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Media Release

Seventy-three percent of workers dream of working somewhere else.

The inaugural Dream Employers Survey reveals seven out of ten Australians and New Zealanders aren't working for their Dream Employer.

Sydney, 28 October 2010 – The top 10 Dream Employers as voted by the public, are Google, Virgin Group/Richard Branson, Self, Apple, Qantas, The Walt Disney Company, OMD, Sydney Water, Getaway and Coca Cola.

“Around ten percent of Australians and New Zealanders dream of working for Google. At the current job vacancy rate, it is going to take about 11,000 years for them all to get a job at Google. But the bigger question is how Google achieved its desirability when it doesn't advertise, doesn't offer glamorous holidays like Qantas, Virgin or Getaway, and doesn't have sexy products like Apple,” James Garriock, CEO, Insync Surveys.

“From the data we discovered that although many Australians do not currently work for a Dream Employer, they have very clear ideas on what makes one,” he added.

According to the survey the top drivers that make a Dream Employer are: brand reputation (41 percent), culture (39 percent) followed by work-life balance (28 percent). Generous pay or kitsch products and services are not enough to lure employees today, with reward and recognition (27 percent) considered equally as important.

Naomi Simson, Founder and CEO of RedBalloon says, “Brand reputation is how organisations treat their employees. Today, employees hold powerful positions to debunk the myth if an employer brand isn't living up to its reputation. Employers who avoid this are those who make the connection between reward and recognition and creating a powerful culture. Organisations that reward and recognise their employees for living the values create unbreakable cultures that people willingly shout about.”

Avoid the working nightmare

In response to the question “What makes a nightmare employer?” the majority of respondents nominated “poor culture” ahead of the “nature of the work”. People prefer to work in a positive, nurturing working environment.

“Many factors contribute to a positive workplace culture. Ideally, such a culture is built and disseminated through an organisation by the behaviour and attitudes of its leadership, who put a priority on making work an enjoyable and rewarding place to be. By this I mean in terms of feeling valued, respected and making a contribution that is appreciated—no matter what that work entails.” John Rawlinson, CEO Talent2.

“An employee's relationship with their immediate manager is also vital to their happiness at work. The attitude and fairness of the front line manager is consistently reported as the most common reason for employees changing roles. Yet they are essential for creating a more positive working environment—which, as the survey shows, clearly boosts employee retention and attracts better talent” he added.

Grass is greener, not-for-profits and disgruntled Baby Boomers

Self-employment is an unexpected theme among the global brands on the list. As the third ranked Dream Employer, it's a sign that Australians and New Zealanders want the freedom to pursue a personal interest and achieve work-life balance at the same time, something other employers can't offer. The majority of employees currently employed by someone else (74%) said being self-employed was their dream. However, it could well be a case of self-employment being viewed through rose-tinted spectacles, with only 35% of the self-employed respondents agreeing.

"It is great to see the percentage of people who work for their Dream Employer rising as they get older. Almost twice as many Baby Boomers work for their Dream Employer as Gen Y's. The happiest group are those who work for themselves; however although they are happier than others more than half of all self-employed people still dream of working somewhere else," says Garriock.

Given the chance to dream, twice as many people want to work for a not-for-profit (NFP) organisation as for a luxury brand. Conversely, NFPs are 50% more attractive to women than men.

The full report can be downloaded from the Dream Employers website at www.dreamemployers.com.au.

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Note to editors

For further comment on the report, please see Media Q&A sheet.

For quotes from Dream Employers please see the full report.

For further comment

James Garriock, CEO Insync Surveys can comment on the survey findings and employee engagement and alignment. Call Virginia Shaw, Insync Surveys, to arrange an interview on 0433 722 729 or 03 9909 9279.

Naomi Simson, CEO/Founder RedBalloon can comment on employer branding, culture, reward and recognition. Call Philippa Lowe, RedBalloon, to arrange an interview on 0414 711 107 or 02 8755 0040.

John Rawlinson, CEO Talent2, can comment on the implications of the findings in the context of the employment. Call Aideen McDonald, BlueChip Communication, to arrange an interview on 02 9018 8618 or 0416 946 932.

The Google and job vacancy rate analogy was based upon the below assumption

We've made the assumption that about 1.3 million¹ Australians want to work for Google. If Google continues employing at the assumed rate of 100² people per year then it will take about 11,300 years for their dreams to come true.

¹ Australia's working population is 11.3 million, sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics at <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@nsf/mf/6202.0> and Google is the Dream Employer for approximately ten percent of the population, based on response rates.

²BRW June 2009

About RedBalloon

RedBalloon transform workplace cultures through strategic employee engagement and reward and recognition programs. Using RedBalloon.com.au's unique resource of over 2500 amazing experiences in Australia and New Zealand they specialise in creating attachments between employees and their employer. RedBalloon has been awarded an engagement score of over 90% two years in a row by Hewitt Associates – the average engagement score in Australian businesses is 55%. www.redballoon.com.au/corporate

About Insync Surveys

Insync Surveys is a 2009 *BRW* Fast 100 company. With offices in Melbourne and Sydney, Insync Surveys specialises in employee, customer, board and other stakeholder surveys backed by consulting. Their experienced team of organisational psychologists and research experts help organisations become more effective.

Insync Surveys has worked with some of the largest organisations in Asia Pacific, including: Cathay Pacific, Toll, Medibank Private, WorleyParsons, Fairfax Digital, Mission Australia, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, state government departments, many local councils and most university libraries. This broad experience allows it to benchmark results. Visit: www.insyncsurveys.com.au or call +61 3 9909 9222 or +61 2 8081 2000.