



News

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Audit Integrity, Experts in Corporate Risk Detection, Salutes Top 100 Firms for Excellence in Accounting & Governance

In scandal-ridden 2006, the Audit Integrity Top 100 shone in financial controls and market performance

LOS ANGELES, Calif., March 26, 2007 – Honoring the best US corporations in accounting and governance, Audit Integrity today made public the Audit Integrity Top 100 report. As experts in risk analysis on public companies, Audit Integrity provides its subscribers with reports on the best and worst of public corporations, based on its Accounting and Governance Risk (AGR[®]) rating. This is the first time the firm has made public its view of the best companies in the US. The full report may be downloaded at www.auditintegrity.com.

In a year of continuing corporate scandals, such as back-dated options, executive compensation issues and insider trading, these 100 firms avoided those pitfalls and won Audit Integrity's recognition for transparency in financial reporting and management aligned with the interests of corporate stakeholders. Companies with high integrity – and therefore fewer litigations, financial restatements, compliance issues and related negative events – have tended to earn higher returns than their peers. The Audit Integrity Top 100 averaged 33.4 percent returns during 2006, compared with overall market returns of less than half that level.

“While our primary focus is helping our clients manage risk, we are pleased to see a confirmation of our risk methodology in market returns,” said James A. Kaplan, chairman and founder of Audit Integrity. “Investors respond positively to trustworthy, transparent management and negatively to scandals and risky behavior.”

Audit Integrity's AGR ratings, as a proxy for corporate integrity, are monitored by insurers, auditors, investors and other concerned corporate stakeholders to assess and manage their risk in dealing with public companies. It is the only comprehensive assessment of corporate integrity, combining forensic accounting techniques and evaluation of behavior and motivation in corporate governance. The AGR Profiles, updated with each quarterly reporting, offer specifics on questionable behaviors and their risk implications.

“Our subscribers already have access to our ratings of these firms, as well as 8,000 others. But we felt these top-rated firms deserved a public acknowledgment,” notes Jack Zwingli, CEO of Audit Integrity. “In addition to helping our subscribers avoid high-risk companies, we also deliver value by pointing out the companies that appear to be doing the right things, and who should be recognized and rewarded for their integrity.”

The report, including the list of public companies, is available at www.auditintegrity.com. Likewise visitors to the Audit Integrity Web site may download samples of AGR reports. Qualified applicants may obtain a free trial subscription of Audit Integrity’s reports and alerts services.

About Audit Integrity

Audit Integrity is an independent research and rating service that evaluates the risks associated with the accounting and governance practices of over 8,000 public corporations. Its industry-leading methodology, based on comprehensive data collection and proprietary analytics, produces statistically reliable measurements of the integrity of reported financial results and corporate governance practices.

Audit Integrity’s flagship Accounting and Governance Risk (AGR) rating system grades companies on a scale of 1 to 100, from Very Aggressive to Conservative. The company has established a direct correlation between its accounting and governance risk assessments and actual stock price performance, as well as the likelihood of such adverse events as class action litigation, financial restatements and SEC enforcement actions.

The company was founded in 2002 and serves the financial and investment communities from offices in New York and Los Angeles.

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