

## Vendor Profile

# Splunk for Good: IT Vendor Corporate Responsibility Profile

Mary Johnston Turner

## IDC OPINION

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As technology becomes the largest infrastructure investment for enterprises and governmental organizations, the potential to impact lives and do good becomes a critical new business metric for the IT industry. Employees, partners, and investors want to work with companies that align with their own desires to make a positive social impact. This has far-reaching business consequences that impact shareholder decisions, employee recruitment and retention decisions, and investors' portfolios. In response, increasing numbers of large IT vendors are investing in corporate responsibility programs. These programs typically service multiple goals, including internal employee engagement and external social impact measurements. IDC finds:

- Splunk, a worldwide provider of data analytics software and services, is an example of how one vendor is identifying impactful ways to promote social benefits while also engaging employees and partners. Splunk's experience provides other vendors with important insights about how commitment to corporate responsibility can result in a number of benefits including:
  - Deeper employee engagement
  - Workforce development and increasing the pool of potential product users
  - Better quality of life and more impactful interventions to support a broad range of sustainability, resiliency, and disaster recovery efforts
  - The power of partnerships
- Splunk's ability to help nonprofits, NGOs, and local governmental initiatives improve and extend critical services using data visualization and analytics illustrates how impactful access to emerging technologies such as AI/ML can be to communities at risk.

## IN THIS VENDOR PROFILE

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This IDC Vendor Profile examines Splunk, a worldwide data analytics software and services vendor that supports a global Splunk for Good program focused on empowering partner organizations around the world to support sustainability, community resilience, and workforce development efforts by harnessing the power of data and analytics.

## SITUATION OVERVIEW

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The roots of the Splunk for Good program map back to volunteer efforts undertaken by individual employees in the early days of the company's history. Today, the program has a small dedicated full-time staff focused on coordinating technical assistance and product donations across a number of nonprofit partner programs. In addition, an extended network of full-time participants contribute to a range of global projects and program areas. Employees are encouraged to actively participate in organized activities such as an annual Habitat for Humanity mobilization and have the opportunity to launch targeted self-organized efforts.

## Company Overview

With annual revenue of over \$2.3 billion in 2019, Splunk is a worldwide provider of IT, security, and business data analytics software and services. The company operates in dozens of countries and has over 6,000 employees worldwide. Customers represent a wide cross-section of industries and geographies, including Dairy Farmers of America; Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (Australia); McLaren Racing (England); Mercari (Japan); NHS Digital (England); Nordea (Finland); Swisscom AG (Switzerland); University of California San Diego; and The Washington Post. Splunk has won many corporate responsibility accolades, including being listed as a 2019 Fortune Best Workplace for Diversity and Women.

## Company Strategy

The Splunk for Good program has committed to donate \$100 million in software licenses, education, training, and workforce contributions over 10 years. Splunk reports that approximately 60% of its employees engage in volunteer activities annually. Over the past several years, Splunk for Good focuses on initiatives related to workforce, sustainability, and resilience. Projects have included:

- Humanitarian, refugee, and disaster recovery efforts to rapidly provide network connectivity to responders
- Support for digital investigation tools to identify and shut down online human trafficking activities
- Emergency response to natural disasters, including social media analysis
- Assistance to public agencies, cities, and towns to implement data collection and analysis programs and dashboards
- Contributions to support digital training for over 12,000 U.S. veterans

Many Splunk for Good initiatives are executed in collaboration with other technology companies such as AWS and Accenture. Splunk champions at partner and customer firms also engage and contribute.

An example of the impact of Splunk for Good is the company's rapid development of a publicly available interactive Splunk COVID-19 Dashboard that any individual or organization can view without any installation necessary. Splunk is also providing an application that an individual or organization can download, populate with their own data, and use to help get a better understanding of the data behind the pandemic. The dashboard was quickly adopted by a range of organizations including the United Kingdom's National Health Service, which customized the dashboard to track and analyze cases at the local level.

Another COVID-19 project highlighted some of the company's many partners. In collaboration with Accenture, Adobe, Oracle, and NuHarbor Security, Splunk helped develop a comprehensive testing platform that has been made available for free to public health officials in the United States. Tarrant County, Texas, was one of the initial users. The county is using the platform to host screening self-assessments, manage testing appointments, and provide public access to data about numbers of tests scheduled and completed by county and zip code and age.

Other Splunk for Good initiatives have included a partnership with the University of Illinois to help contain a severe strain of flu among its athletes and a close collaboration with NetHope to provide safe and reliable connectivity to impacted populations and humanitarian organizations dealing with crises around the globe including refugees in Syria and post-hurricane challenges in Puerto Rico.

Each Splunk employee is able to take up to 24 paid hours per year to support Splunk for Good programs locally or to participate by providing technical skills and support to one of the larger programs. The company sees the Splunk for Good program as an important part of its employee recruitment and retention efforts. Employee surveys often identify the program as an important differentiator, and all new hires are exposed to the program as part of orientation.

## FUTURE OUTLOOK

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Executive sponsorship for the Splunk for Good program is primarily driven by the Splunk legal and government affairs offices, but executives from across the company are actively engaged. As the program matures, the organization is working to refine and track metrics to measure the impact of these programs. Current metrics generally focus on people and time, including such measurements as:

- Employee engagement as measured by the number of hours contributed annually
- Number and value of product licenses donated
- Compliance with customer procurement processes that consider corporate responsibility commitments and governance
- External workforce development metrics such as the number of participants completing workforce training programs

In the future, the program expects to generate an annual tracking report including online dashboards to better report and visualize impacts related to sustainability and resiliency outcomes.

## ESSENTIAL GUIDANCE

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### Advice for Splunk

The Splunk for Good program provides an impactful opportunity for Splunk to support communities and individuals in need while engaging employees, partners, and customers and creating new commercial opportunities in mission-critical functions. IDC believes that, in the coming months and years, there will be pressing needs for nonprofits and government agencies to quickly collect, analyze, and take action on vast amounts of public health and economic data. This represents an important opportunity for Splunk to extend the benefits of the Splunk for Good initiative broadly around the world.

As the program continues to mature, Splunk will benefit from developing and publishing more use cases and quantitative tracking metrics that help visualize the number of people, lives, and jobs impacted by Splunk for Good investments.

## LEARN MORE

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### Related Research

- *OptiRTC: Watershed Management Technology for Good* (IDC #US46241520, May 2020)
- *Technology for Social Good: The Response to COVID-19* (IDC #US46220520, April 2020)

## About IDC

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## Global Headquarters

5 Speen Street  
Framingham, MA 01701  
USA  
508.872.8200  
Twitter: @IDC  
idc-community.com  
www.idc.com

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