Cision and NIRI Release 2021 State of Investor Relations Report
Nationwide study reveals top trends in an unparalleled time with ESG, CSR and D&I initiatives remaining key priorities

CHICAGO, March 23, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- The events of 2020 had a profound impact on businesses around the world, creating a barrage of challenges for investor relations teams and the need to quickly pivot. A new nationwide study from Cision and the National Investor Relations Institute (NIRI) shows how investor relations teams rose to the occasion in the midst of a global pandemic, social and racial strife and economic uncertainty – and adjusted strategies for the year ahead.

The study, The State of Investor Relations in the Virtual World, features interviews and survey insights from IR leaders in the U.S., representing organizations across industries and ranging in size from micro- to mega-cap corporations. The results offer insights into what worked, what needs improvement and when activities will return to normal.

View the report.

Key Takeaways

- As the pandemic and escalating racial and political tensions mobilized communities, IR teams underscored their organizations' commitments to purpose and equality:
  - The majority said the importance of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) initiatives grew in 2020 compared to 2019.
  - Over one-third (36%) shined a brighter spotlight on their current and future diversity and inclusion (D&I) efforts.
  - 44% expect their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) budgets to grow in 2021.

- Thousands of in-person meetings, roadshows and investor conferences were canceled after March 2020, forcing a shift to virtual environments that continues today:
  - 45% of companies plan to hold completely virtual shareholder or general meetings this year while others are still weighing their options.
  - Newswire releases, webcasts and IR contact CRMs ranked as the top communications vehicles for IR teams in an increasingly digital space.

- While most IR leaders (92%) were satisfied with how they responded to the immediate plunge into virtual communications, one third (33%) felt that working from home impacted their seat at the table with senior management.

"As the pandemic forced many professions to change the way they conducted business, our study shows IR teams have been resilient and quick to embrace new methods to communicate with their stakeholders," said Liam Power, Senior Vice President of Distribution at Cision. "Themes of diversity, equality, sustainability and mission-related investing will continue to headline IR narratives as companies work to create positive change while driving business growth."

Cision is hosting a webinar on Thursday, April 8th, at 2:00 p.m. ET on The State of Investor Relations in the Virtual World, featuring insights and strategies from senior IR executives at leading companies. Register for the webinar.

Methodology
Cision and NIRI consulted 90 senior IR leaders across the U.S. through one-on-one interviews and a nationwide online survey from October 8 to December 10, 2020. The participants represented a wide range of industries and market caps.

About NIRI
Founded in 1969, NIRI is the professional association of corporate officers and investor relations consultants responsible for communication among corporate management, shareholders, securities analysts and other financial community constituents. The largest professional investor relations association in the world, NIRI's more than 2,800 members represent over 1,350 publicly held companies.

About Cision
As a global leader in PR, marketing and social media management technology and intelligence, Cision helps brands and organizations to identify, connect and engage with customers and stakeholders to drive business results. PR Newswire, a network of over 1.1 billion influencers, in-depth monitoring, analytics and its Falcon.io social media platform headline a premier suite of solutions. In addition, Cision has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire Brandwatch. Cision has offices in 24 countries throughout the Americas, EMEA and APAC. For more information about Cision's award-winning solutions, including its next-gen Cision Communications Cloud®, visit www.cision.com and follow @Cision on Twitter.

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