MEDIA RELEASE

First-of-its-Kind App Empowers Consumers to Force Change in Big Business Behaviour

Christmas shoppers with a conscience will have the power to change big retailer behaviour for the better this year, thanks to the launch of a new, free app which will ensure their voice is heard by companies like Tesco and Amazon.

The first of its kind app has been developed by 'Impact Monitor', a group of like-minded data experts, ex-CEOs and academics, who want to force businesses to become more sustainable and more socially responsible, faster.

The 'Impact Score' app, which is now available to download for free via Apple and Android app stores, highlights to consumers how thousands of retail, manufacturing and services businesses treat their staff, suppliers and the environment. It then provides users with a simple mechanism to feedback their opinions on these business practices at the click of a button.

Launched in time to support Small Business Saturday – 5th December – the Impact Score app will also help to influence consumer buying decisions in the 2020 Christmas run-up and beyond.

Designed to be as user-friendly as possible, the app uses a straightforward scoring system, which has been developed by the Maths and Applied Sciences team at the University of Chester, along with a set of emojis so users can tell at a glance how businesses perform across key measures.

The app encourages users to check the Impact Score of individual businesses and empowers them to express any discontent, or support, by clicking on a 'Tell Them' button in the top right of the app and selecting 'Not good enough' or 'Good, keep going'.

This feedback is shared with the individual businesses concerned, so they can see what the Impact Score community is saying about them, and act accordingly.

In 2019, members of the Impact Monitor team commissioned YouGov to research which business behaviours consumers cared about most. More than 2000 consumers from across the UK responded and six areas were revealed to be of greatest concern; CEO pay ratio, CO2 emissions, the gender pay gap, prompt payment of suppliers, paying the real living wage and amount of UK tax paid.

Impact Monitor then gathered comprehensive data on thousands of UK companies, from over 100 different sectors and approached the Maths and Applied Sciences team at the University of Chester, who developed weightings and formulas to transform the data into a single Impact Score for each business.

The emoji system created illustrates how companies are performing against the six measures. The highest score for a measure is represented by the hearts emoji (top 20%). Then come the smile, meh, and sad emojis. The angry emoji represents the lowest score (bottom 20%). Behind each emoji sits the actual data – information regarding the gender pay gap ratio, for instance.

Scores are refreshed monthly, using the latest sets of data obtained by Impact Monitor and league tables published to show which businesses are performing well and highlight those that are performing badly.

Over 20,000 organisations are currently scored by the app including household names such as Argos, Starbucks, Apple and HSBC. The app is not restricted to large companies however, and individual businesses can apply to have their data listed on it.

Explaining the impetus behind the app creation, Impact Monitor Co-founder, Josh Simpson said, "Our mission is to help consumers make change happen. Companies talk a lot about responsible

business behaviour, and it's become particularly pertinent during the pandemic, but we want to make sure they are focused on actions rather than words.

"We're applying pressure by giving each app user a voice, and combining it with thousands of others in our community, to tell businesses what we think of their behaviour, good or bad. When they change their behaviour, we'll change their score and everything loops back in a virtual circle.

"At the same time we're enabling consumers to make informed choices about who they shop with and which brands they buy from. Nine out of ten people want to live a sustainable lifestyle, but less than two in ten are actively changing their behaviour, as it's often seen as too hard. The Impact Score app is designed to make the process easier. People might be more likely to buy their Christmas presents on the local high street, this year, for instance, when they see the tax paying behaviour of bigger online retailers or compare the gender pay gap from one brand to another."

"The consumer feedback we collate can be a useful source of market intelligence for businesses, to will help them to constantly improve."

Tamara Hunt, Sustainability Officer from The University of Chester added, "We wanted to be part of this project from the outset, as it aligns so closely with the University's sustainable values and desire to effect positive social change.

"Ultimately, Impact Score is a tool that lets consumers lead the agenda for change. It harnesses the power of data and app technology to boost sustainability and equality, which is of benefit to our communities and the planet."

Impact Monitor is now lobbying Government to tighten the requirements on companies to report data surrounding responsible business practices, so that there is greater transparency for consumers.

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For further information and FAQs go to: https://impactscore.app/ and https://impactscore.app/faqs/

To download the free app. click your app. store

Apple

Google Play Store

Impact Monitor's Co-founders Josh Simpson and Ian Yates are available for interview and can be arranged via Cathy Henderson, cathyhendo75@hotmail.com

Notes to Editors

Impact Monitor is a group of like-minded individuals from a range of backgrounds, who have a shared mission to make businesses more accountable and bring about positive sustainable and social change.

Members of the group devote their time, resource and expertise to the Impact Monitor project for free. The group comprises:

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