

OVER A THIRD OF COMPANIES PLEDGE TO ACCELERATE DISABILITY INCLUSION IN THE WAKE OF COVID-19

- *New research from The Valuable 500 is released to mark the 30th anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act*
- *The findings show one third of corporations are committed to being more inclusive as COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of accessibility and flexible working*
- *However, the research also highlights there is still a long way to go with 15% of major corporations admitting to delaying efforts to address disability inclusion due to other pandemic recovery priorities*
- *In America, Boston Consulting Group, Black & Veatch, Mesoamerica, Nuance Communications, PVH Corp. brands Tommy Hilfiger and Calvin Klein, Voya Financial and Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP are the latest companies to pledge to The Valuable 500*
- *Barilla, Canal-Plus, Electrocomponents PLC, Greene King, InMoment, Roche Pharma UK and Software AG are the latest companies headquartered in Europe to pledge to The Valuable 500*
- *Across the Middle East, India and Asia Dentsu, Seibu Group, Tara Chand Logistic (India) and Zain commit to The Valuable 500*

24.07.20: Today, The Valuable 500 – the global movement which is working to get 500 of the world’s largest businesses to commit to placing disability inclusion on their business leadership agendas – recognises the upcoming 30th anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Day on Sunday by releasing new research which highlights how companies are working to improve their diversity and inclusion policies.

The findings highlight the impact of COVID-19 on diversity and inclusion, concluding that 35% of companies are now more aware than ever of the needs of people with disabilities and are accelerating their actions and commitments to disability inclusion and accessibility. Changing perceptions around remote and flexible working, as well as a growing realisation of the importance of an inclusive and diverse corporate culture have both been identified as contributing factors for this trend.

Whilst this is positive news in the midst of a global crisis, other key learnings from the report drive home that there is still much work to be done in this space. 15% of organisations surveyed have had to shelve efforts around disability inclusion due to immediate challenges in the wake of a global health pandemic.

The research also looked more broadly at diversity and inclusion within major global corporations to mark the 30th anniversary of ADA and shows there is still a long way to go until equality is truly achieved. Findings show that despite 88% of corporations claiming disability inclusion is important to their business strategy – only 8% regularly include people with disabilities in marketing and communications.

Launched on the main stage at the World Economic Forum’s Annual Meeting in January 2019, The Valuable 500 is announcing today that it has reached 296 companies that have put disability on the business leadership agenda. It remains the only global CEO community committed to radically



transforming the business system across the whole supply chain for the benefit of all those with a disability.

The latest global companies to join the movement include Barilla, Boston Consulting Group (BCG), MesoAmerica, Black & Veatch, Nuance Communications, PVH Corp. brands Tommy Hilfiger and Calvin Klein, Voya Financial and Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP.

In addition, there is a strong European cohort joining the movement including Electrocomponents PLC, Greene King, InMoment, Roche Pharma UK and Software AG. There is also representation from the Middle East, India and Asia with Dentsu, Seibu Group, Tara Chand Logistic (India) and Zain committing by joining The Valuable 500.

The combined revenue of The Valuable 500's current members is now over \$4.1 trillion, with over 10.2 million employees and reaching across 30 countries.

Today, The Valuable 500 calls on businesses globally to join the movement and pledge to put disability on their board agendas as it has never been more important to be truly inclusive in the wake of COVID-19. As it stands, there are 56 Valuable 500 members within the USA, accounting for 18% of current membership. Given the US remains the largest world economy, with 54 of the top global 100 companies (PWC Global Top 100), the membership percentage should be higher.

The Valuable 500's goal is critical as currently, 15% of people worldwide live with some form of disability and, when you include the families of those living with a disability, this number rises significantly to 53%. Businesses cannot afford to exclude such a huge market comprising of talented employees and valuable customers with a significant spending power of \$8 trillion per annum.

The Americans with Disabilities Act was an influential turning point in history and has been cited for its influence on disability rights internationally. In 2015, the then Secretary of State John Kerry highlighted that the principles underlying the ADA "inspired and are reflected in the 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" – the world's first comprehensive global treaty on disability rights.

Today, as we celebrate this ADA anniversary, we still live in a world where significant discrimination and exclusion is present. This fact has been reinforced by recent events, from the Covid-19 pandemic to Black Lives Matter.

Under the current regulation 14 (c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act, businesses can apply for permits to pay disabled employees well below the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour. Besides local, state and federal government websites, there are no Americans with Disabilities Act Day legal standards to adhere to when it comes to website accessibility. These are areas we need to work on to make positive change happen for disability inclusion across society.

By engaging the most influential business leaders and brands, The Valuable 500 wants to create a tipping point that unlocks the business, social and economic value of the 1.3 billion people living with disabilities around the world.

Today's research is important as disability is often forgotten or overlooked as part of diversity and inclusion reporting. Most D&I and sustainability reports fail to take into account the lives and experiences of people with disabilities, from employees to customers, and those who care for them. As a result, the topic of disability is heavily under-represented, under-researched and under-reported.

Caroline Casey, Founder of The Valuable 500, commented:

“It's important we simultaneously celebrate the progress made over the past 30 years on the anniversary of the ADA, while ensuring the call to action in this space remains loud and clear. As economies globally look to recover and adapt to a new normal, it is vital we do not return to business as usual but learn from the lessons of Covid-19. Now is a critical time to reset business leaders' attitudes to disability inclusion.

“We are confident that The Valuable 500 community is listening intently to society – from their employees to customers – as to what they want for a more inclusive, accessible world. This includes both the online world, and physical world, in an increasingly digital age. It is also not just enough to listen – now is the time for action which shows business has taken on board new learnings, and truly appreciates the value a diverse and inclusive culture will bring to all.”

Commenting on what businesses need to do going forward, disability activist Judy Heumann said:

“It's great to see this type of call to action go out on the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Just the fact that we have laws around an inclusive society shows how far we have come, but now it's time for businesses to step up and also take action. We are all living through unprecedented times, and as we hopefully start to come out of it, I believe it is critical for businesses to look at the type of changes that need pushing forward and make them long lasting.

For the business community – it's important to realise that you have the power to help those who are marginalized and this in turn will influence society. Businesses need to find the marginalized people in their workforce and talk to them, listen to them and bring them on the journey to being inclusive. If a businesses is going to survive then it needs to be a place that is accessible for everyone – we are in a world where people will no longer tolerate an unfair society and hopefully this change will be around for the long-haul. Let's put a timeline in place and make the fundamental changes that need to happen quickly.”

Claudio Colzani, CEO, Barilla comments:

“As a next step in our global diversity and inclusion journey, we're thrilled to join The Valuable 500. We believe that the inclusion of all employees, including those with disabilities, is the right thing to do for our people and our business. By creating a workplace and products that are designed with people with disabilities in mind, we are living our core values and driving positive change for people and the planet.”

Rich Lesser, CEO, BCG comments:

“As part of our ongoing commitment to unlocking the potential of every employee at BCG and across our clients, including those with disabilities, we're proud to join the Valuable 500. We look forward to



learning from best in class organizations and leaders, contributing to the dialog, and to advancing opportunity, equality, and inclusion for all.”

Steve Edwards, CEO of Black & Veatch, comments:

“We’ve always championed workplace diversity and inclusion as a competitive strength, and we proudly join in this global effort that’s so important and simply the morally right thing to do,” said Steve Edwards, Black & Veatch’s CEO. “Companies that embrace a variety of backgrounds and perspectives are more successful and offer the type of workplace experience that drives better decision-making, employee engagement and career development. As an employee-owned company, we believe deeply in listening to every voice, bringing out the best in our people.”

Cheryl Abel-Hodges, CEO, Calvin Klein, Inc. comments:

“Calvin Klein is proud to be a part of The Valuable 500, alongside our parent company, PVH Corp. While we are deeply committed to being an inclusive organization that values every individual, the unfortunate reality is that disability inclusion is too often overlooked in the fashion industry. This pledge signifies our commitment to consider differently-abled people in our recruiting, marketing and product development efforts. We believe that collaboration is critical, and that together, this group has the opportunity to create significant and meaningful impact.”

Hiroshi Igarashi, President & CEO of Dentsu Inc. comments:

“Dentsu is a company that has always treasured the individuality and diversity of our staff, and we have turned our respect for each other's differences into business strengths. For a long time, we have deeply acknowledged the need of respect for diversity that V500 promotes, and thus it is a natural move for us to take part in the initiative. We will continue our endeavors to realize a more inclusive workplace, encourage our people to bring new perspectives in every small act we engage in, and expand both personal and professional potential for a better society.”

Lindsley Ruth, CEO, Electrocomponents PLC, comments:

“I am proud that Electrocomponents is partnering with the Valuable 500 movement to raise consciousness about the work that we all need to do, to bring about equality and inclusion for all. As a global organisation we are working to ensure we not only attract diverse disabled talent but that we provide long-term sustainable employment as well.

We acknowledge that we are at the beginning of our journey and that we may not always get it right, but we are 100% committed to making systemic changes within our organisation to reflect those we serve within our community, our customers and our suppliers.”

Nick Mackenzie, CEO of Greene King, comments:

“We’re really focused on building an inclusive culture at Greene King and have made some good progress so far but we know there’s much more to do. We want to create a company where everyone



can build a career and can feel valued for the skills they bring. Disability inclusion is an important part of our diversity and inclusion strategy going forward and we're really pleased to join the Valuable 500."

Luis Javier Castro, CEO, Mesoamerica, comments:

"For us, working on the inclusion agenda has not only been the right thing to do, but has also produced amazing results in terms of morale, productivity and profits."

Mark Benjamin, CEO of Nuance, comments:

"We know that we simply cannot create the best outcomes without a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. Nuance is proud to join The Valuable 500 and we are committed to continuing to build an environment that celebrates and values everyone equally, including people with disabilities."

Richard Erwin, General Manager, Roche Pharma UK, comments:

"Ensuring disability inclusion in the workplace is something my colleagues and I feel very passionately about and I'm thrilled that Roche Pharma UK is partnering with The Valuable500. Roche Pharma UK is recognised as a Disability Confident Employer and this partnership will help with our commitment and aspiration to become a Disability Confident Leader. We have also launched our own disability inclusion programme, called Workability - an initiative that focuses on supporting adults with disabilities (hidden or visible) to become 'work-ready', whilst creating an environment at Roche where everyone can thrive."

Takashi Goto, CEO and President of Seibu Holdings Inc, comments:

"I am delighted that we can participate in such wonderful activities. In addition to public transportation such as trains and buses, the Seibu Group has also developed various other businesses such as hotels and commercial facilities. Our slogan is "Smiles ahead" and we believe that our foremost mission is to ensure safe and comfortable use by all customers. Furthermore, as our business entails a highly public nature, it is essential that we coexist harmoniously with local communities. We believe that for us to continue to fulfil our social responsibility, it will become increasingly important that we ensure the inclusion of a wide variety of people, including those with disabilities. Through our support for this initiative, we will be even more active in our efforts for the realization of a sustainable society."

Sanjay Brahmawar, CEO, Software AG, comments:

"Software AG is proud to join forces with The Valuable 500. Initiatives like this are what we need to help make progress on issues of inclusion and diversity. There is so much we can both learn and achieve by connecting with one another in these discussions. At Software AG, we know that diversity makes us stronger and we strive to be better on inclusion in all of its forms. Disability is an important area that we shouldn't overlook, and we should remain open to address any instances of discrimination or lack of inclusion wherever or whenever it exists."

Himanshu Aggarwal, Executive Director, Tara Chand Logistic Solutions Ltd, comments:



"We are absolutely delighted and honoured to be on-board The Valuable 500 campaign. Our company's operations in logistics and infrastructure development solutions are spread across 20 states in India, a country filled with diverse colorful cultures. We enjoy the luxury of a geographically and religiously diverse growing team, which is our biggest strength. We are committed towards continuing efforts in improving diversity and inclusivity in our policies for employees, vendors, clients and other stakeholders. In the current unprecedented times, everyone across the globe is learning to align with the dynamic 'new normal'. With disability now on our board agenda, we are excited to set afoot our plans to empower Persons with Disabilities"

Martijn Hagman, CEO, Tommy Hilfiger Global & PVH Europe, comments:

"More than ever, we are standing behind our commitment to be a brand and business that 'Wastes Nothing and Welcomes All.' Joining The Valuable 500 alongside our parent company, PVH Corp. strengthens our commitment to attracting diverse talent, creating an inclusive workplace, and developing innovative products to serve diverse consumers. Launching the Tommy Adaptive range was one of the many steps we have taken to champion disability inclusion, and we are proud to come together with other companies and leaders who share the determination to continue driving their industries forward."

Rodney O. Martin, Jr, Chairman and CEO, Voya comments:

"Voya Financial stands with The Valuable 500 and its leaders around the world to advance disability inclusion. We understand that all stakeholders — including customers, employees, investors, legislators and regulators — are increasingly looking to business to help foster a more-inclusive society. Through our Voya Cares® program, we are committed to disability inclusion, and to making a difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities, as well as their families and caregivers."

Barry M. Wolf, Executive Partner, Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP, comments:

"Inclusion has been part of Weil's founding DNA. To continue living up to that legacy, we are proud to join the Valuable 500 to deepen our commitment to disability inclusion. In particular, mental health and wellness is a significant priority for our Firm that has become even more important for us to be mindful of now."

Bader Al Kharafi, Zain Group Vice Chairman & Group CEO, comments:

"As a leading Middle East mobile operator, we have been actively addressing the issue at Board level over the last 12 months, promoting equitable and inclusive systemic change. We firmly believe that people with disabilities offer new and diverse perspectives and employing them can lead to a more positive and inclusive culture."

For more information please visit: www.thevaluable500.com

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Notes to Editors

About The Valuable 500

Launched by social entrepreneur and activist Caroline Casey at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in January 2019, The Valuable 500 aims to put disability on the global business leadership agenda.

The Valuable 500 was created by Binc, the organisation founded by Caroline Casey in 2015, with a mission to ignite a historic global movement for a new age of business inclusion - capitalising on Caroline Casey's 18-year track record of success engaging over 450 organisations. The campaign has won three awards: a Cannes Lion, D&AD, and a BIMA.

Our goal is to persuade 500 multinational companies that have at least 1,000 employees to make a public commitment to advance disability inclusion in their organisation. By engaging the most influential business leaders and brands, we want to create a tipping point within business that unlocks the business, social and economic value of the 1.3 billion people living with disabilities around the world, and the millions of us who will become disabled over time

We believe that if business takes a lead, society and government will follow, truly inclusive businesses can build truly inclusive societies.

About The Valuable 500: Phase 2

We have approached over 2,800 leaders across the globe to commit to specific actions including putting disability performance on their leadership agenda. The deadline to join the Valuable 500 has been extended to January 2021, coinciding with the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting in Davos, and we will continue to build momentum and work with business leaders to complete the sign-up formalities to reach our goal of 500.

We also will inaugurate Phase II development in 2020: a three-year effort to turn The Valuable 500 into a community of like-minded business peers committed to raising their game on disability by sharing models, lessons learned, and energy. This will include:



- Helping our 500 CEOs boost inclusivity best practice at the leadership level through our Executive Inclusivity Programme
- Developing a peer-to-peer network of CEOs committed to inclusion
- Providing research and insight around inclusivity and business disability performance
- Empowering our CEOs to integrate disability across the entire value chain and
- Continuing to change the global narrative around disability.