Dear Hocus,

I have long felt that if we find it beneficial to rate our television, movies, and video games for consumer awareness, then why don't we also rate corporations? These entities have far greater effects on us, dominating our economy and culture, so I believe they should be subject to a similar ratings system. I would name this rating project "Rated C for Corporate". It would consist of clear, concise, understandable infographics that display how a corporation performs for the benefit of consumers.

Consumer-oriented projects such as the Better Business Bureau and Consumer Reports once served the public, but have become tools for industry rather than serving us. "Rated C for Corporate" would comprise infographics that clearly display how a corporation performs in the following metrics:

1. CEO to wage-earner ratio

2. Environmental impact

3. Collective public good

4. Diversity and Inclusion

5. Transparency and Accountability

I believe a key aspect of this project would be the graphic that illustrate these performance metrics. By being truly easy to read at a glance, I believe they would inherently have the ability to go viral—an important aspect of the Rated C for Corporate project. These infographics could be made available through a web browser plug-in that would affix the graphics to web pages. Alternately, the graphics could be printed on stickers and given to volunteers to be applied to street print advertising in a guerrilla effort. I imagine that if the graphics were genuinely useful and clear, consumers would find numerous ways to engage with them.

I would also create an accompanying web site where a consumer could look up any company and see the metrics and how they were determined and the

sources for the metrics. There could be a company-to-company comparison feature. It might be possible to create a Reddit-like feature that would allow people to contribute information to affect scores with editorial oversight.

There are several difficult hurdles to this project. One, figuring out metrics that are fair, consumer-oriented, that work across multiple industries, and are hard to argue against. Two, it requires the gathering of a vast amount of information. It's hard not to see this program needing to be a Wikipedia-like crowdsourced effort with all sorts of people being able to contribute, fact check, and edit. That sort of development comes with its own problems if it is to become a trusted source. If the nature of the site were to utilize crowdsourcing, strict but fair protocols would have to be put in place to verify the information provided, while filtering out folks with an axe to grind.

Believe it or not, the thing that most scares me about such a project is if it were to succeed! I look to individuals like Craig Newmark who created Craigslist and Jimmy Wales who founded Wikipedia and have let their creations largely consume their lives. Would I truly want to commit everything to this endeavor? I think I could handle this part, especially if it were to become more of a communal effort as it grew—especially if it truly benefited the public.

There is also the potential for significant corporate blowback. Would corporations try to engage, pervert or outright sue an individual or organization for attempting such a project? This part keeps me up at night, knowing as I do that corporations rigorously defend their bottom lines and don't play nice.

Still, I can see "Rated C for Corporate" planned out in my head. I can see the infographics. I've made several attempts to design them and work out the metrics. Witnessing such a creation develop and spread throughout the web and the real world would truly make me proud.

Yours sincerely,
Russell Warner