

PUBLIC AFFAIRS PULSE SURVEY



What Americans Think About Business
2015 Research Insights

Methodology

- Fifth annual survey sponsored by Public Affairs Council, a non-partisan and non-political organization
- Poll conducted in July 2015 by Princeton Survey Research Associates International
- Telephone interviews with 1,601 adults in continental U.S., including 50% using cell phones

“Aha Moments” in Past Surveys

- 2011 Young American adults like big companies.
- 2012 People tend to give positive feedback to businesses online and negative feedback through other means.
- 2013 Sectors considered untrustworthy are more likely to be considered under-regulated.
- 2014 Public opinion of business is shaped through personal experience, not through social media.

2015 Pulse Survey Topics



Big Business and Small Business



Can Big Companies be Trusted?



Are Firms Under-Regulated or Over-Regulated?

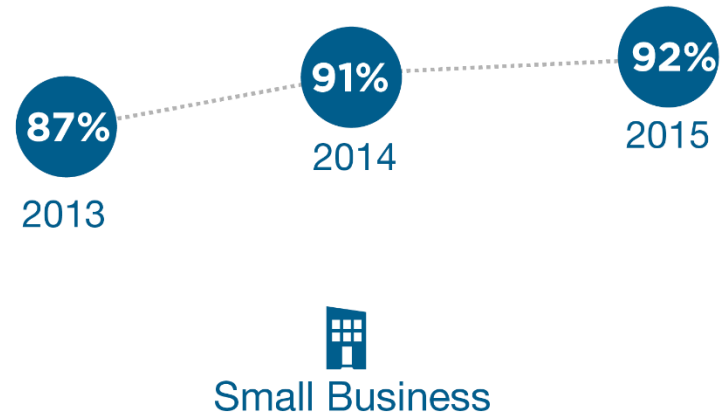
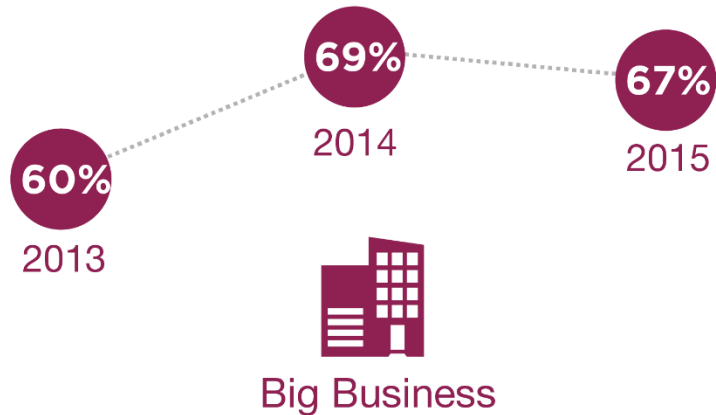


Lobbying and Politics



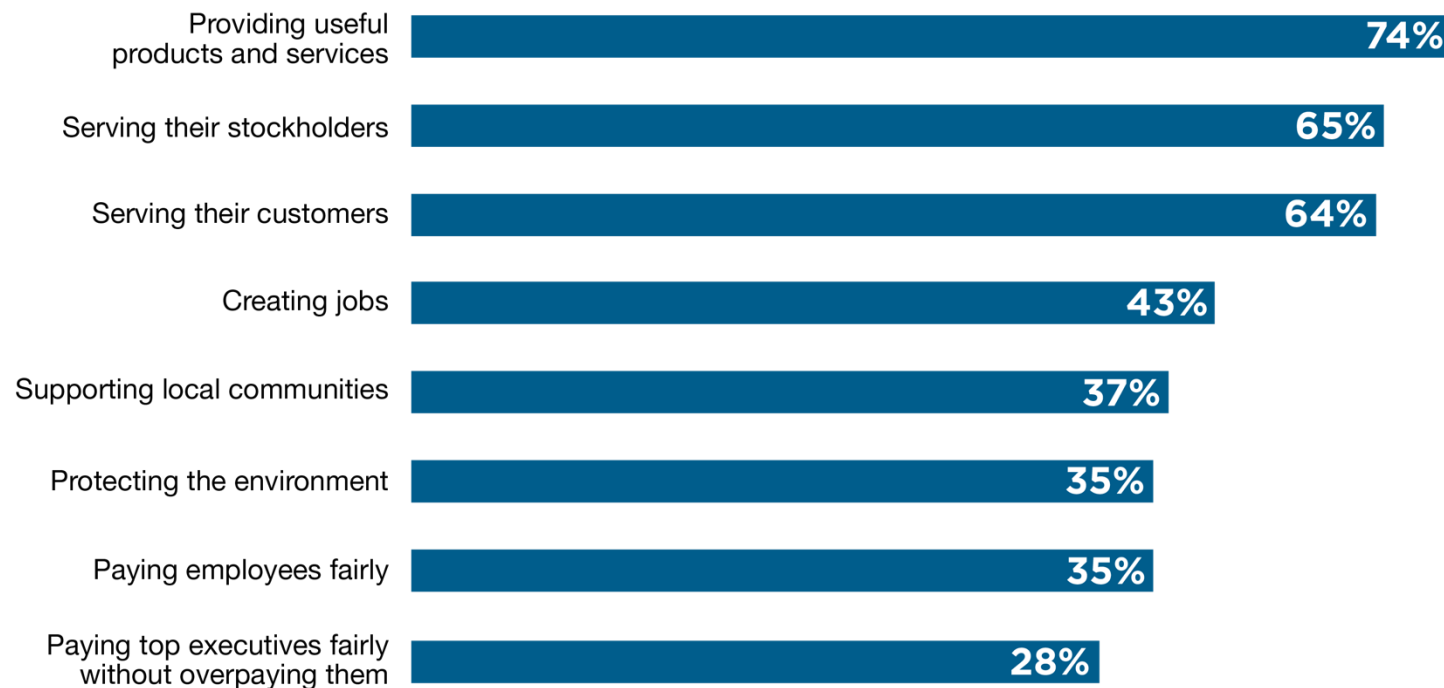
High Expectations for Corporate Behavior

Business Favorability Ratings



Where Companies Succeed and Fail

Percentage of Americans Who Think Companies Are Doing a Good Job



What Shapes Opinions of Business?

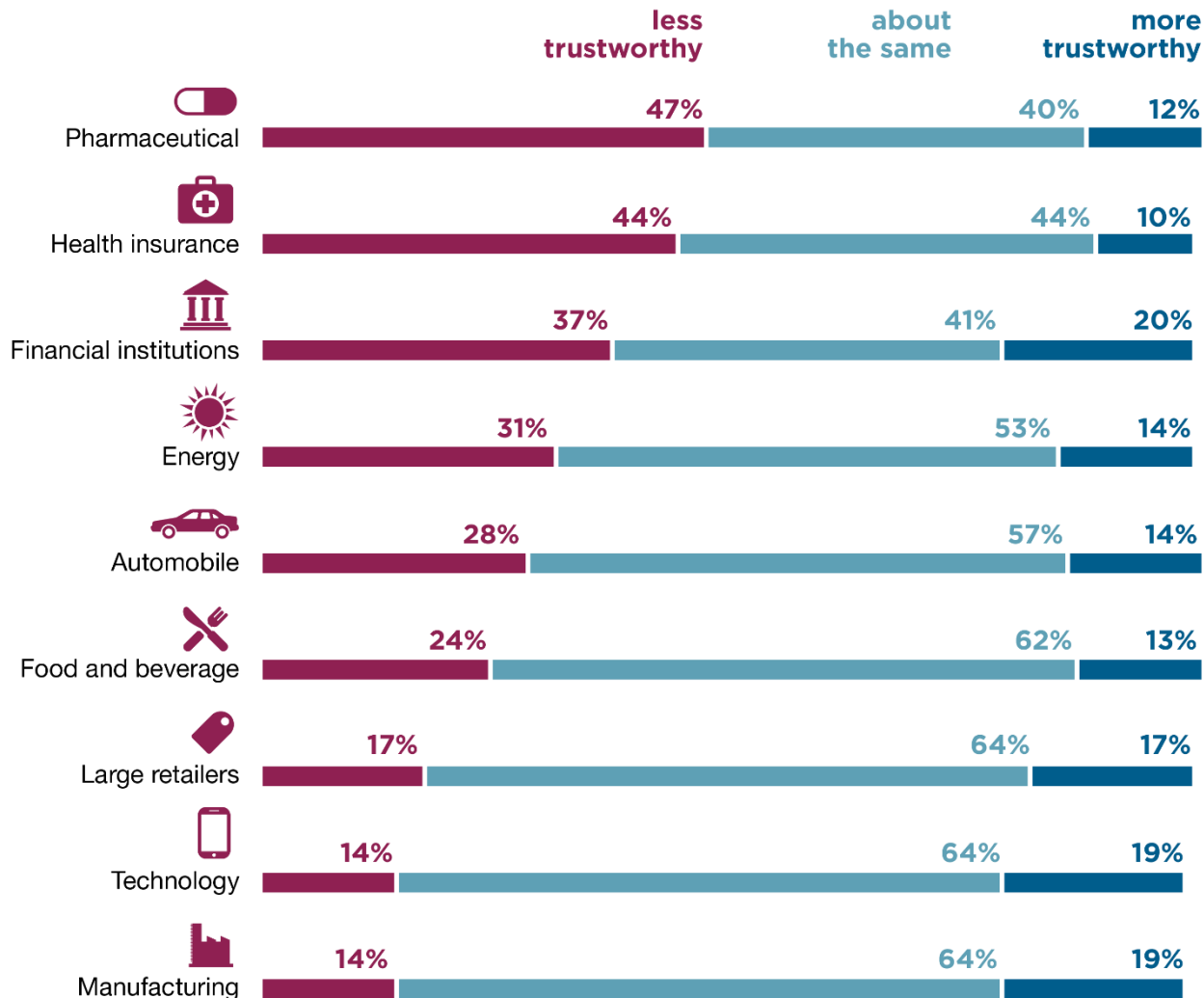


Inside the Data

1. While 67% give major companies a favorable rating, only 45% feel the same way about the federal government.
2. Attitudes about business performance in job creation have jumped from 24% to 43% since 2011.
3. Young people are most likely to be critical of business efforts to protect the environment, with only 28% giving companies a passing grade.
4. Nearly 40% of the public say social media has no influence whatsoever on their opinions of big companies.

Can Big Companies be Trusted?

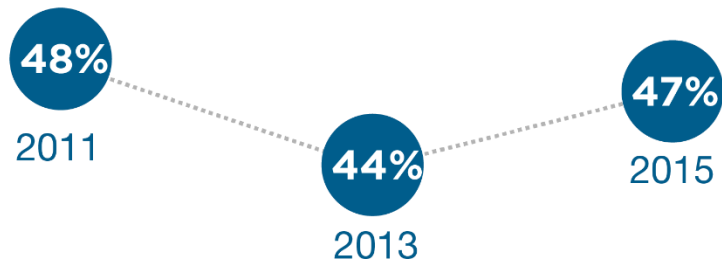
Industries Considered Less Trustworthy Than Average



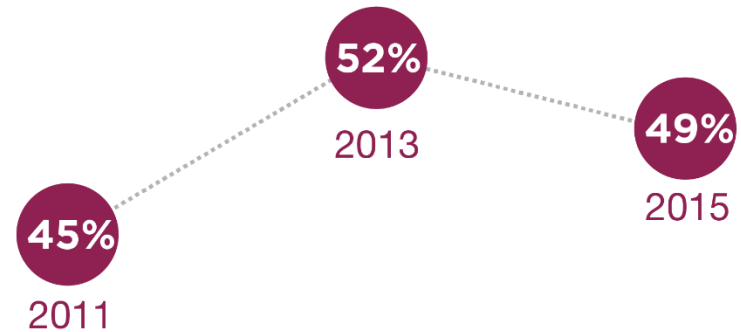
Inside the Data

1. 46% of Americans say they have little or no trust and confidence in businesses to behave ethically.
2. Pharmaceuticals took over top spot for least trustworthy.
3. Reputations improved for some sectors such as energy, health insurance, automobiles and manufacturing.
4. Less than 40% of big business foes say their level of trust could be improved by quality products/services or favorable reviews from family/friends.

Changing Attitudes on Regulation



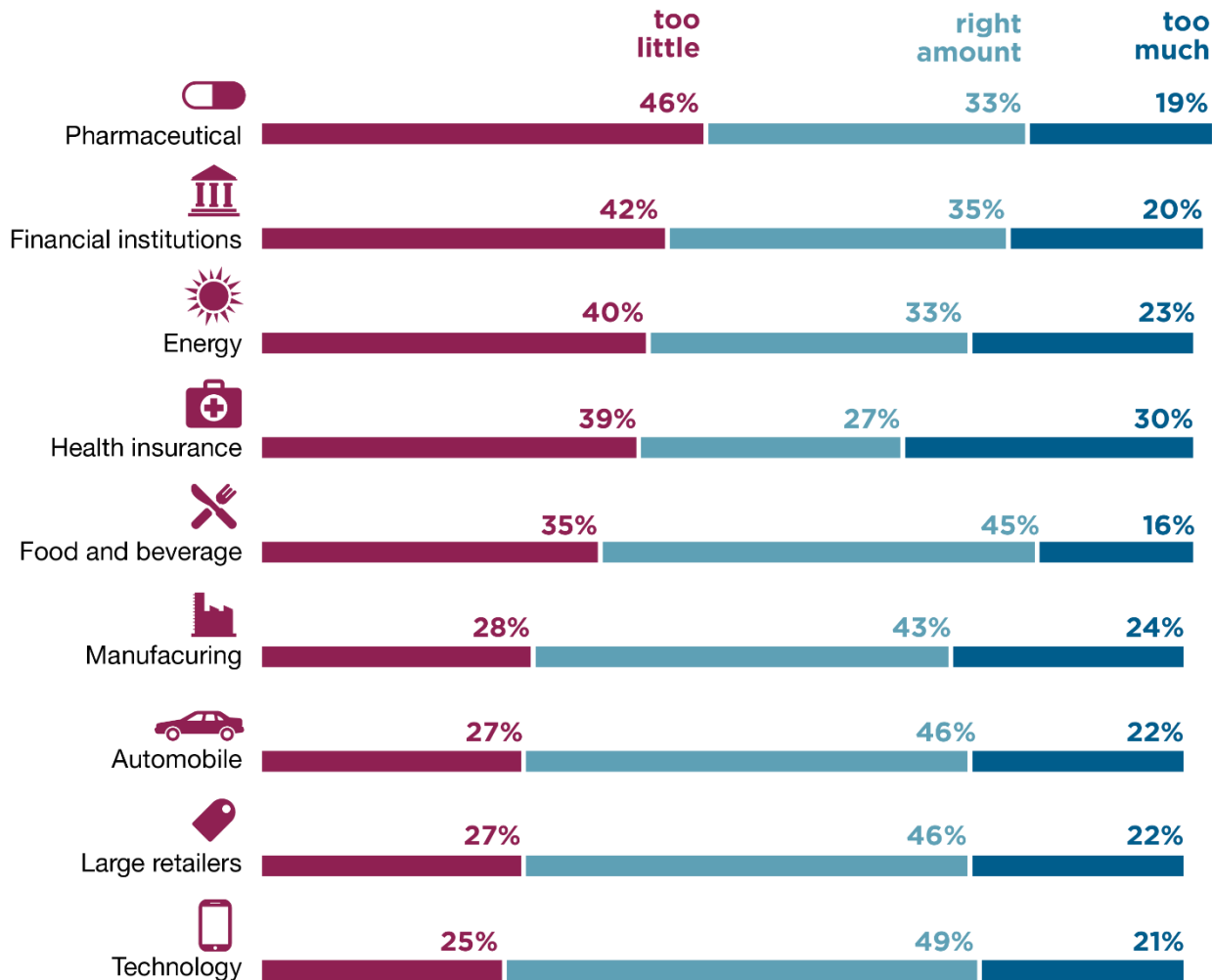
Regulation Necessary
To Protect Public



Regulation Does More
Harm than Good

Who Needs More Oversight?

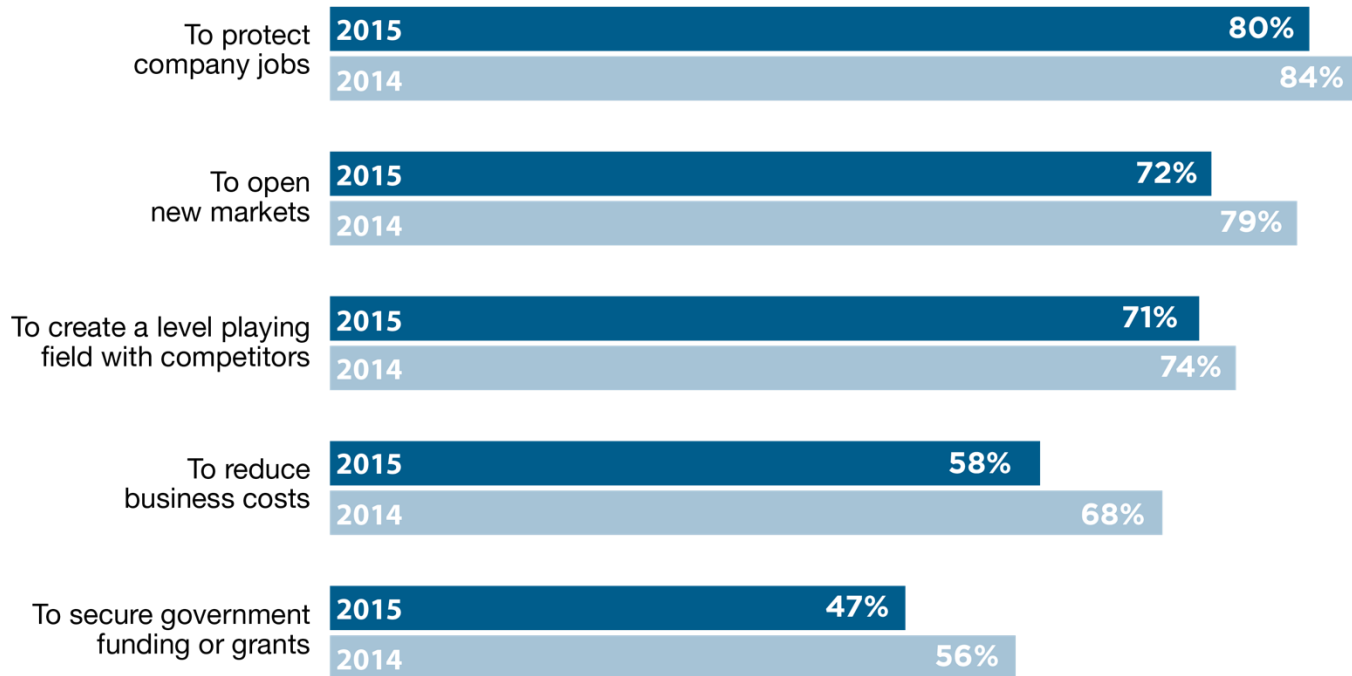
Industries Considered to Have Too Little Regulation



Inside the Data

1. Since last year, the percentage of Independents believing regulation does more harm than good has dropped from 54% to 48%.
2. Strong majorities of black Americans, Hispanic Americans and college graduates favor business regulation.
3. Support for further regulating pharmaceutical firms has risen while support for further regulating health insurance firms has declined.

When is Lobbying Acceptable?



What Would You Do if You Were CEO?

Most Americans Would Take Political Action

84%

Personally
contact elected
representatives

54%

Make campaign
contributions to elected
representatives who
agree with your views

84%

Work with other
companies to try
and change
laws/regulations

46%

Hire a lobbyist to
contact your elected
representatives

67%

Ask employees to
contact elected
representatives

2%

Probably not
take any actions

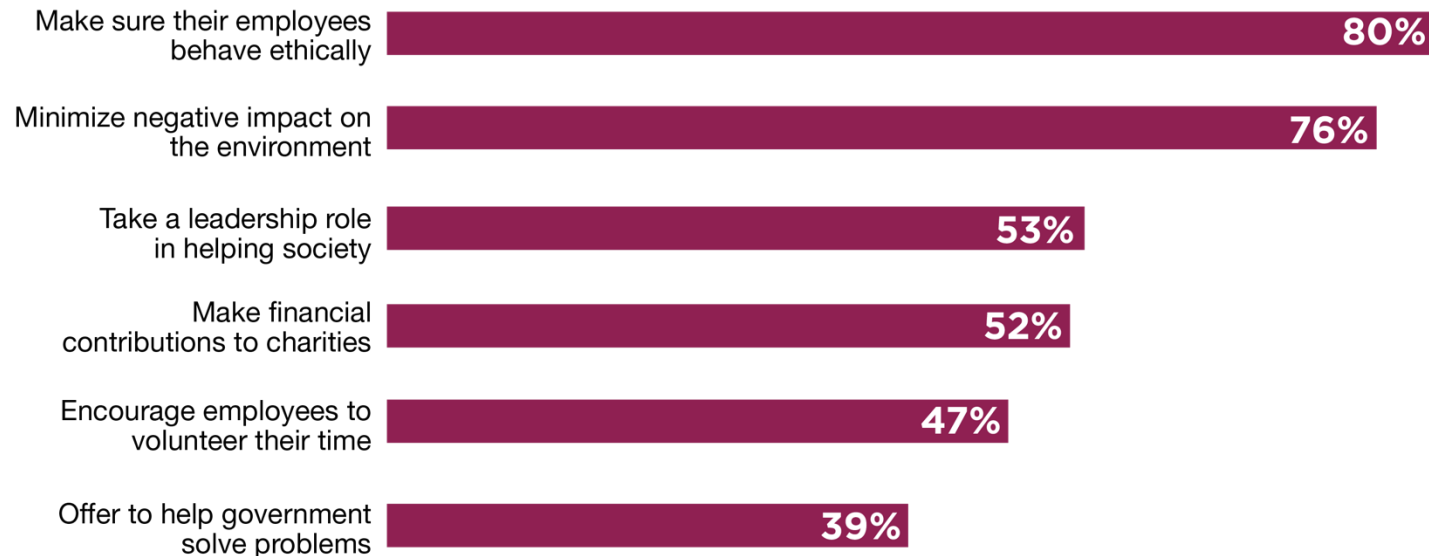


Inside the Data

1. Young people are more willing than their parents to be politically active.
2. Strong majorities of 18-29-year olds and 30-49-year olds say they would make campaign contributions to specific candidates.
3. Over half of adults under age 50 would hire a lobbyist, compared with just 38% of Americans over age 50.

High Expectations for Big Companies

Percentage of Americans Saying Each Action is Very Important



What to Say and Do in a Crisis

Actions that Make the Public Feel a Company is Doing the Right Thing

72%

explain

Explain what happened and what's being done to correct the situation

63%

take action

Take quick action to pay costs to those affected — even if it is unclear who is at fault

56%

fire those responsible

Fire executives and employees responsible for the problem

45%

apologize

Issue an apology

43%

advertise

Pay for ads explaining the company's actions to fix the problem

41%

use social media

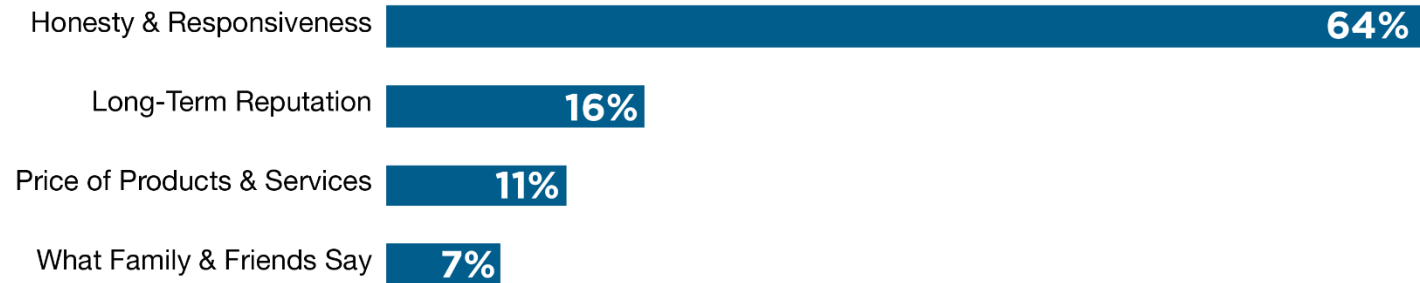
Use social media to explain the company's actions to fix the problem

28%

no comment

Say it won't comment on the crisis until all the facts are available

What Restores Trust After a Crisis



Inside the Data

1. Among different generations, Baby Boomers place the greatest value on honesty/responsiveness when deciding whether to do business with a company after a crisis.
2. Contrary to popular belief, many Americans are active in their communities:
 - 59% regularly volunteer their time
 - 32% have attended local community meetings
 - 26% have contacted an elected official
 - 19% have contributed money or volunteered for a political party or candidate

Final Words of Advice

- Don't be anti-small business.
- Remember that customer/employee experiences matter more than what everyone else is saying about you.
- If your industry has a low trust score, view it as an opportunity.
- Always explain why you lobby.
- Show no tolerance for ethical lapses.
- Don't expect to get credit for your good works.
- Be honest and candid during a crisis.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS PULSE SURVEY



What Americans Think About Business
2015 Research Insights