

## TRUST IN BUSINESS DROPS, BUT CANADA'S MOST REPUTABLE COMPANIES BUCK THE TREND THROUGH SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

*MEC, Jean Coutu stand out among Canadian brands; Google remains overall leader  
Roots gains most, Tim Hortons drops furthest*

**Toronto – May 23, 2018** – Canadians' willingness to trust business has dropped significantly in the last year, but the most reputable companies are bucking the trend through social responsibility, according to the world's largest and longest-running annual study on corporate reputation.

Despite heavy challenges facing its sector, tech giant **Google** held on to the top spot in the 2018 rankings of Canada's Most Reputable Companies compiled by the Reputation Institute (RI). The top Canadian company in the survey (fifth overall) is retail brand **MEC**, followed closely by drugstore chain **Jean Coutu**, which gained eight spots – going from sixteenth last year to eighth overall in 2018. Nine Canadian companies cracked the Top 50, including **Canadian Tire** (14<sup>th</sup>), **Shoppers Drug Mart/Pharmaprix** (20<sup>th</sup>), **Home Hardware** (21<sup>st</sup>), **Cascades** (31<sup>st</sup>), **Cineplex** (33<sup>rd</sup>), **Roots** (39<sup>th</sup>), and **Sleep Country Canada** (44<sup>th</sup>).

"While Canadians' trust in companies has dropped nine points in the past year, the most reputable companies of 2018 are those that balance performance with purpose, conquering our hearts and minds by living up to their brand promise," said Bradley Hecht, Senior Managing Director, Americas, at the Reputation Institute.

The survey, based on 27,000 individual ratings from Canadians, is unique not just in its size but also its relevance, as it only includes rankings from people familiar with the companies they are rating. The Reputation Institute's proprietary RepTrak® model asks respondents to score companies on seven key reputation dimensions: products and services, innovation, workplace, governance, citizenship, leadership and (financial) performance.

Here are the top 10 companies in the 2018 Canada RepTrak® survey:

- |                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Google                         | 6. Samsung              |
| 2. LEGO                           | 7. Sony                 |
| 3. Rolex                          | 8. Jean Coutu           |
| 4. Nintendo                       | 9. Goodyear             |
| 5. Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC) | 10. Walt Disney Company |

More than 250 companies were tracked in the survey, conducted in January and February of 2018.

## Roots rises, Tim Hortons drops

In a year marked by high volatility in the public's perception of corporations, two Canadian retailers – **Roots** (+5.0 points) and **Canadian Tire** (+4.5 points) – saw their reputation scores soar on the strength of their corporate social responsibility. Both earned strong ratings for their citizenship and governance, the latter category defined as the perception that a company is open, honest and transparent in its stakeholder and public relationships.

The picture isn't quite as rosy for two other Canadian brands that saw their reputations decline severely in 2018. While still considered in the "strong" range in terms of their reputation, both **Tim Hortons** (-5.7 points) and **Agropur** (-4.5 points) were among the fastest fallers in the survey, with the coffee giant going from 13<sup>th</sup> to 67<sup>th</sup> overall in this year's rankings.

"Authenticity really matters to Canadians, and we judge companies harshly when we don't believe they live up to their stated values," said Daniel Tisch, President and CEO of Argyle Public Relationships, a leading Canadian expert in reputation management. "The most reputable Canadian companies are almost nine points higher than their peers in perceptions of their corporate social responsibility – and it's not surprising that they are widely perceived to be more genuine."

With a direct correlation between corporate reputation and business performance, companies have an opportunity – with the use of reputation measurement tools – to understand the key opportunities and gaps, and have processes in place to manage reputation.

To see the full 2018 Canada RepTrak® rankings, visit [https://www.reputationinstitute.com/canada-reptrak\\_2018](https://www.reputationinstitute.com/canada-reptrak_2018)

### About Reputation Institute

Reputation Institute powers the world's most reputable companies. By tracking and analyzing stakeholder perceptions, we unleash the power of reputation to enable leaders to build better companies. Our RepTrak® model analyzes the reputations of companies and is best known as the Forbes-published Global RepTrak 100. Underlying the model is the RepTrak methodology, the global gold standard for measuring reputation. Learn more at: [www.reputationinstitute.com](http://www.reputationinstitute.com).

### About Argyle Public Relationships™

Argyle helps major brands and respected organizations build and strengthen their relationships with the stakeholders who drive their reputations, brands and business success – across Canada and beyond. For more than 35 years, Argyle has been chosen by some of the world's biggest brands, put big ideas onto the public agenda, and become one of Canada's largest independent communications firms. Learn more at: [www.argylepr.com](http://www.argylepr.com).

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