



EEO TRUST
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The feel good factor

Reporting on social responsibility has become more commonplace and conscience buying more mainstream in the last few years. Quadruple bottom line reporting introduces community involvement and cultural diversity to the business equation.

Social responsibility once meant signing a tax-deductible cheque or perhaps sending a senior executive to a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Nowadays, corporate ethics is taking on a strategic role in business planning and influencing the way employees and customers view an organisation, its products and services.

Leading organisations are adopting corporate social responsibility (CSR), socially responsible investment (SRI), and cause related marketing (CRM) strategies to clearly communicate their values to employees, customers and investors.

The aim of quadruple bottom line reporting or social/environmental/ethical auditing is to create sustainable growth and responsible governance on all levels of an organisation. The key to effective CSR reporting is sincerity. Transparent communication of an organisation's intentions or activities – whether it is a SME or large corporation – sends a clear message to staff and the general public that these principles are valued. Appreciating resources and people, investing in the community, and making ethical business decisions help create respectful work cultures, engaged employees and healthy communities.

According to recent research, nine in ten UK employees said that their employer's social and environmental responsibility is important to them.¹

This is pertinent when recruiting the best talent in a tight labour market. Much has been written on how Gen Yers – more than previous generations – place great value on social and environmental issues, and how these

factor into their employment choices. Potential employees are scoping out like-minded organisations they **want** to work for: "Employers of Choice" whose ethos they can relate to and contribute towards.

Corporate footprints

How these "Employers of Choice" behave in the international arena is relevant: seven in ten UK employees believe "companies should ensure good working conditions and fair treatment for their workers regardless of whether the law requires it in that [other] country".²

Environmental and social impacts can be traced along the production continuum from start to finish including: supplier and distribution choices, health and safety standards, human rights and labour laws, use of resources, disposal of wastes, and local investment or lending options.

How responsibly companies conduct business also influences investors. Terry Creighton, Director of Prometheus Ethical Finance and Board member of New Zealand's Council for Socially Responsible Investment, says the positive correlation between social and environmental responsibility and a company's long-term market value has contributed to marked growth in the ethical investment sector.

"Companies that adopt good SRI practices are finding that they can attract investment capital more readily than those who don't," says Terry. "The fact that well-managed SRI funds are equalling, if not out-performing, other mainstream investment funds is

reinforcing investors' growing awareness that they do not need to divorce their investment strategies from their fundamental values."

To start tracking corporate impacts:

- [Recycling Operators of New Zealand's \(RONZ\)](#) national directory of places that recycle office computers, equipment etc.
- [Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research's carbon calculators](#) for measuring, managing, and reporting on CO₂ emissions. According to their annual report, Manaaki Whenua offset 97% of its emissions in 2005.
- [The Get Sustainable Challenge](#) walks businesses through the first stages of sustainability engagement.

Community involvement

Organisations interested in quadruple bottom line reporting and SRI can consider investing in projects in their local communities or supporting causes close to their employees' hearts.

Financial investment is not the only way organisations can get involved with not-for-profits and local charities. There are varying degrees of philanthropic commitments, and options include: fundraising, matching employees' contributions, donating goods, placing associated logos on products, offering the use of facilities or meeting rooms, or sending in skilled staff to lend a hand. To be successful, the relationship needs to be appropriate, genuine and beneficial to the recipient charity or cause.

¹ <http://www.mori.com/publications/jld/publics-views-of-corporate-responsibility.pdf> The Public's Views of Corporate Responsibility 2003

² Ibid. p6

Good karma or good business?

For more information on ethical reporting and investing:

[The Corporate Citizenship Company](#) suggests six steps organisations can adopt when embarking on ethical or social auditing. Also has sample matrixes and self-assessment sheets.

[Business in the Community](#) has a document *The Business Case for Corporate Responsibility* that outlines the benefits of implementing CSR. Also has a resources and research section.

[Global Reporting Initiative \(GRI\)](#) aims to develop globally applicable Sustainability Reporting Guidelines. See the document *2002 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines*.

[London Benchmarking Group](#) describes how to monitor and assess involvement in the local community.

[New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development](#) offers guidelines on preparing and publishing sustainable development reports.

[Sustainable Business Network Bay of Plenty](#) has developed a set of guidelines for assessing business sustainability called *Sustainable Business Challenge Sustainability Criteria*.

[The Natural Step Framework](#) is a planning tool that integrates environmental and social considerations into business decisions.

[Council for Socially Responsible Investment](#) seeks to establish benchmarks and guidelines for investors so that they can ensure their funds reach destinations where there is ethical and sustainable corporate behaviour.

[The Institute of Business Ethics](#) aims to encourage high standards of business behaviour based on ethical values.

[ASRIA](#) is an association dedicated to promoting corporate responsibility and sustainable investment practice in the Asia Pacific region.

[The Dow Jones Sustainability Group Index](#) tracks the financial performance of the leading sustainability-driven companies and provides benchmarks to help with managing sustainability portfolios.

Corporate volunteers

Volunteering is a popular way to contribute to the community, and without the dedication and effort of volunteers, huge sectors of New Zealand life would come to a standstill including many sport codes, health and counselling services, and arts and literacy programmes.

In 2004, the New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations researched 10 New Zealand voluntary agencies and found that a staggering 4,063 full-time equivalents and 7,638,238 hours were worked by their volunteers during that year.³

Many employees already have volunteer commitments outside the workplace: 31% of respondents to a recent survey said they are involved in charity work and volunteering.⁴ How then can employers support staff in their volunteering aspirations?

Flexible working options, paid time off, or extended leave are some ways

employers can recognise and support employees' personal volunteering commitments, while developing corporate volunteering programmes can create a conduit for employees' technical skills, fundraising abilities and business experience to be transferred to not-for-profits in a structured way.

These programmes enable employees to express their personal values and feel connected to their organisation's social objectives, and can foster staff loyalty and motivation. They also ultimately benefit the community and local causes that rely so heavily on donated time and money.

Alison Marshall, Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind's National Manager Volunteer Services and Locality Co-ordinator, says that the RNZFB's volunteers contribute at least 1.5 million hours annually.

Alison, who is also the chairperson of Volunteering New Zealand, believes that a good relationship between a

corporate and a not-for-profit can have lasting benefits. "There is definitely a willingness and interest from businesses to be involved in employee volunteering programmes. It provides a way for people to give back to the community they are living in," says Alison.

She adds that corporate volunteers bring a lot of expertise and passion but also gain a sense of connectedness and reward. "We find that often this first encounter can act as a springboard and people continue their involvement with volunteer organisations in their own time."

Planning in helping out

Management support in the planning and implementation of community and corporate volunteer programmes is essential to their success. A team or person leading this project can help ascertain what causes or campaigns are important to employees.

3 New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations (2004). *Counting for something Value Added by Voluntary Agencies: The VAVA Project*, p21 http://www.nzfvwo.org.nz/files/VAVAreport_full.pdf

4 Nielsen Media Research Panorama /Nick Jones & Associates Ltd. (2005). *Good is Gold*. This research information is collected as part of Nielsen Media Research Panorama and this information is then licensed to Nick Jones & Associates Ltd for use in compiling consumer profiling.

Volunteer work can be done by individuals, teams, or divisions and can be on a project or ongoing basis. Pro bono work, mentoring, paid time off to help with street appeals, projects or specific skill exchanges are examples of how employers can get staff involved. However, community work should not be seen as a replacement for team building activities or professional development training.

Specialised brokerage companies and volunteer networking organisations

such as Volunteer Wellington, Volunteer Auckland and Volunteer Canterbury can liaise between charities and organisations, and assist with setting specific goals and boundaries. Job descriptions or outlines help direct energy and skills, and it is important to assess how these corporate/charity relationships are working on an ongoing basis. Acknowledging staff volunteering efforts and achievements can also help maintain momentum and enthusiasm for corporate programmes.

Investing in the community, making socially responsible business decisions, undertaking transparent reporting processes, and considering employees' personal values is not just "the right thing to do": it can influence how staff, consumers and investors perceive an organisation. It can also increase morale and productivity and lead to healthier relationships inside and outside the workplace.

For more information:

- [Volunteering Canterbury's](#) publication *Employee Volunteering* is a very helpful guide that walks you through various options available to businesses. For a copy contact Patricia Ockwell co-ordinator of the Volunteer Canterbury programme on 03 366 2442, ev@volcan.org.nz.
- [Volunteering England's](#) publication called *Employee Volunteering - the Guide* provides practical information and guidance on setting up a corporate programme.
- [Fact sheets on volunteers' rights](#) and health & safety regulations.

Getting involved

- [Volunteering New Zealand's](#) site has a list of the volunteer centres throughout New Zealand as well as [volunteering opportunities](#).
- [New Zealand Trust for Conservation Volunteers](#)
- [Department of Conservation's projects calendar](#)
- [The Auckland Regional Council's volunteer programme and projects](#).
- [Greater Wellington's volunteer programme](#).
- [List of volunteering workshops and seminars](#).
- [The Robin Hood Foundation](#) partners business with not-for-profits focusing on social issues and sponsorship.
- [AdAid](#) is a portal for pro bono creative, advertising and media work. It acts as a holding house for briefs from registered not-for-profits dealing with social issues.
- [Project K – business mentoring and youth development programmes](#)
- [Volunteer Services Abroad](#) offers New Zealanders a chance to work in developing countries.
- [ESOL Home Tutors volunteers](#) assist adults to develop their English skills.
- You can also contact organisations such as: Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind, Cancer Society, Plunket, The Stroke Foundation, Meals on Wheels, sports associations, cultural groups, local schools, and hospices.

ANZ – investing in the community

ANZ's employee volunteer programme has been in place since 2001 and aligns with one of the bank's values – to "participate in our communities". Many charities or not-for-profits have heard about the programme as a result of the television advertisement that runs every few months showing ANZ staff involved in community projects.

"Often employees have had personal contact with an organisation that they feel loyal to and want to support, or else a division will decide to take something on as a team or in groups," says Gordana Brkljaca, Staff & Community Sponsorship Manager. "But we find out about many volunteer opportunities directly from charities who call us with specific projects."

All employees are eligible for one day's paid leave each year to volunteer in their local communities. They can choose how they use their volunteer time but it must be with a not-for-profit organisation. The administration of the programme is left to line managers. Notification of available projects is put on message boards, sent out to staff networks and put on the intranet.

Hands on approach

"Last year our staff contributed about 6500 volunteer hours to the community," says Gordana. About 20% of staff take up the full volunteer day but many more do volunteer work that may not necessarily be a full day equivalent. "The list of organisations our people help is endless, from packing food parcels at the local food halls over Christmas, to helping out with street collections, or planting trees at regional parks. Our employees have said they feel proud to represent ANZ in the community."

They have also built houses for Habitat for Humanity, raised money for local hospices, as well as for many health-related charities such as the Stroke Foundation, Cancer Society, Arthritis Foundation, Canteen, the Red Cross, Oxfam, Riding for the Disabled, and New Zealand Blood Service.

"I thoroughly enjoy using my volunteer day," says Christchurch Financial Advisor, Al Bean, who recently spent time helping out at a local hospital. "It's a privilege to give something back to the community."



ANZ's Christchurch Financial Advisory team helped out with the gardening at the Nurse Maude Association's Memorial Hospital. From left to right: Lyn Wright, Steve Ayers, Richard McGrath, David Reveley and Al Bean.

Spare change goes a long way

ANZ also has a matched giving programme called the ANZ Staff Foundation, whereby ANZ matches employee contributions dollar for dollar. Staff can decide how much they would like to contribute every fortnight and this is then deducted directly from their payroll. Charitable organisations apply for the funds and grants are made quarterly.

"Employees are involved every step of the way," says Gordana. They support applications, participate in the board that makes grant decisions, and present the cheques to the successful organisations.

"We have granted more than \$715,000 to community organisations over the past five years," she adds.

Volunteering and the ANZ Staff Foundation are part of ANZ's wider commitment to the community and corporate social responsibility, which also includes the bank's sponsorship of the "Fives for under 5s" Plunket appeal.

The bank is currently working on formalising its position on CSR for the entire New Zealand business (ANZ and The National Bank) and will be reporting on this as part of the ANZ Group report later in the year.

"Our challenge with volunteering is to better match the skills of our staff with the needs of charity organisations. This is an ongoing objective to offer targeted support that will benefit our local communities" says Gordana.

Latest research

Older people prefer flexible work

EEO Trust research has found that people nearing retirement would stay in paid work longer if they could work flexible hours or had quality part-time jobs.

The EEO Trust's online *Work and Age Survey* was completed by more than 6,400 people earlier this year.

All but 7% of respondents were in paid work and most of the retired respondents wanted to be in paid work. Flexible work and quality part-time work were the preferred options to transition to full retirement, and were most likely to encourage people to continue working longer. The survey explored people's preferences around retirement, the factors that would determine when they retired, and age-related difficulties and discrimination in the workplace.

[For the full survey results, see the EEO Trust's website.](#)



Flexible working options – UK

More British workers would like flexible working options according to the Labour Force Survey *Challenging times: flexibility and flexible working in the UK*. One in ten employees would like to work less hours even if they would have to take a pay cut, but most employers do not provide this level of flexibility. [See www.tuc.org.uk/work_life/tuc-11171-f0.cfm](http://www.tuc.org.uk/work_life/tuc-11171-f0.cfm)

Parenting and work – NZ

This Ministry of Social Development's *Work, Family and Parenting Study* investigated "home and workplace practices, attitudes and preferences of 1128 working parents in New Zealand". It also discusses lifestyle choices, housework and childcare responsibilities, and how work and life is managed in these households.

[For the executive summary and full report visit the MSD website.](#)

Career opportunities – NZ

The State Services Commission explored the views of employees in the Public Service with regards to their work environment and career opportunities. Its report *Career Progression and Development Survey, 2005* has a chapter on "Balancing work and personal lives" where it states that 53% of respondents rate their employers as "Good" at accommodating flexible working hours, and 33% said that their employers were "Good" at providing part-time work opportunities.

[See the State Services Commission website.](#)

Please read on...

Flexible work options – therapy for retailers

This Australian Department of Employment and Workplace Relations' website highlights the benefits of flexible working options for the retail industry, and addresses managers' concerns about negotiating and implementing these arrangements.

[See their website for more details.](#)

Pros and cons of volunteering

Corporate volunteering: the potential and the way forward. This report, by Darren Quirk, discusses corporate volunteering and how businesses can support and encourage staff involvement in community projects. It is mainly based on a 1997 study of corporate volunteering in the UK, but also includes background on US programmes, and direct New Zealand experience from the perspective of the Wellington Volunteer Centre. Quirk describes the pros and cons of corporate volunteering, and includes recommendations and case studies. Published by The Wellington Volunteer Centre, 1998.

European labour markets

Flexible working and organisational change: the integration of work and personal life. Edited by Bram Peper, Anneke van Doorne-Huiskes, and Laura den Dulk, this publication examines the recent developments in European labour markets and workplaces, and how these affect work patterns and organisations. Some article headings include: "Internal and external career aspirations of men and women within their organisations"; "assessing the use of parental leave by fathers: towards a conceptual framework"; and "IT and telework." Published by Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2005, ISBN 1-84376-618-3.

Members of the EEO Employers Group can borrow these books from the [EEO Library](#).

To join the library, email [Renee Schick](mailto:Renee.Schick).

Celebrating best practice

The EEO Trust Work & Life Awards will take place on 31st August 2006 at the Hyatt Regency in Auckland. To celebrate some of New Zealand's leading employers in work-life balance, book a ticket or table for this gala dinner and awards ceremony by contacting Valerie Bocarro on 09 525 3023 or admin@eootrust.org.nz.

