

## Simplifying CSR with Responsible Brands Initiative

More and more companies are investing in corporate social responsibility (CSR), and promoting their CSR accomplishments as part of general corporate branding and in obligatory government filings. Market research indicates that consumers are favoring companies with strong and fertile CSR programs, which is fueling a general movement that is persuading and enticing all companies to consider taking concrete actions for the good of our world.

Initial changes in corporate behavior focused on reducing waste and recycling, and assuring “conflict” minerals in their supply-chain were sourced in a manner that did not exacerbate inhumane behavior in Africa and other areas of the world. More recently, there has been a growing emphasis on companies operating in a manner that is both ethical also helping to sustain our planet.

*It has never been more complex for consumers to determine which company meets their preference for a “responsible brand”.*

While these efforts are bearing fruit, the many varied approaches have complicated the picture for consumers. In today’s marketplace where consumers are able to quickly review product recommendations and make increasingly rapid purchasing decisions, it has never been more complex for consumers to sift through the data to determine who meets their preference for purchasing from a company with requisite ethical, responsible, sustainable and other adjective affiliations.

Responsible Brands Initiative (RBI) is a 501c6 corporation inspiring product companies to collaborate, for example on a common definition of “responsible”. Our efforts will also enable companies who meet requirements of a Responsible Brand™ to more easily and fully earn a return on their CSR investment. Working together, we will enable consumers to have ready access to an uncomplicated and objective assessment of a company’s CSR and sustainability performance, and an easy way to consider that performance when making their buying decision.

As is normal for any corporate team, those involved with CSR are always looking for new ways to have an impact, within their budget. Existing CSR budgets are never enough to implement all the great ideas of an energized CSR team. To scale-up and raise the impact of CSR investment, joining the Responsible Brands Initiative offers additional leadership recognition while simplifying management and oversight of CSR, and sharing workload with other companies.

You and your company are invited to participate in RBI. In addition to recognition for corporate membership, companies and individuals have the opportunity to participate in RBI working groups and thereby earn recognition while having substantive and meaningful influence. Individuals can gain recognition for their expert knowledge and insights, and their industrious contributions, regardless of corporate membership.

## **Responsible Brands Initiative™**

Four RBI membership levels offer degrees of influence and recognition. Spending ranges from \$5K-75K per year. Representatives from member companies and other selected individuals have opportunity to participate in working groups, and to vote on final drafts of work products before their use — for example, the scoring system for a “responsible brand”.

Initially, RBI has been working to make “responsible” a more of objective assessment with a scored threshold to be considered “responsible”. The draft criteria are being developed by a wide array of experts and already exceed 100 items. It may well reach 200 before initial publication.

New working groups are forming and this is opportunity to join with us, either individually or as a corporate member. We invite your participation as compliance criteria are finalized, a program is developed to assess compliance, and new programs are created to develop brand elements to signify compliance and then promote these to consumers.

RBI and members will promote the brand to both educate consumers and also simplify purchasing decisions. Promotion by members will assure the RBI brand is recognized by consumers as indicating a responsible company. Simplifying consumer selection of products from companies complying with industry-defined criteria is both a new means to reach CSR objectives, and is also affordable.

Now is the time to make your plans for membership or individual participation. We need your help, now. As you make plans for implementing programs to meet CSR objectives for your company, consider investing resources in Responsible Brands Initiative. This is a simple way to increase the impact of what may already be in your annual budget. By supporting RBI, your company will gain additional recognition and credibility with the growing audience who favor products which are produced in a responsible manner.

More information about how you can help is available on our website; please visit:

<http://responsiblebrands.org>

**Take Affirmative Action  
Today**

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Responsible Brands Initiative is a corporation registered in the State of Oregon and operates according to IRS 501c6 requirements. Additional legal information is available at: [ResponsibleBrands.org](http://ResponsibleBrands.org). Donations to Responsible Brands Initiative are not tax deductible by individuals.