

# BANKING INDUSTRY INSIDER

Perspectives on the Banking Industry

The RepTrak Company | Content and Community

The global Banking industry is holding steady so far in 2021. Companies currently have an overall average Reputation Score (68), and the sector lags the global average by three points.

Governance, Citizenship, and Products most influence the industry's reputation, which excels in score across (Financial) Performance while performing just average (<70) on Citizenship and Governance.

Despite their current flat position, banks have seen an overall improvement in the last twelve months, primarily due to their response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Banks quickly rose to the task; they supported their customers by transferring government stimulus measures, waiving late fees, and accelerating their digital and contactless initiatives.

These actions garnered renewed goodwill from the informed general public (IGP). The industry's Reputation Score improved two points from 2020. Banks are doing well in meeting the public's needs, with 33% of the IGP agreeing that banks deliver a consistent experience. In addition, public trust is on the rise, with 33% of the IGP strongly supportive of saying something positive about banks and trusting banks to do the right thing.

To sustain reputation progress into 2021, banks must continue to concentrate on "doing the right thing." Consumers are more motivated to support banks that demonstrate behaving ethically, supporting the community, practicing transparency, and ensuring they are doing good for society. Conversely, 44% say they will not support institutions that are focused on profit maximization.

Banks must emphasize their Governance and Citizenship initiatives. Their current subpar Driver scores combined with urgency from the IGP means inaction can damage business outcomes. Despite banks' improvements, there is still residual skepticism across business outcomes. Almost two-thirds of the public feel ambiguous about whether banks communicate frequently enough, provide sufficient information about their activities, or share many of the same values and beliefs as the public. This skepticism means banks must close the perception gap, educate stakeholders, and link their actions back to their areas of reputation strength.

## BANKING INDUSTRY

67.6

June 2021 Global Reputation Score

18%

Most Influential Driver Shaping Banks: Governance

72.8

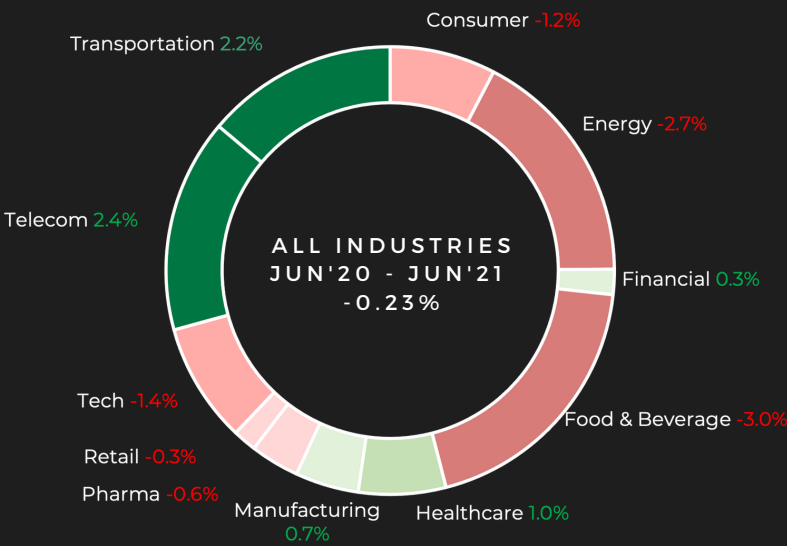
June 2021 Top Driver Score - Financial Performance

33%

Percentage of public who strongly agree Banks sector "delivers a consistent experience"

## GLOBAL CONTEXT

### INDUSTRY POINT % CHANGE

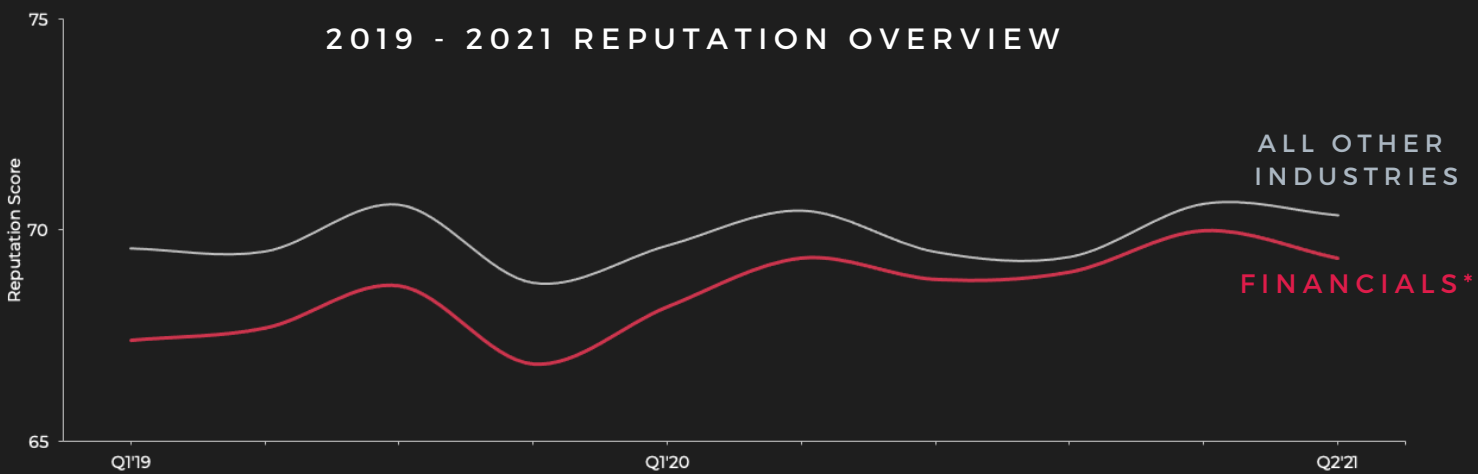


### INDUSTRY POINT SCORE CHANGE

Industry	Jun-20	Jun-21	Score Change
All Industries	74.7	73.8	-0.9
Consumer	66.0	64.2	-1.8
Energy	66.0	64.2	-1.8
Financial*	69.6	69.8	0.2
Food & Beverage	75.6	73.3	-2.3
Healthcare	70.4	71.1	0.7
Manufacturing	69.3	69.8	0.5
Pharma	71.6	71.2	-0.4
Retail	74.3	74.1	-0.2
Tech	73.4	72.4	-1.0
Telecom	61.6	63.1	1.5
Transportation	68.6	70.1	1.5

\*INCLUDES INSURANCE, BANKS, AND DIVERSIFIED FINANCIALS

## 2019 - 2021 REPUTATION OVERVIEW



## INSIDER Q&A

The RepTrak Company spoke with Michelle Hecht, Head of Communications at Citizens Financial Group, in June 2020 to get her perspective on which areas were most critical for banks to pay attention to and how to grow their reputations the following year.

- At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Citizens worked to exemplify their philosophy, which calls for their employees to "do more every day" to serve better their customers, colleagues, communities, and shareholders.
- Citizens donated \$5M for pandemic relief, with \$2M going to small businesses. Citizens took every opportunity to tell the story, not just from the bank's perspective, but spotlighted the recipients. Citizens launched a multi-faceted campaign across traditional and social media channels.
- To improve its Governance and Citizenship, Citizens leveraged senior leadership to be visible at all levels. It was important that leaders didn't shy away from but instead engaged with local businesses, employees, and community leaders across markets. Michelle says, "the key here was a lot of listening and understanding how people are feeling and what their needs are."
- Afterward, Citizens announced a \$10M commitment to social equity and social advancement in underserved communities. The investment combined the bank's resources and expertise with the unique strengths of their culture to help drive progress in the communities they serve.
- Michelle advises her communication peers to take a look at their roles as communicators and collaborators. Adopting a holistic view of how you represent your company in your function and across all disciplines that communicate with stakeholders is critical. "Break down walls and silos and other barriers that might exist. Let your role as a comms leader be a conduit for collaboration and a convener."



**Michelle Hecht**  
Head of Communications  
Citizens Financial Group

Michelle Hecht is the executive vice president, head of communications of Citizens Financial Group (CFG), one of the nation's oldest and largest regional banks.

Hecht has a proven track record of leading complex communication, crisis and change efforts. She has held a variety of leadership roles in Communications and Marketing, Consumer Banking, Corporate Strategy and Human Resources.