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U.S. CONSUMERS AND FORTUNE 1000 EXECUTIVES SKEPTICAL ABOUT CORPORATE COMMITMENT TO GO GREEN

Insufficient ROI, Consumer Reluctance to Pay, and Difficulty in Tracking Sustainability Are Top Business Barriers; Corporate America Asks Green Stewards to Share Duties

Key Messages:

- The 2010 Gibbs & Soell Sense & Sustainability™ Study surveyed U.S. consumers and Fortune 1000 executives on their views of corporate efforts to improve the health of the environment through sustainable practices, products, or services.
- Results reveal only 16% of consumers and 29% of executives believe that a majority of businesses are committed to sustainability. Facing barriers to “going green,” businesses are taking more conservative approaches to resource management by asking green stewards to share duties.
- Gibbs & Soell is the eighth largest independent public relations agency in the United States (*O’Dwyer’s 2010 PR Agency Report*) and offers communications expertise to engage consumer and business audiences in advanced manufacturing, energy, greentech, and sustainable industries.

NEW YORK, August 11, 2010 – U.S. consumers and Fortune 1000 executives doubt there is widespread commitment to “go green” among corporate America, according to the 2010 Gibbs & Soell Sense & Sustainability™ Study released today.

The study was conducted online in July 2010 by Harris Interactive® among 2,605 U.S. adults and 304 Fortune 1000 executives on behalf of Gibbs & Soell, a global independent public relations firm with communications expertise in **advanced manufacturing, energy, greentech, and sustainable industries.**

Key findings include the following:

- **Corporate America has embarked on its journey toward sustainability, but still draws public skepticism.** Only 29% of executives and 16% of consumers believe that a majority of businesses (“most,” “almost all,” or “all”) are committed to “going green” – defined as “improving the health of the environment by implementing more sustainable business practices, and/or offering environmentally-friendly products or services.” Many executives (54%) and consumers (48%) believe only “some” businesses are committed to “going green.”
- **Financial inefficiency, market reluctance and unclear measurement are impeding the path to corporate sustainability.** Executives cite insufficient return on investment (78%), consumers’ unwillingness to pay a premium for green products or services (71%), and difficulty in evaluating sustainability across a product life cycle (45%) as the top barriers to more businesses “going green.”
- **Shared duties reflect the nascent stage at which many businesses are organizing their human capital around a sustainability strategy.** While more than two-thirds of executives (69%) indicated their companies have people responsible for sustainability or “going green” initiatives, most have merely added responsibilities for green efforts to the primary duties of a team of individuals (35%), or a C-suite

or another senior level position (15%). Only about one in 10 say they have a C-suite or other senior level title/position dedicated solely to sustainability (12%), while 31% noted there is no one at their organization who is primarily or partially responsible for green initiatives.

Founded in 1971, Gibbs & Soell develops and implements communications strategies to engage consumer and business audiences across a **broad array of industries**. Its rich history includes successfully launching and guiding the growth of green products and technologies, manufacturing processes and business practices, including energy-efficient building systems, nature-based plastics and chemicals, biofuels, water conservation, and plastics recycling.

“This general skepticism about the corporate commitment to environmental stewardship represents a critical communications challenge for business leaders,” stated Ron Loch, senior vice president-greentech and sustainability practice, Gibbs & Soell. “Closing this credibility gap is going to require actions and communications that connect with key stakeholders. Having a dedicated staff and line item budget for green initiatives is an important step in making believers of employees, customers, and investors. For connecting with consumers, it means transparency and consistency of message.”

“There is a wealth of evidence indicating the business value of pursuing sustainability. This study highlights the need for chief executives to evaluate the messages they are sending and to equip themselves with a communications strategy that addresses their organization’s full range of stakeholders in order to chart a more direct path toward sustainability and business growth,” Loch said.

The Gibbs & Soell Sense & Sustainability Study was conducted online by Harris Interactive on behalf of Gibbs & Soell between July 8th and 12th, 2010 via the QuickQuery online omnibus service among 2,605 U.S. adults ages 18+, and between July 6th and 16th, 2010 via the Executive Omnibus service among 304 Fortune 1000 executives. To obtain a summary of the Gibbs & Soell Sense & Sustainability Study, please visit the Gibbs & Soell [website](#).

About Gibbs & Soell, Inc.

Founded in 1971, Gibbs & Soell is the eighth largest independent public relations agency in the United States (*O'Dwyer's 2010 PR Agency Report*). Gibbs & Soell provides communications expertise to top-tier corporations, organizations and brands focused on advanced manufacturing and energy, agribusiness and food, consumer lifestyle and building solutions, greentech and sustainability, professional services, and technology and general science. The firm’s **portfolio of services** includes corporate communications, marketing communications, event marketing, digital and social media, leadership positioning, employee communications, communications training, and communications research and evaluation. Headquartered in New York, Gibbs & Soell has **full-service offices** in Chicago, Raleigh, N.C. and Zurich, Switzerland, and a **global footprint** that extends to more than 30 countries through its affiliate network that includes the Public Relations Organisation International (PROI). For more information, please visit www.gibbs-soell.com.

About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is one of the world's leading custom market research firms, leveraging research, technology, and business acumen to transform relevant insight into actionable foresight. Known widely for the Harris Poll and for pioneering innovative research methodologies, Harris offers expertise in a wide range of industries including healthcare, technology, public affairs, energy, telecommunications, financial services, insurance, media, retail, restaurant, and consumer package goods. Serving clients in over 215 countries and territories through our North American, European, and Asian offices and a network of independent market research firms, Harris specializes in delivering research solutions that help us - and our clients - stay ahead of what's next. For more information, please visit www.harrisinteractive.com.

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