perceptions, expectations and reputation internally and externally to map your position

IDENTITY - Demonstrate your success and plan your next move...



Celebrating 20 Years in Communications
& Reputation Research



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Echo: 20 this year, and CR enthusiasts from the start

We may have had a decade of *Ethical Performance*, but it's 20 years since Echo first started adding up for its clients the credit and debit columns of the balance sheet of reputation.

From small beginnings then, a research company has grown which today tracks the fall and rise of company and nation-state brands and perceptions internally as well as externally – from identity and image to influence.

During the 90s, the company grew into Europe and by 2000, into North America. Asia has just been added among the fully-owned office locations. First challenged to measure the impact of corporate responsibility on reputation by client Dominic Fry at J Sainsbury's (now at M&S), Echo noted the different drivers of corporate responsibility.

In London, it was about community engagement, while New York focused almost exclusively on philanthropy. Sensing how corporate responsibility would become central to brand resilience and value, by 2000 Echo had launched an early 'CSR Thought Leadership' series, featuring interviews and content analyses on the case for sustainability, best practices and the implications of

committing to strategic CR programmes.

Today, Echo is one of the few international companies able, with 200 foreign-language analysts with a wide sectoral and cross-cultural skills base, to create global services that pre- and post-test corporate responsibility, then map out important 'ecosystems' for our clients to consider.

At any time, and not least in an economic slowdown, research is an investment that delivers high yields. It guarantees excellence as stakeholders and interested players are engaged in the process, and helps drive the right solutions accordingly. The word 'co-creation' has entered business vocabulary recently: research is co-creation in one of its finest forms.

Research before sustainable commitment takes place cuts out guesswork, provides strategic insights and provides a benchmark, reducing uncertainty and associated resource misallocation and financial waste. After sustainable commitment, research demonstrates success, movement and gaps to be addressed, especially to senior executives and ever-so-slightly sceptical colleagues. A map of the routes trodden

and still to journey upon is traced out, with pitfalls highlighted and the quickest and smoothest paths delineated.

Along with many household names in government and the voluntary sector and among the world's most powerful companies, Echo's clients include several leading organisations prominent in sustainability, such as the International Business Leaders' Forum and the UN Global Compact. CEO Sandra Macleod sits on the IBLF's Financial Performance and Measurement Council; and Echo strives to observe the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact in its own day-to-day relationships with staff, clients and other stakeholders.

Work-life balance, personal compassion alongside business rigour, enthusiasm for a green and efficient world, the will to seek inspiration, creativity and innovation amid warnings of potential risks and disconnects along the way: these are some of the hallmarks that have characterised a 20-year success story which still has far to go.

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