

Canadians Increasingly Prioritizing Fairness as a Measure of Good Business and Government

Report analyses thousands of online conversations to unearth emerging priorities and values

Toronto – February 11, 2015 – A new report studying thousands of online conversations among Canadians has concluded that 2015 will be the Year of Fairness. [*The Bold Thinking Report, What Canadian Culture Creators Want You to Know*](#), is a collaborative effort of NATIONAL Public Relations and its digital division Sonic Boom, A Customer Experience Agency, and reddit.com.

“Fairness cuts across Canadians’ discussions on reddit of a broad range of topics, and leads us to conclude that, more and more, it is being applied to consumer decisions to buy products, support companies and advocate for issues. More than ever, Canadians will support corporations and organizations who act fairly to employees and customers, for example, and punish those who appear to act exclusively out of self-interest,” said Ujwal Arkalgud, vice president, Strategy at Sonic Boom.

Reddit has emerged as one of the most influential communities online. Widely regarded as the “front page of the Internet”, reddit is frequented by early adopters of technology, geeks and cultural creators. As such, reddit conversations serve, in part, as a proxy for emerging values and beliefs, which in turn affect a variety of decisions, from which product to buy to which politician or issue to support. Over 7.4 million Canadians visit each month averaging 18 minutes per visit.

“Through our Belief Based Consumption research, which uses social sciences and ethnographic methodologies, we analysed over 20,000 discussions on topics ranging from financial services and pharmaceuticals to telecommunications and energy. What we found is that Canadians don’t begrudge companies making a fair profit, but want to ensure that corporate actions are not exploitive and that those in positions of power act with impartiality,” said John Crean, national managing partner at NATIONAL. “Further, Canadians increasingly expect companies to be progressive, inclusive and fair-minded,” he added. “And if they aren’t, Canadians will be more likely to organize and become involved themselves.”

Key Findings on Fairness

Some top-line key findings included the following:

- Canadians were particularly clear that they wanted our business communities and governments to collaborate but not to unfairly collude;
- They want Canadian companies to innovate and think it is fair our banks and governments prioritize and support these efforts;
- Canadians on reddit lack confidence in the objectivity of financial education materials from financial institutions. They want our financial institutions to provide relevant information about investment opportunities and risks for the young investor, not just for the high net worth client;
- They expect companies and governments will be progressive with respect to planning for our energy future and they want to be able to choose between options such as renewable versus traditional energy sources;

- For Canadians on reddit, technology is part of how they work and play. They want industry and government to ensure Canadians have fair access to available and emerging technologies;
- Conversations online about our retail sector suggest that fairness and respect for the people throughout the supply chain, from those in manufacturing plants to those in direct sales positions, influence Canadians' intention to purchase.

In 2015, Canadians will hold decision-makers to a higher standard. For redditors, companies and governments need to demonstrate a strong sense of social responsibility and a moral code that prioritizes fairness over self-interest.

For those interested in a more in-depth presentation on how the idea of fairness affects their company, industry or market, contact John Crean at (416) 848-1439.

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About NATIONAL

[NATIONAL Public Relations](#) is the largest public relations consultancy in Canada with offices in Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Quebec City, Saint John, Halifax, St. John's, New York and London. The Firm serves leading corporate, government and institutional clients and offers the full range of communications services, including corporate communications, investor relations, public affairs, employee engagement, public consultation and participation, marketing, technology and healthcare communications, as well as digital communications. It provides medical communications, public relations and clinical trial support services to a wide section of the leading pharmaceutical and medical devices companies internationally under the name AXON Communications. NATIONAL also owns digital marketing firm Sonic Boom, A Customer Experience Agency with offices in Toronto and Montreal. NATIONAL is a subsidiary of RES PUBLICA Consulting Group. At the international level, the Firm is affiliated with Burson-Marsteller, part of WPP Group, a world leader in marketing communications.

About Sonic Boom

Located in Toronto and Montreal, [Sonic Boom, a Customer Experience Agency](#) is the digital subsidiary of NATIONAL Public Relations, Canada's largest communications consulting firm.

Since 1998, Sonic Boom has partnered with leading global brands on a wide array of digital mandates. Bringing together experts from the creative, technology, and business strategy fields, Sonic Boom offers interactive, insightful, efficient, and innovative solutions to various clients across Canada and abroad. Recent work includes acting as the social media agency of record for Ford Motor Company of Canada, as well as work supporting clients like Health Canada, Pfizer, GE, Hoffmann La Roche, Kohler, and Vaughan Mills.

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