

CSR is about connecting the dots to make a better world!

The way every individual has a responsibility to give back to the world that nurtures it, every organization has a responsibility to do the same. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the responsibility of company towards society. CSR is, in fact, like giving back to the society in which we exist and flourish. The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility emerged in the later half of the 20th century. But now it has become an indispensable aspect of every company as it helps to improve the image and increase credibility of the company. All the leading corporate organizations have dedicated themselves to the CSR concept which is a good sign. A strategic approach to CSR is increasingly important to a company's competitiveness. It can bring benefits in terms of risk management, cost savings, access to capital, customer relationships, human resource management, and innovation capacity. CSR not only encourages social and environmental responsibility from

the corporate sector, but also helps to increase the level of trust of end-customers in businesses. To understand what should be the CSR initiative in India, Lenovo conducted a research and concluded that Lenovo needs to focus on technology to improve the quality of education and increase the reach to the marginalized communities of the society. CSR at Panasonic is perceived as the commitment of businesses to

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Head – CSR, SAP India – “CSR is an opportunity towards nation building initiatives, rather than a ‘responsibility’.”



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contribute to sustainable development by working with employees, their families, the local community and society at large which resonates with management philosophy of creating “A Better Life, A Better World”.

“Panasonic India has aligned its community initiatives with The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), constituted by the United Nations, which addresses the most pressing problems that the world is facing,” opines Radhika Kalia, Head of Corporate Affairs & CSR, Panasonic India.

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Head – South Asia & Country Manager, ASUS India, “CSR reflects the symbiotic nature of the relationship between the community and the corporate world. The community requires the corporate world for economic progress. At the same time, organizations depend on the society's resources to function to the best of their ability. This makes it only natural for a corporate to undertake activities that will sustain, build and enhance the ecosystem they operate in. For instance, some organizations may take steps to improve the natural environment, while others may concentrate on improving the quality of education; whatever be the step, the aim is to contribute to the society in a way that helps it progress.” The SAP firmly believes in the vision of improving people's lives and helping the world run better. This ethos is reflected in each of company's endeavours. Gunjan Patel, Head – CSR, SAP India, excerpts, “We believe that CSR is an opportunity

Mr Rajneesh Chaudhary
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towards nation building initiatives, rather than a ‘responsibility’. We can create shared values with our stakeholders and community.” On the other hand, Rajneesh Chaudhary, Vice-President, The Practice, feels that CSR is not a responsibility; it is an inherent element of doing business. He adds, “We have the Companies Act popularizing CSR now, but we had John Elkington coining the concept of triple-bottom-line more than two decades ago. To ensure businesses are profitable and sustainable, the only way is to create mutual value socially, environmentally and financially. CSR can and should not be an afterthought or something that is directed by law. It is the inherent way to do business.”

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) has recently honoured their corporates with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) awards. Corporates won awards in their social spectrum.

The theme of the event was “Leveraging CSR: Achieving National Development Agenda”.

Inter Awards were divided in five categories based on turnover, PSU and innovations. The winning companies were Odisha Power Generation Corporation in the PSU category, Essel Mining Ltd in exemplary innovation in the CSR category, Ashiana Housing in the section with a turnover up to ₹ 200 crore, Monnet Ispat Ltd in the section

with a turnover of up to ₹ 3,000 crore and Shree Cement Ltd for their CSR work in the category with a turnover above ₹ 3,001 crore.

Newgen's commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility is deep and far-reaching. It is managing business to the highest ethical standards, and believes that community involvement is one of the most important catalysts for change. Priyadarshini Nigam, Head – CSR, Newgen Software Limited, says, “Together, we are continuing to grow and evolve Newgen's CSR programmes. We have always believed that to foster a progressive ecosystem for developing economies, ‘Education’

Mr Rajeev Kapoor, Executive Director, Finance and India Champion, Dell Giving Initiatives – “CSR is a chance to extend a helping hand to the community around you.”



has to be promoted amongst all sections of the society.” With that objective in mind, Newgen started its “Sadbhavna” initiative in 2006 – An educational programme for the children of support staff which focusses on overall development of every child.

CSR & Sustainability in Corporate World

An active role in CSR creates better human touch through concern and genuine initiatives aimed at uplifting the neglected. CSR is also a great channel to show what causes you support and as a brand how do you value the world and

society. The overarching objectives of CSR are to create shared value for and to enable and empower the community through various mechanisms.

SAP's CSR model is a combination of community-focussed engagement and employee-led volunteering. Human capital contributes significantly towards the various CSR initiatives. Lenovo's CSR activity is implemented in Bangalore and Puducherry, especially for students who have limited access to technology. In Bangalore, Lenovo partnered with an NGO, Agastya, a non-profit educational trust to launch an initiative called “Lab-On-a-Tab”. “Lab-On-a-Tab” provides self-paced, high-quality innovative hands-on education to supplement the existing teaching and learning modules used at schools. This was implemented by using technology from Lenovo to convert physical experiments into novel e-experiments which children could easily identify with. Baminee Viswanat, Director Legal and Company Secretary, Lenovo, shares, “At Lenovo, we play a prominent role to increase our reach towards society, thereby creating more visibility for the brand.”

Another corporate, Dell has also taken a keen responsibility towards empowering people, communities and countries. In 2012, Dell launched the ‘Powering the Possible’ campaign as a first step toward a new sustainability strategy for Dell. The Dell 2020 Legacy

Mr Rohit Aggarwal, CEO & Founder, Koenig Solutions – “We provide school education to 1,600 students and Computer Vocational Training to 300 needy youths.”

