



# 2019 Trends in Corporate Reports

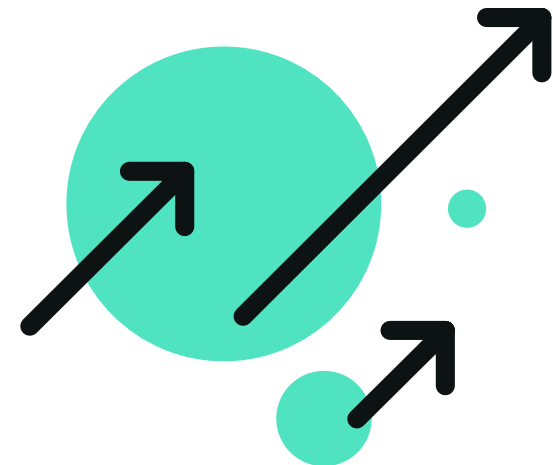


**With a brighter spotlight on corporate purpose and creating value for employees, communities and investors – the demand for accountability is growing.**

Corporate Reports continue to be an important communications vehicle for the Fortune 200. In 2019, we see an array of reports, using diverse formats and channels. And, this year we dive deeper into the content.

The traditional Annual Report continues to decline, but summary or highlights documents and integrated reports have grown. Issuing a CSR/Sustainability Report is now the norm. Engaging with key audiences, sharing your story and being accountable to commitments demonstrates a company's purpose in a tangible way and builds goodwill.

There is no question that an effective corporate report is a critical communications and reputation tool, not only a compliance exercise. Reaching shareholders and stakeholders continues to be challenging as attention spans shrink and information outlets grow. The use of multiple formats and channels better serves today's fractured audience, from the professionals to the more casual consumer reader.



## APPROACH

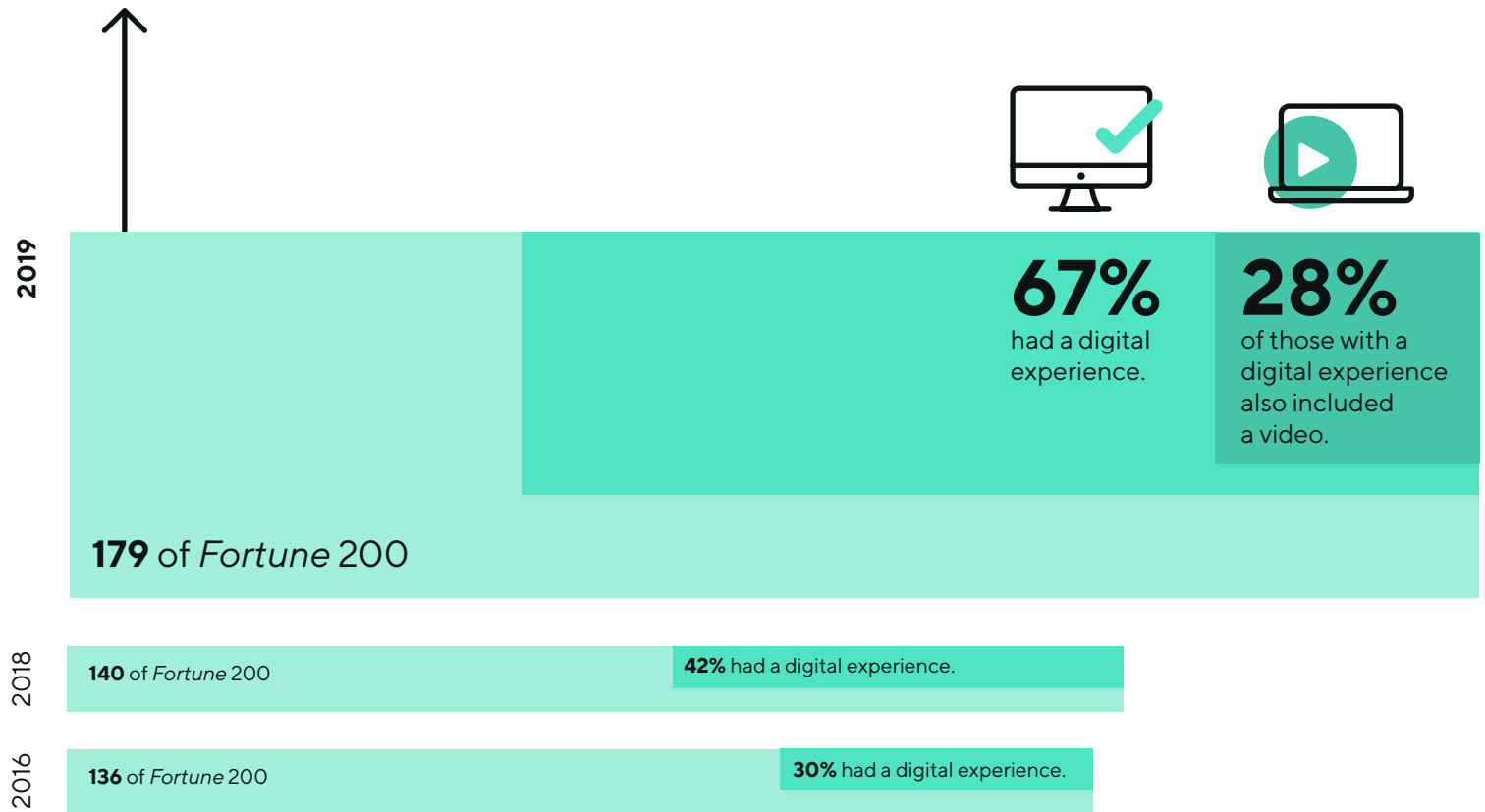
The CSR/Sustainability report has officially arrived. From 90% of the *Fortune* 200 to 86% of the S&P 500 (2018 Governance & Accountability Institute), in all corners only a minority are not creating this communication.

And, as companies seek to reach audiences where they are, and at their level of interest, we continue to see a diversity of platforms, channels and formats. We expect to see experimentation continue over the next few years as companies strive for concise, consistent, and comparable Reports.

We use "CSR/Sustainability report" to broadly include CSR, Sustainability, Responsibility, Citizenship and ESG reports.

Some percentages featured in this report may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**90%** of the *Fortune* 200 had a CSR/Sustainability report.



## CONTENT

This year, we deepened our research and looked at the frameworks used and the way companies set climate goals.

### FRAMEWORKS

As frameworks proliferate, and harmonization is a work in progress, what's used today?

**59%**

(109) incorporated the Global Reporting Initiative.



**46%**

(84) included the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



**22%**

(40) included the UN Global Compact.



**13%**

(24) included the Task Force on Climate-Related Disclosures.



**Fortune  
200  
Reports**

### CLIMATE GOALS

When looking at an organization's climate goals, we focused on efforts to reduce GHG emissions and looked at absolute vs. relative goals. The way goals are set is a key to the level of commitment to the effort.

**58%** featured relative climate goals.<sup>1</sup>

**27%** featured absolute climate goals.<sup>2</sup>

**16%** did not have clear climate goals.

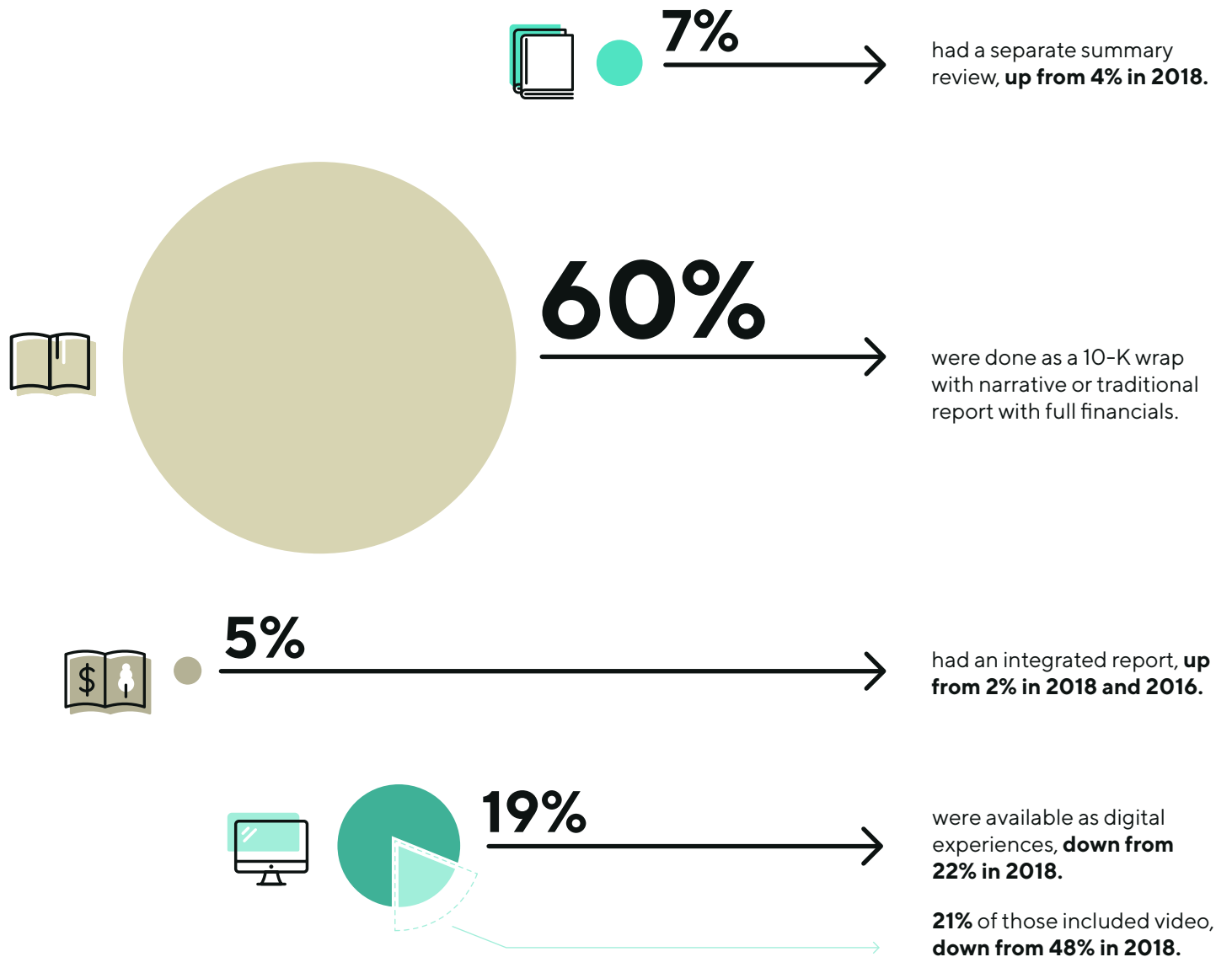
**15%** of those with climate goals had science-based targets, the 'gold standard.'

<sup>1</sup> Relative climate goals: emissions reduction as a percentage based on a given year baseline.

<sup>2</sup> Absolute climate goals: emissions reduction as a concrete number, a clearly stated amount of decrease, or which included the term "absolute reduction".

# Annual Reports

We still see companies investing in more than the minimum required. We saw a slight increase in both summary reports, without detailed financials, as well as integrated reports. Clearly, companies are still finding value in giving context to the numbers, and in framing financial performance in the broader business context.



**As the purpose of companies in society is increasingly under scrutiny, many companies are sharing more about their efforts – promoting the good, explaining the less than good and outlining how they seek to make change for the better.**

We see increased investment in developing the content and presentation of information, especially in the CSR/ Sustainability world, using more vehicles and channels to reach audiences at all levels of interest and depth.

The best reports have a clear narrative while defining the companies' challenges and efforts that are uniquely theirs. Reports can engage audiences, build belief and set your company apart – clarifying why all stakeholders should “invest” in your company – financially in the stock, with their time as an employee, or as a partner in business or community endeavors – as well as believe in your brand.

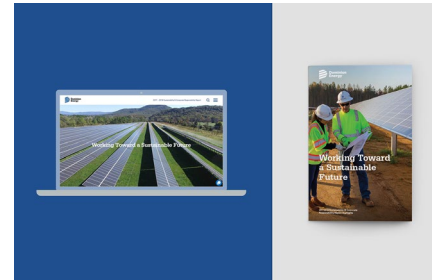
Although we are looking at trends, each situation is unique. As a corporate communicator or investor relations leader, you need to determine what kind of report, in what mix of media, serves your company and your diverse stakeholders best.

# Our Expertise

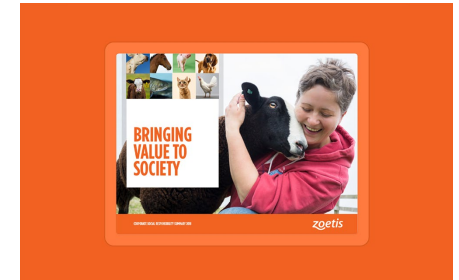
**Ideas On Purpose** has 19 years experience in corporate reports for leading and emerging brands. We've created CSR/ Sustainability Reports; financial Annual Reports and 10-K wraps; Integrated and Combined Reports; Summary Reviews, and more – in print, interactive PDF and digital online experiences.



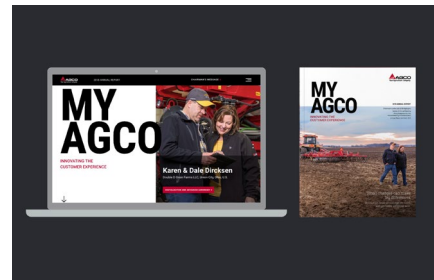
**Coca-Cola**  
2018 Business & Sustainability Report



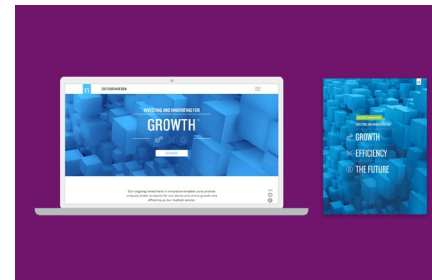
**Dominion**  
2017-18 Sustainability & CSR Report



**Zoetis**  
2018 Corporate Social Responsibility Summary



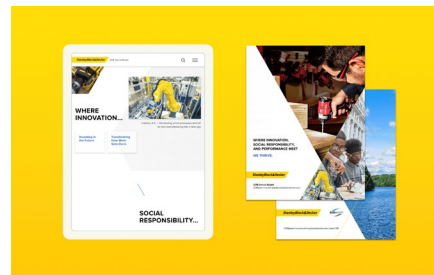
**AGCO**  
2018 Annual Report



**Nielsen**  
2017 Annual Report & Year in Review



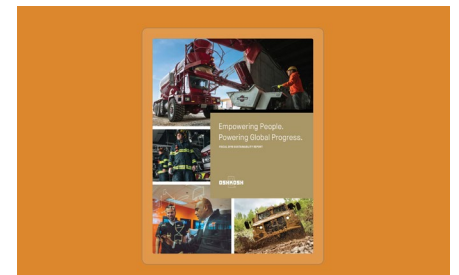
**United Technologies**  
2018 Annual Report



**Stanley Black & Decker**  
2018 Year in Review Suite, Financial & Sustainability Report



**Memorial Sloan Kettering**  
2018 Annual Report



**Oshkosh**  
2018 Sustainability Report



**Ideas On Purpose** is a design and digital agency. We partner with organizations to help them uncover, express and be accountable to their purpose – the reason they exist, the value they add – so they can grow their people, profits, and social impact. We work across Branding, Corporate Communications and Reports, with deep expertise in Annual and CSR/Sustainability Reports.

Learn more at  
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