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The world's Top 50 most attractive employers: Google followed by Microsoft

First Global Index of Employer Attractiveness

Stockholm, October 27th 2009 – Universum presents, for the first time, the world's Top 50 most attractive employers. Compiled from 11 out of the 12 leading economies, nearly 120,000 students from top academic institutions chose their ideal companies to work for. Google is the world's most attractive employer, followed closely by its rival, Microsoft. This is the only global index of employer attractiveness and highlights the world's most powerful employer brands, those companies that are the most successful in talent attraction and retention.

Employers today are faced with a shrinking global workforce, a lack of skilled workers and an increasingly demanding generation of new talent. To secure talent under these conditions, employers must develop true and differentiating employer brands. "We have 40,000 engineers a year, but we are lacking 10,000-16,000 more," said Christian Wulff, premier of Lower Saxony. Another example is NASCOM which reports that the Indian IT sector expects to face a talent shortage in 2010 of 500,000 engineers. The employers that feature in this Top 50 all have one thing in common: they successfully appeal to current and future talent, and they are aware of how scarce talent is.

The global ranking is based on the national rankings that Universum conducts annually all over the world. The companies that are featured in at least eight out of the twelve leading economies were included in the global ranking, and the 50 most attractive employers were identified. The countries represented in the Global Top 50 rankings are the US, Japan, China, Germany, France, UK, Italy, Russia, Spain, Canada and India.

Despite it being one of the toughest years for car manufactures, BMW and Daimler appear in the Global Top 50 rankings. The Big Four accountancy and professionals service firms; financial services companies and management consultancies, still remain strong. They are globally attractive employers, in spite of this year being one of worst recessions since the Second World War and are especially popular with business students. IT employers are highly placed in the engineering ranking, which can be expected, with Google, Microsoft and IBM in the top three. The fast moving consumer goods companies and employers in the retail sector are also attractive employers, recognised for their universal appeal as employers in the graduate recruitment market, attracting students from both a business and engineering background.

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“These companies in the Top 50 really work with employer branding strategically. The Big Four, for example, are all in the top 10 business ranking, as they have employer branding as part of their business strategy. Many associate their corporate brands to people. This is normal for the service industry, but it’s a new approach for other companies” says Michal Kalinowski, Universum CEO. “These companies are in the Top 50 because they are focused, consistent and differentiate themselves in their communication.”

Irrespective of rank, the Top 50 Global Employers for business and engineering students are very similar, showing strong employer brands transcend many skill and industry groups. Conversely, Oracle and Philip Morris make it to the Top 50 for business students, but not for engineering students. GlaxoSmithKline and Alcatel-Lucent appear in the engineering ranking, yet not in the business ranking. Aside from these differences in choice of employers, what the rankings most certainly reveal is that the big multinational brands are favoured.

Due to the globalisation of the talent market, multinational companies are generally recognised as being attractive employers. Findings from Universum’s various student surveys show that students would like a good career reference, an international career and an employer that can offer secure employment. Lovisa Öhnell, head of research and consulting at Universum, comments, “These multinational brands are globally well-known, they offer relocation opportunities and business travel, interaction with clients and colleagues in various countries, and due to their size and economic strength, they are also seen as being the safest choice.”

Google’s number one position is no surprise. Due to its remarkable brand image, students worldwide see it as a company they would like to work for. What’s surprising about Google, however, is that it doesn’t invest in employer branding much in comparison to other companies that spend massively on branding activities. Farhad Manjoo, a journalist from Time magazine, recently said it best, “What’s astonishing...is how effortlessly Google has come to earn the public’s affection,” while others “spend enormous sums to stay in the consciousness”. The question remains: will Google be able to do this forever?

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Global Top 50 for Business Students

Company	Rank
Google	1
PricewaterhouseCoopers	2
Microsoft	3
Goldman Sachs	4
Ernst & Young	5
Procter & Gamble	6
J.P. Morgan	7
KPMG	8
McKinsey & Company	9
Deloitte	10
The Boston Consulting Group	11
BMW	12
Coca-Cola	13
L'Oréal	14
Morgan Stanley	15
Sony	16
IBM	17
Johnson & Johnson	18
Deutsche Bank	19
General Electric	20
Citigroup	21
HSBC	22
Accenture	23
Nestlé	24
Credit Suisse	25
Bain & Company	26
Unilever	27
UBS	28
Nokia	29
Intel	30
Esso/ExxonMobil	31
Kraft Foods	32
Shell	33
Hewlett-Packard	34
Mars (Masterfoods)	35
Pfizer	36
Siemens	37
Philips	38
Oracle	39
Bayer	40
Philip Morris*	41
DHL	42
BP	43
Bosch	44
Cisco	45
Daimler	46
Ericsson	47
ABB	48
Novartis	49
Schlumberger	50

Global Top 50 for Engineering Students

Company	Rank
Google	1
Microsoft	2
IBM	3
BMW	4
Intel	5
General Electric	6
Sony	7
Siemens	8
Shell	9
Procter & Gamble	10
Johnson & Johnson	11
Hewlett-Packard	12
Cisco	13
Esso/ExxonMobil	14
McKinsey & Company	15
Schlumberger	16
BP	17
L'Oréal	18
Nokia	19
Accenture	20
Coca-Cola	21
Philips	22
Goldman Sachs	23
Nestlé	24
Pfizer	25
Bosch	26
The Boston Consulting Group	27
J.P. Morgan	28
Deloitte	29
Morgan Stanley	30
GlaxoSmithKline	31
Ericsson	32
Ernst & Young	33
ABB	34
Bayer	35
Unilever	36
PricewaterhouseCoopers	37
Deutsche Bank	38
HSBC	39
Kraft Foods	40
Bain & Company	41
Citigroup	42
AlcateI-Lucent	43
Daimler	44
Novartis	45
Mars (Masterfoods)	46
KPMG	47
Credit Suisse	48
DHL	49
UBS	50

* Philip Morris International and Philip Morris USA (Altria) are two separate companies with completely separate operations and employer branding work. However, in this global ranking, they are viewed as a joint employer brand.

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About the Global Top 50 rankings

The Global Top 50 rankings are based on the employer preferences of nearly 120,000 final year students, who were surveyed at the top academic institutions in the world's 11 largest economies. This is the first time that Universum compiles the global rankings to complement its national rankings. These are based on the annual surveys conducted on a global level in 2009. Each student is presented with a list of 130 to 150 national and international employers, chosen by university students through an independent and structured nomination and assessment process, which prevents companies unfairly influencing their position. On a global level, this represents 800 considered employers. Students acknowledge those companies they would consider working for. Of the companies selected as 'considered employers', each student then selects his or her five 'Ideal Employers'. The Global Top 50 is based on the frequency of being selected as an Ideal Employer overall within 11 markets: US, Japan, China, Germany, France, UK, Italy, Russia, Spain, Canada and India. The Global Top 50 is the most comprehensive study ever conducted on employer attractiveness.

About Universum

UNIVERSUM is the global Employer Branding Leader. With headquarters in Sweden and with a presence in more than 28 countries, Universum has been driving the Employer Branding field forward for more than 20 years. Over 1,200 clients, including many Fortune 500 companies, work with Universum to better understand and attract their preferred talent group, and to retain their current and future ideal employees.

With this knowledge, Universum has developed a broad portfolio of research, strategic consulting and media solutions, enhanced by a network of more than 1,500 educational institutions and partners worldwide. The portfolio aims to improve employers' presence in the talent market, as well as their recruitment and retention levels. Both internally and externally, the Employer Branding strategy helps employers achieve their desired appeal on current and future talent. The benefits of a strong Employer Brand are: larger talent pool, shorter time-to-fill, increased employee engagement and reduced HR costs.

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