



THE TIMES 100

Vodafone summary

Introduction

Vodafone is one of the world's largest mobile network operators. It provides mobile telecommunication links and networks to support mobile phones. Its aim is to be the leading company in the communications market. Vodafone also has a commitment to Corporate Responsibility (CR). This is when a business tries to ensure its activities have a positive influence on the people and places where it works. Vodafone is aiming to reduce the company's carbon footprint by encouraging the recycling and re-use of old phones. This policy also brings benefits to the company's stakeholders. Stakeholders are individuals, groups or organisations that have an interest in the business.

External stakeholders

External stakeholders are those that are outside the organisation. The two main groups affected by phone recycling and re-use are customers and partner charities.

- Customers may be either businesses or individuals. Businesses can reduce their carbon footprint by making fewer business journeys. With the right technology, it is possible to work efficiently and securely from anywhere. Vodafone also encourages its customers and employees to recycle old phones. These contain materials that could be dangerous if not properly disposed of. Vodafone also encourages customers to upgrade phones less often (typically every eighteen months at present) as well as recycling and re-use.
- One of the company's main partner charities is Global Cool Foundation UK, which aims to encourage a saving of a million tonnes of CO₂ in the UK to help halt global warming. The money from recycling also supports the charity Solar Aid, providing solar powered devices in Zambia, as well as the Million Superheroes Campaign. This aims to recruit a million people in the UK who promise to reduce their carbon emissions.

Recycling agents and the supply chain

Another group of external stakeholders is Vodafone's suppliers. The supply chain shows how a product gets from supplier to consumer. A well-managed supply chain creates a much longer life cycle for the product. In the case of phones, this is by returning them to the retailer for recycling or re-use rather than throwing them away. Vodafone sends phones to Fonebak. This organisation recycles or re-uses the phone or its parts. They are then sold to lower income countries. For each handset returned, Vodafone donates around £8 to Global Cool Foundation UK.

Internal stakeholders

Internal stakeholders are within the business. The most obvious group is employees. Employees play an important role in helping Vodafone to reach its CR goals. They reduce waste, communicate electronically rather than on paper and recycle their phones.

Shareholders

Shareholders own part of the business and are financial stakeholders. Vodafone includes CR reports as part of its annual report. This shows shareholders that the commitment to CR is good business as well as good sense.

Conclusion

It is important for leading companies to show that they act responsibly. Vodafone's Corporate Responsibility policy helps the environment, keeps its stakeholder happy and helps the business in the long term.