



Echo Research

GLOBAL RESEARCH PROTECTING BRANDS AND REPUTATION

Communication of Progress 2012-13

Company name	Echo Research	Date	March 30th 2013
Unit (if applicable)		Contact name	Amy Wright
Address	Craven House, Station Road, Godalming GU7 1EX	Contact position	Senior Account Manager
		Contact telephone	+44 (0)1483 413 600
		UK Network membership date	2004
		Employee numbers	50+ (Ebiquity parent group 600+)
Country	UK	Sector	Market research

Brief description of nature of business

Established in 1989, Echo Research is the premier global specialist provider of reputation analysis and stakeholder research. The company enables clients to measure how they are viewed and to protect the integrity of their brands and reputations. Echo works with impartiality, combining meticulous research methods with expert analysis to provide comprehensive, high-level reports. In 2011 Echo became part of the Ebiquity group, which provides independent, data-driven insights to the global media and marketing community to continuously improve clients' business performance.

As a full-service communication research company, Echo helps organisations work towards their goals by providing a clear and objective 'echo' of perceptions and expectations. To support clients' leadership and excellence, Echo understands and measures intangible assets such as reputation, communications effectiveness and drivers of behaviour. It does this by combining understanding of the drivers of brand, reputation and communication, with expertise in market research, media and digital media content analysis to provide tailored solutions for 500+ clients spanning all sectors and regions.

Echo has increasingly focused on the challenges of corporate social responsibility and corporate governance, with a particular emphasis on helping its client base to understand the views and impact of key stakeholder groups.

Echo's sector expertise spans finance and professional services, education, government and public sector, healthcare, consumer, telecommunications, media and technology, utilities, the environment and many more.

Echo Research is on the *UK Register of Expert Witnesses* for legal purposes, and a member of the college of the UK's Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), MRS (Market Research Society), ESOMAR (European research association), CASRO (American research association) and AMEC (Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communications), and is ISO-accredited for its quality procedures.


Statement of support for UNGC by the Chief Executive of Echo Research

In 2012-13, Echo Research maintained its full commitment to the Compact and observance of the Compact's 10 ethical and environmental principles. As ever, details of our activities for each Principle appear below.

We continue our strong belief and advocacy in wider corporate commitments through our day to day reputation research work for our clients, and special studies on leadership commitment and responsibility.

This past year, we have partnered with Ashridge Management Centre to conduct an international study among CEOs on this subject, and have been asked by The Economist publishers, Profile Books, to author a book on 'Mindful Reputation Management'.

We are also working on leadership conferences in South Africa and the United States in 2013 around new global reporting standards and values-based leadership and action to affirm the strategic importance of social, environmental and financial performance working together.

Signature		Position	Group Chief Executive
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PRINCIPLE 1 Business should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights

Our commitment / policy & management system

We support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights, including the right to safe and healthy working conditions, and the right to freedom of speech without distinction of gender, creed, national origin or other differentiator.

Actions implemented in the last year and outcomes

- We encourage the free engagement of all staff with charities of their choice for one day of paid leave. This has led to individuals supporting a wide range of charities including Echo corporate charity, Shooting Star Chase (SSC).
- As part of Echo's commitment to the health of all staff, as well as continued support of SSC, participation was organised in a number of charity running events, including the Great South Run and the fun run held by SSC at Loseley Park.
- We continue to provide weekly fresh fruit supplies to all staff. Although in itself a small act, it expresses well our fervently held belief in the principle of small changes cumulatively making a big difference.
- We have a rolling program of Visual Display Unit checks for all staff to help maintain good posture and prevent back strain.
- Echo maintains a strict no-smoking policy.

PRINCIPLE 2 Business should ensure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

Our commitment / policy & management system

We aim to ensure that we are not complicit in human rights abuses

Actions implemented in the last year and outcomes

- A survey of our client base indicated no evidence of human rights abuses.

PRINCIPLE 3	Business should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
Our commitment or policy & management system	
Conformance with the UK's Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004.	
Actions implemented in the last year and outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular meetings were held to inform /consult with employees: the work of a dedicated taskforce set up to generate ideas and actions to encourage teamwork continued, and Echo participated in a second Ebiquity-wide staff survey. ▪ Echo is currently in the middle of a period of consultation with all staff to look at company culture and surrounding policies. The opinions of all staff are being taken into account to ensure that our office environment is effective and enjoyable for all team members. 	
PRINCIPLE 4	Business should support the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour
Our commitment or policy & management system	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We support the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour. 	
Actions implemented in the last year and outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We continue to conduct pre-qualification and scrutiny of suppliers to ensure conformity with civilized standards in these areas. 	
PRINCIPLE 5	Business should support the effective abolition of child labour
Our commitment or policy & management system	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Our business is based on 'intellectual capital' whereby in practice 90% of Echo staff are in possession of a University degree or tertiary education equivalent. This in itself minimises the possibility of child labour within Echo. All our non-First World partners are providers of intellectual property which, again, <i>de facto</i> debars the employment of children. 	
Actions implemented in the last year and outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We continue to monitor our supply chain for any breach of this Principle, which given the nature of our business is already extremely unlikely. 	

PRINCIPLE 6	Business should support the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation
Our commitment or policy & management system	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Applications for employment are welcomed from all sections of the community. Policy is to ensure that no job application or employee should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, caring responsibilities, marital status, sexuality, disability or age. 	
Measurable results or outcomes	
<p>Our drive to minimise discrimination and enhance its opposite were divided into two types: 1. direct action by Echo, and 2. indirect / proxy action through a third party in order to extend our positive 'footprint', as follows:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Direct action:</i> Across Echo we employ a broad range of people with diverse ethnic backgrounds including Asian and Indian. In our French office we directly employ people with diverse nationalities based in France and in Europe and fully support their development. In our Singapore office we employ people from across south-east Asia. ▪ <i>Direct action:</i> We consider that 'caring responsibilities' imply greater work-life balance for employees with young children, older relatives, and neighbours / friends / family needing help. This definition is potentially relevant to all members of staff. Flexitime working to permit a better work-life balance was taken up by, again, some 45 % of Echo staff, maintaining the levels of the two previous years. ▪ <i>Indirect / proxy action:</i> Following a 2012 review of Echo's charitable support, Echo staff voted overwhelmingly to continue supporting Shooting Star Chase (SSC), a local children's charity which cares for families with children and teenagers with life-limiting conditions across South West London, Surrey and Sussex. Link: http://www.shootingstarchase.org.uk/. Echo staff has raised money for SSC by taking part in sponsored runs and monthly themed dress-down days (colours, eras, seasons, events), as well as bake sales and centrally organised volunteer days. This activity will continue throughout 2013. Echo also continues to support I CAN, a children's special needs charity, providing pro-bono evaluation support and financial contributions. ▪ <i>Indirect / proxy action:</i> We encouraged our staff to take advantage of the UK government's Childcare Voucher scheme, with some 10% of the team doing so. ▪ <i>Direct action:</i> In respect of 'race', Echo has 200 staff and analysts working in 33 languages across the following markets: North / Central America, South America, Europe, GCC, Other Middle East & Africa and Asia / Oceania. Our multi-lingual analysts include, among many more, speakers of Afrikaans, Arabic, Chinese, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Malay, Nepalese, Russian, Macedonian, Thai, Ukrainian, Urdu and Uzbek. 	
PRINCIPLE 7	Business should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges
Our commitment / policy & management system	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Our interpretation of this Principle focuses on climate change, with the precautionary aspect consisting of present action despite the uncertainty of future impact. ▪ We believe it is important to support organisations that can extend our beneficial environmental influence beyond what we could achieve in our own right i.e. we support the proxy principle as a multiplier of positive impact. 	
Actions implemented in the last year and outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We kept up to date on EU Directives through SuPeRB and Business EcoLogic. 	

PRINCIPLE 8	Business should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility
Our commitment / policy & management system	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Echo aims to reduce its negative environmental impact through recycling and minimising energy use. 	
Actions implemented in the last year and outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We took further steps in reducing the potential quantities of paper that we and our clients use, by upgrading and refining our electronic media monitoring and search facility, EchoSonar, to run on the EVO2 platform. This system draws on up to 50,000 online titles and permits Echo's clients to do the same, thus replacing an equivalent volume of paper. ▪ In the UK, a strong initiative was taken by our Ethics and Environment team to bring recycling bins to the company to reduce company waste to landfill. Centralised recycling bins for paper, card, plastics and glass have been installed and individual desk bins removed to encourage participation. ▪ Virtually 100% of Echo Research products were again supplied to clients in electronic rather than paper form. As a result, stationery and printing costs were again minimised. ▪ The majority of paper used was recycled (Green "Evolve"). ▪ We have a standing requirement of our stationery suppliers to recommend green options. ▪ The sending of 1000+ paper Christmas cards was replaced by electronic greetings and a charitable donation to the charity I CAN. ▪ We restricted travel where feasible to public transport (up to 80% of total Echo business journeys last year). 	
PRINCIPLE 9	Business should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies
Our commitment / policy & management system	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We support the introduction, development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies. 	
Actions implemented in the last year and outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any obsolete or broken computing equipment was collected by our Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)-certified IT collection company. According to their website, they "recycle over 95% of all electronic equipment by dismantling and recycling the raw materials with possible refurbishment options." ▪ Echo has found an organisation to recycle used toner cartridges, to minimise waste. 	

PRINCIPLE 10 Business should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery

Our commitment / policy & management system

- We aim to work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

Actions implemented in the last year and outcomes

- As MRS Company Partners, we do not offer clients own goods/products/services as incentives for research projects. We also pledge to protect the reputation and integrity of the profession, as part of the MRS Code of Conduct ([link](#))

How we make this COP available to our stakeholders

We make this COP available through the quarterly Echo e-zine which is sent to several thousand Echo stakeholders and by posting key points on our website. In terms of raising broader awareness of our actions, Echo maintains its commitment to Corporate Responsibility and the UNGC through its professional engagement in reputation management, of which CSR strategies form such an important part.



© Echo Research Ltd
10/11 Charterhouse Square London EC1M 6AX United Kingdom
T +44 (0) 207 608 1113 F + 44 (0)1483 413 601 E infouk@echoresearch.com

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