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## **New real-time reputation tracking and risk management service for UK companies**

A company's reputation is worth 20 to 40 per cent of its stock market valuation but it can be as high as 90 per cent in the case of financial and service companies that rely heavily on their brand values.<sup>1</sup> To help board directors manage their company's reputation more effectively, a new service is being launched this month in the UK that will provide an objective, automatic way of identifying and forecasting emerging risks to reputation and brand. Pioneered in the US by Evolve24, the service is applicable to both traditional and new media and can also be applied across all countries and languages.

Although the Evolve24 service is new to the UK and mainland Europe, it is already widely used in the USA by many well-known corporations and brands.

In the UK and Europe the service will be provided by Strategic Advantage, which has formed a joint venture with Evolve24. John Browne, chief executive of Strategic Advantage, says: "Our clients, without exception, have been asking us for an objective and scientific way to identify emerging reputation risks with minimal input from themselves. The new service is designed to answer this need.

"A corporate reputation is a substantial asset of growing importance. It is time for boards to bring as much rigour to managing reputation as they do to the management of their other major assets. The problem in the past has been the absence of a proven, science-based approach to the whole business of early-stage risk identification and management, and the lack of good-quality interpretation.

"Boards, brand and corporate affairs directors and investment analysts want to be able to track what is being said in all forms of media – from the traditional media such as TV, radio and the press through to the new media including all internet traffic. Without this data they cannot develop appropriate responses. And they want the findings interpreted by people who understand reputation risk. Global clients want to do this across all countries and all major languages. This is precisely what the Evolve24 service supplies.

"We are delighted to work in partnership with Evolve24," adds Browne. "We are bringing their expertise to our home markets and working with them to bring our proven reputation risk technology to the USA. We see this as a classic win-win for clients everywhere."

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<sup>1</sup> Oxford Metrica, Reputation Institute and University of Kansas research on the link between reputation, market value, book value and the profitability of companies.

Evolve24's chief operating officer, Nha Hoang, says: "Our combined skills and experience will help companies identify, manage and monitor threats to their reputation and brand and proactively turn those threats into areas of opportunity"

### **About the management team**

EVOLVE24 has its headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri, and is a leader in business analytics focusing on corporate and brand reputation. Its aim is to help companies better understand, predict, and navigate emerging and current issues. Evolve24 provides a fully integrated solution based on scientifically peer-reviewed methodology, and uses statistical tools to analyze and predict the life cycles of existing and potential issues.

STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE Ltd is based in Surrey, UK, and has a 12-year record of transforming the way UK and Europe-based global and large national companies manage reputation risk and build their in-house capabilities. Strategic Advantage has developed pioneering tools to assist in this process and these have been tested and applied across a wide range of industries.

### **Additional background for editors**

The new service is revolutionary because it features:

- Interpretation by experienced reputation risk experts backed up by an *i-room* (a *virtual management environment that receives and organises all reputation and issue information*) keeping abreast of developments in real-time. Results are fully worked through to their implications for brand strategy. At present, many companies criticize their existing suppliers for dumping data on them with little or no interpretation.
- Superior brand and reputation strategy, which comes from the confidence that critical issues are being tracked and emerging risks identified and that the things being said about a company, and by whom, are known. Proven behavioural and cognitive sciences tools are used. These are superior to "word and phrase" searches common among existing approaches.
- Weighting of the credibility and influence of commentators and stakeholders. This is factored into the results. No other approach does this objectively, based on hard data.
- A comprehensive range of public and private subscription sources, TV, radio, web sites, blogs, industry, NGO and government sources and more. The extensive database enables decisions based on well-informed interpretation.

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