

GM gets punctured by ratings

Media Image of US Companies – 1st Quarter 2006

Ailing motor giant General Motors was the most covered company by opinion-leading US media during the first three months of the year, but an analysis of over 400 passages on the company by **Media Tenor** shows that GM received predominantly negative coverage.

It comes as no surprise for a company awash with so many problems that last year it saw its corporate credit rating reduced to junk status. Weighed by mounting losses, a shrinking market share and by heavy pension and benefit costs, the average media rating the company was -20%. It would be little consolation for GM to know that its equally ailing rival Ford Motors received nearly equally negative ratings, although half the media coverage. Inversely, Toyota tops the list among the positively rated companies, as the Japanese firm gears itself up to dethrone General Motors as the world's largest car maker. In nearly 100 passages Toyota received over 40% positive rating. DaimlerChrysler received relatively more media coverage in the US than Toyota during the first quarter of this year, placing third among the most positively covered companies.

Apple Corp placed second in the list of most positively rated companies, thanks to its hugely profitable

iPod products that turned it into one of the world's most successful companies. It received an average 25% positive rating in around 150 passages analysed by **Media Tenor**.

Former US energy giant Enron is a fascinating example of how bad news can make good news, at least for the media. It was the second most covered company during the review period, with nearly 300 passages analysed. It received a stunning 90% negative rating, by far the most negatively covered company in opinion-leading US media.

The second most negatively covered company was insurance giant American International Group, that in February agreed to pay more than \$1.6 billion to settle state and federal charges of accounting abuses. Placing third among the most negatively rated companies was shipping services provider Dubai Port World, which got horridly entangled in a controversy in the US following a takeover of P&O.

Media Tenor's media research findings also show that Google was the third most covered company after GM and Enon, with a generally positive rating of over 10%. It is interesting to observe that media tends to give more platform for the US companies. zb

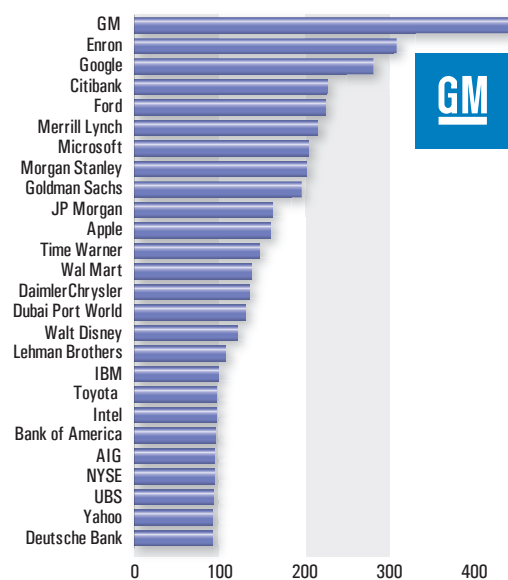
Basis:

Media: ABC, NBC, CBS evening news, Fox news, Wall Street Journal U.S., Time, Newsweek

Time: 01/01 – 03/31/2006

Analysis: 23,494 reports on companies/managers

Coverage of top-companies in opinion-leading U.S. media 01-03/2006

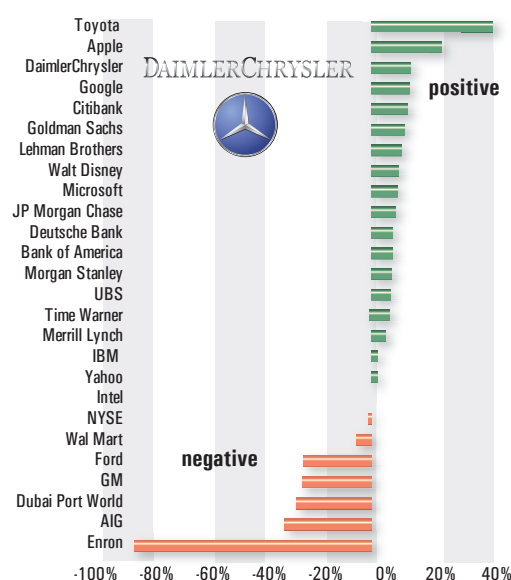


Number of reports

Source: Media Tenor
01/01 - 03/31/2006

Basis: 23,494 reports
in 7 US media

Rating of top-companies in 7 opinion-leading U.S. media



Balance of +/- ratings

Source: Media Tenor
01/01 - 03/31/2006

Basis: 23,494 reports
in 7 US media

Zetsche's strategies yield fruits on DC's corporate reputation