

59 resolutions for 2023

- The brands not to buy in coming year because owners are still involved with Russia
- The ‘moral cost’ of each brand has been rated by the MRA



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Note: The ‘Moral Rating’ of each brand owner has been calculated according to the Moral Rating Agency’s methodology

The Moral Rating Agency released a list of ‘immoral brands’ that should be avoided in our New Year’s resolutions. They have all been assigned an ‘MRA moral health warning’.

Mark Dixon, founder of the MRA, said: “Don’t buy products that pay for the invasion of Ukraine. An immoral brand doesn’t taste very good if you close your eyes and think about its association with the war in Ukraine.”

The brands are owned by companies with some degree of ongoing business involvement with Russia and the owners are among the largest companies in the world. The MRA also releases a moral ranking of these companies. It is calling for their brands to be boycotted in 2023.

What not to shop?

Not all the brands are available in Russia but the MRA has found their owners to be involved with Russia. The MRA says boycotting should cover all brands owned by an immoral company.

The MRA founder suggests, **“Make a New Year’s resolution to avoid consumption that exacerbates misery”.**

He added, **“During New Year celebrations in the West, there is still a war in Ukraine. Don’t be indirectly part of it.”**

The 59 brands to cross off your shopping list have been selected from over a thousand ‘immoral brands’ based on how well-known they are as consumer brands and how immoral their owners are.

The Moral Rating Agency has assigned the brands a ‘moral cost’ based on its corporate rating of the brand owner. The agency rates companies according to five dimensions: degree and speed of exit from Russia, how courageously they spoke out, as well as the impact they had on the Russian economy and the sacrifice to the company itself.

59 New Year’s Resolutions Checklist							
Brands with an 'MRA moral health warning'							
	Moral Cost	Owner		Moral Cost	Owner		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7UP	-72	PepsiCo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lazada	-113	Alibaba
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AliExpress	-113	Alibaba	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Maggi	-87	Nestlé
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ariel	-63	Procter & Gamble	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Magnum	-81	Unilever
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Audi	-32	Volkswagen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Microsoft	-55	Microsoft
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Aveeno	-90	Johnson & Johnson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Milkybar	-87	Nestlé
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Axe	-81	Unilever	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Motorola Mobility	-100	Lenovo
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ben & Jerry’s	-81	Unilever	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mountain Dew	-72	PepsiCo
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bentley	-32	Volkswagen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nescafé	-87	Nestlé
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bounty	-63	Procter & Gamble	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nespresso	-87	Nestlé
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Buick	-12	General Motors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nesquik	-87	Nestlé
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cadillac	-12	General Motors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neutrogena	-90	Johnson & Johnson
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cap’n Crunch	-72	PepsiCo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Olay	-63	Procter & Gamble
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cheerios	-87	Nestlé	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Panasonic	-20	Panasonic
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cheetos	-72	PepsiCo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pepsi	-72	PepsiCo
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chevrolet	-12	General Motors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Popsicle	-81	Unilever
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Clean & Clear	-90	Johnson & Johnson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Porsche	-32	Volkswagen
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coffee-Mate	-87	Nestlé	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Puffs	-63	Procter & Gamble
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cornetto	-81	Unilever	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Quaker	-72	PepsiCo
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-shot	-78	Sony	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ruffles	-72	PepsiCo
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Doritos	-72	PepsiCo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Samsung	-32	Samsung
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Febreeze	-63	Procter & Gamble	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SK-II	-63	Procter & Gamble
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fritos	-72	PepsiCo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Smarties	-87	Nestlé
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Häagen-Dazs	-87	Nestlé	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	St. Ives	-81	Unilever
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Handycam	-78	Sony	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sunbites	-72	PepsiCo
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Head & Shoulders	-63	Procter & Gamble	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ThinkPad	-100	Lenovo
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Herbal Essences	-63	Procter & Gamble	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tresemme	-81	Unilever
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	IdeaPad	-100	Lenovo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tropicana	-72	PepsiCo
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	KitKat	-87	Nestlé	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Walkman	-78	Sony
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lamborghini	-32	Volkswagen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Wall’s	-81	Unilever
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lay’s	-72	PepsiCo				

Note: Biggest consumer brands of companies still involved with Russia. The ‘Moral Cost’ of each brand is based on the Moral Rating Agency’s rating for the brand owner.
Source: MoralRatingAgency.org

Misery-mongers

The Hall of Shame of consumer products companies still involved in Russia

Worst First	Moral Rating	Top brands owned
Alibaba	-113	AliExpress Lazada
Lenovo	-100	IdeaPad Motorola Mobility ThinkPad
Johnson & Johnson	-90	Aveeno Clean & Clear Neutrogena Cheerios
Nestlé	-87	Coffee-Mate Häagen-Dazs KitKat Maggi Milkybar Nescafé Nespresso Nesquik Smarties
Unilever	-81	Axe Ben & Jerry's Cornetto Magnum Popsicle St. Ives Tresemme Wall's
Sony	-78	Cyber-shot Handycam Walkman
PepsiCo	-72	7UP Cap'n Crunch Cheetos Doritos Fritos Lay's Mountain Dew PepsiCo Quaker Ruffles Sunbites Tropicana
Procter & Gamble	-63	Ariel Bounty Febreze Head & Shoulders Herbal Essences Olay Puffs SK-II
Microsoft	-55	Microsoft
Samsung	-32	Samsung
Volkswagen	-32	Audi Bentley Lamborghini Porsche Volkswagen
Panasonic	-20	Panasonic
General Motors	-12	Buick Cadillac Chevrolet

Source: [MoralRatingAgency.org](https://moralratingagency.org)

Note: The 'Moral Rating' of each brand owner has been calculated according to the Moral Rating Agency's methodology

Boycott the 'Hall of Shame'

The MRA's Hall of Shame – or what it calls 'misery-mongers' – is ranked according to the MRA's 360-degree 'moral rating'. While they are all guilty of continuing business with Russia, some are worst than others.

Chinese companies **Alibaba** and **Lenovo** get the worst moral ratings in our selection. **Alibaba** is top among the 'misery-mongers'. Its joint venture **AliExpress Russia** controls about 10% of Russia's e-commerce market and **Alibaba** has made no announcement of exit. **Mr. Dixon** said, "We think **Alibaba** is trapped. If it fails to follow the Chinese regime's **Putin** appeasement policy, it runs the risk of retribution. It may be caught between a rock and a hard place, of wanting to do the right thing and fearing doing the right thing. It loses profits in the West if it becomes a pariah, and loses profits in the East if it doesn't side with China. Such quandaries are the price of living under the long shadow of the Chinese regime. **Alibaba** is a pawn on a chess board being played by democracy on one side and autocratic regimes on the other but in this case autocracy is winning." **Amazon**, by contrast, is totally clear of Russia.

Then come six of the best-known Western consumer products groups: **Johnson & Johnson**, **Nestle**, **Unilever**, **PepsiCo**, **Procter and Gamble**, and **Microsoft**. They are expert at making excuses about their continued involvement in Russia. Using slightly different wording, they have all said they will supply products that are 'essential' to Russia. Many of them also pass other products through this loophole.

The MRA is against the essential excuse. **Mr. Dixon** explained: "Lives of innocent Ukrainians rank higher than satisfying the tastebuds of Russians that lead to tax revenues that are destroying lives in Ukraine. The 'essential product' ruse is simply moralwashing that disguises their immoral profits and their culpability for misery. The companies are not just food producers but now also 'misery-mongers'."

Ukraine's 2022 Misery at a glance	
Civilian deaths (total)	6,490
Children deaths	430
Civilian injured (total)	9,972
Children injured	745
Military deaths	100,000
Population displaced	14,600,000
Population affected by power cuts	4,500,000
Residential buildings destroyed	1,500
Schools destroyed	202
Hospitals destroyed	34

Source: [MoralRatingAgency.org](https://moralratingagency.org) based on data from UN Human Rights, US government, and EUAA, IOM and OECD reports
Note: Figures reflect different dates for each sources

The worst Misery-mongers

Worst first	Moral Rating	MRA accusation
Alibaba	-113	We think Alibaba is trapped. If it fails to follow China's Putin appeasement policy, it runs the risk of retribution. It may be caught between a rock and a hard place, of wanting to do the right thing and fearing doing the right thing. It loses profits in the West if it becomes a pariah, and loses profits in the East if it doesn't side with China. Such quandaries are the price of living under the long shadow of the Chinese regime. In a way, Alibaba is a pawn on a chess board being played by democracy on one side and two autocratic regimes on the other.
Lenovo	-100	We don't give Lenovo much credit for the unverified reports that it has reduced its activities in Russia without saying anything publicly. It may be afraid of Chinese government retaliation if it announces a withdrawal.
J&J	-90	J&J needs to get out of Russia as other pharma companies like Bristol-Myers have done. It also needs to disclose the scale of what it's still doing there. J&J spoke out against the war and gave some humanitarian aid, but these are both hypocritical when compared to its actions. How can you be profiting in the Russian economy and spending some of your profits supporting its victims while you also admonish the perpetrator? This is an immoral vicious cycle. J&J should stop dancing around and just get out.
Nestlé	-87	Nestlé was forced to take action against its will by consumer outrage and direct intervention by a sovereign nation (Zelensky's challenge to Nestlé CEO). Nestlé is still in Russia today, using the pseudo-moral arguments that food is a basic human right. To that, the MRA replies that life is a more basic human right, and helping Putin to afford to kill innocent Ukrainian civilians and soldiers is what Nestlé is unwittingly doing every day it sells products in Russia. Nestlé also conveniently changed its definition of what is "essential food". If Nestlé really felt that all foods such as a KitKat were a human right, why did it later deny people their human right but by cutting off its KitKat production? This back-peddling shows the company had no solid moral position in the first place. Nestlé can't expect to be treated differently from other Western companies. Swiss neutrality and sitting on the fence doesn't cut it in a world of good and evil. Nestlé must get out of Russia or it will be making chocolates for a diminished Free World.
Unilever	-81	Unilever is what the Moral Rating Agency calls a 'triple hypocrite'. First hypocrisy: it claims to care about issues facing the world but is right now supporting the country causing the most dangerous issue in the world. Second hypocrisy: it uses the words 'essential food' to justify selling non-essential food like Magnum and Cornetto ice creams. Since when were such products good for health or survival? Third hypocrisy: Unilever said 'We continue to condemn the war in Ukraine as a brutal and senseless act by the Russian state.' It is hypocritical to condemn a war when you support the economy that pays for it. Also, Unilever made a grandiose-sounding statement that it wouldn't make further investments in Russia, which we class a red herring since who would commercially do so? We measure companies on getting out of Russia rather than promising not to get further in. Unilever's statement about not making a profit from Russia is a profit warning not a moral position since Unilever didn't say what it would do with any profits or for how long it would not make a profit, and anyway it doesn't mean Russia isn't making a profit from Unilever.
Sony	-78	The company has mothballed Sony Pictures, Sony Music and Sony Interactive rather than pulling out of Russia. This allows it to switch back on at any moment and sets a pathetic example compared to others that have left for real. The mothballing of Sony Interactive only happened after Ukrainian government pressure. Sony needs to get all its divisions in one room, form a unified policy, and move all of them out of Russia.
PepsiCo	-72	After the invasion, the company said it was suspending sales of Pepsi but Reuters found that the product continued to be produced and sold in Russia as late as August. Also, when PepsiCo carved out 'daily essentials' from its withdrawal announcement, it failed to mention it still had two plants in Russia making potato crisps. If crisps are essential, what food isn't? PepsiCo is not only hiding behind the word 'essential' but is also failing to disclose which products it is carving out with this excuse.
P&G	-63	P&G said it would "focus" on selling health-related products in Russia, but the MRA thinks the focus covers the majority of its global product lines. Like Unilever, P&G made a red herring statement about not making future investments. It would be a small sacrifice for P&G to withdraw from every product because we estimate Russia at less than 1% of profits. Refusing to leave is a lost opportunity because Russians would notice so many brands disappearing from the shelves. P&G should close all products and get rid of its Russian factories.

Source: [MoralRatingAgency.org](https://www.moralaratingagency.org)

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About the [Moral Rating Agency](#)

The Moral Rating Agency was set up to get Russia out of Ukraine. It later plans to cover corporate unethical actions in other countries and on other issues.

In addition to exposing, and crediting, corporations through moral ratings, the MRA maintains an [Indelible Ledger](#) of a company's actions so any later corrective actions do not wipe the slate clean. Time is of the essence, so the rating system includes a disincentive for delay through exposing and tracking what preceded a later corrective action.

Unlike ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) rating agencies, which have a commercial responsibility to their institutional investor clients to cover the range of issues these clients wish, the Moral Rating Agency is zeroing in on a single corporate moral issue, in this case the Russia-Ukraine war.

The MRA was founded and is led by Mark Dixon, who runs the mergers & acquisitions consultancy Thinking Linking in the City of London and New York. He was one of the co-founders of the online financial commentator [BreakingViews.com](#), which is today part of Thomson Reuters. Mark has been opposed to autocratic regimes, particularly to the Chinese government and to Putin's transformation of Russia from a nascent democracy into a fully-throttled autocracy. He has a personal connection with Ukraine because he has owned an apartment in the city of Lviv since 2010. He has also lived in China.

The MRA has a paid staff of moral raters, verifiers, and fact-checkers who operate according to its [Rating Methodology](#). It also has an on-site team involved in statistics, media relations, site production and publishing.

The MRA has no customers, external commercial relationships, or conflicts of any kind. It will rate and publish so that consumers, media and governments can judge companies on a single topic on a fair basis. This objectivity on individual companies and their relative scores is maintained despite the campaigning nature of the agency, as explained in [Rating Philosophy](#).