

CSR Newsletter

Good for Business
Good for All



www.csrhub.ie

Issue No.2 March 2017

Give your SME a Business Boost!

5 ways CSR can improve your business reputation!

Corporate Social Responsibility is often seen as something only done by large business, but it has huge benefits for SMEs too. Check out some of the ways you can benefit from adopting CSR practices



1. Customers and Suppliers

Attracting and retaining a strong customer base is a constant activity for companies and is key to creating a sustainable business. As consumers become more selective it is important to be sensitive to customers' needs and expectations. Build your competitive advantage and enhance your business's reputation by embedding CSR values into your core business operations.

2. Community

Enhance your local business environment by investing time and energy into community projects. Active participation in CSR initiatives with the community will earn you respect and promote your brand.

3. Workplace

A good CSR strategy can increase the efficiency of your business, both in terms of productivity and operating costs. A positive workplace atmosphere can help with recruiting talent and increase employee productivity and create a positive working environment, while contributing to a reduction in operating costs.

4. Environment

Recycling and re-using materials is a simple way in which CSR and energy efficiency can reduce your company's carbon footprint, thereby boosting your environmental record, while making savings for the business.

5. Improving Business Reputation across the CSR Pillars

SMEs do not brand themselves in the same way as large companies. Whilst the marketing techniques used between businesses differ, reputation remains critically important.

6. Positive 'word of mouth'

CSR presents the opportunity to promote your business. SME engagements with the local community are featured in the local press and spread by word of mouth. Not only does this enhance the reputation of your company and generate goodwill for your brand, it also generates free publicity leaving you money to spend on other aspects of the business.

By carefully implementing a transparent CSR strategy, going above and beyond what is legally required in the workplace and the environment, etc., your SME can enhance its reputation, build trust with the community, attract and retain a strong, productive workforce and increase its customer base.

Where customers can see responsible behaviour and good stakeholder engagement this leads to building trust and enhancing reputation which is crucial to the success of SMEs.

Prompt Payment Code

As outlined in Ireland's National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility 2014-2016, "buying and selling products or services is a core part of business - ensuring this is done in an ethical and sustainable manner in today's business environment is key to a company's reputation and long-term viability."

Paying your bills on time is part of responsible business practice. If you are a business that pays your bills on time, why not let your suppliers, and indeed potential suppliers, know that you are a prompt payer? You can do this by signing up to the Prompt Payment Code - through the online portal www.promptpayment.ie - and pledging your commitment to pay on time, i.e. pay on time within the terms of your contract or, where no contract exists, pay in line with legislation.

Once a signatory is approved they will receive a PPC Seal for use on their documentation and website. By displaying this Seal, businesses are sending out a clear signal to their suppliers, and potential suppliers, that they are serious about good payment practice. Signatories to the Code also commit to best practice by giving clear guidance to their suppliers on their payment and dispute resolution procedures and by encouraging adoption of the Code through their own supply chain.

Mr. Pat Breen, T.D., Minister of State for Employment and Small Business recently launched a public campaign to promote awareness of the Code and encourage sign up by businesses in Ireland. Launching the campaign Minister Breen said "Paying on time is the right thing to do. Signing up to the Prompt Payment Code is the right thing to do". So if you are a business who believes in doing the right thing, sign up to the PPC today and demonstrate your commitment to responsible business practices.



CSR Stakeholder Forum

In recent years Government has proven its commitment to the promotion and encouragement of CSR in Ireland. Following the launch of Ireland's first National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility "**Good for Business, Good for the Community**", a CSR Stakeholder Forum was established to support Government in driving the objectives of the National Plan.

The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and the CSR Stakeholder Forum are delighted to announce that Ms Catherine Heaney, founder and Managing Director of DHR Communications has been appointed as Chair to the CSR Stakeholder Forum to replace Mr Brendan Jennings, Managing Partner, Deloitte Ireland.

Catherine has a special interest in Corporate Social Responsibility, and has developed her business in line with CSR principles, winning the Chambers Ireland CSR award for SMEs in 2015. She has been an active and valuable member of the CSR Stakeholder

Forum since its inception in June 2014. She has also served as a judge for the Business to Arts Awards and for the Chambers Ireland 2016 Corporate Social Responsibility Awards.

The Department would like to express appreciation for the level of interest and involvement by all members of the Forum and want to particularly thank Mr Brendan Jennings for his time and dedication over the last two years. The Department recognises Ms Heaney's drive and energy and her company's high level of engagement in CSR, and look forward to working with her over the next few years during her term as Chairperson to the Forum.



*Catherine Heaney,
Chairperson to the
CSR Stakeholder
Forum, and founder
and Managing
Director of DHR
Communications*

Chambers Ireland 2017

The Chambers Ireland 2017 Corporate Social Responsibility Awards was launched on March 9th. The Awards provide an opportunity for businesses to showcase their varied work in CSR. There is a wide scope of categories in which companies can enter different CSR projects or initiatives. The Awards seek to reward best practice and forward thinking in CSR.



L-R Tadhg Lucey, CSR Director at BAM Ireland; Dil Wickremasinghe, Newstalk and host of the CSR Awards launch; Ian Talbot Chief Executive of Chambers Ireland

The Awards are open to businesses of all sizes, covering multinational companies, large indigenous companies and small and medium size enterprises with nine different categories covering different aspects of CSR, from volunteering programmes to environmental initiatives. The awards offer companies the opportunity to exhibit their work in CSR and to acknowledge and promote innovation.

Applications go through a two stage judging process. The judging panels are comprised of experts in the field of CSR. The first panel will decide on the shortlist, while the second panel will decide the category and overall winners.

ESB claimed the *Outstanding Achievement in CSR Award* at the event in 2016. Other winners at the Awards in 2016 included Three Ireland, Bon Secours Hospital Cork, Dawn Meats, Abbott Ireland, Trinity College Dublin, Oracle, Laya Healthcare, Microsoft, Bank of Ireland, PayPal, Arthur Cox, Diageo Ireland, and Carey Building Contractors.

As businesses work to make Ireland a great place to live and work, Chambers Ireland strives to highlight best practice, and in doing so, to encourage engagement and higher standards in CSR from even more companies. Now in their 14th year, the Awards have seen a great evolution and improvements in CSR work on a wide variety of social issues and challenges facing Ireland.

The closing date for applications for the Chambers Ireland 2017 Corporate Social Responsibility Awards is Thursday 20th April. Additional information and application forms can be found at www.csrawards.ie or by phoning Chambers Ireland on 01 400 4300.

CSR at DHR Communications

DHR Communications is different to most PR companies. Its clients tend to come primarily from the not-for-profit and statutory sectors and the company, chooses to make CSR an integral part of its day-to-day business activities.

The team at DHR share a strong value system that is reflected in their work in the Dublin 8 community and beyond. DHR's business model - including the emphasis they place on CSR - helps them to achieve their objective to deliver exceptionally high quality PR to organisations that might not otherwise have the capacity for such services. DHR has worked on a number of ground-breaking human rights, mental health and equality campaigns over the past decade and has provided pro-bono support to a number of organisations, including:

- Hosting a fundraiser for Marriage Equality, the campaign for equal marriage rights.
- Generating press coverage with Our Lady of the Wayside National School to highlight, that vulnerable school children are feeling the long-term impacts of Ireland's economic crisis.
- Providing PR support to The Complex, the northwest inner city's live arts centre, to promote its Dublin Fringe show 'Reassembled, Slightly Askew'.
- Marking PARK(ing) Day Dublin 2016 by joining with Francis Street neighbours, Cuckoo Events and Oxfam Home to create "Francis' Folly". DHR transformed two parking spaces into a vibrant, relaxing area for all to enjoy, complete with armchairs, bookcase and a steady supply of free tea, coffee and biscuits.
- Actively involved in the Liberties Business Forum. MD Catherine Heaney is the Chairperson of the Forum.

The benefits of CSR

Catherine Heaney explains that "For us, CSR has multiple benefits. It allows employees develop new skills, meet new people and work on projects outside of their comfort zone. It opens up opportunities for collaboration and networking between clients from different sectors. Most importantly, it means we know we can provide support to charities, organisations and individuals to which we are deeply committed. Genuine engagement in CSR leads to a happier working environment and more fulfilled staff. We highly recommend it!"

DHR Communications was awarded the 'Excellence in CSR by an SME' at the 2015 Chambers Ireland CSR Awards.

Catherine Heaney was part of the 2016 Chambers Ireland CSR Awards judging panel.

Catherine Heaney is the newly appointed Chairperson of the CSR Stakeholder Forum.

The Four Pillars of Corporate Social Responsibility



The Community

This is about how you interact with your local community partners and organisations



The Environment

This is about how you reduce, reuse or recycle resources to minimize negative environmental impacts



The Workplace

This is about how you support and engage your employees



Suppliers and Customers

This is about the responsible commercial decisions your company makes in the Marketplace

How well does *your* business engage in **CSR activities?**

To discover take our on-line survey at <http://csrtool.csrhub.ie>

For more information check out:
www.csrhub.ie
email: csrhub@djei.ie
Follow  @CSRHubIrl

Useful Links
www.bitc.ie
www.chambers.ie

This is an initiative of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in association with the national CSR Stakeholder Forum



An Roinn Post, Fiontar agus Nuálachta
Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation