



AGAINST EXPECTATION, TRUST IN BRITAIN BOUNCES BACK

- **Highest Trust Levels for Six Years**
- **Young Generation of 'Info-entials' are Optimistic, Good and Green**

London, 24 January 2008 – Britons' Trust in UK institutions is at its highest level for six years, according to the ninth annual Edelman Trust Barometer, released today. The survey of opinion-forming elites* (aged 25-34 and 35-64) shows a 'Trust Bounce' for Business, Media, NGOs and Government. The younger professionals are emerging as a more trusting generation of leadership, focused on responsible business more than financial performance.

Some of the emergent trends among the young opinion-forming elites show:

- The younger generation is generally more trusting than its older peers
- They absorb news from a range of sources and can be described as 'Info-entials' – a generation of well-informed influentials
- They are more likely to translate their Trust into direct action. The younger generation is more than twice as likely than their older peers to share views online about companies they trust (64% vs 29%) and are also vocal about those they distrust (56% vs 33%)
- This generation of young professionals are focused on being Good and Green – responsible business issues, including social and environmental track record, are more important to them than financial performance
- The young opinion-forming elite is more trusting of companies from Brazil, Russia, India and South Korea than their older peers

Robert Phillips, CEO, Edelman UK, commented: "This generation represents the future leadership of British business and they are re-shaping the Trust landscape. They more trusting than their older peers, but the nature of their Trust is different: they are not impressed by financial performance, instead having higher regard for responsibility and integrity. This has real implications for Business, Government and the Media who need to engage with them on their terms."

Phillips continued: "Despite the prospect of an economic downturn (likely to be the first for this generation of professionals), they appear to be optimistic and committed to their ideals. The question is: will hard economic reality erode this emergent idealism?"

Trust and the Media

The BBC's Director General, Mark Thompson, recently speculated whether "large swathes of the British public have lost their faith in politicians, in our democratic process, in other public institutions, and in much of the media too". According to the Edelman Trust Barometer findings, however, Trust is back among the older opinion-forming elite**. The findings show that over the past year:

- Trust in the Media jumped from 19% to 38%
- Trust in Government rose from 16% to 34%
- Trust in Business increased from 44% to 45%
- Trust in NGOs grew from 41% to 53%

Robert Phillips remarked: "The Edelman Trust Barometer surveys the opinion-forming elite, not 'large swathes of the British public'. While British institutions can

draw comfort from the return of Trust among the opinion elite, we may be witnessing the beginnings of a significant social fragmentation.”

Both generations rely heavily on traditional media outlets for business information (TV news coverage (76%) and newspapers (73%) being the highest ranking), but conversations with friends and peers make it into third place (61%).

Trust in Media companies rose 13% among the older generation over the past year.

Older opinion leaders rely on the BBC more than any other outlet for business information – at 83%, it far outranks its nearest rivals (CNN at 25%, Sky News at 20%, Financial Times at 13% and Google at 10%).

Trust and Industry

Companies headquartered in the UK are the second most trusted globally (in joint second place at 67% with the Netherlands, behind Sweden at 68%. The top five also includes: Canada at 66% and Germany at 65%).

Across both generations, Technology is the most trusted sector (69%), while Media and the Insurance industries lag at the bottom (33% and 31% respectively). Over the past year, the Energy sector (45%) has seen one of the most significant rises.

Robert Phillips remarked: “Responsibility and integrity are the key factors in driving Trust in business. This may explain why industries such as the Technology, Automotive and Energy sectors, which are seen to be addressing the challenges of climate change and developing cleaner, greener solutions have scored well.”

Trust in Politics

In January 2008, Edelman carried out supplementary research to establish whether recent political events (such as party funding rows and Northern Rock) would alter the Trust Barometer findings. The findings show that, between November 2007 and January 2008, institutions were largely unaffected by the political and economic stories dominating the news agenda. Trust in Government, Media and Business saw only a very slight dip (between 2-4%).

Robert Phillips concluded: “It appears that Trust levels are holding up. From the lows of the highly personalised Blair Government, Gordon Brown seems to have redressed the Trust credibility of Government as a whole, though his personal Trust ratings have suffered since the autumn. Nonetheless, our research shows that the Prime Minister is distrusted more than David Cameron, while the jury is still out on Nick Clegg. No doubt, 2008 will hold many ups and downs for the politicians and the personal Trust Barometer.”

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Notes to editors:

About the Edelman Trust Barometer

The 2008 Edelman Trust Barometer is the firm's ninth global trust and credibility survey.

The survey was produced by research firm StrategyOne. It consisted of thirty-minute telephone interviews conducted in October-November 2007. This year, for the first time, the survey sampled two different age groups concurrently (25-34 and 35-64).

*"Opinion elites" meet the following screening criteria:

- College educated
- In top 25% of household income per age group in each country
- Reported significant media consumption and engagement in business news and public policy
- Tracking trust from 2001 - 2008

Opinion elites aged 35-64 (N = 3,100):

- Surveyed in 18 countries: 400 in the US; 300 in China; 150 each in United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Sweden, Poland, Russia, Ireland, Mexico, Brazil, Canada, Japan, South Korea, and India
- Consistent with previous Edelman Trust Barometers

Opinion elites aged 25-34 (N = 675):

- Surveyed in 12 countries: 100 in the US; 75 in China; 50 each in United Kingdom, Germany, France, Russia, Mexico, Brazil, Japan, South Korea, Canada, and India
- New audience to the survey this year

For more information on the Edelman Trust Barometer and to view past results, please visit www.edelman.com/trust.

** Trackable data only available for the older generation (35-64 year olds)

About the Edelman Opinion Elite Survey, January 2008

StrategyOne interviewed 500 opinion elites aged 25 – 64 (200 aged 25 – 34, 300 aged 35 – 64). The interviews were conducted online between 9th – 13th January 2008.

About Edelman UK

Founded in 1952, Edelman is the world's largest independent Public Relations company, with 3,000 employees in 51 offices worldwide.

Edelman UK employs 240 people in the UK across all key Practice Areas (Consumer, Health, Technology, Financial, Corporate, Public Affairs) and includes consumer brand specialists JCPR, research company Strategy One, and Strategic Consultancy First&42nd - plus a Strategic Media Unit and Edelman Digital. The agency is a multiple-award winner in the UK for a broad range of clients - including Mars, Pfizer, Microsoft and Shell. Edelman UK is ranked Number One in the 2007 PR Week league tables of independent agencies. Edelman was named Large Agency of the Year by The Holmes Report in 2006 and European Agency of the Year for the same period.

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