

Brandz Top 100 Brands Shows Dramatic Growth in the Financial Power of Brands

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The third annual BrandZ â„¢ Ranking issued today proves that brands are becoming ever more valuable and powerful in driving business growth. Companies that own brands in the BrandZ Top 100 have significantly outperformed the stock market when compared to the S&P 500.

The new edition of the BrandZ Ranking was announced today by leading global market research and consulting firm Millward Brown. It identifies the worldâ„¢s most powerful brands as measured by their dollar value. The brand ranking is produced by Millward Brown Optimor, the group dedicated to helping companies maximize returns from brand and marketing investments.

The combined value of all brands in the BrandZ Top 100 increased by 21% from \$1.6 trillion in 2007 to \$1.94 trillion in 2008, more than double the increase experienced the previous year. Google tops the list again with a brand value of \$86.1bn followed by GE at \$71.4bn and Microsoft at \$70.8bn.

â€œThis yearâ„¢s brand ranking demonstrates the importance of investing in brands, especially in times of market turmoil. Strong brands generate superior returns and protect businesses from risk,â€• said Joanna Seddon, CEO of Millward Brown Optimor. â€œOur data shows that strong brands continue to outperform weak ones in terms of market share and share price during recessions.â€•

The most notable trends emerging from this year's BrandZ Ranking include:

Established Asia vs Emerging Asia â€” Chinese brands continue to get stronger according to the new BrandZ Ranking. Seven brands in this yearâ„¢s Top 100 come from mature Asian economies: Japan, Korea, and Hong Kong. Their aggregate brand value increased by only 7% in the last year (to \$111bn). In contrast, the value of the four Chinese brands that made this yearâ„¢s BrandZ Top 100 increased by 51% (to \$124bn). China Mobile, Bank of China, China Construction Bank and ICBC are only just starting to expand beyond China so they have considerable potential for further growth.

Continued Rise of the BRICs â€” Emerging markets play a key role in driving growth for international brands, for example Apple and Gucci. The new BrandZ Ranking shows that domestic brands from emerging economies are gaining momentum. Chinese brands performed strongly and Russian-based mobile operator MTS entered the ranking at number 89. MTS is the first Russian brand to make the Top 100 list with a brand value of \$8.1bn. Other BRIC brands to watch in future brand rankings include Lukoil, Beeline, and Baltika from Russia, ICICI from India, as well as Brahma, Petrobras, and Bradesco from Brazil.

Technology Boom â€” The technology sector (including mobile operators), which accounted for 28 of the top 100 brands, outperformed all other categories in this yearâ„¢s BrandZ Ranking, with a brand value growth of \$187.5bn. This is more than half of the Top 100â„¢s total increase.

Commenting on this year's BrandZ Ranking, Eileen Campbell, Global CEO of Millward Brown said: "We've been tracking brand equity on WPP's behalf for 10 years, so we know what hard work it is and what a fantastic achievement it is for any brand to achieve BrandZ Top 100 status. We'd like to congratulate these companies for their extraordinary performance and commitment to the power of great brands and the role that effective marketing plays in building them. Particularly in a challenging global economy, we were delighted to see such high growth, reconfirming our assertion that sustained marketing support is a winning strategy, even in tough business conditions."

The BrandZ Ranking is the only brand ranking based on primary research â€” it therefore reflects the perceptions of people who really count â€” brand users and consumers. Derived from WPP's BrandZ database, the world's largest repository of brand equity data, the BrandZ study has interviewed more than one million consumers globally and covers 50,000 brands worldwide. The BrandZ Ranking is the first study to cover both business and consumer brands and to include predictive metrics of future brand performance. Market performance metrics and financial data were obtained from Datamonitor and Bloomberg respectively.