



Open
For
Business

PRESS RELEASE

- **Open For Business announces four new supporter companies: Accenture, Barclays, Microsoft and Tesco.**
- **Open For Business is a coalition of global companies advocating for global LGB&T inclusion. It is supported by American Express, AT&T, Brunswick, EY, Google, IBM, LinkedIn, Linklaters, MasterCard, McKinsey & Company, Royal Bank of Scotland, Standard Chartered, Thomson Reuters and Virgin Group.**

Davos, Friday 22nd January, 2016 – Accenture, Barclays, Microsoft and Tesco today joined Open For Business, a coalition of leading global companies supporting LGB&T inclusion around the world.

The purpose of Open For Business is to make and promote a positive business and economic case for global LGB&T rights. As businesses with customers, employees, suppliers and operations around the world, the coalition believes successful, enterprising businesses thrive in diverse, inclusive societies, and the spread of anti-LGB&T policies runs counter to the interests of business and economic development.

The announcement was made at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting at Davos, Switzerland, during an event on LGB&T inclusion hosted by Microsoft.

Dan Bross, Senior Director of Corporate Citizenship at Microsoft, said:

Putting forward the economic and business case for inclusion is essential to advancing LGBT equality globally. That's why I'm pleased that Microsoft is supporting Open For Business.

Sander van't Noordende, Products Group Chief Executive at Accenture, said:

We're extremely pleased to join Open For Business because we share the coalition's belief in inclusion and diversity. It is important to us that all of our LGBT employees across the globe can feel comfortable, be themselves and, as a result, bring their best at work.

Mark McLane, Head of Global Diversity & Inclusion at Barclays, said:

Open For Business gives us the opportunity to collaborate with other global businesses as we work towards our goal of creating an inclusive work environment that enables LGBT people to be themselves, wherever they are in the world.

Open For Business: the Report

The Open For Business coalition published a comprehensive report, written by authors Jon Miller and Lucy Parker, which shows that successful businesses thrive in open, diverse and inclusive societies.

The report, 'Open For Business: the Economic and Business Case for LGB&T Inclusion,' presents the most substantial evidence---base to date on this subject, on three levels:

- Economic performance:
 - LGB&T inclusion signals a diverse and creative environment, and is associated with higher levels of innovation and entrepreneurship.
 - LGB&T discrimination often goes hand---in---hand with a culture of corrupt practices, a lack of openness and a weak civil society with poorly developed institutions.
- Business performance:
 - Companies that support inclusion and diversity are better able to compete for talented employees, and show higher rates of retention.
 - LGB&T inclusion is associated with higher levels of innovation and more effective collaboration and teamwork.
- Individual performance:
 - Individuals working in open, diverse, inclusive environments have higher levels of engagement and satisfaction, leading to greater productivity.
 - They are more likely to speak up with suggestions to improve performance, and to “go the extra mile” and contribute to the culture of the company.

Risks faced by global companies operating in countries with anti---LGB&T legislation are analyzed in the report. These include risks to employee safety and security, risks of non---compliance, and risks to brand and reputation.

In a survey of UK and US consumer attitudes commission by Open For Business:

- Nearly HALF (47.5 percent) would support a boycott of companies working in countries that have anti---gay laws
- More than HALF (52.5 percent) said they would be UNLIKELY to support international development aid going to a country that has anti---gay laws
- More than HALF (52 percent) would be UNLIKELY to work for a company that does business in a country that has anti---gay laws
- 42.5% would be UNLIKELY to buy coffee from a country that has anti---gay laws
- More than HALF (51 percent) would be UNLIKELY to go on vacation to a country that has anti---gay laws

The full report and details of the coalition can be found at: www.open---for---business.org

Open For Business: Background

Open For Business was launched by Bill Clinton at the Annual Meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative in New York, September 2015.

Despite progress in some countries, the global situation for LGB&T persons is urgent: In at least 77 countries around the world today, same sex relationships are illegal, at times involving lifetime imprisonment. In seven countries, same sex acts are even punishable by death. Even in more progressive countries, violence and discrimination against LGB&T people still exists in the form of discriminatory laws, unfair treatment by employers and negative social attitudes.

A broad base of civil society organizations support Open For Business: Open For Business is a coalition of global businesses. It has been developed in dialogue with a number of civil society organizations, which will continue to provide advice and guidance. These organizations include: the UK Department of International Development, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Global HIV/AIDs Alliance, the Kaleidoscope Trust, the Human Rights Campaign, Stonewall, Out Leadership and OUTstanding.

By joining Open For Business, members commit to: respecting the diversity of their customers, employees, suppliers and partners wherever they are in the world; showing progress in implementing strong and robust policies to provide a working environment that respects and protects *all* individuals and tackling all forms of discrimination against LGB&T employees.

About Open For Business: This is an informal coalition of businesses working together on this issue; it has no legal incorporation of any kind. At this stage it is a small coalition and decision-making is by discussion and consensus. Open For Business has been developed collaboratively by the member companies, and the coalition has an 'administrative home' at Brunswick Group.

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