

**Banks in the United States Receive Reputation Rankings
Reputation Institute Releases Results of its Global Pulse – U.S. 2008 Study**

National credit crunch take down reputations of nation’s largest banks

New York, NY – June 4, 2008 – Washington Mutual notched the highest corporate reputation among the largest U.S. banks surveyed in Reputation Institute’s Third Annual Global Pulse Study, but all suffer from generally weak reputations. The Global Pulse 2008 study measures the overall respect, trust and good feelings consumers hold towards the largest 600 companies in the world, including the largest 150 U.S. companies. The top rankings for banks are:

Corporate Reputations of the Largest U.S. Banks

<u>US Companies</u>	<u>2008 Pulse Score</u>	<u>2007 Pulse Score*</u>
1 Washington Mutual	64.04	66.87
2 SunTrust Banks	63.56	N/A
3 Wachovia	61.22	64.32
4 National City	58.83	N/A
5 Wells Fargo	57.38	60.25
6 US Bancorp	54.18	N/A
7 Bank of America	50.94	57.34

Bank Industry Findings:

- The industry has an average rating of 58.59 landing them in the weak/vulnerable category.
- All the largest U.S. banks suffered drops in reputation rankings from 2007 to 2008. This dip may be due to consumers’ perceptions of the industry’s role in the recent national credit crunch.
- Atlanta based SunTrust Banks’ first foray in the survey landed them in second place behind Washington Mutual.

Reputation Drivers

Reputation Institute’s research model indicates that reputation is built on 7 pillars from which a company can create a strategic platform for communicating with its

stakeholders on the most relevant key performance indicators. These dimensions are: Products/Services, Innovation, Workplace, Citizenship, Governance, Leadership, and Performance. The 2008 Global Pulse survey indicated that consumers are most influenced by a company's delivery of high quality products and services, followed by its policies on governance (how the company is run, its ethics) and citizenship (social and environmental causes the company supports). Not surprisingly, this year, none of the largest U.S. banks included in the survey earned top spots in dimensions of reputation.

"As an industry, banks had one of the lowest reputation standings in the study," said Kasper Nielsen, Managing Partner at Reputation Institute. "The national credit crunch has brought the entire industry down and we recommend that these companies look to their policies on governance and citizenship to pull them up next year."

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Survey Methodology

The Global Pulse 2008 was conducted online in the U.S. between February and March of 2008. A Pulse score is a measure of corporate reputation calculated by averaging perceptions of 4 indicators of trust, esteem, admiration, and good feeling obtained from a representative sample of at least 100 local respondents who were familiar with the company. Scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 100, Pulse scores that differ by more than +/-0.5 are significantly different at the 95% confidence level. Scores can be categorized using the below key:

Excellent/Top Tier	above 80
Strong/Robust 70 – 79	
Average/Moderate	60 – 69
Weak/Vulnerable	40 – 59
Poor/Lowest Tier	below 40

* **Note:** 50 additional U.S. companies were added to the Global Pulse in 2008.

About Reputation Institute

Reputation Institute is a private advisory and research firm specialized in corporate reputation management. With offices and associates in more than 20 countries, Reputation Institute provides knowledge-based consulting services to some of the most respected companies worldwide. Our consulting teams regularly help global clients assess, value and act on their reputations by providing strategic analysis and direction, as well as relevant assistance in developing and implementing reputation measurement and management systems. Reputation Institute also identifies best practices from original research, and we share our cutting-edge findings with clients and members through engagements, seminars, conferences, and publications. The *Global Pulse* is Reputation Institute's flagship research study conducted annually with some 60,000 consumers in 27 countries from which emerge detailed ratings of the reputations of the world's 1000 largest companies. Each year, the results of this study are featured in leading business publications around the world. Visit *ReputationInstitute.com* to learn more about us.

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