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Marketplace

Wherever we work, our values come alive and underpin our mission to make Alliance Boots the world's leading pharmacy-led health and beauty group. We are responsible for bringing these values to life for our customers and partners, every day, wherever we operate.

Central to the success of our Group is the trust in which Alliance Boots is held by our customers and wider stakeholders. We aim to reflect integrity and stewardship in everything we do.

"We aim to reflect integrity and stewardship in everything we do"



Recognition in the marketplace

In terms of our Health & Beauty retail activities, our corporate social responsibility process is focused on ensuring that what we stand for is accurately reflected in the customer service we provide; the way that we source and transport products; the type of products we sell, and how we sell them.

We are continually working on developing new and better ways to deliver on our values through the shopping experience we provide, not least because we know how much this matters to our customers. According to the "2007 Ethical Reputation Index Report", almost 60% of UK consumers are likely to talk about company reputations with other customers.

In 2007, for the Boots brand, we were ranked number one in the "UK Ethical Reputation Index", which gauges customer perceptions of leading brands. In addition, we were recognised as the most trusted UK brand in three of the UK editions of the "Reader's Digest Most trusted Brands" survey. This demonstrates that we are heading in the right direction. We do not take anything for granted and are always looking out for ways to improve.

No7 Protect & Perfect

Within cosmetics & fragrances sales of our No7 cosmetics and skincare brand grew very significantly year on year, partly as a result of very high customer demand for our award-winning No7 Protect & Perfect Beauty Serum, a successful No7 marketing programme and continuing new product development with a strong pharmaceutical focus. In January 2008 we successfully launched a No7 Protect & Perfect total skincare regime which includes specially formulated day, night and eye creams. No7, the UK's leading cosmetics brand for many years, is now in addition the leading skincare brand.



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2007/08 targets

Progress against the targets we set and published last year is as follows:

Target

Review stakeholder communications to ensure they reflect our mission, purpose and values

In our first year as a private healthcare company, we published a comprehensive Annual Review and full Consolidated Financial Statements for the Group. These reports, as well as this Corporate Social Responsibility Report, demonstrate our desire and commitment to be at the forefront of best practice corporate governance reporting.

Target

Work with leading charities to raise awareness of key health concerns among our customers

Over the past year, we have successfully worked with leading charities in many countries to raise awareness of the key health concerns among our customers. For example, in the UK, we have worked closely with "Breast Cancer Care" to raise awareness of the disease through the special training of our pharmacy professionals. We have also worked with "Cancer Research UK" to promote skin protection, in conjunction with our Soltan sun care brand, focusing on in-store education and community health campaigning.

Target

Introduce a Code of Conduct to all our employees

A Code of Conduct was issued to all employees during the past year, translated into all languages in which we operate. This code covers a wide range of issues including equal opportunities, health and safety, animal testing, ethical procurement, substance misuse, bribery, privacy and, more positively, how we engage with communities and on environmental issues.

We worked with bodies such as the "Institute of Business Ethics" and "Business in the Community", as well as our own Group Internal Audit & Risk Management Department, to ensure the Code is rigorous, robust and fit for purpose in a modern international group. If an employee is unsure about what to do in a specific situation, we encourage them to raise questions and seek appropriate advice.



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Cause-related marketing

At Alliance Boots, we recognise our responsibilities as a corporate citizen to deliver what we promise and to maintain the trust of our customers and stakeholders. For us, the key to successful cause-related marketing is in finding common ground with causes that genuinely make a difference in improving people's quality of life and that are strategically relevant to us. Our chosen partners benefit from our financial resources, the willingness and enthusiasm of our people and our ability to reach supporters through our customer base. At the same time, we gain the opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to the communities we serve and to reinforce popular trust in our brands.



"BBC Children in Need"

Over the last year, Alliance Boots employees raised over £2.4 million for our UK national charity partners. During November 2007, employees from across our Health & Beauty business in the UK helped to raise a record total of £1.2 million for the "BBC Children in Need Appeal".

Our Bluewater store in Kent was a key performer, raising £3,400 via a "music through the ages" fancy dress event. Teams at the business's Feltham and Nottingham Support Offices also showed energy and imagination, raising well over £50,000 through a variety of activities.

In addition we donated £1 for every toy sold in Boots stores in the UK between 24 October and 20 November 2007, as well as 20% of the price of all "Pudsey Bear" products sold.

"Making a difference in improving people's quality of life"

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Corporate governance

Doing business with integrity

Wherever we operate, we want to ensure that the Alliance Boots name stands for fair dealing, trust and integrity. That is why, over the last year, we introduced an updated and unified Code of Conduct, setting out in detail the way we do business.

Our Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct was translated into all languages in which we operate and issued to all employees. It covers a wide range of issues including equal opportunities, health and safety, animal testing, ethical procurement, substance misuse, bribery, privacy and, more positively, how we engage with communities and on environmental issues.

We worked with bodies such as the "Institute of Business Ethics" and "Business in the Community", as well as our own Group Internal Audit & Risk Management Department, to ensure the Code is rigorous, robust and fit for purpose in a modern international group. If an employee is unsure about what to do in a specific situation, we encourage them to raise questions and seek appropriate advice.

Our Corporate Governance regime

A full description of our corporate governance regime is set out in our 2007/08 Annual Review. This reaffirms that we recognise the benefits that accrue from responsible employment and having appropriate environmental and community policies.



"We want to ensure that the Alliance Boots name stands for fair dealing, trust and integrity"

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Healthy living

Healthy living is high on the agendas of governments across Europe. We believe that Alliance Boots has a role to play in helping to address concerns over unhealthy diets and rising levels of obesity. We want to use our expertise to help our customers and their customers make positive changes and live healthier lives.



Alphega Pharmacy

Alphega Pharmacy, our European network of independent pharmacies, successfully runs a series of thematic and preventive campaigns across Europe. For example, we recently worked closely with Lifescan (a Johnson & Johnson company) to develop a permanent, cross-European diabetes campaign designed to promote improved pre-diagnosis, preventative action and follow-up in helping patients and consumers with diabetes. The campaign has been rolled out in France, Italy, and Spain. In addition, the Alphega Pharmacy e-learning network continues to focus on pro-actively anticipating pharmacy needs and developing a range of practical educational modules on key issues such as smoking cessation (in partnership with Novartis).



"We want to use our expertise to help our customers live healthier lives"

"change one thing"

Through our "change one thing" campaign, which Boots has now run for three years in the UK, we provide help and support to Boots customers who wish to stop smoking, lose weight or get fit. The campaign principle is that by making small lifestyle changes one at a time, step by step, it is much easier for customers to build success in reaching their overall aims of looking great, feeling healthier and happier. Over the last year, "change one thing" focused on weight-loss and delivered a range of ways to help customers achieve their goals, including healthy-weight check machines, action plans created by experts and an online support network. The programme proved a good platform for our Boots pharmacy teams to positively communicate their healthcare expertise to customers.



Healthy eating

Our Health & Beauty business in the UK is committed to promoting healthy living which is underpinned by the adoption of strict nutrition criteria for our own brand lunchtime food, drink and snacking products. We also introduced the UK "Food Standards Agency" traffic light colour coding in May 2007. This helps customers put healthy eating into practice. For each product you can see the amount of calories, fat, saturated fat, salt and sugars in a serving, along with the traffic light colour code that indicates whether the levels are high (red), medium (amber) or low (green) and in line with Food Standards Agency guidance.

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Supplier verification

Going further to verify suppliers

Our customers are increasingly concerned to know where the products they buy come from, and how they have been made. Over the last few years we have visited suppliers in more than 25 countries to assess their ethical and environmental performance and, where necessary, have worked closely with them to bring their standards into line with ours.



Search