

■ Third-Party Opinion



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This year, I am pleased to offer my first third-party opinion for the *Mazda Sustainability Report 2009*. Based on my 10 years' experience in the support of CSR and sustainability management of Japanese companies in several industries, I will offer my opinions on (1) the strong points in this report, (2) points that can be further improved in terms of communication, and (3) proposals for the advancement of CSR management at Mazda.

(1) Strong points in the Mazda Sustainability Report 2009

Above all, I was able to confirm in this report a dramatic increase in effort to communicate effectively compared to the previous year's report. First, the design is significantly improved, so that the reports are much easier to read. Second, the division of the report into Data and Storybook sections greatly improves accessibility to readers.

Regarding structure and content, I would like to make the following three points.

- a) The report focused on environmental issues and reported in considerable detail regarding powertrains, the most important issue for automakers, including Mazda's vision for powertrains of the future. The i-stop system, a new endeavor connected to environmental branding, was also reported in easy-to-understand terms.
- b) Measures advanced through Mazda's business partners—its suppliers and value chain—were described separately and in great detail.
- c) The number of pages devoted to reporting on measures aimed at employees was greatly increased. I was particularly impressed with the establishment of the Mazda Way and its coverage, and how this core philosophy was tied in with CSR management.

(2) Points that can be further improved in CSR/sustainability communications

As a conventional report, the *Mazda Sustainability Report 2009* clearly achieves the same levels of quality and completeness as the CSR reports of the world's leading companies. Even so, I believe a comprehensive examination and implementation of CSR/sustainability communications strategy is called for. In examining that communications strategy, I would like to submit the following two points of potential improvement for consideration.

- a) The most important matter is the continuous development of communications that seamlessly integrate corporate and marketing communications with respect to the environment and sustainability. Currently, it is not clear whether Mazda is doing this or not, so some strengthening of this aspect would be valuable.
- b) Examine whether it is really necessary to publish a report of more than 80 pages on paper media every year. For example, you could publish "Stories" every year, but place other information as a "simple progress report" with the detailed information published on the Web. Doing this could dramatically reduce the volume of paper used.

(3) Proposals for enhancement of CSR management

Reading the *Mazda Sustainability Report 2009* gave me a palpable sense of the sure progress Mazda has made in CSR management. However, the report does not provide comprehensive targets or explain how key performance indicators (KPIs) are set. More clarity would be welcome in the "Six Areas of CSR Operations" on page 24 and "Key Stakeholder Relationships" on page 25, regarding what Mazda's aims are and how it measures progress toward those aims. Inclusion of such information would lead to the achievement of the next advances in CSR management.