

# Leading Practices on Disability Inclusion



Business Leadership Network  
**USBLN**  
DISABILITY AT WORK





The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than 3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations.

# Table of Contents

<b>Welcome Letter</b> .....	<b>2</b>
-----------------------------	----------

<b>Workplace Disability Inclusion Assessment Tool</b> .....	<b>3</b>
---	----------

## **Disability Inclusion Across the Enterprise**

AT&T .....	4
BlueCross and BlueShield of Florida .....	5
Cargill .....	6
CSC .....	7
Ernst & Young, LLP .....	8
The Hartford .....	9
HCSC .....	10
Lowe's .....	11
Manpower .....	12
Merck & Co. Inc. ....	13
Northrop Grumman .....	14
PepsiCo .....	15
QUALCOMM, Inc. ....	16
Unum .....	17
Walgreens .....	18

## **Using the Disability Marketplace to Attract New Customers**

3M .....	19
AMC Theaters .....	20
AOL .....	21
IBM .....	22
Verizon .....	23



Successful businesses recognize that incorporating disability in all diversity and inclusion practices positively impacts their companies' bottom line. Corporate CEOs understand that it's cost effective to recruit and retain the best talent regardless of disability. Chief technology officers know that technologies that are usable by all employees lead to greater productivity. Senior purchasing managers recognize the economic benefits of broadening their supplier bases to include diverse categories, such as disability-owned businesses, and savvy marketing directors eagerly embrace opportunities to increase their companies' share of new markets.

While businesses sometimes encounter serious challenges as they seek to implement inclusion strategies, many employers have overcome these hurdles with robust and creative practices. Through the Leading Practices on Disability Inclusion initiative, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the US Business Leadership Network (USBLN®) invited business leaders to share their successful disability inclusion strategies. This publication highlights successful strategies that can be used by businesses of all sizes to create a more inclusive workplace, marketplace, and supply chain. Real-life examples, such as these, are important to help businesses realize the wide range of opportunities available and the potential for replicating success.

The companies and leaders featured in this publication provide valuable insights on the successes they have realized through the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of their corporate enterprises as well as in their marketing. In addition to these effective strategies, an assessment is included as a tool to initiate or enhance your company's disability-friendly corporate practices.

Sincerely,

**Thomas J. Donohue**  
President and CEO  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

**Jill Houghton**  
Acting Executive Director  
US Business Leadership Network

# Workplace Disability Inclusion Assessment Tool

This checklist is designed to provide companies with a tool to initiate or enhance their disability-friendly corporate practices.

## Check the box that best applies to your organization

Yes

No

Not Applicable

### Recruitment

The term “disability” is specifically mentioned in diversity and inclusion materials.

☐☐☐

Job applicants with disabilities are actively recruited.

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Recruiters have established contacts with staffing entities that are knowledgeable about disabilities.

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Recruiters receive training on interviewing job candidates with disabilities.

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Recruiting materials are available in alternative formats, e.g., braille, large print, electronic.

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Application materials are available in alternative formats.

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The company regularly evaluates its physical plant for accessibility.

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### Employment

A companywide reasonable accommodation policy is in place.

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A formal accommodation process exists.

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If leadership training is available for women and minorities, it is also available to employees with disabilities.

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Logistics for skills training courses include provisions for sign language interpreters, training materials in alternative accessible formats, and training held in accessible locations.

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An employee resource group (also called an affinity group) focused on disabilities exists.

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Disability is included in all diversity and inclusiveness training.

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### Diversity Supplying

The company's diversity supplier program includes outreach to disability-owned companies.

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Any diversity supplier programs your company offers, e.g., mentoring or small business education programs, include suppliers with disabilities.

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### Technology Access

The company's IT department is knowledgeable about accessible technology.

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The company's website is accessible to users of screen readers.

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There is a companywide policy requiring that technology tools and resources, e.g., online travel, expenses or employee benefits, are accessible.

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### Marketing

Images of people with disabilities appear in advertisements, collateral materials, and other external communications.

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Disability appropriate language is required in all documents, including press releases and presentations.

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**“At AT&T, accessibility is so much more than a word; it’s an aspiration that drives a commitment to connecting people with their world—a commitment to continuous innovation. This philosophy is rooted in the invention of the telephone, which took place while Alexander Graham Bell was exploring ways to help the deaf. From our early days as a leader in relay service and work on hearing aids, to our current lineup of hearing-aid compatible digital wireless devices, screen readers, and the visionary ideas being explored in our laboratories, AT&T innovation leads to access.”**

*—Cynthia Brinkley, Senior Vice President, Talent Development & Chief Diversity Officer*



## Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Communications

**Number of Employees:** 266,000

**www.att.com**

We know that diverse, talented, and dedicated people are critical to our success, so we seek out individuals from diverse backgrounds and give them opportunities to grow and develop in their careers. We have long been a leader in providing an inclusive work environment, offering performance-based rewards, and creating cultures of excellence.

Management is accountable for leading diversity initiatives as part of this philosophy. Our leaders understand the value of inclusiveness—and our managers are trained to understand a simple philosophy: We better serve our customers when we build diversity into all we do—and that positively impacts our shareowners.

These diversity initiatives point to actions that managers can take to foster a positive, inclusive work environment, which leads to enhanced performance and increased profitability for our company.

AT&T’s diversity and inclusion strategy aligns with our business goals and leadership priorities in key areas, including workforce diversity and employee development, strategic relationships and reputation management, customers and community, and supplier diversity.

In 2009, we created the Chief Diversity Officer Forum to provide a venue to formally integrate, leverage, and grow enterprise-wide initiatives to become best-in-class from a diversity perspective. The forum meets quarterly throughout the year to monitor the progress of these initiatives.

Leadership action and accountability are essential to our culture’s success, which is why we also created the Business Unit Diversity Council initiative to help build greater awareness around diversity while creating an inclusive culture. This initiative enables us to work collaboratively toward our goal of making diversity a top priority for our company, while gaining increased commitment from business units as they drive employee engagement around diversity.

At AT&T, our people are our company. That’s why we’re committed to providing employees with high-level, state-of-the-art opportunities to learn and develop as they define their careers.

To support our commitment to diversity, AT&T provides accessibility tools and career development initiatives.





**“Understanding our multicultural marketplace and creating a workplace of openness and trust are critical to our success as a company. We recognize that our members and our employees come from all walks of life. If we are not open to different viewpoints and diverse needs, we will not be successful or respected.”**

*–Sherri Mikell, Vice President, Cultural Competence and Diversity Systems*



## Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Health Solutions

**Number of Employees:** 5,500

**www.blbsfl.com**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida (BCBSF) has a community-driven, customer-focused mission. Our corporate beliefs call for a commitment to the public good, and we consistently attempt to make a constructive contribution to the well-being of our customers and all Floridians.

Our leadership's commitment to the inclusion of people with disabilities is exemplified by our work with our Employee Resource Group (ERG) “possAbilities.”

This chartered ERG focuses on employees with disabilities, family members with disabilities, disability-owned supplier companies, and customers with disabilities. The possAbilities employee resource group was launched in November 2008 to accomplish the following:

- Provide a foundational understanding of disabilities and related issues for all.
- Offer awareness, education, and understanding to drive BCBSF's leadership.
- Attract employees and customers who are enthusiastic about a company that supports people with disabilities.
- Leverage experience and knowledge to advocate on behalf of persons with disabilities.
- Enhance partnerships with external organizations to support the community of people with disabilities.

The vast majority of the deliverables for the ERG center on promoting education, changing attitudes, and understanding the differences and value of people with disabilities.

Further, possAbilities sponsors several educational activities throughout the year, including lunch-and-learn events. Here are some accomplishments:

- A computer-based training to improve the mentee experience for participation in the annual Disability Mentoring Day program.
- Establishment of nearly 50 internships throughout our organization for students and disabled veterans with disabilities.
- Relationships with community disability organizations.
- Executive level attendance and support for every educational session and symposium that possAbilities facilitates.
- CEO was the featured speaker at the launch of the First Coast Business Leadership Network.
- A dedicated resource with a centralized budget and corresponding policy on disability accommodations.

BCBSF lives out our commitment through activities such as supporting the establishment of the First Coast and Greater Orlando Business Leadership Networks (BLNs), serving in leadership roles for the Florida BLN and USBLN, and supporting charitable and disability-focused organizations across Florida communities. We maintain a process improvement focus and have changed business processes, policies, and technology in support of our goals focusing on people with disabilities. BCBSF's goal is to enhance an inclusive and supportive environment that empowers individuals with disabilities to be productive and achieve their full potential.



**“Cargill needs a talent pool as broad as possible to succeed in a competitive global environment. Therefore, we are building our awareness and understanding of the contributions, experiences, and skills that employees with disabilities bring to our company.”**

*—Greg Page, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer*



## Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Food, agricultural, financial, and industrial

**Number of Employees:** 131,000

**[www.cargill.com](http://www.cargill.com)**

The world is becoming increasingly global, visible, and transparent. As Cargill continues to expand worldwide, our differences—from our culture and work habits to communication style and personal preferences—are becoming even more essential to our business strategy. We are working hard to create an environment in which all employees are valued and respected, including those with disabilities.

Our Disability AWAREness Council partners with our company's leadership to build and sustain a supportive culture with the goal of employing individuals with disabilities. Cargill's council focuses on three key areas:

**Education and awareness** to engage employees and the communities we serve:

- Sponsor of Autism Society of Minnesota's Employment Forum.
- Display artwork created by individuals with disabilities.
- Host events throughout the year spotlighting disability-related topics.
- Sponsor Special Olympics, including "Casual for a Cause Day."
- Host movie screening and autism awareness discussion featuring Temple Grandin.

**Comprehensive resources** to help our managers and employees champion disability-related initiatives:

- Encourage employees to join the Disability AWAREness Council.
- Have an internal website that features tools to foster increased knowledge and an understanding of employing people with disabilities.
- Urge council members to serve as a resource to employees living with disabilities, either themselves or their family.

**Outreach and recruitment efforts** encouraging individuals with disabilities to apply for open positions:

- Host Project SEARCH, a work-based learning program that provides education experiences to students with disabilities through workplace immersion.
- Partner with organizations focused on creating competitive employment opportunities for people with disabilities.





**“At CSC, we value the diversity of our employees and the unique perspectives they bring to the company and are committed to treating everyone with fairness and respect.”**

*—Michael W. Laphen, Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer*



## Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Technology

**Number of Employees:** 94,000

**www.csc.com**

CSC approaches full inclusion of employees with disabilities through a multidimensional program to ensure that they receive equal treatment in all aspects of employment. This includes the following:

- Increasing the number of individuals with disabilities employed in all positions—professional, administrative, technical, clerical, and other categories.
- Providing promotional opportunities for employees with disabilities through training, career development, and leadership programs.
- Encouraging employees with disabilities to participate in all CSC programs, elevating the level of awareness within the CSC population.
- Serving as a role model for the employment of people with disabilities in all communities in which we work.

A highlight of the CSC program is “ABILITIES First!”—a global employee resource/affinity group that was created to provide mentoring. In conjunction with this employee resource group, CSC holds disability awareness lunch-and-learn sessions and participates in the annual Disability Mentoring Day. CSC has also formed strong partnerships with several disability organizations and sponsors disability community

events. Organizational partnerships include Easter Seals, the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), Best Buddies, and Bender Consulting. Sponsored events include the Bender Leadership Academy, the annual Epilepsy Walk in Washington, D.C., the Red Cross Fire and Ice Ball, the US Business Leadership Network Annual Conference, and the Cell Phones for Soldiers drives.

To ensure a disability-friendly workplace, CSC launched a Video Phone program throughout the United States and entered into a national agreement with an interpreter service. In addition, CSC offers a braille business card option to our employees and posted the “What Can You Do” campaign materials on the CSC intranet.

CSC is proud of the awards and recognition we have received, including the Secretary of Labor’s 2005 New Freedom Initiative Award, the AAPD Justice for All Award, the Epilepsy Foundation Award, and twice receiving the Tony Coelho Award. CSC was named a Top 50 Employer for Persons with Disabilities by *Careers & the disABLED* magazine 2010/2011. As a result of CSC’s initiatives, partnerships, and continued support from executive leadership, 11% of CSC’s hires in the United States alone for the last fiscal year were people with disabilities.



**“At Ernst & Young, we pride ourselves on attracting, developing, and retaining the best people; I’m proud of the progress we’ve made at increasing awareness, educating our people, and working to make sure we support those with differing abilities in the most effective ways.”**

*–Steve Howe, Americas Managing Partner*



## Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Assurance, tax, transaction, and advisory services

**Number of Employees:** 141,000

**www.ey.com**

Ernst & Young is committed to building an inclusive and flexible workplace for all our people. A key part of that commitment calls for us to do all we can to develop a disabilities-friendly culture. Our goal is to foster working relationships and a physical environment in which each of our people can grow and succeed.

We have several disability-related networks (also called affinity or employee resource groups): Ernst & Young AccessAbilities™, for anyone interested in issues of working with disabilities; Abilities Champions, for geographic and functional group leaders of our initiatives; the Network for Parents of Children with Special Health Care Needs; and the Caregivers Circle, for people who act as caregivers for family members or other adults with disabilities.

**At Ernst & Young, we have undertaken a wide range of initiatives, including the following:**

- **Providing accommodations for people with disabilities in our own offices, at off-site meetings, and in the client locations where we frequently work.**
- **Making our internal communications, meetings, training, and tools accessible and easy to use.**

- **Building an accessibility strategy for all our web-based and online applications.**
- **Leveraging assistive technologies for easier computer and communications use by people with disabilities.**
- **Educating all our people on disabilities etiquette, language, and work habits.**
- **Improving physical accessibility in Ernst & Young offices.**
- **Raising awareness of hidden disabilities and how to support people working with chronic health conditions, serious illnesses, mental health issues, nonvisible, and temporary disabilities.**
- Supporting disabled-owned businesses in our supplier diversity program and acting as first founding sponsor of the Disability Owned Business Enterprise certification program.
- Assisting veterans with disabilities and their families through founding sponsorship of the Entrepreneurship Boot Camp for Families of Veterans with Disabilities program.



**“A leading provider of group disability insurance and workers’ compensation, The Hartford has long supported meaningful employment and productive lives for people with disabilities. Our ‘ability philosophy’ focuses on enabling individuals to overcome limitations so they can reclaim their lives and reach their full potential.”**

*–Liam E. McGee, Chairman, President, and Chief executive Officer*



### Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Financial Services

**Number of Employees:** 26,800

**[www.thehartford.com](http://www.thehartford.com)**

Almost one-third of Americans entering the workforce today will become disabled before they retire, according to the U.S. Social Security Administration. That’s why a return-to-work program can be an important tool for employers to maintain a healthy and productive team.

As a leading provider of group disability insurance and workers’ compensation, The Hartford partners with employers of all sizes to put into action return-to-work programs that help employees who experience a disability return to active, rich lives.

Here are some key aspects of a return-to-work program:

- Clearly communicate your company’s benefits plan and policies related to absence.
- Provide resources for employees, such as contact names and phone numbers in your organization (e.g., Human Resources and Employee Assistance Program) and the insurance provider and forms.
- Make contact early and frequently with employees who are out of work due to a disability. Use technology,

such as e-mail, social networking, or blogs, to help keep employees connected to the workplace. Forward company e-newsletter to employees’ e-mail. By staying connected, employees are less likely to feel isolated or forgotten by managers and co-workers.

- Partner closely with employees and their treating physicians and disability insurance provider to bring employees back to the workplace. Don’t assume that accommodations are costly. The average cost of assistive technology accommodations is less than \$500, according to the Department of Labor’s Job Accommodation Network, 2009. Job modification options include remote work and flex schedules.
- Be consistent when offering modified duty options and accommodations. Don’t lose your commitment. Focus on the value of a return-to-work program, such as lowering disability costs.
- Welcome employees back. Help by recapping changes that occurred during their leave.



**“From a strategic perspective, a diverse workforce that includes persons with disabilities is a major priority for HCSC. To help as many people as possible find quality, affordable health care, we must reach out to a more diverse population than ever before. That requires insights and strategies that can come only from a workforce that is equally diverse.”**

*–Patricia Hemingway Hall, President and Chief Executive Officer*



### Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Health Benefits

**Number of Employees:** 17,000

**[www.hcsc.com](http://www.hcsc.com)**

Health Care Service Corporation (HCSC) is a customer-owned health benefits company focused on improving the health and wellness of our members and communities. Through our plans, affiliates, and subsidiaries, HCSC offers a wide variety of health and life insurance products and related services, including coverage under Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas, and Dearborn National. HCSC has 17,000 employees and is the largest customer-owned health insurer in the United States.

At HCSC, we value and practice diversity and inclusion and promote cultural competence among our workforce and work partners. Because we are a more diverse health care company, we can better understand our policyholders. In particular, we're more capable of seeing health issues from the consumer's perspective.

With this in mind, we are making deliberate efforts to increase the number of people with disabilities as well as veterans in our workforce. To do so, we have partnered with sourcing agencies who share our vision. We are also

focused on making sure that our workplace is welcoming and receptive to employees with disabilities by incorporating diversity in our employee programs and talent strategies. Our goal is to keep employees with disabilities at HCSC where they can have a successful career.

In addition, HCSC is a wellness company that looks for opportunities to promote healthy living among our employees. For example, our corporate wellness program provides services and resources that support caregivers. Our In-Abled Employee Resource Group (ERG) works with our fitness centers to ensure that programs are welcoming and accessible to all employees. The In-Abled group also focuses on developing the skills of its members and raising awareness in the workplace. As with all ERGs at HCSC, In-Abled represents our company in the communities where our employees live.

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion is the foundation from which we build our efforts for persons with disabilities. This commitment extends to all aspects of how we do business in our workplace, marketplace, and community, with our vendors.



**“At Lowe’s, inclusion means creating a place where everyone has the opportunity to grow and succeed.”**

*–Stephen J. Szilagyi, Senior Vice President*



### Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Home Improvement Retailer

**Number of Employees:** 234,000

**www.lowes.com**

Lowe's dedication to diversity and inclusion grows from the steadfast values of our employees and extends to every corner of our company. We draw upon the strength of collaboration, bringing together many unique individuals in the workplace and the community to better meet the needs of our employees and customers. Recruiting, developing, and retaining a diverse workforce ensures a welcoming customer experience, enhances partnerships, and strengthens community involvement.

At Lowe's, inclusion means creating a place where everyone has the opportunity to grow and succeed. The company is committed to treating each customer, co-worker, community, investor, and vendor with respect and dignity. Our Diversity Advisory Council and Diversity Leadership Teams, co-chaired by Robert A. Niblock, Lowe's chairman and chief executive officer, and Larry D. Stone, president and chief operating officer, meet regularly to provide direction and review progress on diversity and inclusion initiatives.

We focus on diversity and inclusion in four areas: workforce, customers, suppliers, and community.

An inclusive workforce helps provide our diverse customer base with the products and services they need from a home improvement retailer. Providing all employees with the opportunity to raise awareness and strengthen their understanding of diversity and inclusion forms Lowe's solid foundation. Lowe's training and development programs are designed to foster open communication, inclusion, and equal employment opportunities for all.

Lowe's remains focused on investing in programs that create value for our customers and our company. Our supplier diversity program is part of our overall commitment to enhance economic development in the diverse communities we serve.

Lowe's is a member of 15 regional supplier diversity councils, as well as the following organizations and associations: Catalyst, Executive Leadership Council, National Black MBA Association, National Organization on Disability, National Society of Hispanic MBAs, National Minority Supplier Development Council, Students in Free Enterprise, United Negro College Fund, Hispanic Scholarship Fund, Urban League, and United States Business Leadership Network.



**“Bringing people into the workplace and connecting them to careers is Manpower’s core mission, and we focus on people’s capabilities, not disabilities, as a source for talent for our clients.”**

*—Martha C. Artiles, Chief Diversity Officer*



## Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Employment Services

**Number of Employees:** 30,000

**www.manpower.com**

Project Ability, a collaborative program, leverages the expertise and resources of local, highly respected community-based organizations and Manpower to tap into people with disabilities as a talent pool. The program focuses on matching the employment needs of local employers through a process that identifies candidates with the needed jobs skills and competencies—who also happen to have a disability. It is meant to be inclusive of all disabilities. The program, initially launched in San Jose, California, has expanded into Boston and will begin operating in Chicago, Houston, and five other markets later in 2011.

Project Ability is unique in that a “primary” Community Based Organization (CBO), in collaboration with other CBOs and the state Department of Rehabilitation, becomes the “funnel point” for referring potential candidates to Manpower for employment. A process has been defined to facilitate the referral of appropriate and qualified individuals with disabilities. This includes project eligibility prescreening by the primary CBO as well as Manpower’s comprehensive testing and evaluation tools.

For many years, Manpower has made it a priority to advocate for access to meaningful workforce opportunities on behalf of people with disabilities, and Project Ability has raised Manpower’s efforts to the next level. Project Ability provides a talent solution that works for the benefit of employers, people with disabilities, and the community at large. With a talent and skills shortage imminent, tapping into this accessible and plentiful population is very relevant. Individuals with disabilities represent the country’s largest minority throughout all segments of diversity.

To date, Manpower has placed 115 people with disabilities into employment, with another 155 in the talent pipeline. Project Ability is unique in its replicable and flexible framework that brings the benefits of collaboration between employers and community organizations to more effectively and efficiently address the needs of this population market by market.





**“What we have learned at Merck is that intention alone is insufficient; issues associated with race, gender, sexual orientation, and ability require creating solutions through the lens of people with disabilities in order to provide opportunities for inclusion and equality and to create a fully engaged workforce.”**

*—Deborah Dagit, Chief Diversity Officer*



## Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Pharmaceuticals, Vaccines, Biologics, Consumer Health Care, and Animal Health

**Number of Employees:** 90,000

**[www.merck.com](http://www.merck.com)**

More than 10% of the world's population lives with a disability. People with disabilities represent one of the largest “minority” groups. At Merck, we are dedicated to creating an environment that supports the needs of all employees, including those who live with a disability, and we make a substantive investment to leverage diversity and inclusion as a source of our competitive advantage.

### Recruiting Diverse Talent

Merck has several programs under way to ensure that it recruits best-in-class diverse talent from a variety of targeted sources.

- We partner with the American Association for the Advancement of Science to source interns with disabilities in science, engineering, mathematics, computer sciences, and business.
- Merck collaborates with Career Opportunities for Students with Disabilities to learn how to more effectively prepare students with disabilities for recruitment.
- Merck's Employee Resource Group, Merck Allies for Disabilities (MAD), sponsors Disability Mentoring Day to promote career development for students and job seekers with disabilities through job shadowing and career exploration.

### Retention and Inclusive Work Environment

Merck understands that enabling employees with disabilities to perform the necessary functions of their jobs through an inclusive work environment makes good business sense.

- HR works with employees to develop a customized action plan that is in place prior to the employee's first day of work. The plan is updated throughout the employee's career with Merck.
- Merck provides training resources to build awareness and help employees work more effectively with colleagues who have disabilities.
- Through the Employee Resource Group, MAD, Merck sponsors leadership development and networking sessions for employees with disabilities.

Merck is committed to advancing its leadership position as the No. 1 trusted and valued health care partner to the diverse people of the world. We firmly believe that creating a globally diverse talent pool is critical to this success.



**“At Northrop Grumman, we don’t see our efforts to better serve the needs of our employees with disabilities as a ‘program,’ but as a way of creating and affirming an inclusive workforce.”**

*–Sandra Evers-Manly, Vice President of Corporate Responsibility*

### ***NORTHROP GRUMMAN***

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#### **Company Overview**

**Type of Industry:** Aerospace and Defense

**Number of Employees:** 120,000

**[www.northropgrumman.com](http://www.northropgrumman.com)**

At Northrop Grumman, we have a performance culture based on building the best workforce and workplace in our industry. We’re convinced that the best way to do this is by hiring and retaining top talent from a diverse pool of candidates and by creating an inclusive work environment that makes such diversity a powerful competitive advantage.

We want our organization to realize the benefits that diversity and inclusion can add to everything that we do. This starts with management leaders genuinely committed to this objective and includes an understanding of diversity that extends beyond traditional notions of race, ethnicity, and gender. For example, we pursue a number of efforts to attract, hire, and develop people with disabilities, a group we see as a part of the inclusion equation.

These initiatives include partnering with Careers & the disABLED—an organization that hosts career expos, exclusively targeting the disability community; co-sponsoring Career Opportunities for Students with Disabilities; working with the Disability Connections Network, a mentoring program where employees with

disabilities and parents of special needs children can either be mentors or mentees; and participating in the Disability Matters Conference. The company received the 2010 Disability Matters Award for its support of employees who are disabled or who have a child or other dependent with special needs.

Additionally, Northrop Grumman created Operation IMPACT (Injured Military Pursuing Assisted Career Transition), an initiative designed to provide career transition support to military service members and their families who have been severely injured in the global war on terror.

These activities go beyond a core commitment to making workplace accommodations that assist individuals with distinct challenges. Our goal is to establish a corporate culture of acceptance that allows people with disabilities to flourish and be accepted as equal parties. This inclusive environment generates better ideas and fosters stronger team commitment, collaboration, and engagement. At Northrop Grumman, it empowers us to best support our customers’ national security missions.



**“When we think about people with different abilities, we need to move from legal recognition to marketplace recognition.”**

*—Massimo d'Amore, CEO, PepsiCo Beverages America*



### Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Food and Beverage

**Number of Employees:** 300,000

**www.pepsico.com**

Throughout history, the world of disability has been anchored to medical conditions and how people with different abilities are perceived by the community and impacted by their surroundings. Too often, recognition and acknowledgment of this consumer group is only through compliance and code. The result is an unintentional “branding” that reduces a large and diverse segment of the population to a universal symbol ... the wheelchair.

The perception and consideration of people with different abilities (PWDA) is, fortunately, evolving—albeit slowly—from accommodation and inspiration to empowerment. Technology has played a key role in this transition by enhancing human capabilities and eliminating barriers.

As marketers, we can help accelerate the pace of this change. Over the years, inclusive marketing has helped drive cultural change by recognizing and accurately reflecting women, ethnic minorities, and the GLBT community.

It's time that we do the same for the disability space. It is not just a “good” thing to do—it is also good for business. At 1.1 billion strong worldwide, PWDA represent an untapped market that rivals China in scale. The disability space is the hidden “D” in diversity, another cohort waiting to be discovered and engaged as a consumer.

It's all about innovation through inclusion and marketing through a different lens. At PepsiCo, we value people with different abilities as consumers. We want their business, so we work to earn it in everything from product development to our advertising campaigns. From producing the first-ever “silent” American Sign Language Super Bowl ad to a campaign celebrating athletes with different abilities, we are addressing an important demographic and hope to help change perceptions about ability and disability in the process.

With an innovative and inclusive approach to marketing, we can create a world in which “difference” becomes cool and inclusion becomes reality.



**“Qualcomm is committed to an environment of inclusion in which all people, including those with disabilities, have equal access and opportunities. This commitment extends to our employees and our suppliers alike. We believe it’s not only the right thing to do—it’s central to our business and our culture.”**

*–Paul E. Jacobs, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer*



## Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Telecommunications

**Number of Employees:** 17,500

**[www.qualcomm.com](http://www.qualcomm.com)**

At Qualcomm, our employees are our most valued asset. Having employees who are accepted and supported is key to the success of each person and the company as a whole. Through our business initiatives, recruitment strategies, and educational awareness, we strive to weave inclusion into our culture and provide a workplace where people with disabilities can excel.

### Raising Awareness

Diversity and disability are included as part of larger company events globally, including the QLife employee festivals, QKids day (bring your child to work), and community events that are hosted on our campuses. In addition, we provide employee training, have employees spend a Day in a Chair, support service dog training on-site, and promote our Disability Employee Resource Group.

### Building Future Employees

Even more important than awareness is ensuring that people with disabilities are included in the workforce. Qualcomm connects with students of all ages who have disabilities

to help prepare them for their careers. We host Career Explorations for middle schoolers, engage high schoolers in our Hire-A-Youth program, and partner with local universities for Disability Mentoring Day. Further, we work with Disabled Student Services Departments at our top recruiting universities to hire students for internships and full-time positions. Qualcomm is also recognized for its ongoing participation in and support of the annual San Diego career fair for people with disabilities.

### Business Initiatives

Because diversity is central to our business, we have our Supplier Diversity Program to ensure that we maintain our commitment to contract with small and diverse businesses. Through our Wireless Reach initiative, Qualcomm works with global partners to bring wireless technology to underserved communities around the world. And with wireless communications delivering everything from better health care to improved education, from business opportunities to safer streets, Wireless Reach is finding innovative ways to improve the quality of life.



**“Working people face dangerous gaps in their financial security, and employer-sponsored benefits represent the single most effective way to provide workers with access to the information and options they need to protect their lifestyle and provide financial security should an unexpected disability occur.”**

*—Thomas R. Watjen, President and CEO*



### Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Insurance

**Number of Employees** 10,000

**www.unum.com**

The majority of today's workforce is living paycheck to paycheck, with little to no savings to fall back on in the event of an emergency. For these employees, even a minor illness or accident can cause financial hardship, and a serious health problem or injury can be financially devastating.

Health insurance covers medical costs but does not replace lost income. Without a paycheck, employees who face a serious illness or injury can struggle to pay the bills while they recover.

Disability insurance products are designed to help people focus on recovery by removing much of the financial burden of being out of work. This coverage provides a financial safety net by protecting employees' most valuable asset—their income.

Many of these products offer services for rehabilitation and returning to work after a disability. Return-to-work programs enlist the services of vocational rehabilitation specialists, vocational counselors, physicians, nurses, disability benefit specialists, and other professionals who can provide expertise to partner with the physician, the employer, and the employee to transition back to work. These experts manage worksite accommodation, retraining, flexible scheduling, and other services to support the employee's safe and timely return to work.



“Walgreens has a long history of connecting with the communities we serve, and one way we can do that is by reflecting the diversity of those communities. We are a pioneer in employing people living with disabilities. Our distribution centers in Anderson, South Carolina, and Windsor, Connecticut, are absolute proof that having a disability need not be an obstacle to working and fully contributing to our company’s goals. People have always been our greatest asset—one of our key goals is to ensure that all of our team members have the opportunity to grow in their careers, develop their skills, and remain fully engaged.”

—Greg Wasson, President and CEO

# Walgreens

### Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Retail Drugstore

**Number of Employees** 244,000

**www.walgreens.com**

Walgreens is the nation’s largest drugstore chain and operates more than 7,600 drugstores in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Each day, Walgreens provides nearly 6 million customers with the most convenient, multichannel access to consumer goods and services, a trusted, cost-effective pharmacy, health and wellness, services and advice in communities across America. Walgreens’ scope of pharmacy services includes retail, specialty, infusion, medical facility, and mail service, along with pharmacy benefit solutions and respiratory services. These services improve health outcomes and lower costs for payers, including employers, managed care organizations, health systems, pharmacy benefit managers, and the public. Take Care Health Systems is a Walgreens’ subsidiary that is the largest and most comprehensive manager of worksite health centers and in-store convenient care clinics, with more than 700 locations nationwide.

In 2007, Walgreens formalized its plan to become a leader in employing people with disabilities with the opening of

the first of its newest generation of Distribution Centers in Anderson, South Carolina. Employees with disabilities are trained to work side by side with other team members—with the same productivity goals, earning the same pay. Walgreens also mentors other companies to share valuable insights and help them shape their own disability inclusion efforts.

In 2010, Walgreens launched a pilot program aimed at hiring people with disabilities for 10% of its service clerk openings at its Dallas/Fort Worth area stores. Training for the pilot, developed in conjunction with the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), prepares candidates for Walgreens staff positions and other jobs in retail or customer service requiring similar skills. The company also plans to work with DARS to help candidates with job placement. Nearly 20 locations are participating in the pilot, and more than 100 people have gone through the training. Walgreens plans to expand the program around the United States in 2012.





**“As a global diversified company, it is critical to 3M’s success to fully engage the diverse backgrounds, styles, thinking, and abilities of our workforce to remain competitive.”**

*—Clydette Douglass, Chief Diversity Officer*



### Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Diversified Technology

**Number of Employees** 80,000

**www.3M.com**

Our vision at 3M is to be an employer of choice and to have all employees engaged in 3M’s mission and in our communities. We are committed to hiring and retaining a diverse workforce and this commitment extends from our CEO throughout the organization.

A strong business case is made for diversity at 3M in the area of business growth. Having a diverse global workforce helps us generate more ideas, which yield more innovative solutions. As global markets expand and more than 60% of 3M’s sales come from outside the United States, we rely on employees who understand the needs of diverse customers. Our goal is to reflect the diversity of our global customers, suppliers, and channel partners and build on each employee’s abilities to achieve greater customer satisfaction and accelerated growth. 3M’s inclusive culture results in high-performance teams and an engaged workforce as employees are valued for their individuality and the wide-ranging knowledge and skills they possess. An inclusive culture also improves retention and reduces recruitment costs. In addition, all employees are expected to exhibit inclusive behavior as part of living 3M’s values and demonstrating their leadership skills.

3M provides strategic support for employees with disabilities in several ways:

- 3M’s Disability Advisory Committee is a volunteer employee resource group that exists to serve 3M employees, their families, and the community with resources related to people with disabilities.
- The 3M Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a resource for 3Mers whose lives include various disabilities. Through confidential personal consultation, EAP professionals help people find resources in the community and 3M, sort out work issues, and navigate the complexities and stresses they may face.
- The diversity and inclusion organization provides strategic support in hiring, job redesign, job support, education opportunities, and accommodations.
- Partnership with the US Business Leadership Network as the lead company for the MN Business Leadership Network provides resources and best practices exchange with companies, providers, and government organizations.

All of these taken together support our business objective to be an innovative growth company.

## Using the Disability Marketplace to Attract New Customers



**“We want to make a difference in the lives of our guests and do ‘the right thing’ in the communities we serve.”**

*—Keith Wiedenkiller, Senior Vice President and Chief People Officer*



### Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Entertainment

**Number of Employees** 17,800

**www.amc.com**

AMC Entertainment (AMC) has a program to give families affected by autism and other special needs an opportunity to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment on a monthly basis with “Sensory Friendly Films.” To provide a more comfortable setting for this unique audience, the auditoriums have their lights turned up and the sound turned down. Families are able to bring in their own gluten-free, casein-free snacks, and no previews or advertisements are shown before the movie. Audience members are also welcome to get up and dance, walk, shout, or sing—in other words, AMC’s “Silence is Golden®” policy is relaxed for these performances.

The idea for the program began with a request from a parent with an autistic child for a special screening at AMC Columbia Mall 14 in Columbia, Maryland. More than 300 children and parents attended the first screening.

Autism is a complex neurodevelopmental disability that affects a person’s ability to communicate and interact with others. It often comes with sensory challenges, such as hypersensitivity to light or sound, and individuals affected by autism may not understand the social boundaries of movie theater etiquette, such as not talking during the film or sitting still through the show.

We are thrilled to now offer this program at many locations nationwide and in Canada. As a worldwide leader in theatrical exhibition and out-of-home entertainment, we realize that we have the ability to make a difference in the estimated 1.5 million Americans living with an autism spectrum disorder. For many people, we have the ability to help change their lives and be “a first”: a first step, a first word, a first movie.



**“We are in the business of helping people. Period.”**

*—Kathy Andreasen, Chief People Officer*



## Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Digital Media

**Number of Employees** 5,000

**www.aol.com**

Accessibility at AOL is about extending the power of the Internet to all users. Cornerstones of our efforts include delivering innovative features, focusing on product compatibility with assistive technologies, and implementing best practices known to advance usability of desktop, web, and mobile applications by people with disabilities.

The AOL Accessibility Policy expresses the company's commitment to develop products and services that are accessible to all users, including those with disabilities. The policy is founded on three fundamental principles: awareness, responsibility, and collaboration.

### Awareness

It is essential for employees to be informed about the challenges faced by people with disabilities in accessing the Internet and the technologies available to improve the user experience. This information helps to address accessibility throughout the product development life cycle.

### Responsibility

Solutions developed to accommodate a broad range of user needs translate into a richer online experience for all users. AOL maintains a dedicated accessibility team whose job responsibilities include the following:

- Represent the technology needs of people with disabilities at all stages of product development.
- Work with industry and accessibility researchers to develop techniques that advance usability of desktop, web, and mobile interfaces.
- Serve as AOL's liaison with the disability community.

### Collaboration

Feedback from the disability community is critical to our accessibility efforts. AOL engages the disability community through the following practices:

- Work with consultants who are disabled to test products with assistive technologies and guide the implementation of necessary improvements.
- Maintain a dedicated e-mail address (aolaccessibility@aol.com) to receive input on accessibility issues.
- Support and participate in national and international disability-focused initiatives.
- Cultivate relationships with developers of assistive technology software to evolve product compatibility.

## Using the Disability Marketplace to Attract New Customers



**“IBM’s commitment to diversity continues in 2011, which I’m proud to say is our centennial year. With IBMers across 170 nations and every part of the human family, there is no typical IBMer, but rather a 400,000 person strong, talented, and diverse workforce. In the 21st century, IBM will leverage the creativity, capability, and diversity of thought in its workforce for innovation and solutions that address the world’s toughest challenges.”**

*–Ron Glover, Vice President, Diversity and Workforce Programs, Human Resources*



### Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Computer Technology and Consulting

**Number of Employees:** 400,000

**www.ibm.com**

In 1914, IBM hired its first employee with a disability who was a World War I veteran. Disability is fully integrated into all of IBM’s efforts to promote workforce diversity and equal opportunity.

IBM has a central, reasonable accommodation fund, partners with the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) to provide internship opportunities, and has proactively sought to increase the number of employees with disabilities worldwide. To ensure that IBM successfully recruits and retains employees with disabilities, disability awareness training is provided to IBM recruitment specialists, general employees, and managers.

IBM has been equally active in the disability aspects of developing products and delivering services by identifying technology solutions for people with disabilities. The company believes that the idea of manufacturing accessible products has created an unparalleled business opportunity and “a way to differentiate IBM from competitors.”

In 1999, the IBM board of directors codified a standard for product accessibility by adopting Corporation Instruction 162, which contained a mandate to assess accessibility characteristics in all new products. As a result, IBM focuses on weaving in accessibility during the initial

product development stage and then conducts accessibility assessments at key checkpoints. Accessibility is a key criteria that IBM uses to select vendors or suppliers and it is identified as a requirement when procuring components from third parties.

In addition to manufacturing accessible products, IBM provides consulting services for companies that seek to integrate accessibility solutions into their corporate activities. IBM Accessibility Services enables its clients to realize the benefits of integrating accessibility. It also drives accessibility into the company’s product development process and invents technologies that help remove barriers and extend capabilities.

In 2000, IBM established the **IBM Human Ability and Accessibility Center** as a part of its research community. The center’s mission is to make technology and other information easily available to people who have visual, cognitive, and motor disabilities by applying research technologies and introducing software solutions. In 2010, IBM established **Accessible Workplace Connections**, a web application that helps employees with disabilities improve their productivity via streamlining accommodation requests for items like computer audio screen readers and live captioning for teleconferences.



**“Verizon’s empowering broadband and wireless technologies enable all our customers—whatever their physical challenges—to make the most of their abilities.”**

*—Ivan Seidenberg, CEO*



### Company Overview

**Type of Industry:** Global Communications Provider

**Number of Employees:** 195,100

**www.verizon.com**

About one in five Americans has a disability, and 9 million require personal assistance to carry out everyday activities, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Verizon promotes technologies to improve the lives of people with disabilities and provides access to the information and services they need.

There is a direct relationship between accessibility, our core values, and our business strategy. To that end, we provide technology that is accessible by all.

Our accessible products enable businesses and consumers to work smarter and faster. By putting our empowering technologies in people’s hands, we can play a huge and constructive role in creating a more sustainable, dynamic, and equitable society.

Serving our customers who have disabilities is integral to our mission and our business plan. One way we do so is through the Verizon Center for Customers with Disabilities (VCCD). VCCD offers communications solutions for customers with vision, hearing, speech, cognitive, or mobility limitations.

Verizon’s work in this area has also yielded business success. Here are a few examples of revenue-enhancing accessible products and services:

- TALKS-enabled smart phone that speaks letters as they are typed and announces the function of a button when

it is pressed. This makes it much easier for vision-impaired users to read and write e-mails and text messages.

- The Haven handset was introduced as our next generation senior phone last year and more than 700,000 subscribers have chosen this handset—370,000 of those were over the age of 55. It has proven to be one of our most popular universally-designed products featuring a large screen, fonts, and dialpad.
- Our Nationwide Text Messaging Plan is a messaging plan for the deaf and hard of hearing.
- Videophone customer service in the Verizon Center for Customers with Disabilities enables customers to communicate directly in American Sign Language.

Verizon’s programs provide both older Americans and persons with disabilities with better, more affordable options to communicate. More and more, access to telecommunications technology (e.g., wireless, Internet access) has become as important as electricity and running water to Americans. Verizon’s efforts to universally design products and services have provided segments of the population with what they need to participate in mainstream America.









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