

# Corporate Sustainability: Consumer Sentiments

# Gauging Consumer Sentiment

**Our Primary Query—  
Do people believe companies in the private sector should have a welcome seat at the “sustainability table”?**

**The quote at the right inspired our line of questioning.**

But do consumers believe corporate America can contribute solutions? Do they trust them to participate . . . and trust what they say about their efforts?

This survey probed those sentiments and more to help inform corporations’ direction and messaging when they choose to debut on the “sustainability stage.”

“

I’m personally kind of done with ideology in this climate crisis. We’ve got a crisis, we have a plan. We spend countless hours trying to make perfect the enemy of the good, and we are out of time.

So the more we can do to celebrate what business is doing, and celebrate those commitments, and have governments learn from that, the better.

—**Claire O’Neill**

Managing Director for Climate & Energy,  
World Business Council for Sustainable Development

# You have their permission

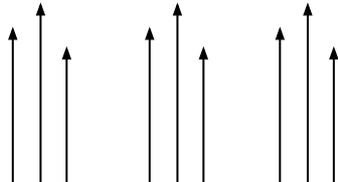
Collectively, consumers welcome corporations' efforts to contribute solutions.

77%

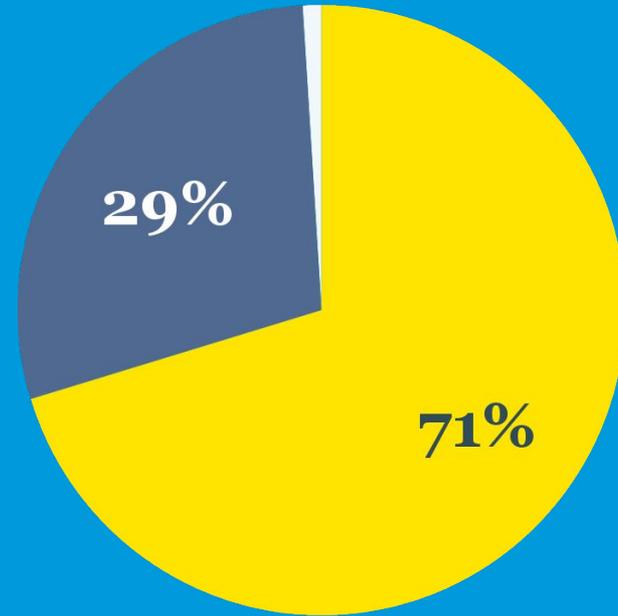
of US adults believe corporate America is capable of delivering solutions

70%

say corporate America can make an equal or greater contribution than non-profits, NGOs or government agencies



71% are very interested in learning more about corporate America's efforts



- Interested
- Not Interested
- Other

## And you have their trust

Brands have clearly done a good job of creating a personal, meaningful connection with their fans because—

**88%**

of US adults are very likely to trust the information around corporate America's efforts on combating the climate and sustainability



But how they want to see your story unfold is specific and methodical; from our **Brand Purpose Research**—

Identify a goal

Take action

**Make an IMPACT!**

# They can identify areas of strength

When it comes to which sector does what best, each “side” can learn from the other

**In what ways can each drive climate solutions and sustainability overall?**

**TOP 3**

## Corporations' advantages

- 1** Can be more efficient
- 2** Don't have partisan politics to deal with
- 3** Are more motivated to effect change

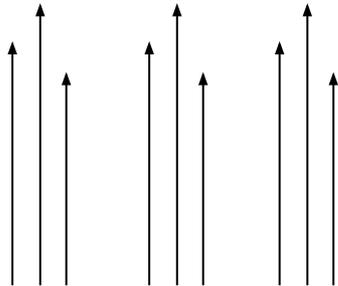
## Government/NGOs/non-profits' advantages

- 1** Can be more focused on mission
- 2** Can be nimbler, act quickly
- 3** Are more motivated to effect change

They understand you are running a business but believe you can do both . . .

85%

of US adults believe corporate America can be **BOTH** profitable and help drive sustainability



. . . And they have an opinion on the benefits you can achieve

75%

Believe it contributes to a positive reputation for the company

69%

Say that a sustainability strategy can reduce costs and can improve profits in the long run

## Verbatims from US adults

Do you believe it's possible for a company/corporation in the private sector to be both profitable and help drive climate solutions and sustainability overall?



**Climate change is going to happen no matter what so being proactive and sustainable is vital.**



**Climate solutions have to be a collaborative effort. Everyone has to do their part and all parts matter, no matter how big or how small.**



**Embracing climate solutions opens up new opportunities for growth and profit.**



**It's a win win situation for them—the more good they do, the more consumers will use their businesses.**

## They have a message for your shareholders

When asked for reasons why corporations should put the public good before corporate profits—

**61%**

Concur that protecting the environment and promoting sustainability is in the best interest of your shareholders

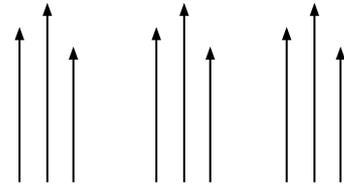
**57%**

A focus on improving the environment and promoting profitability can lead to less government regulation

**However, 51% believe that corporations' prioritize short-term profits over the common good, plus—**

**29%**

say a sustainability strategy costs corporations too much money to be worthwhile



# Who they think is getting the job done and who can do more . . . a bit of a conundrum?

Which industries do you believe are making a positive effort in protecting the environment/promoting sustainability?

**TOP 5**

1. Energy providers
2. Manufacturing
3. Auto
4. Consumer Goods/Services
5. Tech

Which industries would you like to see take greater action?

**TOP 5**

1. Energy providers
2. Manufacturing
3. Auto
4. Healthcare/Pharma
5. Tech



## Where they want to learn about your efforts and your impact

1. In the news
2. On their website
3. On their social platforms
4. On packaging if available

**News environments are enormously trusted and yet sometimes there is a barrier to entry**

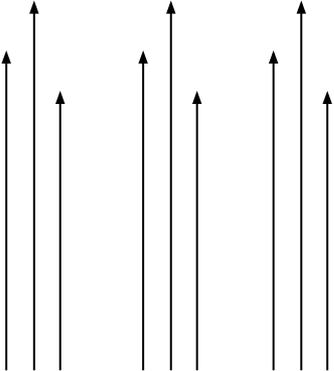


**BRAND SAFETY**

# I. They don't see the risk you may be assuming

Sentiments from our **Brand Safety** research white paper

Brands who align their messaging with climate crisis editorial coverage...



Of US adults will view that brand more positively or have no perception change of the brand

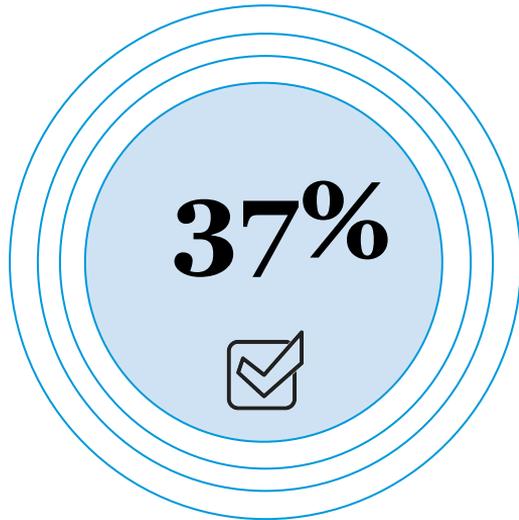


Of Guardian US readers say advertising on trusted news sites **does not** negatively impact their perception of the brand

## II. They don't see the risk you may be assuming

Sentiments from our **Brand Purpose** Survey

**When a brand advertises in news media, do you agree it impacts how purposeful the brand's advertising is?**



“Sometimes there is a hesitation to advertise with news media sites ... Yet, brand trust is more likely to increase when brands are surrounded with more objective, ‘must-know’ breaking news stories.”

*Industry Participant*

The Guardian US



“Staying quiet is not an option ... consumers are not only judging brands that are pro or con a position, they’re also judging brands that don’t take a position.”

*Industry Participant*

## Verbatims from Guardian US readers

Do you believe it's possible for a company/corporation in the private sector to be both profitable and help drive climate solutions and sustainability overall?

There can be creative solutions, working in partnerships and teams with other sectors, to make a company profitable, while ensuring it's good for our planet and communities.

We have a long way to go before we reach true sustainability. But corporations can be leaders in the effort while still being profitable.



Innovation, new products, green operating procedures, can lead to more users/customers and greater profits.

Driving climate solutions is about being innovative, and innovation is the key to profitability.

The necessity is obvious and the potential for innovation is huge. The profit will follow.



Questions? And Thank You!

# Methodology

## A Quantitative Deep Dive

10 minute online survey

Quotas applied to age, gender, location and ethnicity

Weighted to national representation using US Census age, gender, region and ethnicity data

Total sample size = 1,401; 95% confidence level

N = 1,401, US only

Survey period: 2/3/2023 to 2/14/2023

Completion time: 6:52

**Research Partner:** Cint is a global software leader in digital insights and research technology. They have one of the world's largest consumer networks for digital survey-based research, with millions of engaged respondents across more than 130 countries.

