



## **Is the Pandemic Reviving Purpose? Ninth Annual Conscious Consumer Spending Index Reports Unprecedented Levels of Social Responsibility**

*Index Soars to All-Time High, Registers 25 Percent Increase from 2020 Results.*

(Los Angeles and Nashville, Tenn. December 15, 2021) -- The ninth annual Conscious Consumer Spending Index (#CCSIndex) reveals record-breaking levels of socially responsible spending among consumers, as it climbs to an all-time high and an unprecedented 25 percent increase over the previous year.

Conducted annually each fall since 2013, the [#CCSIndex](#) is an ongoing benchmarking study. [Good.Must.Grow.](#), a socially responsible marketing consultancy, administers the Index to gauge momentum for conscious consumerism and charitable giving.

The Index score is calculated by evaluating the importance consumers place on purchasing from socially responsible companies, actions taken to support such products and services, and future intent to increase the amount they spend with responsible organizations. Based on the design of the Index's algorithm, even a one-point change in overall score indicates meaningful movement of consumer sentiment.

After posting a record low performance of 39 in 2019, the Index momentarily recovered during a mid-year checkpoint administered earlier in the pandemic. That momentum was short-lived as the Index retreated back to 39 by the end of 2020. With a score of 51 this year, the Index ends a three-year slide in dramatic fashion.

“Our team is pleasantly shocked by this year’s findings,” said Heath Shackleford, founder of Good.Must.Grow. “We hoped to see a rebound from last year’s data, but to go from an all-time low to a record-breaking high in just one year, that is a massive and surprising turnaround. It’s exactly the kind of jolt we’ve been needing the last few years. It appears the pandemic has reenergized the pursuit of purpose. Now we need to sustain the momentum and build upon it.”

Charitable giving was also trending positively in this year’s findings, although the rebound for nonprofits is not keeping pace with the growth in conscious consumerism. In total, 64 percent of Americans reported supporting “do good” brands, while 54 percent reported making a financial donation to a nonprofit. Meanwhile, 36 percent of Americans plan to increase the amount they spend on socially responsible goods and services in the year ahead, while 31 percent planned to give more to charity.

### **Consumer Expectations Are Also Rising Fast**

As consumers increase their spending with socially responsible companies, their expectations are rising as well. In total, 83 percent of individuals said that how a company treated its employees during the pandemic will be an important factor when determining whether to support that company in the future, up from 72 percent in 2020. Meanwhile, 72 percent of individuals said a

company's purpose or mission is important to earn their support moving forward, an increase from 63 percent in 2020. Being trustworthy jumped from 74 percent in 2020 to 84 percent in 2021, while the ability to demonstrate a positive impact on society and the environment climbed from 67 percent to 76 percent.

### **Spending Less, Saving More and Investing In Health**

In addition to purposeful purchases, consumers are also prioritizing their personal health and wellbeing. More than one-in-four respondents said their income and/or their overall wellbeing had declined during the pandemic. As a result, approximately one-third of Americans have reduced spending in key retail categories such as home furnishings, services (such as housekeeping and landscaping), entertainment and clothing/accessories. Meanwhile 41 percent are increasing savings, and 45 percent are investing more in their health and wellbeing.

### **And Still, the World Keeps Getting Worse**

For the third straight year, more Americans said the world is getting worse. In 2021, 44 percent of respondents thought so, compared to 42 in 2020, and 36 percent in 2019. While this pessimistic outlook is holding firm, the reasons for this negativity have shifted considerably. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic was the most common reason for a negative outlook (80%), followed by the political environment (72%), social and civil unrest (67%), violence and crime (67%) and the state of the economy (59%). In 2021, the political environment was the most common driver of negativity (77%), followed by violence and crime (73%), the economy (66%), and then the pandemic (64%).

### **Virus and Vaccine Influence Good Behavior**

A previous COVID-19 diagnosis positively increased the chances of an individual exhibiting socially responsible behaviors, including being green, giving to charity, purchasing socially responsible products and reducing consumption. The same was true for those who reported receiving a COVID-19 vaccine, compared to unvaccinated individuals.

Additionally, #CCSIndex scores showed differences based on both factors. Individuals with a previous COVID-19 diagnosis scored 57 on the Index, while those without a prior diagnosis scored 50. The difference was even greater when comparing vaccination status. Those who reported being vaccinated for COVID-19 scored 54, while unvaccinated Americans had a score of 45.

### **Top 20 Good Company Poll**

This year marked the #CCSIndex's seventh annual top 20 "Good Company" poll, compiled by responses to the question, "What company or organization do you think of first when you think of socially responsible companies/organizations?" Based on unaided recall, organizations were ranked by how frequently they were named.

For the third straight year, Amazon tops the list and does so with a dominant showing. Amazon received three times as many votes as the number two company, Walmart. After a one year absence, Johnson & Johnson re-enters the list in a big way, finishing in the top-five.

This year's top 20 rankings are as follows:

1. Amazon
2. Walmart
3. Salvation Army
4. Johnson & Johnson
5. American Red Cross
6. Google
7. Apple
8. Goodwill
9. Microsoft
10. Tesla
11. Facebook
- t-12. Target
- t-12. Nike
- t-12. Starbucks
15. Ben & Jerry's
16. Patagonia
17. PETA
18. Toms
- t-19. Greenpeace
- t-19. Coca Cola

#### About the Study

Conducted annually each fall since 2013, the [#CCSIndex](#) is an ongoing benchmarking study to gauge momentum for conscious consumerism and charitable giving. This year's study was conducted November 22 -30, 2021. In total, 1,033 Americans were surveyed (margin of error is +/- 3%). Sampling was provided by Dynata. For more information on the Conscious Consumer Spending Index, please visit [www.goodmustgrow.com/ccsi](http://www.goodmustgrow.com/ccsi)

#### About Good.Must.Grow.

Doing good by any means necessary. That's our motto. We are obsessed with helping good organizations grow. We provide strategic marketing support for socially responsible businesses, nonprofit causes and individuals committed to making our world a healthier place. We also fuel our own initiatives aimed at specific causes, ranging from human trafficking to addiction to health and wellness. Proud to be a Certified B Corp and for our three-time recognition as a Best for the World company. Learn more at [goodmustgrow.com](http://goodmustgrow.com)