

Trust withers as financial sector irresponsibility impacts on consumer faith in...everything

Months of financial crisis have left people far less trusting of authority figures and institutions ♦ even charities are not trusted by almost a quarter (23%) of adults and an amazing one in ten donors does not even trust the charity they support, new research has revealed.

To discover whether the irresponsible behaviour within the financial sector had eroded trust in other previously-respected institutions too, online research company CCB fast.MAP quizzed a panel of just under 1000 people whose profile echoed that of the UK population.

Almost two thirds (65%) don't trust the Government, half (49%) no longer trust their local council, yet a surprisingly small 41% (considering they shoulder much of the blame for the current recession) don't trust banks and a quarter (24%) don't trust the police However, traditionally-respected professionals such as doctors and school teachers were mistrusted by fewer than one in ten people (7%).

In fact, half of the panel (48%, the highest number) felt their doctor was entirely trustworthy, though only a fifth (22%) felt the same way about doctors in general, but still way ahead of charities in general which only 5% trusted completely and only just behind charities you support, which 28% trusted completely.

In response to less generalised questions, for example, how people feel about the organisation they use rather than that sector in general, people tend to display slightly more faith ♦ although a quarter mistrust even their own bank and 42% don't trust their own MP.

People more likely to trust the brands they use

♦The good news for marketers is the higher faith people place in the organisations they use; this loyalty can be built upon with improved communication and service, ♦ says David Cole, MD of CCB fast.MAP.

♦The mistrust of charities must ring alarm bells for fundraisers because their very existence depends upon donor goodwill.

♦Other organisations do not depend on voluntary contributions to survive and two thirds (65%) of those whose trust in charities has diminished say this has changed the way they give; 59% say it's caused them to reduce their donations. Only a third have not changed their donor behaviour in some way.

♦Many of those who gave unprompted responses, said instead of giving money they now volunteer to help local charities or donate more to charity shops. Others said they have cancelled direct debits, replaced regular donations with spontaneous gifts to local charities or stopped responding to unsolicited mail packs, ♦ Cole adds.

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