

Sample report

J Sainsbury plc

UKNetMonitor

What people are talking about

info@uknetmonitor.com

+44 (0)1622 85 11 44

Important Note: As this report contains verbatim quotes from consumer generated media, weblogs and hate sites on the internet, it may include offensive language and sentiment. We can take no responsibility for such content.

Executive Summary

Comment on the internet about Sainsbury is wide ranging across a broad waterfront of issues underlying the diversity of stakeholders the company relates to.

Particular issues of interest to bloggers and pressure groups that may be of concern include:

- The appointment of Anna Ford
- The OFT inquiry

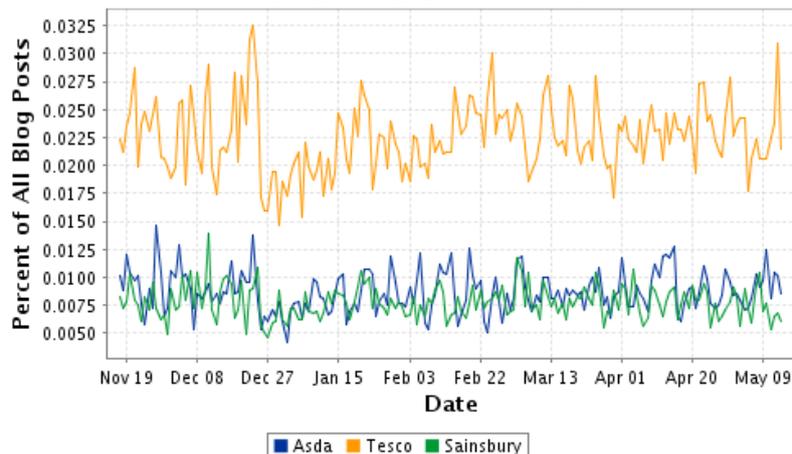
Other issues being discussed in weblogs, in discussion groups, and chat rooms, and by NGOs include:

- Noisy Deliveries
- Parents parking
- Paying farmers
- Shopping locally
- IT investment
- ETI
- Carrier bags
- English labelling
- Store layouts
- Price comparisons
- In-store toilets
- Poor customer service
- Unhappy employees

In addition a number of products have been commented on including: Sainsbury lager, croissants, sandwiches, organic vegetables, kitchen appliances.

Mentions of "Sainsbury" in weblogs

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COMMUNITY ISSUES

ClipRef:23
COMMUNITY ISSUES



Noisy deliveries

Sainsbury's keep residents awake with all-night deliveries. Residents in Pimlico are having their lives made a misery by the noise from night deliveries made to the local Sainsbury's store. Many are unable to get a decent night's sleep and it is claimed that the schoolwork of some children is being affected. Property prices in the vicinity have slumped by as much as 30%. Sainsbury's crassly insensitive offer to reduce the number of night deliveries from 4 to 2 (to show their commitment to being a "good neighbour"!)) has naturally upset residents even further.

Astonishingly, in 1996 (under the Conservative Government) Sainsbury's original planning application to develop a new store in Pimlico was rejected by Westminster Council. In 1997 (under New Labour), after a donation to the Labour Party of £1 million by Lord Sainsbury, the plans were "called in" by John Prescott. A year later he overruled the local Council and gave Sainsbury's the go-ahead for the store, including permission for night deliveries.

Strange isn't it that some people are so cynical about New Labour.....

<http://www.supermarket-sweep-up.com/?p=380#>

Analysis: Supermarket sweep up is a largely anti-Tesco website, but does not miss an opportunity to take a swipe at others. It has about 5,000 incoming links, which gives it an above average presence on the web, and a Google page rank of 5.

ClipRef:11
COMMUNITY ISSUES



Parent & Child parking

See that sign above the bay into which you've just manoeuvred your sky-blue Porsche? Look at it carefully. That sign depicting a parent and child is there for a reason - it means that particular parking bay is reserved for parents insane enough to bring their child(ren) to the supermarket. And no, your girlfriend does not count as a child. Although in this case, only just. [Lengthy description of an incident involving a single man parking in a parents parking space at the Sainsbury in Cromwell Road, London follows.

<http://mothersontheverge.blogspot.com/2006/05/hopefully-shamed-but-sadly-unnamed.html#>

Analysis: This has attracted a number of supportive comments, largely from other mothers. The issue of better policing of parking bays for those with special needs is highly emotive, and an area where supermarkets can gain the support of those stakeholders by taking an active approach.

ClipRef:20
COMMUNITY ISSUES



BNP

Boycott The Supermarket Cartel ! Shop Locally, Vote BNP !
The BNP's Land and People Circle joins the campaign by Friends of the Earth Friends of the Earth say they are encouraging shoppers to think twice before spending their 'hard-earned' at Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's or Morrison's.
FoE, quite correctly, says local shops don't just sell fresher produce but are more energy-efficient and spend far less on transporting goods up and down motorways

http://groups.google.co.uk/group/uk.politics.misc/browse_frm/thread/4eac7dfa91c991ae/48638e99783b3d13?lnk=st&q=sainsbury&num=38&hl=en#48638e99783b3d13

Analysis: There has been a growing tendency for right-wing political activists to latch onto supermarket issues as a focus for activism. The alt-politics Google group is very lively indeed and reaches a large number of political opinion formers and influencers. The BNP's increased activism in this space should be of some concern.
<http://www.bnp.org.uk/landandpeople/index.htm>

ClipRef:10
COMMUNITY ISSUES



Paying farmers

.....Do you mean the nonsense of paying farmers at all.....?
after all, food just comes out of the ground,

Enough of these fairy stories Jim. Everyone knows it comes from Tesco.

Well everything else does, so why not food!
except for snobs who shop at Sainsbury's

http://groups.google.co.uk/group/uk.business.agriculture/browse_frm/thread/1b091e84142c306c?q=sainsburys&hl=en#

Analysis: In a long a heated debate about how farmers are treated by supermarkets this is the only mention of Sainsbury. Tesco are clearly taking much of the heat around the public policy issue of sustainable farming communities.

CORPORATE ISSUES

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CORPORATE ISSUES



IT Investment

The Long, Dismal History of Software Project Failure
Last October, for instance, the giant British food retailer J Sainsbury had to write off its US \$526 million investment in an automated supply-chain management system. Merchandise was stuck in the company's depots and warehouses and was not getting through to many of its stores. Sainsbury was forced to hire about 3000 additional clerks to stock its shelves manually.

<http://www.codinghorror.com/blog/archives/000588.html#>

Analysis: Not a particularly highly ranked or linked page with only limited reach. Nevertheless it demonstrates the "memory" of the web. Once items are posted they stay there and are discoverable by anyone investigating a particular issue.

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CORPORATE ISSUES



OFT investigation

Action Aid today vowed to step up its campaign for a wide-ranging inquiry on British supermarkets' exploitation of small producers and suppliers in poor countries after the agency won a partial victory through the decision by the Office of Fair Trading to investigate the £95bn-a-year supermarket industry, including the big chains Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's and Morrison's.

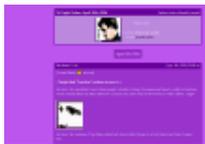
http://www.actionaid.org.uk/100395/supermarkets_inquiry_campaign_hots_up.html

also reported at:

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/fromthefield/216723/5efc0cf08090c1d6ed539bf7d4b87ae0.htm#>

Analysis: Pressure group websites are effective ways for them to disseminate their messages. This has also been picked up by Tesco hate site <http://www.tescopoly.org/>. The site itself is linked to by around 6,000 other websites giving it a broad reach. Action Aid, like War on Want is clearly minded to campaign in the public space against the growth of the retail supermarket sector.

ClipRef:3
CORPORATE ISSUES



Anna Ford

Tonight I was half watching the Baftas while I was painting -more on that later- and Anna Ford was presenting an award and it was so weird because she was at our store last week. Since leaving the BBC she has become a director of Sainsbury's (what a come down) and she was walking around the store asking us all what it is like to work for Sainsbury.

<http://violascent.livejournal.com/24156.html>

Analysis: The personal blog of a Sainsbury employee. Not ranked, and unlikely to be seen by many, but an interesting indicator of an opinion from employees reflecting a less than wholehearted view of the company.

ClipRef:2
CORPORATE ISSUES



Sainsbury is a shop and Anna Ford is CSR window dressing

I do not see any CSR expertise in M/s Ford's CV. She is, at best, an amateur and as such window dressing... Its what you would expect from a competent grocer

...

Well are we surprised? There is not a Public relations Director at Sainsbury at all (there is the Pip Wood, the lowly Director of Communications whose title reveals she is obviously not a PR person and not on the Operating Board) but there is Operating Board member Gwyn Burr who is a paintings by number person...It really is time that larger companies recruited skills and experience and left the politically correct (62 year old woman celebrity) attractions to I'm a Celebrity - Get Me Out of Here.

<http://leverwealth.blogspot.com/2006/05/sainsbury-is-shop-and-anna-ford-is-csr.html#>

Analysis: This is a fairly influential blog. Blogs linking: 47 other blogs link to it, while more than 5,000 web pages links in. It enjoys a relatively high Google page ranking which means it is likely to be found quickly by searchers. It has been online for 8 years, and is the blog of David Phillips, Chair of the joint CIPR/PRCA Internet Commission.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

ClipRef:26
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES



ETI

On May 6 Somerfield pulled out the ETI scheme – which the likes of Tesco, Marks and Spencer and Sainsbury's all support – to re-consider its “short and medium term business priorities”. The ETI provides a forum for large buying companies to tackle the complexity of ethical trade alongside union and non-governmental organisations. As a member of ETI, Somerfield made a commitment to adopt the ETI code and apply these principles in its business dealings with its suppliers.

[#http://foodanddrinkeurope.com/news/ng.asp?n=67692-somerfield-eti-tesco-sainsbury-s#](http://foodanddrinkeurope.com/news/ng.asp?n=67692-somerfield-eti-tesco-sainsbury-s#)

Analysis: Pressure groups will continue to use the web to highlight good (and bad) practice. Membership of ETI is something that has been well received by bloggers and other stakeholders. This post highlights the dangers of withdrawal in the hope that it would go unnoticed.

ClipRef:9
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES



Food sourcing from overseas

The real cost of a bag of salad

You pay 99p. Africa pays 50 litres of fresh waterCustomers who scour the aisles of Tesco, Sainsbury and Waitrose for Spanish tomatoes, Egyptian potatoes and Kenyan roses, are intensifying the worldwide Shortage of our most precious resource.

[#http://groups.google.co.uk/group/misc.activism.progressive/browse_frm/thread/e548381e8b418246/29aaa2ffa04a3ddd?lnk=st&q=sainsbury&num=28&hl=en#29aaa2ffa04a3ddd#](http://groups.google.co.uk/group/misc.activism.progressive/browse_frm/thread/e548381e8b418246/29aaa2ffa04a3ddd?lnk=st&q=sainsbury&num=28&hl=en#29aaa2ffa04a3ddd#)

Analysis: This appears to be lifted from an article in the Independent newspaper. The activism newsgroup is a wide ranging an active one. Sainsbury is not often cited here - the last time was a reference to Euan Blair working for Finsbury who have Sainsbury as a client.

ClipRef:16
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES



Plastic carrier bags

The Co-op (and Sainsbury iirc) provides "bags for life" for a single payment of 10 p each. It's strong plastic and lasts multiple uses; when it wears out they give you a new one in exchange for the old one which is recycled.

Reply:

The 'bag for life' was a good initiative, I agree, and perhaps needs some re-promotion. I've had them from Sainsbury's and Waitrose and they really do last and last.

[#http://groups.google.co.uk/group/uk.rec.gardening/browse_frm/thread/e67c473b26c075ca/1734e51056450639?lnk=st&q=sainsbury&num=9&hl=en#1734e51056450639#](http://groups.google.co.uk/group/uk.rec.gardening/browse_frm/thread/e67c473b26c075ca/1734e51056450639?lnk=st&q=sainsbury&num=9&hl=en#1734e51056450639#)

Analysis: The Gardening discussion forum is highly active, attracting thousands of posts a month. This clip is part of a lengthy debate about how to reduce litter. The consensus was that the law should be changed to make the provision of FREE plastic bags illegal. Tesco's announcement about degradable bags has been well received.

MARKETPLACE ISSUES

ClipRef:4
MARKETPLACE ISSUES



Tesco & Sainsbury's - We Hate England, But We Love A Profit! Take a fresh look at Sainsbury's vegetables...

So, if Scotland can be listed, why not England? Because Sainsbury's doesn't want it to be. Enquiries have elicited various strange responses such as: "It's legal". Eh? Sainsbury's frontline staff dealing with these enquiries are often just as baffled and unhappy with the situation (once it is pointed out to them) as the customer. But Sainsbury's doesn't care. To them, England is "UK" - it doesn't exist...Buy your England football stuff elsewhere. Come on, England, YES! But don't swell the coffers of two supermarkets who discriminate against England and the Cross of St George in every possible way they can. If you buy England football stuff from Sainsburys and Tesco the last thing you are really doing is supporting England. Here's an updated version of Sainsburys mid-to-late 1980s advertising slogan. In the early 21st Century it should read...

IT'S CLEAN, IT'S FRESH, IT MIGHT BE MARKED "SCOTLAND" BUT IT DEFINITELY WON'T BE MARKED "ENGLAND" (UNLESS WE'RE TRYING TO UP OUR PROFITS DURING THE FOOTBALL SEASON) AT SAINSBURYS

<http://englandparliament.blogspot.com/2006/05/tesco-sainsburys-we-hate-england-but.htm#>

Analysis: The England Parliament blog is one of several which take issue with supermarket product labelling. Whilst not formally connected with the Campaign of an English Parliament, it is indicative of a groundswell of public opinion that is increasingly using supermarkets as a focus for rallying activity around political issues. In some instances these have been on the fringes of right-wing political activity - one recently called for a boycott of a supermarket because it sold Halal meat. Although not page ranked by Google (indicative more of poor site construction) this site is linked to by 2,000 other websites.

ClipRef:7
MARKETPLACE ISSUES



Store layout

Anyone who's been into the Sainsbury's at the O2 Centre in north west London will know it's all layout is all a bit pot-luck really. They're opening a new baby clothes section. Next to the salad bar. Where the piles are discounted beer are. And cue the next entry: "Why can't Sainsbury's lay their shops out correctly?"

<http://bobbysox-blog.blogspot.com/2006/05/celebrity-editor-makes-another-spot.html#http://>

Analysis: One customer who remains confused by Sainsbury store layouts. Not an issue that many are commenting on, however. This is part of a post commenting on Stephen Merchant in Sainsbury's in the O2 Centre.

ClipRef:18
MARKETPLACE ISSUES



Price comparisons

.....Sainsbury's best drumbeat seems to be shelf cards next to certain lines proclaiming "As cheap as Tesco". Jeeze! What does that tell you about everything else on the shelf? Time was when Sainsbury's own brand was consistently very good and > unrivalled by its competitors. No longer.

http://groups.google.co.uk/group/alt.consumers.uk-discounts.and.bargains/browse_fm/thread/3ac7c48051b61d3d/1ad6d142288847d0?lnk=st&q=sainsbury&num=1&hl=en#1ad6d142288847d0#

Analysis:

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MARKETPLACE ISSUES



OFT inquiry

The hostility of the siege that has befallen the UK's major supermarkets was upped yesterday when the Office of Fair Trading said it has referred the UK grocery market to the Competition Commission for a market investigation. To Tesco's intense annoyance, Asda and Sainsbury's have been complaining that the market leader's huge bank of undeveloped land is a major competitive advantage.

It is, for the first time, possible that supermarkets could be forced to sell plots of land to rivals, or even to industry newcomers. But unless changes to planning laws are well thought out, the winners may not be newcomers but some of the giants already involved in the fight.

<http://www.just-food.com/blogdetail.aspx?id=1114&lk=alrt3&amd=3080#>

Analysis: The OFT inquiry is stimulating remarkably little consumer comment. Websites that are still covering the issue this week include:
http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/news/columnists/article.html?in_article_id=408867&in_page_id=19&in_author_id=2

ClipRef:6
MARKETPLACE ISSUES



Jamie Oliver

I blame the not-so-naked chef

I swear I wouldn't love Sainsbury's so much if Jamie Oliver didn't shill for them. Come to think of it, I'm not sure why I even care that he's in their ads, considering it's not like I ever watched the Naked Chef or own any of his cookbooks. But for some odd reason I find him charming, and I love his spots for Sainsbury's so much that they're my favourite grocery store.

<http://eternallyskeptical.blogspot.com/2006/04/i-blame-not-so-naked-chef.html#>

Analysis: Not an influential blog, but a customer insight. She goes at some length to describe how good the home delivery service is.

ClipRef:17
PRODUCT ISSUES



Supermarket Chic?

Well George at Asda have really outperformed themselves in the fashion stakes this season. They've produced some 'must-have' outfits and have been featured in some of the top womens magazines. For a supermarket they really do seem to be delivering quality goods and Tescos, Sainsburys and the like can only sit back and admire.

<http://psychicfrog.com/2006/05/08/supermarket-chic/#>

Analysis: A blog that is linked to by only a handful of others, not page ranked at all. Of little influence, but nevertheless a litmus test of customer opinion.

ClipRef:13
PRODUCT ISSUES



Organic vegetable competitor

The Eden Farms vegetable boxes are consistently excellent. Even through the winter months we have been treated to some superb local organic produce. They are still cheaper than Sainsbury's as well.

<http://www.eatnottingham.com/2006/05/eden-farms.htm#>

Analysis: The personal blog of one man's quest to eat at every decent restaurant in the English City of Nottingham. This posting reflects a general sentiment and tendency of people to talk about how they claim to be switching to buying food from farms and farmers markets. With over 2,000 inbound links this personal blog is more widely read than most.

SERVICE ISSUES

ClipRef:8
SERVICE ISSUES



Access to toilets in store

Went to Sainsbury's yesterday. The loos (so this is on topic) are now locked and you have to go to the security manager for a key, presumably with guarantees from the Chief Con that you aren't a rapist. How paranoid can people get?
Chris

http://groups.google.co.uk/group/uk.d-i-y/browse_frm/thread/651915edad716614/c2c0b7718537ffd2?nk=st&q=sainsbury&num=45&hl=en#c2c0b7718537ffd2#

Analysis: Google Groups are the most widely read discussion boards on the web, where there are dedicated groups to just about every conceivable issue, often demonstrating the breadth of stakeholders on a particular issue. This is part of the DIY board, in a discussion about retailers being forced to be overcautious on the supply of household chemicals. The DIY group has a high level of activity with typically more than 10,000 posts each month.

ClipRef:5
SERVICE ISSUES



Pool customer service

There was no salt in the supermarket today. It was Sainsbury's, from whom I expect better. One of the useless shop assistants tried to fob me off with a 'Sodium Based Alternative' instead (Hmm, doesn't that sound rather like the next Sudan 1 to you?) I was not happy, as I had to wait around for ages whilst said incompetent berk rummaged around in the stock room, only for him to come back and tell me he was giving up because he couldn't find any.

[#http://missnarcissus.livejournal.com/6912.html#](http://missnarcissus.livejournal.com/6912.html#)

Analysis: Customers continue to use their blogs as a means of letting off steam - often commenting that they would rather do this, than complain to the company about poor service. As such, it is often a more useful indication of customer sentiment than an analysis of formal complaints.

ClipRef:19
SERVICE ISSUES



Kitchen appliances

Sainsbury's kitchen appliances (DISGUSTING SERVICE) (4 posts) by susiegordon at: 9:45 22/04/06

I thought I would post our situation on this site, to warn other people never to purchase anything from Sainsbury's kitchen appliances. I would recommend to everyone never to purchase anything from Sainsbury's kitchen appliances. Personally, I will never spend a single penny in Sainsbury's ever again.

<http://www.grumbletext.co.uk>

Analysis: Grumble text is a UK consumer complaints and action site the encourages dissatisfied customers to post their complaints for the satisfaction - of having a go at an unreachable faceless company in public and revenge - "by warning others you can actually dent that company's sales - a good example is Safestyle UK - our visitors have cost them thousands by influencing buying decisions". It is frequently quoted by mainstream media such as The Independent, BBC Watchdog, Mail on Sunday etc. It is often used as a source by investigative reporters. A recent post reply to a complaint was "Hi Paul, I'm working on a new series for BBC1 about customer service called 'Are We Being Served?'. I'd love to talk to you about your experience at MFI. Any chance you could call me please? I'm on tel: 0117 9858771. Look forward to hearing from you, Katie Lee".

WORKPLACE ISSUES

ClipRef:22
WORKPLACE ISSUES



Employee comments

There's so much to say about Sainsbury's I just dunno where to begin!

Ok first of all I wear a name tag so eh people seem to say excuse me all the time or the lady but then pervy old men use it to their advantage and I get given a note or asked for my number by ugly people! Then there's pressing a button for help and no one comes what's the point I think I'll just do it myself! Supervisors who don't have a clue what they're doing! Adolescent boys who think they act all old when they probably haven't even got pubes yet! Little old ladies who think that just because they're old I obviously have to pack for them. Lifting things up that are bigger than I am! It's not in the job description to give yourself a hernia! Then there's the breaks of 20 mins when you have to walk miles to get to the staff canteen so really you only get about 10. Every single week I get asked if I'm new or piss off I've been there a year! You walk down the checkouts and girls who think they're all that give you dirty looks whilst all the minging men eye you up and down!

So there you go I love my job!

<http://blog.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=blog.view&friendID=66617135&blogID=115580042#>

Analysis: The blogs of employees, whilst not widely read beyond their circle of friends and family, are highly influential and often reputationally damaging. Other stakeholders are likely to put considerable store and trust into their opinions, particularly where they demonstrate a divergence with avowed corporate values. All but a very few companies suffer from employee bloggers commenting frankly on their workplaces. This blogger is Kimberley Emma Grant who lives in Beckenham. There are a number of similar posts.
