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Media Release

For immediate release

Another win for Google

Insync Surveys and RedBalloon.com.au discover who our top 20 Dream Employers are, and why

Monday 19 September 2011: It's official, again. More Aussies and Kiwis dream of working for Google than any other organisation.

The Insync Surveys and RedBalloon 2011 Dream Employers Survey, Australia and New Zealand's largest public employer of choice survey, attracted over 7100 responses from the general public, and the verdict was clear.

Insync Surveys CEO James Garriock said "For the second year running, Google clearly maintained its position as the employer of choice, and the desire for people to work for themselves is as strong as ever, with self-employment ranked second, moving up from third place last year. These were followed by Virgin Group, Qantas and Apple, all of which featured in the top five last year."

Google Head of People Operations Joe Krayer said the key to their success is "To not look at programs in isolation, [but] use a multi-faceted approach to motivate and provide a culture that recognises employees."

"The foundation is our very competitive compensation package consisting of base pay, equity and bonuses", which isn't surprising given the company rolled out a global 10 % pay rise in 2010 to all employees.

But according to Mr Krayer "All compensation programs are closely tied to performance and designed to reward employees for building innovative solutions for users and business partners."

"We have in place robust reward and recognition programs, [where we] reward employees via excellent benefits and unique perks, such as massages, sleep pods and fun off-site events. Googlers often tell us their biggest reward is our unique culture and the ability to work with amazing co-workers on products with a global impact."

Money talks in 2011

The top three drivers that make a Dream Employer in 2011 are:

- pay, benefits and conditions (38%) - up 11 percentage points from sixth position in 2010
- work-life balance (37%) - up nine percentage points from third position in 2010
- culture (36%) - down three percentage points from second position in 2010

This is a notable shift from last year when the top motivation was brand or company reputation, dropping from 41 % in 2010 to 27 % this year.

Mining giants Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton both made the list – Rio entering the top 20 for the first time and BHP jumping up the ranks from twentieth in 2010 to ninth place this year. The survey results came only a week after BHP announced a net profit of \$22.5 billion for the 2010/2011 financial year, the biggest in Australian corporate history.

According to economist Saul Eslake from the Grattan Institute, this shift away from brand reputation in favour of companies that can offer financial security speaks volumes about the state of the economy.

"It's true that people are becoming more anxious about their finances in the face of rising costs of living, increased taxes, fears of higher interest rates, declines in personal wealth through superannuation fund losses and decreased house prices," Mr Eslake said.



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“Wages have been pretty static since before the onset of the GFC, so in the face of all these developments it’s perhaps not surprising that employees are attaching greater weight to pay than they were last year.”

But according to RedBalloon founding director Naomi Simson, companies may be left wanting if they put all their emphasis on the size of pay packets.

Keeping employees happy

Less than half (40 %) of respondents were satisfied with their current employer, 45% are planning to look for another job in the next 12 months and only one third (33 %) are prepared to recommend their employer.

When asked what they most want to improve about their workplace, the top three gripes were systems and processes (41%); communication (39%); and rewards and recognition (38%).

Ms Simson says reward and recognition programs are “Vital in attracting, developing and retaining key talent.

“Paying people fairly is an absolute must, but cash rewards don’t inspire employee loyalty, with studies showing that non-monetary incentives have a higher perceived value, being 24% more powerful at boosting performance than cash incentives¹.

“The survey results support what we have known for a long time – the feel-good generated by a pay rise only lasts as long as it takes for the extra cash to be swallowed by the mortgage or credit card payment.

“Offering flexibility, building high levels of employee engagement and giving employees the opportunity to learn and develop with a sense of purpose will be crucial once the thrill of a fatter pay cheque has worn off.

“Companies who ignore the benefits of having reward and recognition programs in place will pay the price with higher staff turnover and reduced productivity from disengaged employees. And worse still, they could become damaging brand ‘badvocates’.”

CEO of Insync Surveys James Garriock said “Employees want to know their work is meaningful and connected to the organisation’s goals. It is strong communication that creates this link, as people feel respected and empowered if they’re informed about things that matter to them.”

“It is the day-to-day working environment that really effects engagement and morale, and this is clearly displayed by these three key areas for improvement.

“Employees should be the biggest advocates for an organisation, helping win new customers and attract new talent, but most employers waste this opportunity. If organisations could harness the word-of-mouth power of passionately engaged employees, the bottom line impact would be potent.”

What’s new?

We’re increasingly attracted to careers that provide the opportunity to do something that matters and adds real value to our lives, with the police force and defence appearing on the top 20 for the first time.

NSW Police corporate services deputy commissioner Catherine Burn APM said it’s not surprising the findings indicate a desire for people to do something of value in their career because “Modern policing is both challenging and rewarding...and a police career provides an opportunity for officers to feel a sense of pride, having contributed to the betterment of society.”

In addition, deputy commissioner Burn indicated that participation in a range of recent TV programs has allowed the force to highlight the vast career options available “as well as the human side of policing that people may not have been aware of previously.”



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“Each year NSW Police Force holds a police open day at the Goulburn Police College - last year we had record attendance. Our organisation has grown...in terms of flexible working conditions and diversity, and I think this is appealing to many people, especially women or any person who is juggling family commitments.”

The top 20 Dream Employers as voted by the public were Google, self employed, Virgin Group, Qantas, Apple, Microsoft, OMD, Walt Disney, BHP Billiton, Getaway, United Nations, police force, Vodafone, NASA, Rio Tinto, departments of defence, Commonwealth Bank, Cadbury, Facebook and Lonely Planet.

New to the list in 2011 are NASA, Rio Tinto, Cadbury, police force, departments of defence and Facebook. Making way for these new additions are Sydney Water, Coca Cola, eBay, Salmat and ABC, who have all dropped from the top 20 this year.

Insync Surveys and RedBalloon are running a free webinar unpacking the results of the 2011 Dream Employers report with loads of advice and insights. To register or for more information visit

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/875692081>

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Notes to Editor

- The full 2011 Dream Employers Survey report is attached and can be viewed online here - <http://www.insyncsurveys.com.au/resources/research/2011/09/dream-employers-2011-report>
- For further comment on the report, please see Media Q&A/Fact Sheet

Available for further comment

- James Garriock – CEO, Insync Surveys
- Naomi Simson – founding director, RedBalloon.com.au

For more information or to arrange an interview or photo of one of our spokespeople, please contact:

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About RedBalloon

RedBalloon For Corporate provides exciting reward and recognition solutions, corporate gifts and sales incentives to ensure businesses keep their employees and customers motivated, rewarded and engaged. With a unique resource of over 2,500 amazing experiences in Australia and New Zealand RedBalloon specialises in creating attachments between employees and their employer. RedBalloon has also been awarded for its innovative employee engagement practices, named in the Best Places to Work by BRW Magazine three times, including a top ten ranking in 2009. Hewitt Associates have also awarded RedBalloon with an engagement score of over 90 percent three years in a row. The average engagement score in Australian businesses is 55 %.

About Insync Surveys

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 co-founded the Dream Employers Survey and has worked with some of the largest organisations in Asia Pacific, including: Cathay Pacific, Toll, Medibank Private, WorleyParsons,



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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.

¹ University of Chicago study, 2004. Sourced from Increase Employee Performance by Meeting Psychic Income Needs, www.globoforce.com November 2008