

The State of Social Responsibility: How Purpose-Driven are U.S. Consumers?

Conscious Consumer Spending Index (#CCSIndex) Establishes Baseline for 2013

Sharp Increase in Socially Conscious Purchases on Horizon

Consumers are getting much more serious about using their pocketbooks to drive positive change.

Our poll of 1,015 Americans shows that nearly 30 percent of consumers plan to increase the amount of goods and/or services they buy from socially responsible companies in the coming year. This is up from 18 percent who reported buying more from such companies in 2012 compared to 2011.

In total, 60 percent believe it's important to shop responsibly, compared to "being green" (83%), reducing consumption (81%) and contributing financially to nonprofits (65%).

About the Conscious Consumer Spending Index

Through this study, we also established the Conscious Consumer Spending Index (#CCSIndex) as a way of tracking progress in this area over time.

The #CCSIndex is a score 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 inaugural results, the #CCSIndex has set a baseline of 65 (on a 100 point scale).



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The only way to sustain the recent momentum around social enterprise and heightened CSR efforts is for consumer demand to push it along.

Based on these results, consumers are more consistently aligning their purchasing habits with their passion and purpose and more aggressively supporting responsible businesses.

How important are the following activities?



Consumers report taking action on their socially responsible beliefs over the past year.

A large majority of consumers cited being green, reducing consumption, supporting nonprofits and buying responsibly as very or somewhat important.

They also reported taking actions at least once within the last 12 months that were consistent with their beliefs.

Ranked as Important

Action Taken Last 12 Months

83%

Being "green"

89%

81%

Reducing consumption

79%

65%

Financial contributions to nonprofits

64%

78%

Donating clothes, etc.

79%

59%

Volunteering

43%

60%

Buying from socially responsible orgs

62%

51%

Seeking out socially responsible orgs

31%

39%

NOT purchasing goods from companies that aren't socially responsible

25%

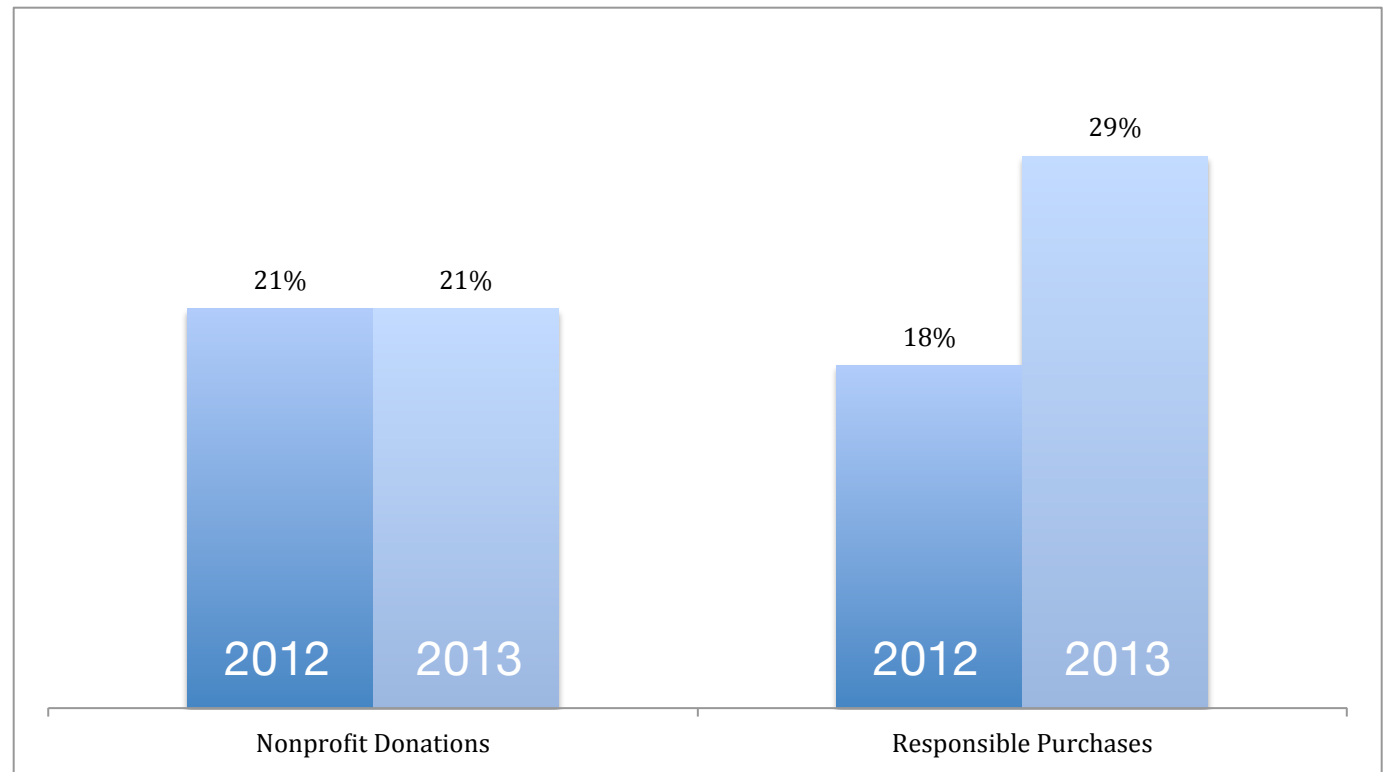
How did charitable giving and socially responsible purchasing behaviors change last year? And what's in store for 2013?



Almost 30% of consumers plan to buy more goods and services from socially responsible companies in 2013.

When asked about their charitable giving, 21% of consumers said they gave more to charities in 2012 vs. 2011. The same percentage planned to increase giving in 2013.

Meanwhile, 18% of consumers said they bought more goods and services from socially responsible companies in 2012 vs. 2011. And 29% planned to increase that activity in 2013.



Who's who in conscious consumerism?



Daughters and Dads going different directions when it comes to socially responsible purchases.

SUPER SHOPPERS

Most engaged in socially responsible purchasing



Female

Age 25-34

Less than 50k
HH Income

College Degree

CHECKED OUT

Not participating in socially responsible purchasing



Male

Age 45-54

Less than 50k
HH Income

College Degree

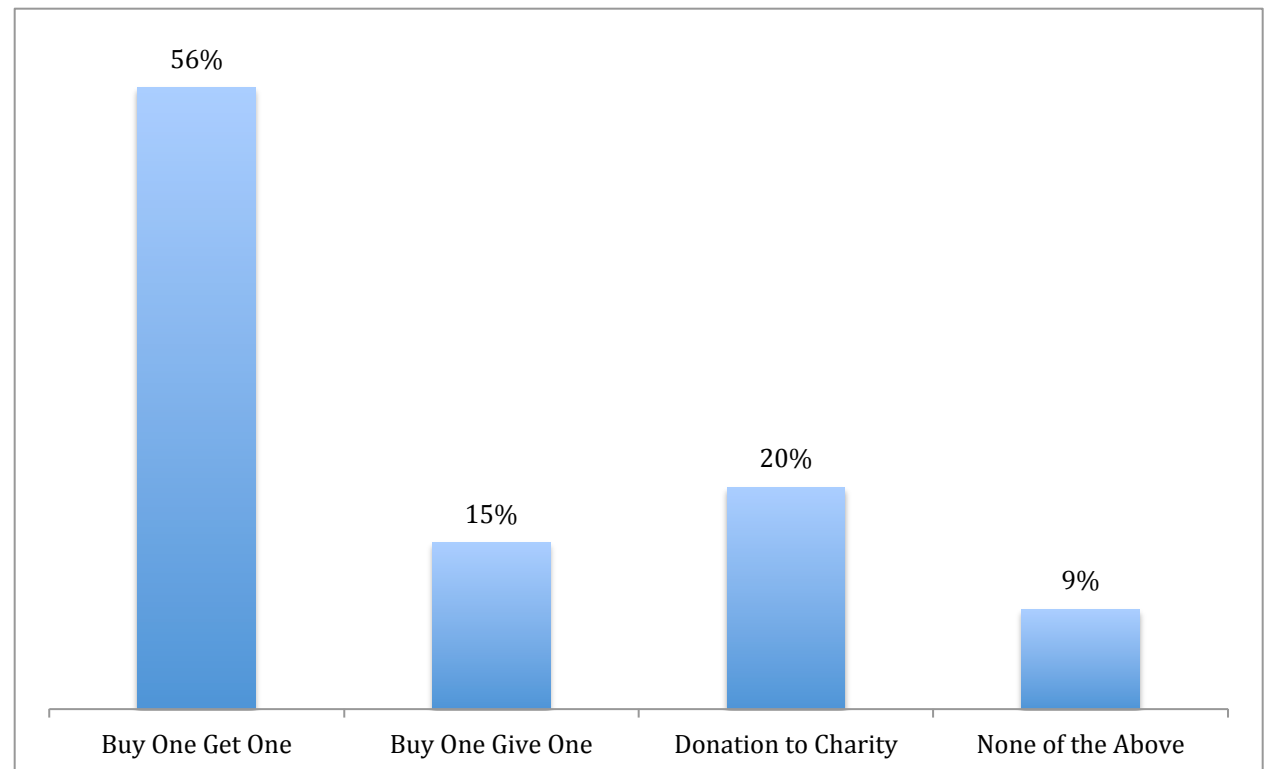
Buy One Get One or Buy One Give One?



Despite an increase in social responsibility, more than half of consumers (56%) prefer the traditional BOGO.

Consumers may be getting more conscious, but they still love a good deal.

Participants highly preferred receiving a buy one get one free offer when shopping, versus a store donating a like product to a person in need or giving a percentage of the purchase to a charitable cause.



With an initial score of 65, the CCSI suggests we should be in for a very positive year for socially responsible purchasing.

However, we also see big challenges awaiting those who are selling the good stuff. There's more education and trust building needed, and companies can't market on purpose alone.

The Conscious Consumer Spending Index



The inaugural #CCSIndex ranks conscious consumerism at 65 (on a 100 point scale).

The Conscious Consumer Spending Index (#CCSIndex) is a score 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.

Scoring system:

- Importance (25 possible points)
- Behavior (50 possible points)
- Intent (25 possible points)



Consumers are constantly bombarded with marketing messages telling them they can be the change, that they can save the world and that their individual contribution is making a real difference.

It appears they've been paying attention. What we see in this survey are individuals who are progressively taking more action, specifically from an economic perspective, to fuel greater good.

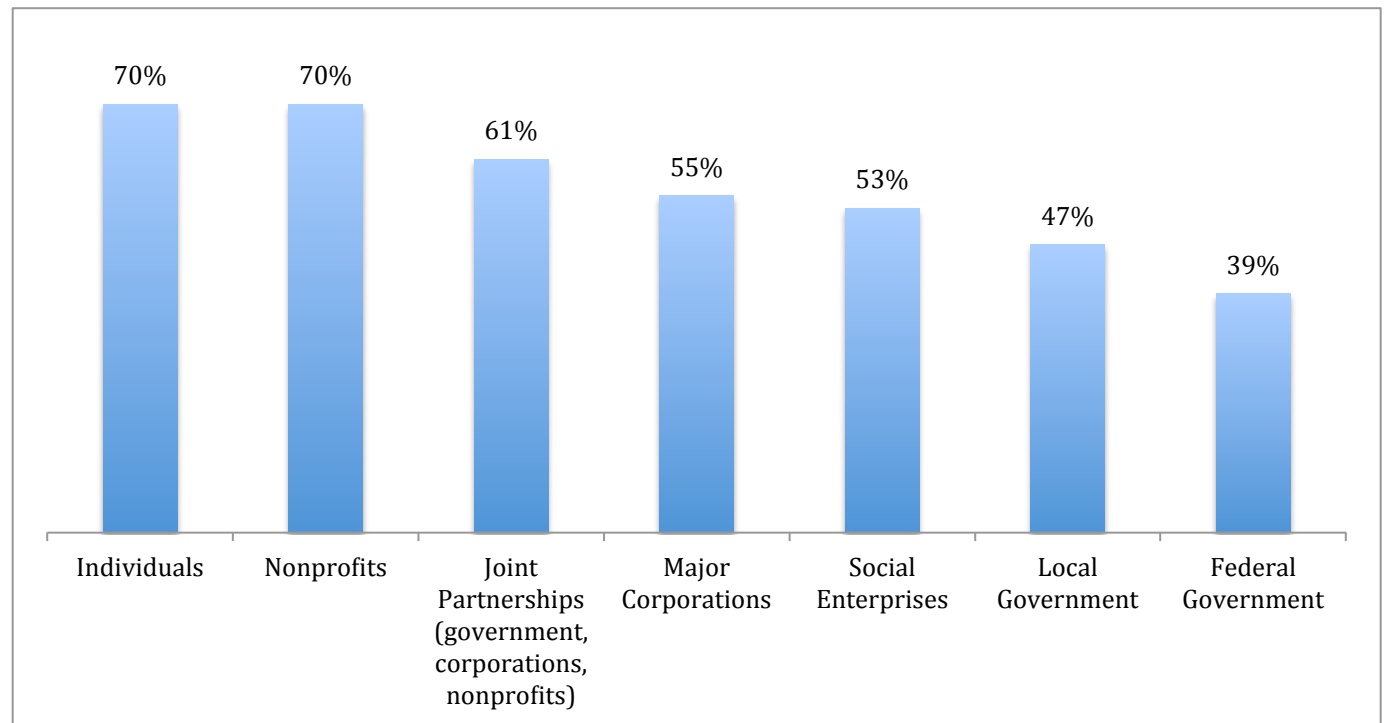
How effective are each of the following in making positive changes in society?



70% said individuals and nonprofits are very or somewhat effective.

Individuals see themselves playing a critical role in driving positive change. They ranked themselves (and nonprofits) as being most effective in driving positive change.

They also viewed collaborations between government, corporations and causes as effective. And ranked the federal government as being least effective.

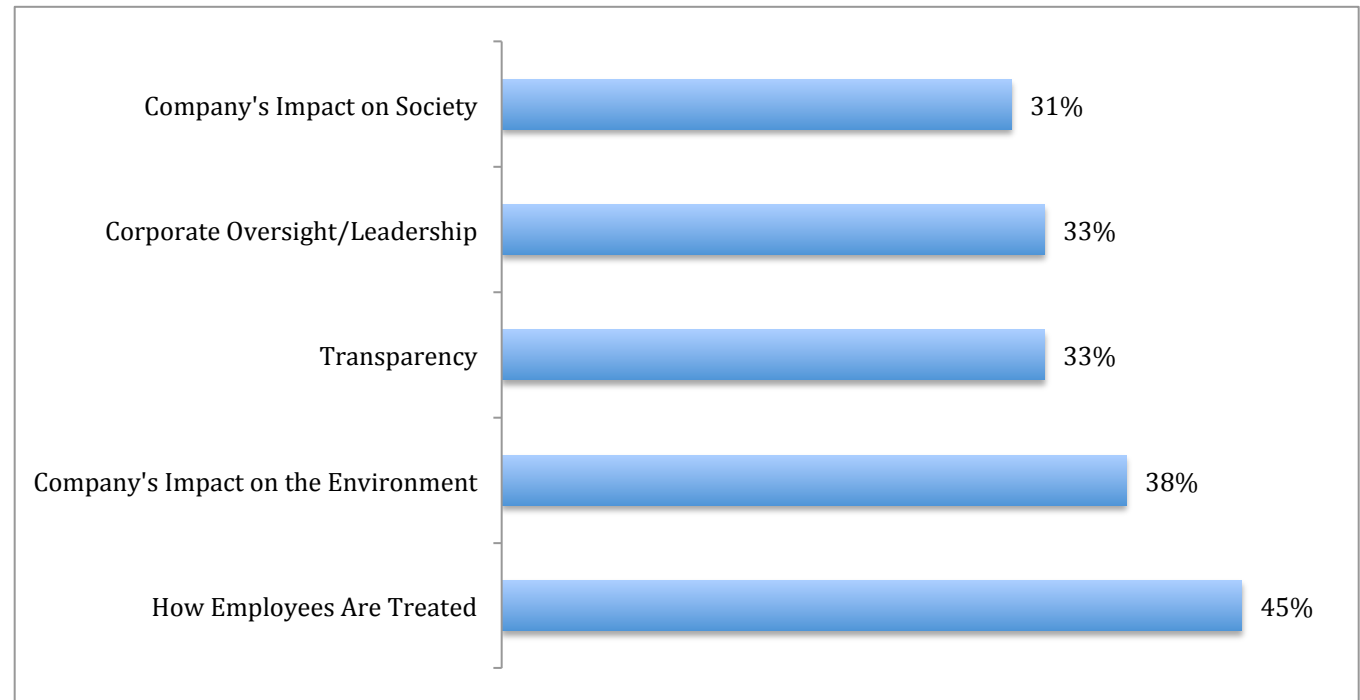


When evaluating whether or not a company is socially responsible, how important are the following factors?



45% said how employees are treated was very important in evaluating social businesses.

How companies treat their employees and the environment matter most when consumers are evaluating how “responsible” a company is. Almost half of participants said employee practices were very important in gauging social responsibility.



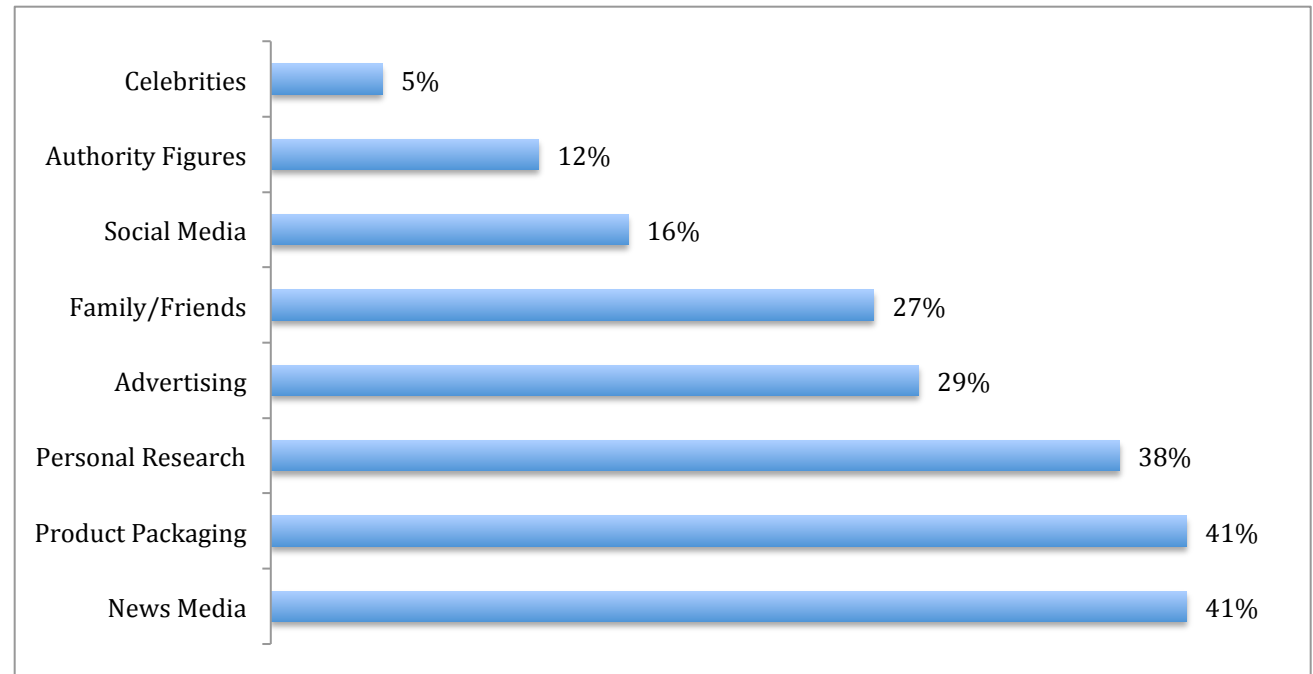
How do consumers evaluate whether companies are socially responsible?



Product packaging, news media and personal research ranked highest as evaluation tools.

Respondents reported using several methods to evaluate whether a company is socially responsible. Almost half (41%) relied on news media and/or product packaging.

Almost 1/3 of consumers (32%) reported they had not tried to determine whether or not a company is socially responsible.

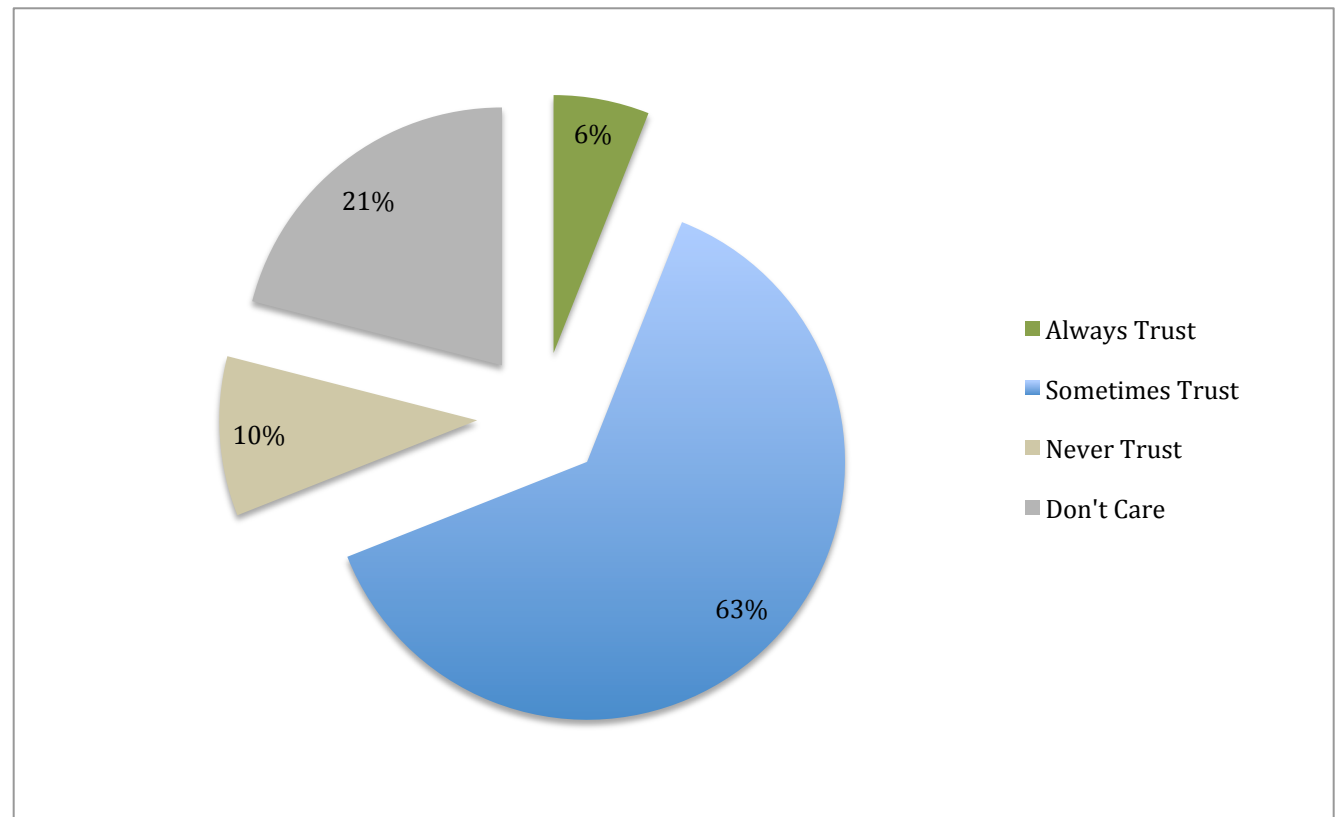


Do consumers trust companies that say they are socially responsible?



Almost 2/3 of consumers have a healthy skepticism regarding companies who claim to be responsible.

Most consumers report that they “sometimes” trust claims from a company that it is socially responsible. A small percentage always trust companies who say they are responsible, while 21% don’t pay attention at all to socially responsible messages.



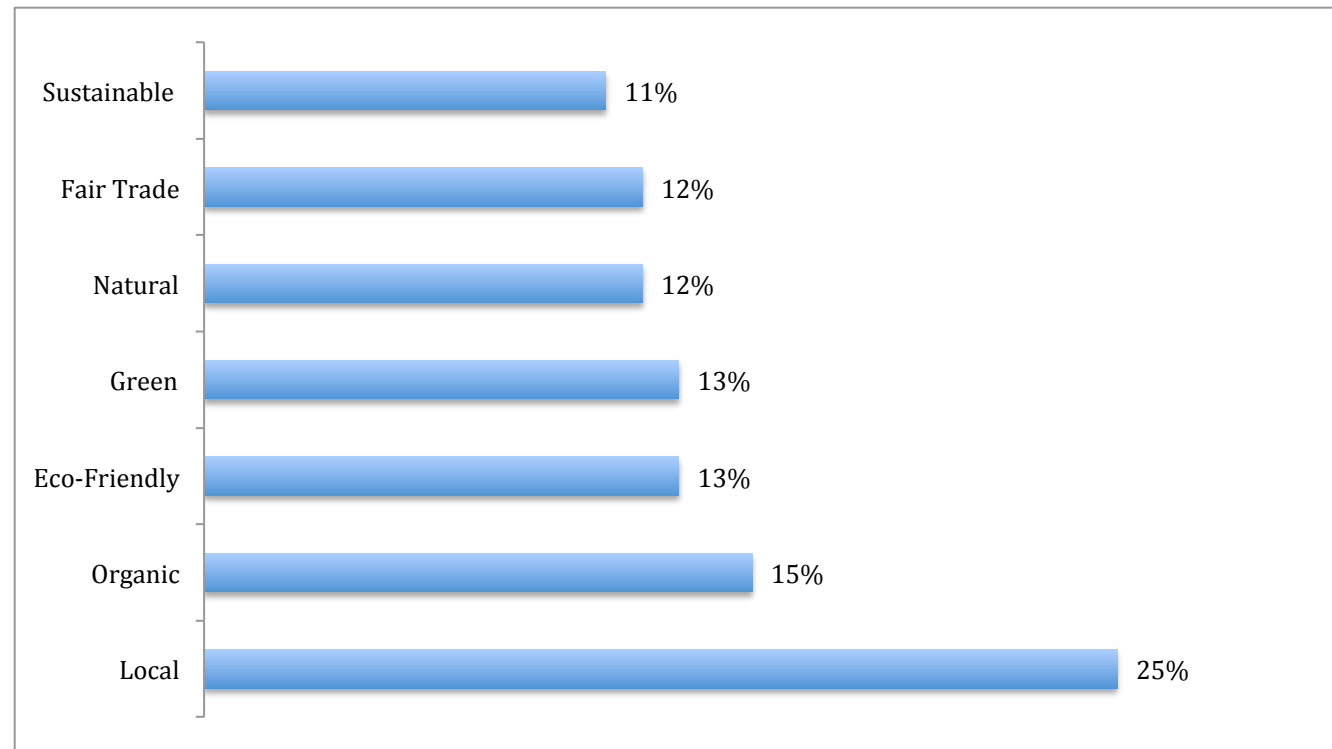
Do consumers have confidence in terms such as green, local, organic and sustainable?



Buzzwords alone don't convince most consumers.

While many consumers are at least "somewhat confident" in specific company claims about products, few are "very confident" that terms like organic and natural deliver on their promises.

As more products stock shelves with socially responsible claims, consumers are not likely to take them at face value.



About the survey



About the Survey

This study was conducted in partnership with Supportive Research Solutions and What They Think Research. Sampling was provided by ResearchNow. Data was collected between March 11-21, 2013. In total, 1,015 Americans were surveyed. Margin of error is +/-3%.

About Good.Must.Grow.

Good.Must.Grow. provides strategic marketing support for socially responsible businesses, nonprofit causes and organizations that are focused on health + wellness. We want to be part of a revolution that drives societal change by sparking increased charitable giving and community involvement as well as unprecedented levels of corporate social responsibility. Proud to be a Certified B Corp. See how we're #GrowingGood at <http://www.goodmustgrow.com>.

To discuss this study in further detail or to request a copy of the full results, please contact Good.Must.Grow. at 615-614-1180 or info@goodmustgrow.com.