GreymatterFinch

REPORTS AND REPORTING

BE STRATEGIC ABOUT DISCLOSURE

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"Yesterday's home runs don't win todays's games."
- *Babe Ruth*

DEAR READER

"We cannot give away our strategy." Or "we don't want to put our policies on the website". These are words we often hear in discussion with company leaders.

In the past, transparency in business was a taboo concept. The better you were at keeping secrets, the better your chances to succeed as a corporate. In ***today's interconnected world***, things have changed .

While some companies still fight to protect their information, their stakeholders, including governments, investors, customers and suppliers are clamouring for more. Impatient with the level, quality and reliability of information provided, regulators step in and make ***new rules for more transparency***.

DISCLOSURE SHOULD BE STRATEGIC

A solid disclosure strategy can help corporates ***be intentional about the information they share***. It will also help them package information in a way that is appropriate to the audience. If stakeholders cannot find the information they need, they will fill the gaps with pieces from other sources, including social media and competitors.

Focus group research done on business behaviour by the largest public corporations in America, shows that disclosures written in ***accessible language and formats*** are considered the most transparent

DISCLOSURE TRENDS

Companies that disclose more than just the minimum are in control of their public information, and reduce the risk of ***stakeholders using the wrong information*** to assess a company's performance. They make it easy for stakeholders to find information. This includes using disclosure tools or well-structured websites, where a user can filter or search for quick access.

Strategic disclosure examples include:

Policies on ethics and corruption, employment, climate risk, environment, diversity, etc.

Remuneration disclosures include policies, implementation reports, pay gap reports, performance metrics, targets and outcomes.

Position statements on net zero, human rights, tax, health and safety, assurance, modern slavery and human trafficking, etc.

Indices to provide a single source reference guide or data index for GRI, SASB, JSE Sustainability and Climate disclosures or future IFRS S1 and S2.

WHERE REPORTING FITS IN

Integrated and sustainability reports are ***important sub-elements*** of a disclosure strategy. They should connect the dots for stakeholders, with tips on where to find more information. For example: a sustainability report might mention a diversity policy, but the detail of what the policy entails, should be available via an interactive link to where the policy is listed online. ***Reports should be concise***, and not include all the disclosure detail available or required.

THE RIGHT PARTNER FOR

YOUR REPORTING NEEDS

WHAT STAKEHOLDERS WANT TO KNOW

Companies that know their stakeholders have ***targeted and efficient disclosure strategies***. Knowing who needs what information when, and on which channel, can save costs and avoid duplication. It will also improve the quality of a company's relationship with their stakeholders and increase levels of trust.

GreymatterFinch helps companies develop ***stakeholder engagement processes*** that can feed into disclosure strategies. Working with a client in Namibia, we developed a fast-read summary based on stakeholder feedback that said their integrated report was too long and complex to read.

Summary reports can be an effective tool to make sure your stakeholders still receive information, but in a format and language that they find easy to absorb. Using diagrams or visual elements to explain concepts, is key to the success of these elements.

> *"Simple can be harder than complex: you have to work hard to get your thinking clean to make it simple. But it's worth it in the end because once you get there, you can move mountains."*
> ***- Steve Jobs***

HOW TO MAKE INFORMATION PUBLIC

An ***internal policy*** is often not immediately suitable to publish online. It should reflect the company's corporate identity, and more often than not, the language will need a polish or simplification for external audiences. You want your online policies to be of the ***same quality as your reports***.

Planning to convert internal to external documents is part of developing a disclosure strategy. It also means ensuring that the right approval process was followed, and that naming conventions are correct.

GreymatterFinch helps companies ***polish their internal documents*** for external use. We also assist with language adaptation, which means that we can convert highly technical documents into simple language, depending on your target audience and what they need to know.

OUR ONE-STOP SHOP

At GreymatterFinch, we want your ***disclosure strategy to be effective and strategic***. We want to help stakeholders find information about you without hassle or frustration. Your integrated and sustainability reports should be core elements of the disclosure strategy.

By allowing us to help you plan your disclosures, you can be ***more concise*** and have less duplication – putting out more quality information with less effort, and less cost.

GreymatterFinch has deep experience in dealing with companies and stakeholders, to make information accessible and ***fit for purpose***. Try us!

NEWS

IN FOCUS

Nature takes the spotlight: The rising corporate focus on biodiversity in ESG - FinTech Global
Position Green recently took the opportunity to dig deeper into ESG and how the sector is growing in presence and popularity in the corporate world. Recent developments underscore a paradigmatic shift, emphasising the vital relationship between nature and global economic health.

Launching the Gold Standard for Transition Plans - TPT
The Transition Plan Taskforce (TPT) best practice Disclosure Framework for climate transition plans was launched in October.

OUR MOST READ ARTICLES

ON LINKEDIN

Incorporating ESG metrics into executives' remuneration

How do we increase youth employment in South Africa?

The role of the Chief Information Officer and access to data

Workplace relationships and the role of the board

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