



FORUM RSE MÍDIAS



Foreword

The “CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) in the Media Sector” Guide was officially published and launched on 6 March 2014.

The Guide is the first publication of the French *Forum CSR Médias*, in partnership with the ORSE (French Study Center for Corporate Social Responsibility). It is intended to lay the groundwork for a dialogue between CSR experts and all players and observers in the Media sector.

▪ The French *Forum RSE Médias*

The *Forum RSE Médias* was established in 2011, in anticipation of the publication of the first international framework on CSR reporting for companies in the Media Sector, by the Global Reporting Initiative (Media Sector Supplement of the GRI published in May 2012). It brings together French Media companies involved in CSR, and represents today a wide universe, which includes public and private audiovisual broadcast, cultural contents, free press, magazine press and Internet content, both general and specialized. With the help of researchers, government officials, and other organizations, it allows to share industry’s best practices, meet stakeholders and develop tools for sectoral reporting.



▪ ORSE

French Study Center for Corporate Social Responsibility (ORSE) is a non-profit organization created in June 2000. The network brings together over 100 members to study and promote Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The association’s success is based on the sharing of experience and heavy involvement of representatives of its members in ORSE activities. Its members include major corporations, management companies and investors, professional bodies and organizations representing employees and employers, and non-governmental organizations. The ORSE supports the *Forum RSE Médias* in its work.

▪ About the Guide

This Guide was prepared from September 2013 to February 2014 by the *Forum RSE Médias*. It is enhanced by interviews with CSR directors from Media sector companies, and by resources collected by the British and French Media CSR Forums and ORSE experts.

It is divided into two parts:

- The first is an introductory booklet presenting CSR issues in the Media sector, the existing regulations, the sector economy and the organization of CSR in Media companies.
- The second part contains the first 7 practical factsheets on sector specific CSR issues.

This “CSR in the Media Sector” Guide is designed to be updated and expanded through the joint work of the *Forum RSE Médias* and ORSE, as well as their partners.



Brief overview of the introductory booklet

The Media, companies like any others?

Companies from the Media sector are still barely associated to sustainable development, except because of the Media coverage they do on the topic. The economic sectors whose impacts are more environmental and measurable have indeed been the first to develop specific dedicated policies and to report for their performances.

But, in the last decade, the concept of “social responsibility” has gained a more systemic view. Within this dynamic, companies from the Media sector – whose main impacts, beyond the environmental topic, are linked to the produced and diffused contents – are called to deliver to their stakeholders more information on their own issues.

In this respect, the GRI Media Sector Supplement (GRI MSS) presents the essential role played by Media sector companies *vis-à-vis* society through the following axes: freedom of expression; information and education; pluralism and diversity; checks and balances; cultural expression and social cohesion; interaction with the public; outreach on sustainable development-related issues; and the “social footprint” (or influence) of content.

CSR standards in the Media sector

Some of the existing CSR standards offer sectoral adaptations focused on sector-specific CSR issues.

1. The GRI published a Media Sector Supplement in May 2012 (based on the G3.1 version). In 2012, the French *Forum RSE Médias* focused its work on integrating the GRI Media supplement into the French context and provides a French translation on the ORSE website.
2. In June 2012, the French *Forum RSE Médias* worked on the adaptation of the ISO 26000 to the Media sector in order to identify all the issues in the sector.
3. The ISAS BC 9001 standard (from the Swiss “Media and Society” foundation) is not, strictly speaking, a CSR standard but a “quality approach” which addresses challenges such as the quality and accuracy of information, public satisfaction, program diversity, etc.

CSR and Regulation: a blurred frontier for the audiovisual sector

In France, broadcasting regulation is entrusted to an independent administrative authority. The *Conseil Supérieur de l’Audiovisuel* (Higher Audiovisual Council - CSA) is responsible for monitoring compliance with ethical rules (respect for human dignity and public order, pluralism and integrity of information, protection of childhood and adolescence, defense...). Thus, for French audiovisual Media, the boundary between regulation and CSR is blurred, since their CSR issues are already heavily regulated.



Brief overview of the practical factsheets

In this first publication, seven issues were discussed in greater detail through practical factsheets. These were selected due to their importance to stakeholders and CSR repositories, and depending on the capacity of the working group to identify the following: definition and overview, challenges and opportunities, regulatory framework, qualitative or quantitative indicators and examples of initiatives.

#1

Accessibility

"Media accessibility" refers to our ability to use, read, listen to, watch, comment on, share and contribute to all forms of media. A range of physical, social, financial, geographical and generational limits can disrupt or prevent our use of the media. The digital divide for example (which excludes part of the audience from the tools and practices of information and communication technology) can result from several of these causes.

#2

Media Literacy

The GRI MSS suggests Media Literacy to be included into Media companies' CSR policies. They are therefore invited to implement "a management approach to empower audiences and society at large to develop skills to understand and engage with content, improve digital literacy, produce content, express themselves and, critically consume and analyze content."

#3

Journalism Ethics & Codes of conduct

Information is an essential part of media content, where print and audiovisual journalists are the most visible players. Their professional identity is based much more on personal ethics and professional codes of conduct than on technical capacity and administrative status. Codes of conduct express the collective morality of a profession, dictating what is permitted or prohibited. Ethics refers instead to individual challenges, the answers to which may vary depending on the context.

#4

Environmental Impact

For the media, the distribution of content depends on the chosen support or channel, which in turn rely on the availability of natural resources. The depletion of these resources, especially the plundering and social conflicts potentially related to their extraction, can threaten the reputation and image of the media.

#5

Youth Protection

The use of the media by a young public had already inspired many regulations by the public authorities, long before the Internet raised new challenges for minor protection. Youth protection goes hand in hand with media literacy (practical factsheet #2). It falls systematically within the CSR of the media sector in all areas of content production, as it has now been extended to Internet content, video games and social media.

#6

Representation & Promotion of Diversity

In the media sector, diversity acquires specific meaning, through the representation of national, social and cultural diversity in media content, on the one hand, and the diversity of the content itself (geographical spread, genre, era, etc.) on the other. Fostered by the regulator and NGOs, main French television channels and media companies adopted a transverse management body to deal with the diversity issue.

#7

Public Awareness of Sustainable Development

The media can contribute, through their content, to providing the public with the tools to understand the key sustainable development issues. As direct or indirect information providers, the media have a potential power to raise awareness of sustainable development, which requires, above all, a behavioural change.

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ORSE
Observatoire sur la Responsabilité Sociétale des Entreprises

The whole Guide is available online (in French) in the ORSE website (heading on "CSR in the media sector"):

www.orse.org

For more information: contact@orse.org